

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

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April 28, 2015  
Start: 1:23 p.m.  
Recess: 3:11 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:

LETITIA JAMES  
Public Advocate

MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO  
Speaker for the Council

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Maria Del Carmen Arroyo  
Inez D. Barron  
Fernando Cabrera  
Margaret S. Chin  
Andrew Cohen  
Costa G. Constantinides  
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.  
Elizabeth S. Crowley  
Laurie A. Cumbo  
Chaim M. Deutsch  
Inez E. Dickens  
Daniel Dromm  
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.

Mathieu Eugene  
Julissa Ferreras  
Daniel R. Garodnick  
Vincent J. Gentile  
Vanessa L. Gibson  
Daniel G. Greenfield  
Vincent Ignizio  
Corey D. Johnson  
Ben Kallos  
Andy L. King  
Peter A. Koo  
Karen Koslowitz  
Rory I. Lancman  
Brad S. Lander  
Stephen T. Levin  
Mark Levine  
Alan N. Maisel  
Steven Matteo  
Darlene Mealy  
Carlos Menchaca  
Rosie Mendez  
I. Daneek Miller  
Annabel Palma  
Antonio Reynoso  
Donovan J. Richards  
Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Deborah L. Rose  
Helen K. Rosenthal  
Ritchie J. Torres  
Mark Treyger  
Eric A. Ulrich  
James Vacca  
Paul A. Vallone  
James G. Van Bramer  
Mark S. Weprin  
Jumaane D. Williams  
Ruben Wills

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

Greg Meeropol  
National Black Society of Engineers -NBSE

Garden School  
Daniel Webster Society Debate Team

Reverend Dr. Barbara Austin-Lucas  
Agape International Fellowship  
8712 Glenwood Road, Borough of Brooklyn

[sound check, pause]

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Ladies and gentlemen, we ask you to please find seats. Silence all electronic devices at this time at this time. Please set to vibrate or on silent. No food or beverages allowed in the hearing room.

[background comments and noise, pause]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Okay, we're going to get started. We have--we have three--

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Quiet please.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: --ceremonials.

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet please.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Keep it down, please. Keep it down, please.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: We have three ceremonials we'll get through. If people could pay attention, I'd appreciate it. So we have Council Member Robert Cornegy who is here to celebrate the National Society of Black Engineers in recognition of their mentorship of students in Central Brooklyn. I thank all the colleagues that are joining us, and I will hand it over to Council Member Cornegy.

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today, it is my absolute pleasure to honor the National Society of Black Engineers for the tremendous work they do on their STEM and especially their SEEK program, which is a summer program that in my district last year worked with over 200 young people to get them to understand science, technology, and to work with some robotics. It is my goal to make sure that every child has a pipeline to science and technology in New York City. And their program is so exceptional because it allows for young people to begin at a very early age, and work through high school and college and to their professional careers. And it's based on not just the program, but it's based on their mentorship of graduates. And so, we have here today some of the--some graduates and directors. We have Greg Meeropol, Tanzee Silver, Joe Barclay, Denisha McPherson and Sonia Irving who are here today standing in the gap constantly. And I thought that today was an excellent opportunity while we see what's going on in other parts of the country with our young people that there should be an alternative pipeline as opposed to the pipeline from--the pipeline to prison. A complex, which we know

very much. I'd like to have the pipeline to technology, which is right in front of us. So thank you so much for the work you do. [applause] Can--if I can just allow Greg Meeropol who--

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [off mic] We need to read the proclamation. [sic]

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Oh, read the proc first. I'm sorry. So I know not to read the entire proc. I did learn that.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [off mic] Clerk, can you read the Proclamation. [laughs]

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: All right, thank you, Madam Speaker. Clerk, would you please read the proclamation. [laughter]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: He was going to read it for you.

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Sorry. I'm a little over-excited. Sorry.

CLERK: Council City of New York Proclamation.

Whereas, the Council of the City of New York is proud to honor the National Society of Black Engineers for its commitment to academic and

professional success of Black and other minority engineers; and

Whereas, in 1975, Purdue University students, Anthony Harris, John Logan, Edward Coleman, George Smith, Stanley Kirtley and Brian Harris nicknamed the Chicago Six, established a student organization the Black Society of Engineers, to help reduce the high rate of attrition among Black engineering students. And with the recruitment and retention of Black engineering students, the group held its first national meeting in 1976, and changes its name to the Society of Black Engineers, and then to the National Society of Black Engineers, NSBE; and

Whereas, NSBE has since grown from six to more than 31,000 members, and hosts an annual national convention with over 8,000 attendees. NSBE has 99 active NSBE junior pre-college 250 student and 68 professional chapters nationwide, ten of which are located in New York City. Through their various chapters, NSBE offers academic excellence programs, scholarships, leadership training, professional development, and access to career opportunities for thousands of members every year; and

Whereas, NSBE's Summer Engineering Experience for Kids, SEEK Program has served as a vital tool in correcting the persistent disparity in STEM, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics participation rates among African-Americans. And in increasing elementary students' aptitude in math and science and interest in pursuing careers in STEM Fields. The three three-week SEEK Program engages Black students in interactive team based engineering projects. In 2013, the SEEK program was offered at PS5 in Brooklyn; and

Whereas, NSBE's New York City's Excel Alumni Chapter focuses on the personal and professional development of its members while providing guidance to collegiate and NSBE junior members located in New York City. In June, NSBE's NYC Alumni Chapter hosted the Tenth Annual Engineering, the World Conference at Time Warner Center, an all-day event developed to introduce minority youths to the technical and non-technical aspects of the broadcast and film industry as well as its many supporting fields; and



Whereas, with more than 2,000 elected leadership positions, 18 regional conferences and an annual convention, NSBE provides opportunities for success. They're placed amongst the top providers of opportunity for people of color in the United States.

Now, therefore, be it known that the Council of the City of New York gratefully honors the members of the National Society of Black Engineers for their outstanding service and achievement in New York City and across the nation. Melissa Mark-Viverito, Speaker for the Entire Council, Robert Cornegy, Council Member 36th District, Brooklyn; Laurie A. Cumbo, Council Member, 35th District, Brooklyn.

[applause, cheers]

GREG MEEROPOL: Madam Speaker, Council Member Cornegy and the entire City Council here in New York, on behalf of our 31,000 members worldwide in the National Society of Black Engineers we want to thank you for this honor. We love being a part of New York, and we look forward to expanding the services of science, math and technology to its residents. Thank you so much. [applause, cheers]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you and-- and I appreciate all of you. I'm sure you do this on a volunteer basis, and obviously, we want to increase the participation of our students, particularly those of color in our public education system in STEM in the sciences. And that's really important you're providing an opportunity for that by serving as examples first and foremost, but then lending of your time. So thank you very much. It means a lot to all of us here that you do that. So congratulations. [applause] All right. Okay.

GREG MEEROPOL: [off mic] Thank you.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: All right. Okay. What?

[background comments]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: You have the photos? Okay. All right, thank you guys. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you again. Okay, the next ceremonial by Council Member Dromm. Those that are being honored if they can come up. He's recognizing the Garden School Debate Team called the Daniel [cheers/applause] the Daniel Webster Society. Oh, little ones. I'm thinking it's like older. Oh,

wow. I was--I was thinking it was going to be like high school age students. This is great.

[background comments]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Garden School Debate Team. They're known as the Daniel Webster Society. They have been--they are champions in the Big Apple Division of the New York Debate League. So congratulations. Council Member Dromm. [applause]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: That's right, Speaker. The Garden School, which is an excellent private school in my district. Which, by the way though, is also the largest provider of UPK seats in my district, over 144 UPK seats at the Garden School, which is a tremendous education for those UPK students as well. But the Garden School has been a great neighbor and a great friend in Jackson Heights. The Garden School is the school that we purchased their playground from in order to expand an existing park in my neighborhood. We closed the street, 78th Street, and now we have a huge wonderful park, which benefits not only the neighborhood but the Garden School as well. So I want to thank their head master Dr. Richard Marotta for all the work that he's done with us. But we're here today to talk about the kids

and what they have done. And I want to acknowledge Mr. Richard Kruczek, and his fellow coach Phillip D'anna for the work that they have done with these students [applause] to make them the number one debaters.

The Garden School sent three teams against some of Manhattan's best private and charter schools. In total, there were 71 debaters on 24 teams from eight different schools. After seven hours of passionate debating, three of the Garden School speakers placed in the top seven of the individual speaker's awards. In team awards, all three Garden School teams placed in the top ten. And two Garden School teams were in the top five. Finally, the most coveted prize of the day, the overall school of the tournament award was given to the school with the highest win percentage of the day and that went, of course, to the Garden School.

[cheers] So we are very proud and lucky to be able to honor these students. [applause] And I often find that debaters look for a job in public office. I just hope that none of them run against me in the future, but we will see what happens. And with that, I'd ask the clerk to read the proclamation.

CLERK: Council City of New York

Proclamation.

Whereas, the Council of the City of New York is proud to honor the members of the Garden School's Daniel Webster Society for the excellent team work that led to their recent victory; and

Whereas, the Garden School located in Jackson Heights, has had a reputation for academic excellence since it was founded in 1923. Throughout its history, it has been guided by many excellent head masters, including Dr. Richard Marotta, who leads it today. Five years ago, history teacher Richard Kruczek, started the school's Daniel Webster Society named after one of the greatest champions for our nation's Constitution. Who in 1830, gained fame for his of, by, for the people speech on the Senate floor. Today, thanks to Mr. Kruczek and his fellow coach Phillip D'anna, the students of the Garden School uphold the tradition of oration in the Daniel Webster Society; and

Whereas, on February 28th, the Garden School located in Jackson Heights played host to the Big Apple Division of the New York Debate League of the ESUUS, the English Speaking Union of the United

States. The Garden School sent three teams against some of Manhattan's best private and charter schools. In total, there were 71 debaters on 24 teams from eight different schools. After seven hours of passionate debating, three of the Garden School speakers placed in the top seven of the individual speaker awards. In team awards, all three of the Garden School's teams placed in the top ten and two were in the top five. Finally, the most coveted prize of the day, the overall school--the tournament award, given to the school with the highest win percentage of the day went to the Garden School. This recent triumph gives the Garden School's Daniel Webster Society two School of the Tournament Awards in their last three debates. A record unmatched by any team in New York; and

Whereas, we commend these students for honing their critical thinking skills, and inspiring others to examine every side of important and often controversial issues with reasoned arguments and respectful discourse. Continued dedication to mastering these debate skills will serve them well throughout their life and careers. And we wish them continued success in the years to ahead.

Now, therefore, be it known that the Council of the City of New York is proud to honor and congratulate the members of the Daniel Webster Society for their stellar teamwork and victory in the Big Apple Division of the New York Debate League. Melissa Mark-Viverito, Speaker for the Entire Council, Daniel Dromm, Council Member 25th District, Queens.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: All right.

[applause] Congratulations. This is very inspiring. What--what were the--what was the topic that you were debating or some of the topics? What were they? Do you want to share?

DEBATE TEAM MEMBER: [off mic]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: What?

DEBATE TEAM MEMBER: We discussed privilege and acting out of. [sic]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Oh, okay, all right and what--any other topic or was that the only one? Huh.

DEBATE TEAM MEMBER: [off mic]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Oh, wow, okay. So, okay, so very complex issues that they were debating, which is great. Very inspired. I don't--I

think this is the youngest debate team that I've ever met. I'm not used to seeing them this young. So congratulations to all of you. Continued success. I'm glad you're here and we were able to celebrate your--your win and your victories. And with that, I'd like the Principal to say a few words.

PRINCIPAL RICHARD MAROTTA: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you Council Member Dromm for inviting us here. Thank you, team. Mr. Kruczek, Mr. D'anna and parents have been very supportive. We don't do this alone. We do this as a partnership. It's very fitting for me that this ceremony is taking place in this room because I've heard--I've heard that occasions that debates take place here.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: It does, oh yes.

PRINCIPAL RICHARD MAROTTA: Okay, just wanted to check. One of our goals for our team, for our students is that they learn the importance of public discourse. They learn that it's not only important, that it's necessary and that above all, it must be authentic. That's the lesson we try to teach them, and clearly these young people, and these are their predecessors over here who were the original



members of the debate team when it started, have learned this. They now do model UN. Have learned this, and above all, we stress be honest, be thorough, know what you're talking about and strive for the importance and the authenticity of public discourse. And thank you so much for this honor. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: All right, thank you. [applause]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you so much. Congratulations.

[background comments, pause]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: All right, I think we have on more ceremonial. I think it's Council Member Ulrich. [background comments] Yes, who's--who's coming up.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: [off mic] The providers, the group. [sic]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: If those providers that are being honored today could come up. Quality Services for Autistic Children Resources of New York City. My Time, Inc., Sinergia NYC, NYFAC and NYU Langone, and Autism Speakers.

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet down, please.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: We're wearing our little pins today. I'll hand it over to the Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: All right, thank you Madam Speaker. I'm very proud to be joined today and to have my colleagues here to recognize establish April, not only this April, but every April from this day forward as Autism Awareness Month in the City of New York. That is what the Council is voting on today. [applause] This designation--this designation also coincides with the U.N. World Autism Awareness Day, which was observed on April 2nd, and every year since 2008. Autism is a complex brain disorder that inhibits a person's ability to communicate and develop social relationships. And is often accompanied by extreme behavioral challenges. Autism spectrum disorders are diagnosed in one out of every 68 children in our country affecting four or five times as many boys than girls. The diagnosis of Autism has increased tenfold in the last decade. The CDC has called Autism a national public health crisis, whose cause and cure remain unknown. Many New Yorkers including families throughout our

districts grapple daily with the challenges imposed by caring for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The resolution we're passing today, Resolution 638, sponsored by many of my colleagues here, will help raise our city's awareness and understanding of this disease while science continues to explore ways to home treatment and research to hopefully one day finding a cure. So, I want to recognize--I know the Speaker mentioned, but we've been joined by several outstanding advocates and folks who are leading research on this issue. First and foremost, Autism Speaks. I don't know where they are, but I know they're here. Right over here. Thank you for joining us. [applause] They had a successful walk. They had a successful walk just this past week and in Queens I think. So thank you for everything thing that you do. Also QSAC, Quality Services for Autistic Children is here. [applause] And they have several board members. Resources NYC is here. [applause] My Time. My Time is here. Thank you for being here. Sinergia, NYC. [applause] NY, here we go, New York from my district--in my district in Howard Beach and New York Families for Autistic Children, NYFAC is here. Andrew is here.

Thank you. And NYU Medical Center, NYU Langone. There are so many others, by the way. We invited as many as we could to be here to share this moment. This is a very important day for the Council.

And I also wanted to make an important mention of two of my colleagues in particular who work very hard on this issue. Who are constantly spearheading the autism initiative here, and finding ways to support autism, the causes and families who care for children with autism. And that's my good friend and colleague Council Member Mark Weprin.

[cheers/applause] And, of course, the--the Chair of our Mental Health--what is the name of it, the committee, Mental--

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Mental Health Services.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Mental Health Services. I'm sorry. I'm having a Republican moment here. I'm sorry. I know. [laughter] Mental Health Services, Andrew Cohen from the Bronx. He's a [applause] staunch advocate. Why don't we have the Chair of the Committee say a few words, and then we'll read the proc because I know that he-- Is that

all right? All right. Okay. Hold on one second.  
Andrew--Council Member Cohen.

COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Thank you. Thank you. Really, I just wanted to say thank you for the partnership with Eric and Mark and the Speaker for her support this initiative, and really thank you to everybody for being here. Awareness is really the key, getting the word out, and all of the work that you do. So thank you very much.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you. All right. Do you want to hold--hold onto this a minute? Do you want to hold on? Do you want to read the proc?

[background comments]

CLERK: Council City of New York  
Proclamation.

Whereas, the Council of the City of New York is proud to observe April as Autism Awareness Month, and to honor Autism Speaks and the many autism services providers of New York City for providing outstanding support to all individuals and their families affected by Autism; and

Whereas, Autism Awareness Month is an opportunity for families, friends and local

communities to raise public awareness about Autism, the fastest growing developmental disability in the country. Today, more than 1.5 million individuals in the United States are affected by Autism.

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it down, please. Keep it down.

CLERK: The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that one in 68 children have Autism. The stress on families affected by Autism is immense. It is our hope that promoting greater awareness of Autism will lead to more funding for research and eventually the discovery of the cause of and cure for Autism; and

Whereas, despite there being no known cure for Autism, experts agree that early intervention is important in addressing the symptoms associated with Autism. When families and caregivers begin looking into various treatment available for Autism Spectrum Disorders, they will be surprised at the wide range of options out there. Unfortunately, what works for some families may not work for others. Since individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders are all unique, treatment plans need to be specifically tailored to each individual; and

Whereas, the Council has partnered with many local organizations through its annual Autism Awareness Initiative to provide exemplary services to those affected by Autism. These organizations provide the one-on-one services and needed resources, which have helped countless New Yorkers as they grapple with the daily challenges of Autism; and

Whereas, since its inception a decade ago, Autism Speaks has led the way in raising Autism awareness throughout New York City and throughout the country. We commend them for their unwavering commitment and encouragement to those in the Autism community to never give up in their search for--to help their loved ones reach their full potential; and

Whereas, Autism Awareness Month raises public awareness about Autism and its affects, and that there is hope to all who deal with the hardships of this disorder by uniting the Autism community to address this urgent global health crisis. Together, we will solve this problem--this puzzle.

Now, therefore, be it known that the Council of the City of New York proudly honors Autism Speaks and proclaims the Month of April 2015 to be Autism Awareness Month in New York City.

Melissa Mark-Viverito, Speaker for the Entire Council; Erich A. Ulrich, Council Member, 32nd District, Queens; Andrew Cohen, Chair, Mental Health Committee; Mark S. Weprin, Council Member 23rd District, Queens and many other Council Members.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you so much. [applause] Yeah, and--yeah, and I--again to thank all the providers that are here. This is an initiative that we have had a longstanding commitment to, and look forward to the--to that ongoing commitment moving forward. And thanks to the leadership of Council Members Ulrich, Weprin, and Cohen and thank you Mark for the pins that we're all wearing today. I hope everyone is wearing them to raise awareness, and again, thank you to all the providers. [background comments] All right, thank you all. [applause]

[pause]

[background comments and noise]

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Okay, folks, can you clear the main floor here. Clear the main floor here. Council Members, please be seated. Can I have your attention, please. Can I have your attention, please. At this time, please place all electronic



devices to vibrate. Will all non-Council employees, non-Council employees please leave the main floor to the Chambers. There's additional seating upstairs in the balcony. Thank you.

[pause]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Pledge allegiance to the flag.

[Please Allegiance to the Flag]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Please be seated.  
Roll call.

CLERK: Arroyo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Here.

CLERK: Barron.

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it down, please. Keep it down.

CLERK: Thank you. Cabrera.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Here.

CLERK: Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Here.

CLERK: Cohen.

COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Constantinides.

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Here.

CLERK: Cornegy. Crowley.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Cumbo. Deutsch.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yes.

CLERK: Dickens. Dromm.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Espinal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Here.

CLERK: Eugene.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Present.

CLERK: Ferreras. Garodnick. Gentile.

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Gibson.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Greenfield.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the  
Chambers, please. Quiet in the Chambers.

CLERK: Johnson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Present.

CLERK: Kallos.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Here.

CLERK: King.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Present.

CLERK: Koo.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Present.

CLERK: Koslowitz.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: [off mic]

Here.

CLERK: Lancman.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Here.

CLERK: Lander. Levin. Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Here.

CLERK: Maisel. Matteo. Mealy.

Menchaca. Garodnick.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: [off mic]

Here.

CLERK: Mendez. Miller.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Palma.

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Reynoso.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Here.

CLERK: Richards.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Present.

CLERK: King.

[background comments]

CLERK: Excuse me. Sorry. Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]

Here.

CLERK: Rose.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Here.

CLERK: Rosenthal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Here.

CLERK: Torres. Treyger.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Here.

CLERK: Vacca. Vallone. Weprin.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: [off mic] Here.

CLERK: Williams.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Here.

CLERK: Wills.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Here.

CLERK: Ignizio. Ulrich.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Present.

CLERK: Levin.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Here.

CLERK: Van Bramer.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Here.

CLERK: Speaker Mark-Viverito.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [off mic] Here.

[pause]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the  
Chambers, please. Everyone rise for the Invocation  
delivered by Reverend Dr. Barbara Austin-Lucas of

Agape International Fellowship at 8712 Glenwood Road  
in the Borough of Brooklyn.

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: All rise.

REVEREND AUSTIN-LUCAS: I want to begin  
with a story that is told--was told by Fannie Lou  
Hamer of Mississippi, a civil rights leader. She  
said that there was a man in a certain town that was  
known for his wisdom. And some young people decided  
one day that they would test whether or not this man  
really had wisdom. So they decided they would take a  
bird and put the bird in their hands. And they would  
go to the old man, and if the old--they would ask the  
old man, Old man, that which we have in our hands, is  
it alive or dead? If he said it was alive, they  
would squash it, kill it, open their hands and prove  
him wrong. It was dead. If he said it was dead,  
they would open their hands and allow it to fly, and  
they would show that again he wrong, for it was  
alive. They approached the old man as he sat in his  
chair on his porch. And they said, Old man, we know  
you have wisdom. That which we hold in our hand is  
it alive or is it dead? He looked at them and  
pierced that which they desired to trick him with.  
And he simply responded, It's in your hands.

Oh, God, as we come before you this afternoon, we understand the task that is before the Mayor, the public advocate, the Speaker and the members of the City Council. There is so much that is happening throughout our city, but we also understand God you love this city. You love the diversity of its people. You love the energy that cultures and ethnicities bring to the city. And we thank you that you created us different. I simply pray at this time that the Council will sit in wisdom. That they will sit in understanding. That they would move to do those things that are needed for the city, for the many people and the various expressions. That we might be able to live and not die. It's in your name that we ask it all. And we thank you that as we ask it, it is so. And together we say amen.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Please be seated. At this time, the motion to spread the invocation I'd like to extend full upon the record. Reverend Doctor Lucas has been an inspirational leader, a woman of great faith, a woman of God who is a profound leader not only in the Borough of Brooklyn but beyond. She has pastored Age International Fellowship, and we all

look forward to the Seven Last Words, the seven women ministers. She has been a founding member as they preach on Good Friday. She has been an incredible inspiration in my life and countless women of faith in this city. I thank her and welcome her--welcome--and welcome her to the People's House of the City Council. Thank you. [applause] Adoption of Minutes. Council Member Cumbo.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I make a motion to accept the minutes of the Stated Meeting of March 31, 2015.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Messages and Papers from the Mayor.

CLERK: None.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Communication from City, County and Borough offices.

CLERK: Preconsidered M 277, Expense Budget.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Finance.

CLERK: Preconsidered M 278, Revenue Budget.

SANDY MYERS: Finance.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Petitions and Communications.

CLERK: None.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Land Use Call-Ups.

CLERK: None.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the Chambers, please. Everyone please be seated. And now we hear from our Speaker, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito. Quiet in the Chambers.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you Madam Public Advocate. I want to begin today by asking my colleagues to stand and join me to recognize the thousands who have lost their lives in the terrible earthquake this past Saturday in Nepal. And the millions more who have been injured, displaced or otherwise impacted. Here in New York City, whenever disaster or tragedy strikes, we always rise to the occasions to show our great character as was done this weekend in Queens. In Nepal and the surrounding countries, there's an incredible need for rescue vehicles, medicine and basic living necessities. So I want to urge all New Yorkers to donate to relief efforts the best of their--to the best of their ability. While we continue to work to make this city a better place for all of our residents, in moments



like these, we should count our blessings and extend what help we can to those who are suffering abroad.

So if you could join us in a moment of silence.

[moment of silence observed] Thank you. I also want to speak for a moment about what is currently transpiring in Baltimore. What happened to Freddie Gray is a true tragedy, and our hope that--our thoughts and our prayers will be with him and his family as well. It is a tragedy we've seen repeat itself all too often throughout this country. And the images that we've been seeing in the last couple of weeks--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [shushing audience]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: --in different parts of this country is truly dire. Freddie Gray and his family deserve answers and they deserve justice. Justice also must mean that protests going on in Baltimore should remain peaceful as has been requested by the family. The answer to violence must not be violence. Violence does not help the cause. It diminishes it. Violence distracts from the very important conversation of systemic injustice that we are having that unfortunately permeates our

institutions, and distracts from the actions that we must engage in, and work towards eradicating that injustice. And it only by pulling together that we can uplift our communities, and it is only together that we can truly achieve justice. So as my heart-- I'm sure many hearts here ache for Baltimore--it is our hope that we can all pull through this. That they can pull through this so that we're able to move forward. So again, I do hope that we do keep Freddie Gray and his family in our thoughts and prayers.

Today, the Council will be voting on legislation to require the Department of Health to provide information about Hepatitis C--B and Hepatitis C in New York City. We estimate that about 100,000 New Yorkers are currently living with Hepatitis B many of whom are immigrants whose home countries have limited access to vaccinations. Additionally, there are approximately 150,000 New Yorkers living with Hepatitis C with high rates among Baby Boomers, and higher rates among African-Americans more than any other racial or ethnic group. So in order to help advocates and policymakers design effective plans to combat Hepatitis in New York, we need more exact data about where this problem is

occurring, and who it is affecting. And that's what this bill will provide.

I want to congratulate our or thank on the staff side, Dan Hafetz, who is my understanding is it's his last bill with us today. You know, he's been working with us for many years, but it is his last bill. So thank you so much for all your work over your time here in the City Council. [applause] To Crystal Pond, to Matt Gewolb, Terzah Nasser, Laura Popa thank you all for your work on this. I'm going to ask Council Member Margaret Chin to say a few words, and also Council Member Corey Johnson after Council member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Madam Chair, Speaker. I'd like to ask my colleagues to vote for Intro 51-B, which I sponsored with my colleague, Council Member Johnson and Council Member Koo. I hope you will all join me in saying happy birthday to Council Member Johnson.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [off mic] Yes, happy birthday. [cheers] You beat me to the punch, Margaret. It was in my mouth again. [laughter]

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I'm sorry.  
[laughs] I like to read the sayings. [sic] So,

how's that. Hepatitis is a serious health crisis in our city. It's also a mostly silent epidemic. Many people have it and don't even know it, but once they develop symptoms, it's often too late for treatment. It's also an issue that affects many of our uninsured and low-income residents and community of colors. This bill is about ensuring that our advocates have the data they need in their fight to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure the two diseases. We have worked closely with the Department of Health to make sure it's a smart bill, one that will give us information we need without being too great a burden on the City. It's time for us to make the fight against Hepatitis a real priority in the city. This is why Corey, Peter and I advocated for a new Council initiative last year, to give our community based health organization more resources to work on this issue. I want to thank the Speaker for her support. I also want to especially thank Dan Hafetz for his hard work as well as the advocates and the staff of the Department of Health who worked with us to make this best bill it could be. And, I want to lastly thank Corey, our Health Committee Chair and his staff Louis. You have been such a great partner, and I

know without your close attention and support for this issue we wouldn't be voting on this bill today. And finally, I also want to thank my Chief of Staff Yume, who's been so hard at working at this. We introduced this bill last term. It didn't even get a hearing, Madam Speaker. So we really appreciate that we're finally voting on it today, and I want to thank all my colleagues, and all the Council central staff for helping us make this happen. Thank you.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you, Council Member Chin. Council Member Johnson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hepatitis B and C both can cause chronic persistent infection, which can lead to liver disease. These are two illnesses that are generally under-reported, as you mentioned, and for which there is not a lot of screening in our city. As you said, there are 100,000 New Yorkers living with Hepatitis B many of whom are immigrants, who contracted their infection in the country of origin that they come from. And where there is limited access to the Hep B vaccine. Or, they got it from mothers who are not vaccinated. There is no cure for Hepatitis B, although there are drugs that can slow the

progression of cirrhosis, and reduce the likelihood of liver cancer. Hepatitis C in some ways paints a very different picture. The most chronically afflicted with Hep C are Baby Boomers, a group that make up about 75% of the chronic Hep C population in the United States. And African-Americans have a higher rate of chronic Hepatitis C than other ethnic-ethnic groups.

And while there is no vaccine for Hep C, there is now thankfully a cure. It is far too expensive, but there is a cure. So, I just want to thank you, Madam Speaker for allowing us to have a hearing and move forward with this. And we need data to be able to have effective public health strategies. The data that we're going to get from this piece of legislation is going to help inform the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene how to best help those who are infected in New York City. I want to thank Council Member Chin who has been a steadfast champion of this. I've worked with her. We first heard this bill in June of last year, and it has been a collaboration relationship. I also want to thank my Legislative Director Louis Cholden-Brown; the Policy Analyst for the Health Committee, Crystal

Pond; Crilhien Francisco, the Finance Analyst for the Health Committee.

And this today is Dan Hafetz's, the Counsel of the Health Committee, last stated meeting. He's not leaving 250 Broadway because he's going to NYCHA. So we'll still see him, but Dan has been an absolute pleasure to work with. He has been tireless, effective, thoughtful, smart, and has given me great counsel and advice over the last 16 months. It's a significant loss to the City Council, but it is NYCHA's gain. And I am deeply appreciative for his help. We are going to miss Dan. And lastly, I want to thank Yume Kitasei, Margaret's Chief of Staff, who has been relentless and tireless in working with Louis from my office to push this forward. I also want to thank Peter Koo, who has been a co-sponsor on this. I look forward to seeing my colleagues vote in favor of this important piece of legislation. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thanks, Council Member Johnson. We're also voting on a bill requiring the Department of Cultural Affairs to create a citywide cultural plan. Despite having one of the most vibrant arts and cultural scenes in the

country, New York currently does not have a citywide cultural plan. The arts help drive the city in many, many different ways, economically, and culturally obviously. We need to ensure that we're communicating with the artistic community to help foster growth and creativity here in New York City.

On the staff side, I want to congratulate and thank Aminta Kilawan. We said Dan was having his last bill. This is Aminta's first bill. So congratulations to her. Also to Tonya Cyrus, Chloe Rivera, Matt Gewalb, Terzah Nasser, Lyle Frank and Laura Popa. And I'd like to ask Council Member Levin and then Council Member Van Bramer to say a few words.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I also want to acknowledge the great work of Aminta Kilawan, Lyle Frank, Tonya Cyrus, Chloe Rivera, Matt Gewalb, Laura Popa and the entire central staff that has worked on this. I want to give a special shout out to Chair Jimmy Van Bramer, the Majority Leader and our Chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee, for his incredible work on this--on this bill. He's been a steadfast supporter and ally, and has shepherded this piece of



legislation through many iterations, and a lot of negotiating that has made this happen. So, I want to acknowledge Chair Van Bramer and his staff Cody Reiter and Matt Wallace. I also want to acknowledge Commissioner Tom Finkelppearl and his staff at DCA, as well as the Mayor's Intergovernmental staff John Palumbo and also Ashley Thompson. And I want to especially acknowledge my Chief of Staff Rami Metal who has put his heart and soul into this bill. He-- he has taken this bill so deeply seriously that he has--it has become a mission for him. And we are very pleased and confident that we have a thorough bill here. A bill that will--that will be relevant for generations.

Because what--what we're doing today is saying that the City of New York needs a cultural blueprint. It needs an articulated cultural blueprint. It needs a strategy on how we can continue to support arts and culture in our neighborhoods. How we can ensure that every child in New York City no matter what neighborhood they live in, no matter where they grew up, that they have the access to this wide breadth of arts and culture that we have. That is really the life blood of New York

City. Art culture is who we are. If you look at every neighborhood throughout New York City, it is-- it has a history. It has a heart and it is made up of the hard work of generations that have come from all over the world here to New York City. And then we--we make this amazing, amazing mosaic of what it means to be New York. That is our culture. Those are our cultural resources, and we need to protect them. And we need to make sure that we are supporting them. We need equity across the board, and we need to make sure that every child for future generations has access to all of those cultural resources. So, Madam Speaker, thank you so much for your support. Chair Van Bramer, I cannot thank you enough. This would not have happened without you. And again, I want to acknowledge Rami Metal. A job well done. Thank you all and I encourage my colleagues to vote aye.

[background conversation, pause]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: I'm sorry. Yes. Majority Leader Van Bramer.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Okay. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker and I want to salute my colleague Steven Levin, an amazing council member,

colleague, friend and champion of the arts. And I want to thank you, Madam Speaker, because this bill, too, was introduced by Council Member Levin and I in the previous session of the City Council. And while we did have hearing, because I am the Chair of the Committee, we were not able to pass it. But with your support and this Council, we are today making history in the City of New York by passing a comprehensive cultural plan. The budget for culture and the arts in the city of New York is larger than the entire budget for the National Endowment for the Arts, which covers the entire country. Let me say that again. Our budget for the arts in the city of New York is larger than the entire budget for NEA covering the entire United States. So it's really important that we study, that we know where this funding is going.

And that we go neighborhood to neighborhood talking to artists, empowering and engaging the community to make sure that these resources and all of the artistic programs and services are truly reaching every child in every neighborhood, every single person. It is too important. And also, cities like Chicago, Denver,

Boston, Houston either already have cultural plans or are in the works in those cities. Culture is the life blood of our city. It inspires us. It teaches us. It engages us. It binds us particularly in times like these. It drives our economy, but more importantly it feeds our collective souls. And it is so important that we address issues of equity. This cultural plan is sometimes called the Cultural Equity Plan making sure the every neighborhood in the City of New York has equal access to the arts and culture. That artists in all five boroughs, every single neighborhood in the City of New York are empowered. And that when this plan is implemented, we make sure that agencies within the City of New York are making sure that the arts are an important piece of our all of their works. And, that we are working to make sure that artists and the needs of artists are incorporated into economic development and land use strategies. That we're making sure that affordable live-work spaces for artists are a piece of this. And, whit this piece of legislation, we're creating a Citizen's Advisory Committee that for the first time will appoint artists. Including artists specifically for small community-based culture organizations to a

panel that will partake in this plan and review this plan, and work with the Department of Cultural Affairs to make this thing real and important. I want to thank in addition to the Speaker and my colleague Council Member Levin, all of the council members who support this bill. I want to thank Commissioner Tom Finkelppearl without whose support this would not happen. He's a great Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, and this piece of legislation is a sign of that. I also want to thank the staff, Aminta Kilawan and her first piece of legislation. But also Chloe Rivera in her second week at the New York City Council is helping to pass legislation. My staff Matt Wallace, my Chief of Staff, Cody Reiter, my Deputy Chief of Staff, the entire staff. And also Lyle Flank--Lyle Frank, Adrea Vasquez, Terzah Nasser, Tonya Cyrus our outgoing Policy Analyst for Cultural Affairs Matt Gewolb, and the entire team. But, particularly Council Member Levin and his Chief of Staff Rami Metal, who for 2-1/2 years have worked with me, and the Department of Cultural Affairs to make this a reality. We're making history today, and I urge everyone here to join us for a celebratory toast in my office after the Stated Meeting, but

before the party celebrating Steve's upcoming nuptials, where we celebrate this historic moment and this cultural plan for the City of New York. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you.

Additionally, we have a--there's two more bills that are both Council Member Jumaane Williams'. I will mention them both and then ask him to speak.

Additionally, we have a bill that will increase communications between the hotel industry, the Department of Buildings and local communities. This bill will require the Department of Buildings to inform the applicable borough president, council member and community board upon receiving a request for a new hotel development in any neighborhood.

That's bill one. Bill two is voting on a bill today that will protect consumers when being misled when purchasing an automobile. The bill would require that used car dealerships give accurate information when advertising the price of any vehicle in their showroom. That means that the customer can rely on the sticker price, and will not be surprised at the end of the transaction by misleading dealer fees or unexplained administrative costs. The bill will also

require clear and accurate disclosure of the price of any add-on products that may be purchased with the vehicle. Purchasing add-on products, such as car alarms and maintenance packages from a used car dealer is optional. The price of these items should be disclosed to the consumer up front. And the initial penalty for any violation will be a \$500 fine with subsequent violations resulting in fines of up to \$1,000. On the staff side, I thank Rachel Cordero, Levoni Raman [sp?] and Israel Martinez for their work on these bills, and with that I'll ask Council Member Williams to say a few words on both of these bills

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you, Madam Speaker and thank you for your support on this legislation and helping it get to where it is today. Sometimes the best bills come from a personal experience. These two bills for me exemplify why I'm--I became a Council Member to really take personal experiences and the experiences that happened in my district and hopefully help other districts and the city at large. The first bill, Intro 181-A I introduced several years back. I want to thank again the Speaker and the Housing Committee

staff including Jennifer Wilcox, Shijuade Kadree, Guillermo Patino, Jose Conde, Sarah Gastelum, Ed Atkins, Thomas Donaldson and my Executive Chief of Staff Nick Smith. This came from a situation in my district where a hotel came up on Foster and East 49th Street in an area that had never seen any kind of hotel activity. And the people told us that their--their expectation was that people would be stopping in Flatbush and spending their time there instead of going to a hotel in Manhattan. We believed that that was not true, and that there may be hourly rates given there and some activities that we did not appreciate there. Luckily, we were able to beat back the hotel successfully, but it took a lot of effort. And we had no idea that the hotel was coming. And I believe we had had some advanced notice we would have been able to have input a lot earlier. This bill doesn't take away anyone's rights. It simply says that if you're going to put a hotel in the area, you should inform the community board, the council member, the borough president and if it's sharing districts, the borough board as well. And hopefully, what we went through, other communities would not. Intro 178-A. I'd like to



thank again the Speaker, Chair Espinal, and those who worked on the legislation including Rachel Cordero, Lebani Ramen [sp?] and Carlos Bito [sp?] and my Deputy Chief of Staff again as well.

This came from personal experience as I was purchasing a car a few years ago. And every place that I went to, there was a significant difference in the price that was advertised and the price that they were selling the car for. I ended up going out of state, actually, to purchase my car. And I believe if I was going through this, many of my constituents as well as many people in New York City were. This bill just basically says you shall advertise the price of the car so people understand that the price of the car is what you're advertising. Any additional add-ons should be clearly delineated, and so that buyers' have an understanding. This is, I think, a good consumer bill, and good bill for community to have input. And I thank everyone involved, and I encourage my colleagues to vote yes.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you, Council Member. And a few notes before I finish. I want to wish the Fire Department in New York City a happy 150th anniversary. [cheers, applause] And

encourage everyone to go out and enjoy one of the many FDNY anniversary open houses that are going on across the City this Saturday, May 2nd.

Additionally, and we just had a ceremonial around this, April is Autism Awareness Month in New York City. Autism Awareness Month raises public awareness about Autism and its effects, and offers hope to all who deal with the hardships of this disorder by uniting the Autism community to address this urgent global health crisis.

And finally, it has been said by Margaret Chin, but we want to wish a happy birthday, feliz cumpleaños, to Corey Johnson, our colleague. [cheers, applause]. Have a happy one today, and with that I end the communication from the speaker.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. Happy birthday, Council Member Johnson and congratulations to Council Member Levin on his nuptials. Discussion of general orders. Seeing none, report of special committees?

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [interposing] Also, we want--we want to congratulate Julissa Ferreras, our colleague.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Oh, yes.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: She is actually on her way---

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Oh, Julisssa Ferraras.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: --I think she is getting ready to go to the Dominican Republic because she did get married just a couple of days ago. So congratulations to her. [cheers]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Congratulations to--

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Sorry.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: --Julissa as well. Report of Special Committees.

CLERK: None.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Reports of Standing Committees, or if anyone else wants to get married. [laughter]

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Consumer Affairs, Intro 178-A, Automobile Price Displays.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International

Intergroup Relations, Intro 419-A, Comprehensive Cultural Plan.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Finance, Preconsidered Reso 665, Organization Funding.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Shh. [shushing audience]

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: Presconsidered M277 and Reso 675, and M278 and Reso 676, Budget Modification.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, Intro 181-A, Hotel Development Plans.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Done. Health-- we--we have here Health Committee. [sic]

CLERK: Sorry about that. Report of the Committee on Health. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Yep.

CLERK: Intro 51-B Hepatitis Reporting.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, Intro 181-A, Hotel Development Plans.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: Report of the Committee on Land Use, LU 205 and Reso 677, Zoning Amendment.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: LU 208 and Reso 678, sidewalk cafe.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: LU 212 and Reso 679 and LU 213 and Reso 680, 986 Washington Avenue.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on General Orders.

CLERK: LU 214 and Reso 681 and LU 215 and Reso 682, 1561 Walton Avenue.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on General Orders.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: General Order  
Calendar.

CLERK: [coughs] Excuse me. LU 189 and  
Reso 683 through LU 191 and Reso 685, Zoning  
Amendments.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on  
General Orders.

CLERK: Resolution appointing various  
person commissioner of deeds.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on  
General Orders, and at this time I ask for roll call  
on all items on the Coupled General Order Calendar.  
Roll call.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]  
Quiet in the Chamber, please.

CLERK: Gentile.

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: With permission,  
I'd like to vote on all Land Use Call-Ups, General  
Orders and Resolutions.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: I vote aye  
especially on Resolution 576-A against the TPP and  
Fast Tracking, and I hope to be speaking on that  
issue on future panels. [sic] [cheers, applause]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Excuse me, excuse me. Quiet in the Chambers. There will be no applause. This is what we do in the City Council practice quietly. Thank you.

CLERK: Arroyo. Barron.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye.

CLERK: Thank you. Cabrera.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

CLERK: Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye on all.

CLERK: Cohen.

COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: [off mic] Aye.

CLERK: Constantinides.

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye.

CLERK: Cornegy.

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye on all.

CLERK: Crowley.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Aye.

CLERK: Cumbo.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Permission to explain my vote.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I just want to congratulate Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer, as well

as Council Member Steven Levin. This is such important and powerful legislation that you have put forward today. And I want to thank you for all the time and energy that you have put into this in terms of not just informing the elected officials about it. But going into every community and talking about the cultural plan, and having important conversation. And I'm so pleased as a--as a new member coming in that you have laid--you have laid such an important foundation and groundwork for us to continue to build cultural conversations around important issues of inequity. And I'm confident that this cultural plan will level the playing field so that all of the cultures throughout New York City know that they have a voice, and know that their culture is important to the vibrancy of New York City. So I congratulate you both. I'm proud to have been a part of it, and played what role I did. And I look forward to continuing to work with you to have even more conversations. Again, congratulations and aye on all.

CLERK: Deutsch.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye.

CLERK: Dickens. Dromm.



COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

CLERK: Espinal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Permission to explain my vote.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: I would like to congratulate my colleague, Jumaane Williams and this common sense legislation.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]  
Shh. [shushing audience]

COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: As a used car owner, I know how important it is for the price to be transparent. So, it's great to know that this bill would not be a burden on the business, and be helpful for the consumer. And I also want to wish my buddy, Corey Johnson, a big happy birthday. And I vote aye on all.

CLERK: Eugene.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

CLERK: Garodnick. Gibson.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Pass.

CLERK: Greenfield.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I just want to say my disappointment that I have not heard

Jumaane Williams sing happy birthday to Corey Johnson, and I'm hoping it will happen a little bit later. Congratulations Council Member Johnson and I vote aye on all.

CLERK: Johnson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: I still haven't been proposed to, but I thank you all for the birthday wishes. I vote aye on all. [laughter]

CLERK: Kallos.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I vote aye on all.

CLERK: King.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Aye on all.

CLERK: Koo.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye on all.

CLERK: Koslowitz.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Aye on all especially--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]  
Shh. [Shushing audience.]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: --the three.  
[sic]

CLERK: Lancman.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: [off mic] Aye.

CLERK: Lander.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Request permission to explain my vote.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I'll get in trouble with Meg if I propose to Corey, but I would [laughter] like to wish him a happy birthday. And with congratulations to Council Members Levin, Van Bramer, Chin and Williams. And I guess I'll use this as an opportunity if you want a second opportunity to toast Steve Levin today after the bill toasting at 5 o'clock at Barleycorn, please come toast his upcoming--his and Ann's upcoming wedding. Talk to me later for details, but that's at 5:00. These are good bills. Congratulations to all the sponsors. I vote aye on all.

CLERK: Levin.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much, Council Member Lander and Council Member Cumbo. Happy birthday to Council Member Johnson and I vote aye on all.

CLERK: Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: With  
congratulations to all the sponsors, I vote aye on  
all.

CLERK: Maisel.

COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Aye on all.

CLERK: Matteo.

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [off mic] Aye.

CLERK: Mealy.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Aye on all.

CLERK: Miller.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [off mic] Aye on  
all.

CLERK: Palma.

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: [off mic] Aye on  
all.

CLERK: Reynoso.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Happy birthday,  
Corey. Congrats to everyone. Aye on all.

CLERK: Richards.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: I proudly vote  
to slow down Fast Track. I vote aye on all.

CLERK: Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] Aye.

CLERK: Rose.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

CLERK: Rosenthal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Aye on all and  
a special Hippo Birdy to Corey Johnson.

CLERK: Garodnick.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: [off mic]  
Aye.

CLERK: Menchaca.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Aye on all.

CLERK: Torres.

COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Aye on all, and  
happy birthday to Corey, and as far as not being  
proposed to, I know the feeling so.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [laughs]

CLERK: Treyger.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Aye on all.  
Happy birthday to Corey Johnson and good health and  
resources. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Shh. [shushing  
audience]. Quiet down, please.

CLERK: Ulrich.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Aye on all.

CLERK: Vacca.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Aye on all.

CLERK: Vallone.

COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: [speaking  
foreign language] And aye on all. [laughter]

CLERK: Weprin.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: I do. [laughter]  
I do on all.

CLERK: Williams.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Congratulations  
to my colleagues on their bills. Happy birthday  
Corey. Congratulations to my colleagues who are  
getting married. I vote aye on all with the  
exception of LU Nos. 189, 190 and 191 on which I  
abstain.

CLERK: Wills.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Aye on all.

CLERK: Gibson.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: With a warm  
congratulations to all the bill sponsors, I vote aye  
and I want to say [speaking Spanish] to Corey  
Johnson. I vote aye on all.

CLERK: Ignizio.

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Aye.

CLERK: Van Bramer.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I proudly vote aye. I do want to recognize Jason Bannary [sp?] from my staff and Amanda Nasner [sp?] who is here for her very first stated meeting in addition to all the other things. But I proudly vote aye. Thank you again.

CLERK: Speaker Mark-Viverito.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: I vote aye on all.

[pause]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: That's okay. Thank you. All items on today's General Order Calendar were adopted by a vote of--

CLERK: Council Member Dickens.

COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [off mic] Aye.

[pause]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. By a vote of 49 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and 0 abstentions, with the except--with the exception of LU 189, 190 and 191 and accompanying Resolutions, which was adopted by a vote of 48 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and 1 abstention. Introduction and Reading of Bills.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: All bills are referred to committees as indicated on the agenda.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Now, we will have discussion of resolutions. Please quiet down. The first Resolution is 576-A, Council Member Rosenthal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much, Madam Public Advocate, and Madam Speaker. By passing this resolution today, the Council is sending a strong message to our federal colleagues that the people of New York City oppose the secret trade deal, the Trans-Pacific Partnership currently being made behind closed doors. Or, at least doors closed to the American people, but open to special business interests. We also oppose the Fast Track Authority, the President is pursuing, which would circumvent the Democratic process of Congressional review and approval giving Congress and the public merely days to consider the biggest international trade deal to date with no opportunity for amendments. Beyond this miscarriage of democracy the actual content--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Excuse me Council member. May we have quiet in the Chambers so we may please--so we may hear Council Member Rosenthal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.



PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: I apologize.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Beyond this miscarriage of democracy, the actual content of the TPP, the little we know that's been leaked to the press, poses a serious threat to the autonomy of our city and the legitimacy of our labor, environmental and health laws that we've worked so hard to establish. I want to thank Chair Koslowitz of the Committee of State and Federal Legislation for hearing the bill, all the 26 advocates representing thousands of New Yorker and Americans who testified yesterday.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]  
Council Member, please conclude your remarks.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: In particular, the Communications Workers of America, the Sierra Club of New York City, New York Central Labor Council. I thank you in advance for your aye votes to our colleague Vinny Gentile--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]  
Thank you, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: --who will take our resolution to Congress.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you so much. Intro--Resolution 638, Council Member Ulrich.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. Today, the Council is voting on a very important resolution, Reso No. 638, which recognizes not only this April, but every April from this day forward as Autism Awareness Month in the City of New York. And I want to first thank all of my colleagues who joined us at the ceremonial prior to the Stated Meeting. Which we were able to recognize many of the providers in our city who helped families and children particularly with Autism. Autism is a designation--I'm sorry. Is a complex brain disorder that inhibits a person's ability to communicate and develop social relationships. And is often accompanied by extreme behavioral challenges. Autism Spectrum Disorders are diagnosed in approximately one out of every 68 children in the United States affecting sometimes four or five times as many boys as girls. And the diagnosis of Autism has increased tenfold in the last decade. The CDC, as the Speaker pointed out, earlier has called Autism a national public health crisis, whose cause and cure remain unknown. Many New

Yorkers and their families continue to struggle daily with the challenges imposed with Autism. But today we are raising awareness about this issue and hopefully shedding some light on some of the great research and science that will one day fund and find a cure. Thank you very much.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Resolution 648, Council Member Constantinides.

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate.

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet, please. Quite down.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the Chambers.

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. Resolution 648 would declare this April and every April moving forward Organ Donation Awareness Month in the City of New York. At our hearing last week with the Health Committee and Chair Corey Johnson, and happy birthday, Corey. Thank you for your great leadership on this issue. We heard stories of--that there was an epitome of 10,000 New Yorkers and over 120,000

Americans who were waiting for a heart, liver, lung or pancreas. They faced waits ranging from five months to two or more years. This drawn out process is compounded by New York's abysmal low donor rate. We have had consistently one of the lowest organ donation rates in the Country, ranking 48 out of 50 on Donate Life America's 2013 report card. It has only gotten worse. According to Live On New York, formerly Organ--New York Organ Donor Network, we're not 50 out of 50 nationally. People don't like to be confronted by their own mortality. I understand that, but if we took the time to think about the dread of the men and women of New York who are waiting for that phone call everyday, a phone call that would save their lives, that's--that's what we're trying to do today, and have that conversation.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

Thank you, Council Member. Seeing no other speakers, we now will be voting on the resolutions, beginning with Resolution 576-A, an amended resolution declaring the City of New York at TPP-Free Zone, and Urging Congress to oppose the bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015. And not grant President Obama the Fast

Track authority over or permission to sign the Trans-Pacific Partnership Free Trade Agreement. All those in favor say aye?

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All those opposed? Any abstentions? The ayes have it. [background comment] Thank you. Resolution 610, a Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the governor to sign legislation granting New York City the authority to set its own minimum wage. All of those in favor say aye.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All those opposed? Any abstention. The ayes have it. Resolution 611. Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation to grant the City of New York the authority--

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Quiet, please. Quiet, please.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the Chambers. Please exit quietly. Thank you all for coming. [background discussion] The authority to

enforce state worker protection laws. All of those in favor say aye.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All of those opposed? Any abstentions? The ayes have it. 612. Quiet in the Chambers please.

SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quite down, please. Quiet down, please.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: A resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign A.5501 strengthening the provisions of the Wage Theft Prevention Act. All of those in favor say aye.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All those opposed? Any abstentions? The ayes have it.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Resolution 615-A, an amended resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign the Paid Family Leave Act to provide support and security for New York's working families. All those in favor say aye.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: You're getting kind of quiet. All those in favor say aye.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [laughs] All those opposed? Any abstentions? The ayes have it. Resolution 638, a resolution recognizing this and every April as Autism Awareness Month in the City of New York. All of those in favor.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All those opposed. The ayes have it. Any abstentions? The ayes definitely have it. Resolution 648, a resolution recognizing this and every April as Organ Donation Awareness Month in the City of New York. Come on ayes. Do the ayes have it?

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And the nos? Any abstentions. The ayes have it. [laughs] And Resolution 649, a resolution calling upon the New York State Assembly to pass and the Governor to sign A.6075, which would amend the Labor Law in relation to the prohibition of differential pay based on gender. All of those in favor.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All of those opposed? The ayes have it, and certainly, the women have it. Now, any general discussion? First, Council Member is Council Member Miller.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. Today, I'm proud to introduce two resolutions that will serve to positively impact transit commuters and its workers alike. The first is Resolution 670. It calls on the MTA to equalize fees for the Long Island Railroad and Metro North Commuter Rails that operate, as in the city of New York, subways and buses. In the 1990s, we declared an end to two-fare zones. Therefore, those that are so--those feeder communities throughout--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Shh. [shushing audience]

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --the city of New York, those two-fare zones continue to exist. Residents in Southeast Queens, East New York, Canarsie, North Bronx, the Rockaways and others throughout the boroughs continue to be victimized by high commuter rail fees, and lack of free transfer to subways and business. In addition, many of these communities already lack more affordable subway and



bus options. Such inequities should not exist within the MTA system. The percentage of New Yorkers spending an hour or more to get to work has increased by 20% in the last few years. Two-thirds of this group make less than \$35,000 per year. It is clear that that is--that there is a relationship between long commutes, and high fees. Yet, Long Island Railroad and Metro North already receive higher State subsidies than does the New York City subways and buses. And also charge large fees to the residents of New York City to catch a ride. In my district, \$9.50 peak to go to two stops into Manhattan. For this reason, I ask that you sign Reso 670.

Secondly, I hope you will consider signing Reso 6--Reso 671, which I have introduced with my colleagues Chin and Johnson. This resolution calls for the State of New York and New Jersey to keep path trains as government grant entity. A recent report produced by the Port Authority called for, and among other things, this item that path to be privatized. In an effort--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]  
Council Member, please bring your comments to a close.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: In an effort to promote so-called efficiency, yet this report admits that privatization does not work. I ask that you support this Reso 671 as well. Thank you, Madam Public Advocate.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay. Council Member Koo.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you, Madam Advocate. Today, I am introducing Bill 775, which is a landmarking bill with the support of Council Member Greenfield. Landmarking in New York City is a very complicated process. There are many properties in the State of perpetual limbo unable to reap the benefits of actual landmark destination. Since the creation of the Landmarks Law 50 years ago, many potential landmarks have languished on the LPC calendar for as long as 49 years with no end in sight. In a city that takes enormous in its history, architecture and labor character, this kind of reaction is undesirable. Currently, the Landmarks Law is the particular timetable that provides reasonable expectations for both the community and the property owners. Introducing this legislation is the first part of a larger conversation about

landmarks reform. And I look forward to continuing this discussion in the future. I am hoping all my colleagues in the City Council will support this bill. Thank you very much.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you and the man whose birthday we celebrate today, Council Member Johnson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. Today I am proud to introduce legislation that will report on the conditions that affect both children's health and their readiness to learn. Which will help New York City deploy effective interventions to improve the educational and health outcomes for students citywide. Health related problems play a major role in limiting the ability of students to learn especially minority youth. We now know that healthier students are better learners, and a greater understanding about what New York City can do to deploy effective models of school based health delivery to children will be instrumental in keeping students healthy and ready to learn. This bill is major step forward, a major step toward significantly improving health outcomes for New York City's school children. And reducing health

disparities that persist across racial and ethnic and economic lines. This information that will be reported from the bill will create a foundation upon which New York City can appropriately implement school health services to eradicate negative health out--negative health outcomes impacting our children. The data will improve children's opportunities for learning in school by assessing the prevalence of health issues in their local school communities. And access to critical health and behavioral health services. I ask my colleagues to sign onto this introduction, and thank you all for the birthday wishes today. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

Council Member Vallone.

COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you, Madam Advocate. We are very lucky to have some of the strongest leaders in the Indian and South Asian community here today with us. But a dear friend of mine is Ambassador Malay of India, and he actually reached out to the entire City Council because he's been very proactive in showing the world the largest democracy in India and all the wonderful things within the community. And he has asked the City

Council to submit a resolution, which I am happily doing today, calling upon us to recognize and commemorate June 21st as World Yoga Day in the City of New York. So within these--there are also many other leaders here. I am Malini Shah, my community liaison; Manuka Pour [sp?], the Executive Director of the Indian Business Association. And Davar Chekavari [sp?] from the very consulate on behalf of the Ambassador asking for his friends here in the City Council to--on behalf of them and over 21 million Americans who use Yoga to--for the benefits of every from body and mind and spirit so that we could do this. So on behalf of the community I proudly submit the resolution today. Thank you Madam Advocate.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

Council Member King.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: I just want to remind the BLAC members we have a general meeting right after stated. And also happy birthday to Corey Johnson and to my staffer Brian Milford, who turned blah-blah-blah today. Happy birthday.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Happy birthday, Brian. Council Member Kallos.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I rise today to introduce a school hunger bill, Intro 773 and a child care reporting bill, Intro 774. It's our job to ensure that not one of the 11 point--sorry, the 1.1 million children in New York City public schools goes hungry. But currently we rank second to last among 62 large school districts in cities nationwide. According to reaching--Sorry. 62 large school districts across the country reaching children eligible for free breakfast according to the 2015 Food Research and Action Center Survey. That is why the Council has included Breakfast After the Bell during the school day as part of our preliminary budget response. The School Hunger Bill co-sponsored with Council Member Levin will provide accountable data in the form of an annual report to school breakfast, salad bars, snacks and supper to advocates, policymakers. And perhaps most importantly the general public on participation rates in school food programs. Together, we could celebrate the success, identify areas for improvement and create new food program participation benchmarks.

The other is the Child Care Reporting Bill introduced with Council Member Levin and Wills

mandating that ACS release information on subsidized childcare that serves 120,000 children each year. Under the legislation, ACS would report a number of closure steps taken to prevent closures, and notification to staff and families among other key benchmarks. Many of us know of day cares in our districts that had to close despite serving a vital function to community. As rents rise, it is imperative that we protect our poorest children by ensuring that ACS is transparent and accountable. To join with many other birthday wishes today, I hope you all will join me in wishing a happy 25th birthday to my Chief of Staff Jesse Townsen, who has been working with me for years, and we're all very pleased to be celebrating with him. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Happy birthday, Jesse. Council Member Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. Colleagues, I want to call your attention to a bill whose number is very easy to remember, 777, which relates--and this is not an advertisement for a car service. It relates to the maintenance of sidewalks in five non-profits. We know that non-profits are essential pillars in our

community, and we know they often struggle financially. One of the burdens they bear is repair and maintenance of the sidewalks in front of the property they own. This bill would pass the obligation to the city. So that non-profits can focus on the work they do, the services they provide and the communities that they are based in. And not face the burden of maintaining sidewalks in front of their buildings. Again, that building and this legislation would pass to the city. I ask you to support Intro 777. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member Gibson.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. Colleagues, I'd like to draw your attention to Intro 770, which is a bill that seeks to de-escalate violence in our prison system by introducing crisis intervention teams to all facilities where the Department of Corrections reasonably foresees any crisis may occur. Sadly, the violence on Rikers has been escalating as has the increase in the mentally ill population. Today, we know that roughly 40% of all inmates on Rikers have mental illnesses, and truly this is a time and a call



to action. Sadly, there are people with uncontrolled and undiagnosed mental illnesses that tend to act out in ways that DOC may classify as crises or disturbances. An obvious example would be cell extractions where a mentally ill inmate refuses to leave his or her cell when they must not leave in a situation that could potentially require force. Instead, this is a situation that could be potentially de-escalated. The DOC is already aware of this, and wherever possible, they will bring in psychologists, trained medical and mental health professionals to assist guards when these events occur. Sometimes de-escalating an event, an occurrence takes just time to be able to talk to the patient and allowing for more individual time. CITs, Crisis Intervention Teams, can assist inmates and our corrections officers in many of these situations and allow these situations to resolve themselves without the use of force and violence. This bill would also identify teams to work with DOC wherever possible. Composed of trained mental health and law professional law enforcements CITs have been utilized nationally to help many police law enforcement and other corrections officers de-escalate situations.

This bill will help inmates as well as correction officers. And we are asking for the inclusion of CITs in this partnership. I thank you for your support and ask you to support Intro 770.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.  
Council Member Garodnick.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you very much. Today, I'm very please to introduce along side Council Members Dromm and Ferreras three bills, which will try to take direct aim at some of the abuses we have seen at Rikers Island. It does not matter what someone is accused of, or even what they have done, when someone is in the custody of the City of New York it is our obligation to keep them safe. Prisoners have civil rights, too, and we need to remember that. We were all horrified to hear the story of Bradley Ballard who dies on September 11, 2013 after he was deprived of insulin for diabetes and locked in his cell without food or running water for nearly a week. Though correction officers, doctors and inmates were visibly repulsed by the

stench coming from his cell, none of them entered or sought help. On September 2 of 2014, four correction officers pulled Jose Guadalupe, an inmate classified as a mental--classified in medical records as seriously mentally ill--into his solitary confinement cell at Rikers Island and beat him unconscious. And these are hardly isolated incidents. While our inmate population has gone down, the use of force at our jails has skyrocketed, up by nearly 50% in the last few years. What is happening at Rikers? The situation has gotten so far out of control that the United States of America through our Justice Department sued New York City on jail conditions. Why has this happened? Well, it is time for the City Council to take additional steps to reform our city's jails. I want to thank Council Member Dromm for his continued leadership in this area, and the Council's work to improve the Department of Corrections. We're going to have an oversight hearing on this subject on May 6th, and we should all be there to ask--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

Shh. [shushing the audience]

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: --hard questions. I hope you'll take a look at our bills

Intro 766, 767 and 768, to publish the Use of Force Policy to require more complete reporting of solitary confinement, and to release more detailed data about our inmate population. Because so much of what happens at Rikers is shrouded in darkness, it is that much more important for us to shed some light. So I ask you to join us on these bills. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

Council Member Williams.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.

First, I would like to extend my personal peace and comfort to the families of the victims who were shot and killed in my district, and for the six people--or the four others who were shot non-fatally. I want to thank in my community, Borough President Eric Adams, Council Member Mathieu Eugene and all of the council members for their good wishes. And hopefully, we will get the perpetrators of this, and also the community groups will do their job to help prevent retaliatory actions in that shooting. Please, I want to call on my colleagues to look at Reso 673, Intro 783 and Reso 674, one dealing with Nicholas' Law, a gun law. One is dealing with interest rates of unpaid charges for emergency repairs at HPD. And one has to

do with retrofitting police vehicles with bullet-proof glass.

Lastly, I wanted to talk about Baltimore. Of course, we have to condemn the violence and destruction of property, but I wanted to read and excerpt of a speech as we do that. Start, quote, "It is not enough for me to stand before you tonight and condemn riots. It would be morally irrep--irrep--irresponsible for me to do that without at the same time condemning the contingent intolerable conditions that exist in our society. These conditions are the things that cause individuals to feel that they have no other alternative but to engage in violent rebellions to get attention. And I must say, tonight that a riot is the language of the unheard." That was an excerpt from the Other America on March 14, 1968 from the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. the Peaceful Warrior. We must continue to condemn the actions that are destructive of property and violent. At the same time, talk about the things that are causing those responses. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member  
Barron.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. I also want to share my prayers and condolences to the victims of Nepal, as well as the family and friends of Freddie Gray, who my colleague has just referenced, and gave the full quote. I was going to summarize it, but he gave the full quote. So we certainly have to look at the conditions that cause these types of uprisings. I also want to call my colleagues' attention to Intro No. 758, my first bill. Thank you. Yes, yes, yes. [applause, cheers] And it's a bill that calls on the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections to post quarterly reports on the number of complaints that were issued, that were submitted by inmates. And it is to be disaggregated by the facility as well as the type of housing that it is received from, and to give the disposition, and site the appeals that were submitted.

And finally, many of you already know, but for those of you who don't, I have great news. Charles and I are now grandparents. [applause, cheers] Yes. My first grandson was born last Wednesday. His name is Solomon Elliott Shamari Johnson. He was 6 pounds 5 ounces. No. Yeah, 6

pounds, 5 ounces and 19 inches long. And I am ecstatic, and anybody who wants to look at pictures just come right over. [laughter] Thank you.

[background comments]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Congratulations to Council Member Barron and Assembly Member Barron on Solomon. It is good to--and Solomon will be proud to know that his grandparents are working for a more perfect society. Council Member Dromm.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very much. Happy birthday to my colleague Corey Johnson, and also I wish to express my condolences to the people of Nepal. I was out in Diversity Plaza on Sunday night where over a thousand Nepalis gathered for the connection and support of each other in the neighborhood. And my community has been tremendously affected by this disaster. They continue to gather there every night to pray and to network with each other to try to find out information about loved ones in their home country. So, God bless them and God bless Nepal. I also wanted to take this opportunity to thank my intern David Caropton [sp?] who, unfortunately is leaving today. He has been with me for two semesters. He has passed law school. He's

going on now to take the bar, and David is friendly and known to many of the people on the 18th floor and beyond. And he has done everything in my office from answering telephones to helping to write legislation to writing letters to commissioners. He's been fantastic. We're going to miss him, and in some way, I'm going to try another way to try to finally get him back. Thank you, David, for all that you have done. Thank you very much.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Congratulations David. Council Member Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. First of all, happy birthday to my colleague, Council Member Johnson and congratulations to our good friend and council member. This morning, I joined the New York Press Photographer's Association to advocate for much needed legislation to return parking privileges to the media. News gathering is one of the most vital components of a free transparent government and society. My legislation will allow any members of the press with a valid New York Press plate to park at a meter location where parking or standing is otherwise prohibited. This privilege is not new. Rather, members of the media have had them for 50



years prior to 2009. This changed forced media to park sometimes miles away from the site they were covering their story. Sometimes leading to make the important breaking news. Join me today as 25 of my colleagues already have signed this bill this afternoon and sign on Intro 779. It is our responsibility as elected representatives to provide the tools the media needs to complete their Constitutional protected duty. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.  
Councilman Constantinides.

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate. I rise today to ask my colleagues to take a moment to remember and reflect the life of Pakistani Human Rights Activist Sabeen Mahmud, who was murdered in Karachi on Friday, April 24th. While many in Pakistan have been increasingly intimidated into silence by violent extremist or corrupt government officials, Sabeen never shied away from away from speaking out and supporting causes that she cared about. On the night of her murder, she was hosting a forum on one of these causes, the plight of the people of the Baluchistan Province on the second floor of the community space she had

helped create in 2007. For years she bravely carried on her work, all the while receiving numerous death threats. One of her childhood friends recounted a moment in 2013 where she was asked when her parents had boarded a plane back to Karachi, the friend has her why she chose to return to her country in the face of these threats. She replied, Someone has to fight. Whether, it's on behalf of religious and ethnic minorities in Pakistan, human rights abuses or free expression, she chose to fight. And while these cowardly killers may have silenced her voice, they will never be able to erase the impact that Sabeen Mahmud had on the people of Pakistan. Nor, will they be able to destroy the shining example of courage and strength that inspired millions around the globe.

Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

Council Member Cumbo.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you Public Advocate. With more than 8.4 million residents it is crucial that we have the safest city in the world. Nearly 500,000 trips are taken daily as passengers move throughout all reaches of the boroughs. That is why I'm introducing Legislation 762. In a city like

ours, taxi and livery cars play an integral role in our transportation system. Rape, assault and violent acts are realities that do occur sometimes within these vehicles. As Chair of the Women's Issues Committee, I was appalled by the sexual act--assault of a passenger in taxicab that took place in February in my district. And I worked diligently with my colleague Council Member Rodriguez on a local law that would require all taxicabs, hail vehicles, liveries, black cars, and luxury limousines to install a panic button that would allow a passenger to send a distress signal to law enforcement. That simple tool would have made the difference in a woman's life. We can't afford to wait for another rape to occur before we act as a body. I hope that all of my colleagues will join with me and Council Member Rodriguez in make the Safe Cities Global Initiative a reality because no woman should have to fear for her life when entering a safe space such as a cab.

I also want to bring your attention to it's been an incredible year so far for women. I'm very proud of the confirmation of U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch. That was a historic moment

for all of us. [applause] But I also want to add that it took far too long. To have had to have waited for five months for this confirmation shows the reality that so many women, and particularly women of color, have when it ascending to the higher positions of leadership. And I'm very proud that she went through this process with dignity and she did it with dedication, and she held her head up high the entire time.

Also, very huge here today with the passage of the Pay Equity Bills. Among the five bills passed by the New York State Assembly was the New York State Fair Pay Act.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member, can you bring your comments to a close?

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Yes, ma'am.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: The measure was passed hours after the New York City Council Committee on Women's Issues voted unanimously in favor of a resolution jointly with Council Member Corey Johnson, and the Assembly to pass A.6075, which would amend the Labor Law in relation to the prohibition of differential pay based on gender

equity in the New York State. And when our Governor signs it into law, this will be the culmination of generations and decades of work by so many women and men who recognize that pay equity is what we need in order to have a more fair and harmonious world.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]  
Thank you, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member  
Van Bramer.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you very much, Madam Public Advocate. I stand before you very lucky to be a gay man who is married to a wonderful man, my husband Dan Hendrick. And I wanted to talk about the fact that today at the Supreme Court arguments were heard on marriage equality. And while we are lucky enough to live in the State of New York and have our marriage recognized in the state that we live in, far too many don't have that right. And I want to remember all those activists, all those courageous people who are at the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. today fighting for our rights. So that gay and lesbian people in every state in this country can marry the one that they love. But also

remember all of those LGBT activists who didn't make it to this day, but who fought bravely in the fight of HIV and AIDS and hate crimes and other tragedies that prevented them from witnessing this moment. Today was a historic day in this country, and with everybody's support. And with at least five justices ruling for us, in June we will see an amazing transformation where marriage equality is the law of the land. And every single American can be truly equal, every single gay and lesbian person can marry the one that they love. Friday will be 16 years that I am with Dan Hendrick, 16 years to the day that we met. And we were denied the right to get married for the first 13 of those years. But there are many who are denied much longer. That should end. We should have marriage equality in all 50 states, and hope to God the Supreme Court rules in our favor. Thank you very much.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. Until victory is won. And now closing remarks by our Speaker, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

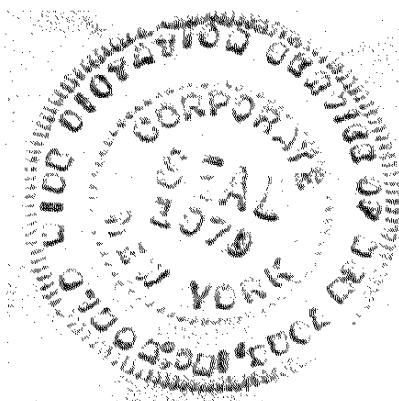
SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: No, I don't have any closing remarks.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: That ends this  
session. [laughs] We stand adjourned.

[gavel]

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 May 6, 2015