



Office of  
Immigrant Affairs  
Nisha Agarwal  
Commissioner

December 15, 2015

Testimony of Commissioner Nisha Agarwal,  
NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

Before a hearing of the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and  
International Intergroup Relations and Committee on Immigration

“Joint Oversight: IDNYC and the Cultural Institutions Group”



Thank you to Chair Van Bramer, Chair Menchaca and the members of the committees for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Nisha Agarwal, and I am Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. I am joined today by my colleague Eddie Torres, Acting Commissioner at the Department of Cultural Affairs.

I am very happy to say that in just under a year, more than 670,000 New Yorkers have received their IDNYC cards. I sit before you on the heels of Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Mark-Viverito's announcement that in 2016 IDNYC will continue to be free for New Yorkers. This will ensure that regardless of immigration status, New Yorkers have easier access to government issued ID, can enter city buildings and apply for services and have an all access pass to the City we all love with memberships and discounts on a range of benefits.

This large number of enrollments makes IDNYC the largest municipal ID program in the country and demonstrates a glaring need for government issued identification in New York City. This success is in no small way a testament to the collaboration with our City's libraries, and our community and benefit partners, including the City's premier cultural institutions.

### **Program Enrollment Success**

Throughout its first year, IDNYC has become a New York City fixture. The ID has been embraced by New Yorkers across all five boroughs, with nearly 10% of the City's eligible population already enrolled. Queens, our most diverse borough and the heart of many immigrant communities, leads the way followed closely by the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Staten Island.

Of particular note are communities like Jackson Heights, East Harlem, Corona, Sunset Park, Flushing and others where upwards of 14% of the eligible population have enrolled.

Furthermore, the IDNYC program continues to facilitate access for New Yorkers with our "pop-up" enrollment centers. Since launching these temporary and mobile enrollment centers in April we have "popped-up" at nearly 50 locations throughout the five boroughs. These locations include an array of hosts, from Bellevue Hospital to Our Lady of Assumption Church to the Queens Council of Arts, El Museum del Barrio and the Gay Men's Health Clinic.

Our library partners are central to the success of our enrollment and pop-ups. All five permanent library centers boast some of the most active center and account for over 265,000 enrollments. Additionally, we have already had 11 library specific pop-ups, such as the New York Public Library-Inwood and New Dorp Libraries, the Brooklyn Public Library-New Lots and Flatbush Libraries, and the Queens Public Library-Jackson Heights and recently announced Bayside Library.

## **Benefits**

We are happy to say, and you will hear more from my colleague from the Department of Cultural Affairs momentarily, that all 2015 benefit partners are returning for year two, including the YMCA, Food Bazaar, BigAppleRx, the Parks and Recreation Centers, NY Pass with entertainment discounts as well as all 33 members of the Cultural Institutions Group. The return of these benefit partners is indicative of the success of and interest in IDNYC.

In addition to welcoming back all of the 2015 benefit partners, in 2016 IDNYC will provide New Yorkers with free one-year memberships to seven more cultural institutions – including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Museum, the Metropolitan Opera, the Museum of Chinese in America, BRIC Arts | Media and Pregones Theater – and discounted tickets and memberships for Citi Bike, the New York City Football Club, and Animal Care Centers of New York.

Adding to the prestigious museums and arts centers that are joining us are the New York Theatre Ballet and Ballet School, the Alliance of Resident Theatres or A.R.T./New York, and Roundabout Theatre Company. All of these cultural partners will offer discounts on performances and classes, with the A.R.T./New York theatre participation comprising 30 distinct theatre offerings throughout the city.

## **Outreach and Use**

A central component of public education and outreach initiatives for IDNYC include information on program benefits and access. The program boasts a cadre of outreach organizers that work diligently with community partners, elected officials and service providers to deliver trainings, answer questions and assist residents in both receiving and utilizing their card.

These efforts have yielded tremendous interest, including at a recent African Community Town Hall with some 300 residents in the Bronx on IDNYC and other city initiatives, successful small business canvasses with elected officials, and roundtables with religious leaders.

Additionally, the city has continued to explore new and creative ways to share information about the IDNYC program. These initiatives include a recently completed live hotline in partnership with the Hispanic Federation and Univision, Radio Wado and El Diario. The hotline received over 2,000 callers over two days and featured a PSA with the New York City Football Club ball players. The Mayor's Office and Department of Education have also initiated focus groups with youth to ensure that the program meets the needs and interest of our young population.

Further, in collaboration with our colleagues at the Department of Cultural Affairs we have recently welcomed the first artist in resident at the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, Tania Bruguera. Tania is a renowned, internationally acclaimed artist, who will employ her practice of *arte util* or "useful art" to develop new methods of addressing pressing issues facing the immigrant community. In particular, Tania will focus aspects of her work around IDNYC and to expand the way immigrant communities receive information about the program.

### **Conclusion**

I want to finish by telling you a few stories, true stories, of cardholders. The first is of Nnamdi. To him this card symbolizes that he is a real New Yorker. He had only visited the Bronx Zoo on Wednesdays previously, but now he sees the zoo as a part of his neighborhood and visits it regularly.

And Cieanne, who has two children and has used the cultural benefits as a way to organize parents and children together, with meet-ups at institutions.

And Judy who never visited the cultural institutions before she got her IDNYC.

And Samya, who finally has a document that make her feel safe and that she can use in the city without fear, while using her all access pass to get discounts and memberships.

Our partners, communities, staff, and outreach team have heard repeatedly what it means to cardholders to have an ID document that makes them feel safe and that identifies them as simply New Yorkers. An ID that speaks to who they are and the pride they have to be a part of the fabric of this large and beautiful city. And that demonstrates in a small but profound way that this is a city for everyone.

The Cultural Institutions Group, the libraries and all our extraordinary benefit partners from 2015 paved the way when they said loudly and clearly that these beloved places are truly for every New Yorker. We are thrilled and grateful to have them back and overjoyed to welcome our new innovators on this great path forward.



**Statement by Bridget Quinn-Carey, Interim President and CEO, Queens Library  
New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International  
Intergroup Relations, Jointly with the Committee on Immigration**

**December 15, 2015**

Good morning. My name is Bridget Quinn-Carey, Interim President and CEO of the Queens Library. Thank you Chair Van Bramer and Chair Menchaca for holding this important hearing and allowing me to testify today on New York City's municipal identification card (IDNYC) program and the Library's role in its administration.

Local Law 35 of 2014, the landmark legislation that created the New York City identification card, has had a positive and significant impact on many people. For those people living in New York City who lacked proper identification, life was akin to living in the shadows of our society. For example, accessing financial institutions or government buildings was either impossible at worst or very difficult at best. Since the introduction of the New York City identification card, people became empowered and our society became more inclusive. People can now open bank accounts, enter City buildings such as schools, and interact with law enforcement without fear of being arrested for not having proper identification.

Queens Library shares the Mayor's and Council's goals of inclusion and equality for all New Yorkers. Indeed, Libraries are the "Great Equalizers" in our democratic society. Our mission is to provide every person who comes through our doors or contacts us, especially our most vulnerable populations, with quality services, resources, and lifelong learning opportunities that meet their diverse needs. Libraries are trusted entities that people turn to when in need. So when the City looked for partners to help administer this important program aimed at documenting the undocumented, libraries made perfect partners.

Queens Library houses two IDNYC enrollment centers at our busiest libraries - Central Library in Jamaica and the Flushing Library. Flushing, the busiest library in New York State, is located in one of the most ethnically diverse zip codes in the United States. We have experienced a great deal of success in helping the City administer this program. Working with our community partners, the Administration and elected officials to promote IDNYC, we have seen huge numbers of people come through our doors to sign-up. As of November 15, we have enrolled 35,166 people at the Central Library, and 42,715 people at the Flushing Community Library, for an enrollment total of 77,881. But wait, there is more.

Because of the program's popularity, we are seeing increased demand for IDNYC cards across Queens County. To meet this demand, we are working with the Administration and creating "pop-up" IDNYC sites at our community libraries. We launched our first pop-up site at the Jackson Heights Community Library in September, where we enrolled 1,728 people over a very successful three-week period.

We launched a second site at our Far Rockaway Community Library in November and enrollment will continue there for one more week; with the latest data showing in the very first week we enrolled 322 people. **All combined, the Queens Library is responsible for enrolling 79,931 New Yorkers in the IDNYC program.** We launched a third site at our Lefferts Community Library at the beginning of this month, and as of today, we plan on launching sites by the end of this month through February at our Maspeth, Briarwood, Bayside and Ridgewood Community Libraries.

I mentioned some of the benefits of owning a NYC identification card earlier in my testimony. In addition, there are many other benefits that come with owning this card. Many people are aware that it provides a free one-year membership to museums, performing arts centers and other cultural organizations in all five boroughs. But many are not aware that one of the cool things that people can also do with their IDNYC card is to link it to their library card. What that means is, instead of carrying both your IDNYC card and Queens Library card, you can take your IDNYC card to any of our community libraries, have it integrated into our system, and use your IDNYC card as your library card! **The latest data shows that 3,353 people have integrated their Queens Library card with their IDNYC card.**

There are additional benefits for New Yorkers who apply for their IDNYC cards at Queens Library. IDNYC enrollment attracts new users to the library, and that is always great news. While applicants are in the library, we make a special effort to keep literature and book displays in their line of sight that introduce other useful library services: English classes for Speakers of Other Languages, afterschool enrichment for children, our Job and Career Academy, health and wellness services. There is so much that we offer to all New Yorkers, and we take every opportunity to call attention to them. Queens Library's goals are closely aligned with the initiatives of the Council and the Administration. It is a great synergy.

We have had great success in our first year working with the Administration and the Council in facilitating the implementation of the IDNYC program. As Speaker Mark-Viverito has said, New York has always been a leader in helping our most vulnerable New Yorkers, especially the undocumented, and the newcomers. New York City's libraries play a critical role in providing that help. As we approach year two, we look forward to continuing to help the City enroll New Yorkers from all walks of life, so that no one is left behind or marginalized in our society simply because they don't have proper identification.

Thank you again Chairs Van Bramer and Menchaca for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to continuing our work together, and to answering any questions you may have.



**New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations and Committee on Immigration  
Joint Oversight Hearing: IDNYC and the Cultural Institutions Group**

Tuesday, December 15, 2015, 10:45 AM – Council Chambers, City Hall  
Testimony Presented by New York City Department of Cultural Affairs  
Acting Commissioner Edwin Torres

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Thank you, Commissioner Agarwal and good morning Chair Van Bramer, Chair Menchaca, and members of the committees. I am Edwin Torres, Acting Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. I am here today to present testimony regarding IDNYC and the Cultural Institutions Group. I am joined by a number of staff from DCLA as well as colleagues from the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

By any measure, the cultural benefits provided by the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) to IDNYC card holders have been a tremendous success. The 33 members of the CIG are nonprofit cultural organizations that occupy City-owned land, encompassing a wide range of groups including Lincoln Center, Staten Island Museum, Brooklyn Children's Museum, Queens Botanical Garden, and Bronx Museum, to name just a few. In exchange for annual operating and energy subsidies, these organizations provide broadly accessible cultural programming for city residents. New Yorkers have fully embraced the IDNYC cultural benefits, redeeming memberships that have helped connect them to the full breadth of our city's incredible cultural assets. The impact on institutions has also been transformative: new members from hundreds of city zip codes have signed up, giving groups a powerful tool to engage with audiences and, in many cases, diversifying the geography of memberships. As the Mayor said at the American Museum of Natural History in July when the program surpassed 400,000 card holders, this card "is a pocket-sized expression of a hugely powerful message – this is a city for everyone." This program has proven without a doubt that residents see cultural experiences as an integral part of being a New Yorker.

Now, I'd like to walk you through some of the impressive statistics we've collected on the program. Since January, New Yorkers have redeemed over 160,000 memberships at all of the 33 CIG members. As of October, nearly 10% of these came from the immigrant rich communities of central Queens, including Elmhurst, Woodside, Corona, Jackson Heights, and Flushing. Other neighborhoods among the top 25 zip codes like Sunset Park, Crown Heights, and Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, and Kingsbridge in the Bronx tell us that this program is attracting new members from diverse communities all over the city. It's no surprise that the cultural benefit has been so successful: from the start, the CIG has embraced the program. They have hosted pop-up IDNYC enrollment sites, such as El Museo del Barrio did earlier this year (where I enrolled for my card, incidentally). Organizations have also worked to incorporate IDNYC into their promotional materials and institutional identity as places that are essential to making New York the dynamic and energetic place that it is.

We have heard stories of this impact from around the city:

- It has fostered increased diversity in membership across the board, whether you're considering geography, background, or even age. For instance, at Brooklyn Botanic Garden, which has always cultivated a diverse audience and participation, 40% of IDNYC members are from boroughs other than Brooklyn, and an incredible 78% are under age 55. Thanks to BBG's exemplary engagement with their IDNYC members, they even know that 98% of new members said the garden "met or exceeded their expectations."
- At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 54% of its nearly 25,000 IDNYC members live in boroughs outside of Manhattan, as opposed to 23% of paid members who are city residents. More than 21% of IDNYC members are from Queens, compared to just 11% of their paid members who live in the city. This remarkable pattern is repeated for the other boroughs as well.
- The Brooklyn Academy of Music reported just last month that more than 10% of their IDNYC members purchased tickets to the Next Wave Festival, indicating that our groups have found ways to sustain these new relationships made possible by IDNYC.
- In a letter from October, New York City Ballet Executive Director Katherine Brown wrote of the importance of the program to her organization, where IDNYC members constituted around 40% of the audience at recent events: "Many of these people had not previously been to our theater, and staff reports that our newest members have been eager to embrace all aspects of member activities and access... The IDNYC program is providing the Company a pool of potential patrons, previously unknown to us, who have a pre-disposition to the Ballet. We are pleased to have the opportunity to get to know these individuals and cultivate their interest over the course of a year-long membership."

We have seen evidence of this transformative impact again and again, of institutions developing larger and more diverse member bases than ever before, and New Yorkers taking their families to experience a museum, zoo, garden, or performance for the first time. For us, it's truly inspiring; we are eager to improve and build on this program so that even more residents and cultural groups can participate in this extraordinary program.

And so I'm pleased to echo an announcement made by Mayor de Blasio just yesterday: all 33 members of the CIG, along with seven new cultural organizations, have signed on to offer residents who get their IDNYC cards in 2016 free membership benefits. Additional cultural groups, including Roundabout Theater and New York Theatre Ballet, will offer discounts as well. This is a testament to these cultural organizations' commitment to engaging New Yorkers, and to their importance not only for their world-renowned programming – but also as something essential to our city's civic fabric.

Last week, our agency hosted a panel discussion where CIGs could share their experiences from the first year with their fellow participating organizations, including the seven new comers. It was packed with stories that explored creative ways of engaging new members, processing applicants efficiently, and strategies for retaining these new members in the long term. The discussion made clear that these groups are seizing the opportunity presented by IDNYC: they're surveying their new members to get a better understanding of the people that are joining, and they're developing communications and retention strategies to make sure these new members keep coming back as paying members even after their one year term is up.

The success of IDNYC wouldn't be possible without the support of our partners in the City Council, and we thank you for your role in increasing access to these treasured institutions. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.



# NEW YORK CITY BALLET

**New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International  
Intergroup Relations and the Committee on Immigration  
Joint Hearing December 15, 2015**

Good afternoon Chairman Van Bramer and Chairman Menchaca, and distinguished members of the Cultural Affairs and the Immigration Committees. It is a pleasure to be here today representing New York City Ballet (NYCB) to testify about the Company's involvement and experiences with New York City's IDNYC program.

## **IDNYC at New York City Ballet - Year One**

When Mayor de Blasio launched New York City's IDNYC program in January 2015, New York City Ballet, which is a member of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG), embraced the program. The Company's membership staff worked with the administration in the months leading up to the launch to develop language about the partnership and mechanisms for accepting new IDNYC memberships.

New York City Ballet anticipated being able to fold new IDNYC members into its general membership population of about 5,000 people for benefit administration, service, and events. The number of new IDNYC applicants, however, far exceeded this expectation. In the first six months of the program, over 3,000 IDNYC cardholders signed up for membership. By calendar year end, we expect to have enrolled 7,000 IDNYC members, who **more than double (58%)** the typical number of New York City Ballet members.

We are thrilled with the interest New York City IDNYC cardholders have shown in the Company. And we are pleased to report that the geographic spread of our IDNYC members is broader than that of our typical members. For example, while 49.8% hail from Manhattan, 26.7%, come from Brooklyn, 16.7% from Queens, 5.4% from the Bronx, and 1.4% from Staten Island. We have enrolled IDNYC members from 203 out of New York City's approximately 212 zip codes.

At the same time, New York City Ballet struggles to keep up with processing so many IDNYC cardholder membership applications. We are very grateful to have received supplemental support from DCLA in June 2015 that provided funds for a new part-time team member to manage IDNYC memberships for the second half of the inaugural year of the program (August – January 2016).

**It is only thanks to this funding and the subsequent addition of a part time staff person that we were able to manage the IDNYC program without exhausting our dedicated membership staff and risking staff turnover and burnout.**

# NEW YORK CITY BALLET

New York City Ballet offers all of its entry-level members, including free IDNYC members:

- An invitation for two to attend two to four working dress rehearsals at the Company's Lincoln Center home.
- Free admission to five annual Monday night Seminars featuring NYCB artists and guests.
- A members-only reception on the Theater's Promenade.
- Weekly access to a total of four working rehearsals onstage for the dancers with accompanist or orchestra.
- Access to select rehearsals of the NYCB Orchestra (in addition to regular working rehearsals) with seating near the orchestra pit.
- Discounts at the NYCB gift shop and at select local restaurants.

**Since the inception of the IDNYC program, NYCB has produced eight high-profile member events including invited dress rehearsals, seminars, and receptions on the Promenade of the David H. Koch Theater.**

The Company's staff is taking every opportunity to reach out to IDNYC members on the telephone, via email, and in person at events in our theater. Since we have observed that many members of this constituency are less familiar with the Company and our theater, staff has created customized messaging to IDNYC cardholders that helps prepare them for what to expect when taking advantage of their member benefits. We hope and expect that these efforts will help our IDNYC members feel welcome and comfortable at NYCB. Moreover, we have begun to survey IDNYC members in anticipation that the findings will help us more meaningfully connect with them in the future.

According to survey results, which had a 20% response rate, 94% of IDNYC members either strongly agreed or agreed that they enjoyed the working dress rehearsal of *Swan Lake* this past September and 99% found it valuable as a membership event. Similarly 90% either strongly agreed or agreed that they enjoyed the "Ballerinas on Broadway" Seminar later in the fall, and 97% found it valuable as a membership event. Our most recent event, the November 25 dress rehearsal of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*<sup>TM</sup> attracted 2,200 RSVPs, exceeding capacity by 700, and the rate of IDNYC cardholders responses was 70%. Though we have not surveyed those audiences yet, all of the staff who stayed in the theater until 9 p.m. that night can bear witness to the delight that attendees took in this very unique experience of our holiday classic.

## **IDNYC at New York City Ballet - Year Two**

The Mayor has asked New York City Ballet along with our CIG peers and additional arts and cultural groups to continue the program for another year. Understanding the burden this puts on our budgets and staff, the City administration has given us the opportunity to adjust membership benefits so that they are more manageable. New York City Ballet has chosen not to do this because we do see participation in the benefits as a way to engage new people with the Company's work and develop loyalty in hopes that their involvement continues.

# NEWYORKCITYBALLET

The program is providing us with an important pool of new potential members, and we are enthusiastic about going into a second year. However this will mean an addition of \$70,000 to \$75,000 to the membership expenses and will require oversight by a new full-time staff position in conjunction with the three other staff members who share responsibility for the entire program. We are willing to take this on because we value the long term potential and we are enthusiastic about how this helps our institutional mission to serve a broad population of New Yorkers, but it will require identifying other funders to cover the additional costs, an added burden to our fundraising staff. We are eager to see how this next year goes in terms of conversion to contributing members, and those results along with our ability to identify additional contributed income will inform our ability to continue the program at its current benefit level.

## **In Summary**

New York City Ballet spends time and money pursuing new ways to introduce potential donors and audiences to the Company's extraordinary artists and repertory. Now, the IDNYC program is providing the Company a pool of mostly unknown potential patrons who have self-selected to become involved with New York City Ballet. This has significant potential value to the Company. At the same time, the proof is in the pudding.

While the first indicator of success – the number of people who have taken advantage of cultural membership opportunities – has surpassed all expectations, another critical indicator of success – sustainability – has yet to be seen. What will this deep investment of staff time and material resources yield? We are running a business that requires revenues of various kinds in order to survive. How and if our investment over this two-year period will pay off remain important questions.

It is a pleasure to partner with the City in such a positive way and we are committed to partnering with the City for a second year of the IDNYC free membership program. Thank you and the de Blasio administration for acknowledging the value of the investment we are making in the IDNYC program. We urge the City Council to continue to recognize the strength and diversity of New York City's arts and cultural sector and hope that you will choose to advocate for critical funding now and in the future, so that we can provide meaningful experiences for all New Yorkers.

Thank you.



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*New York City Council Testimony – IDNYC & CIGs*

December 15, 2015

Good morning, City Council members of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations and of the Committee on Immigration.

My name is Cheryl Adolph, and I am the Interim President & CEO of the Staten Island Museum. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor, but with concerns, of providing free museum memberships to IDNYC card holders.

Staten Island Museum feels strongly about encouraging all New Yorkers to visit us, especially since we opened our new, outstanding flagship location at Snug Harbor, this past September. The remarkable \$24.4 million renovation was funded through City Capital funds. Thank you!

In the last three months, we have seen tremendous increase in IDNYC membership applications – tripling from about 70 to over 210 per month.

The IDNYC program has allowed us to make more inroads to the other boroughs than ever before. More than twice as many of our new IDNYC members come from off-Island. We are benefiting from being marketed to the whole city. And it is gratifying to see people travel more than an hour to visit us.

These new members receive our printed newsletter, program calendar and invitations to events and programs in addition to email notices. Our goal is that after a year of free membership, at least 5% will renew as paid members.



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*New York City Council Testimony – IDNYC & CIGs*

December 15, 2015

The flip side of the free IDNYC membership is that it is challenging to administer the application process with a small full time staff of 16. Between the expense of staff time, printing costs, postage and lost admission, this is quite an investment – about \$15 per membership for the 560 IDNYC memberships to date.

With the opening of the new Museum, we know there is an increased interest in the institution. However, we are not seeing the jump in membership or admission revenue we would have expected. Actual membership revenue is down for this quarter compared to previous years. It is possible that people who would have otherwise paid for museum membership or admission are instead utilizing IDNYC?

In closing, while we can't foretell the future impact of IDNYC, Staten Island Museum is committed to absorbing the associated risks of participating, so that more New Yorkers can enjoy and appreciate our two locations – one by the Ferry and future home of the Empire Outlet Mall and New York Wheel; and our newly opened state-of-the-art museum on the scenic Snug Harbor campus which is home to historic buildings, lawns, park land and our cultural partners such as Snug Harbor and its New York Chinese Scholars Garden, the Staten Island Children's Museum and the Noble Maritime Collection.

Please visit us soon and tell your constituents about the Museum that you as City Council members helped to create with your support.

Thank you.

**Testimony of**

**Rosemary DeLuca, Director, Government & Community Affairs,  
Wildlife Conservation Society**

**Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations  
Committee on Immigration**

**December 15, 2015**

Good morning Chairman Van Bramer, Chairman Menchaca and committee members. I am Rosemary DeLuca, Director of Government and Community Affairs for the Wildlife Conservation Society. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding our successful collaboration with the City of New York to offer free one-year memberships to 2015 IDNYC registrants. WCS is pleased to be a part of this historic partnership with the Administration and the City Council that allows all New Yorkers the opportunity to access more arts and cultural opportunities throughout the City.

As you know, WCS runs the Bronx Zoo and the New York Aquarium which are part of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) as well as the city zoos in Central Park, Prospect Park and Queens. In an effort to help promote registration for the new IDNYC program, our free one-year IDNYC membership includes free general admission to all five of our parks as well as discounts for select gift shops and restaurants at our parks and for Education programs and courses. IDNYC members also receive invitations to Members' Evenings and free e-newsletters.

To date, WCS has issued more than 31,000 IDNYC memberships, I believe the most of any CIG. Based on our equivalent basic individual membership, this equates to a combined value of more than \$2 million to participating New York residents. While we expected membership enrollments would begin to go down after school started in September, they have grown exponentially with more than 50% or 16,000 enrollments over the past three and a half months. Based on our data covering January through November 2015, nearly 31% of our IDNYC members are residents of Queens, 28% Brooklyn, 24.5% Manhattan, 14% Bronx and 2% Staten Island.

In terms of visitation, we have had over 51,000 visits to our five parks from IDNYC members: over 37,000 to the Bronx Zoo, almost 5,500 to Central Park Zoo, approximately 4,700 to the New York Aquarium and the remainder split between Prospect Park Zoo and Queens Zoo.

While we do not have income data for our IDNYC members, we have done a zip code based analysis applying 2014 U.S. census poverty data to gain an understanding of our IDNYC membership. To clarify, this is not a direct representation of our members but an extrapolation based on their residential zip codes. In general, we found the average citywide poverty percentage for our members' zip codes trended with the city average of just over 20% below the poverty line. Broken down by borough, average zip code percentage below the poverty line for our IDNYC members is 30% for the Bronx, 22% for Brooklyn, 18% for Manhattan, 16% for Queens and 14% for Staten Island.

WCS is pleased it could deepen its century long public private partnership with the City of New York for the benefit of its many residents. We look forward to continuing this benefit one more year for 2016 IDNYC registrants.

Thank you.

**Testimony of Brooklyn Public Library**  
***Oversight Hearing IDNYC -- December 15, 2015***

**Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup  
Relations jointly with the Committee on Immigration**

Good morning. My name is Eva Raison, and I am Brooklyn Public Library's coordinator of immigrant services.

I'd like to thank Chairpersons Van Bramer and Menchaca for the opportunity to testify today. I'd also like to thank our IDNYC partners for inviting New York City's libraries to assist in the planning and implementation of the program, including Mayor de Blasio; Speaker Mark-Viverito and the members of Council; Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Nisha Agarwal; Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steven Banks; and Mayor's Office of Operations Director Mindy Tarlow. Thank you all for your leadership.

Brooklyn Public Library's sixty branches are centers of learning and opportunity for more than one million patrons, and we are proud to serve as a registration site for an ID card that is—like the library—free and available to all.

Demand for the program has been high since its launch. In the opening days and weeks of IDNYC, lines to get into the registration center at Central Library stretched out the front doors and around the block.

Even now, nearly a year into the program, the office continues to do a very steady business. To date, 4,357 IDNYC cards have been activated as library cards at BPL, allowing users to check out materials, access online courses and databases, access library computers, borrow devices and reserve meeting rooms.

In Brooklyn Public Library's Outreach Services Department, we provide a wide range of services to veterans, older adults, immigrants and other Brooklynites with unique and often overlooked needs, including people transitioning into and out of the city's correctional and shelter systems.

In other words, we serve many of the people who are most in need of photo identification—and least likely to have it.

Our multilingual programs provide the borough's large and growing immigrant population with citizenship preparation courses, free English classes, computer tutorials, seminars for



entrepreneurs and more. We also host New Americans Corners—centralized collections of information and resources for immigrant communities—in every BPL branch.

I can tell you from experience that the library is very often the first stop for immigrants upon their arrival in New York City. We are as essential to the modern immigrant experience as Ellis Island was to those who arrived here a century ago.

IDNYC is particularly helpful to immigrants, and we have worked with the city to open temporary pop-up enrollment sites in branches that serve large foreign-born populations—including New Utrecht, New Lots, Bay Ridge and Flatbush.

This month, we are opening our fifth temporary enrollment site at Midwood Library, and the sixth will open next year, at the Jamaica Bay branch.

Thanks to IDNYC, 600,000 New Yorkers are now able to engage more fully in the life of the city, and we are very pleased that so many of them have taken advantage of what we feel is a principal benefit of the ID: its function as a library card for all three systems.

Brooklyn Public Library very much looks forward to our continued participation in the IDNYC program, and we congratulate the city on an incredibly successful first year.

Thank you.

# **CARNEGIE HALL**

**New York City Council Fiscal Year 2016  
December 15, 2016  
Oversight: IDNYC and the Cultural Institutions Group**

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Chairman Van Bramer, Chairman Menchaca, Members of the Council Committees on Immigration and Cultural Affairs, Libraries and Intergroup Relations. My name is David Freudenthal and I am glad to speak today, as a member of the Cultural Institutions Group, about Carnegie Hall's experience with the IDNYC Card Program.

This collaboration between the Administration, the City Council, and the Cultural Institutions Group has made cultural access a key component of the IDNYC benefits package, and we at Carnegie Hall are very glad to be part of this initiative's huge success. This partnership has significantly broadened citizen engagement in cultural institutions such as ours. We feel a responsibility to offer New Yorkers access to extraordinary musical experiences, and IDNYC has helped expand the Hall's ability to share these world-class artistic and creative resources.

This first year, all IDNYC cardholders who apply become Carnegie Hall Friends. To reduce barriers to participation, we invite IDNYC cardholders to apply either online or in person. Members receive our Friends newsletter, access to free rehearsals, priority ticketing, and special discounted ticket offers. With an end-of-year surge in signups, we now have some 7,000 IDNYC Friends, surpassing our paying members. This shift represents both a challenge and an opportunity for our limited staff managing the Carnegie Hall Friends membership program. The volume of membership applications grows so quickly that it is often a burden on staff time and resources. Because of the doubling of demand, we have also had some difficulties servicing our existing contributing donors.

In terms of opportunities created by the program, it is wonderful to have more New Yorkers discover all this organization can offer; this influx of new members compliments Carnegie Hall's ongoing efforts to reach broader and more diverse constituencies. For example, 74% of our contributing Friends Members who live in New York City are from Manhattan. By contrast, only 49% of IDNYC Members are from Manhattan, or 25% more people from Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island than our regular constituency.

We are very glad to see that those coming to us through IDNYC are new to Carnegie Hall and have not engaged with us previously. Only 10% of those signing up through IDNYC have purchased tickets over the past 10 years, and data indicates IDNYC cardholders are taking advantage of benefits such as free attendance at open working rehearsals and discounted ticket offers. We hope that our IDNYC Friends stay in the Carnegie Hall family, and will do our best to encourage them to do so. We are very glad they will have had exposure to Carnegie Hall; we will keep them on our mailing list and we will hope they return to us, whether as members, ticket buyers, or participants in our many free and low-cost programs at the Hall and in communities across NYC.

For all these reasons, many of which are shared by my colleagues today, we hope in the coming year the Council will continue to support culture in New York City.

**David Freudenthal**

Director of Government Relations

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**NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL  
INTERGROUP RELATIONS JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION**

**HEARING ON OVERSIGHT: IDNYC AND THE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS GROUP**

**December 15, 2015**

Good afternoon. I am Caryl Soriano, Chief Librarian of the Mid-Manhattan Library, the largest of The New York Public Library (NYPL)'s circulating libraries. I would like to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Finance Chair Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair Carlos Menchaca, and the entire City Council, for hosting me today. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today on our system's involvement in the implementation and continued success of IDNYC.

For over 100 years, NYPL has been committed to providing New Yorkers with access to the knowledge and services they deserve. Embedded in our mission of *inspiring lifelong learning, advancing knowledge, and strengthening our communities* is our dedication to opening doors of opportunity for the underserved. Consistently, we have advanced this mission by joining with our partners in City government to increase access to programs and services for all New Yorkers. IDNYC is one such program.

On January 12<sup>th</sup> of this year, the Library opened its doors to two brand new IDNYC Enrollment Centers. As a critical partner in the delivery of this City service, along with our colleagues at



the Brooklyn Public Library and Queens Library, the NYPL houses two of the City's busiest IDNYC enrollment centers; one at Mid-Manhattan Library (the location at which I serve) and another at the Bronx Library Center (BLC) off Fordham Road. After hiring support staff, building out the physical spaces needed, allowing the IDNYC cards to function as a library card, and opening each enrollment location to the public, I can proudly say that today, IDNYC's partnership with NYPL has been a successful one.

With approximately 1.7 million visitors last year, Mid-Manhattan is a bustling community center and was a natural location to host an enrollment center. The demand, however, was even greater than we had imagined. Mid-Manhattan opened with three enrollment terminals and, due to the high demand, was quickly expanded to 15 terminals. To date, BLC and Mid-Manhattan have enrolled 138,887 individuals. Due to our success, the Library has continued to work with the City to expand IDNYC access through our locations. Recently, we have begun to host IDNYC "Pop-Up" enrollment centers at our Clason's Point branch in the Bronx, our Inwood branch in Manhattan, and our New Dorp and Mariners Harbor branches on Staten Island – and we are planning on hosting even more in 2016. Together, the "Pop-Up" centers have accounted for an additional 2,060 IDNYC enrollments.

We are proud to say that, as of this month, 140,947 people enrolled in IDNYC at NYPL. That is 140,947 people who now have access to photo identification that may not have had it otherwise. Patrons that have told my colleagues: "Finally I can go inside City buildings without



having to show my benefit card as ID” and “Now I can have an ID that I can proudly show without fear of being singled out for having an out of country ID.” One day, a woman approached me to let me know how excited she was at being able to have an ID that would allow her into her children’s school to have meetings with their teachers. 140,947 people with IDs translates to a stronger, more connected community and again, the furthering of our mission at NYPL.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. We look forward to continuing our partnership and building on the success we’ve had.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/15/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CATHERINE LECLAIR

Address: 65 ARDEN ST., 10040

I represent: NEW YORK CITY BALLET

Address: LINCOLN CENTER 10023

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/15/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bitta Mostof

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Mayor's office of Immigrant Affairs

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/15/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nisha Agarwal

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: MOIA

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 10NYC Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/15/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jorge Daniel Yenciano  
Address: 1230 5th Avenue, NY, NY 10029  
I represent: El Museo del Barrio / CIG's  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Edwin Torres  
Address: 31 Chambers St  
I represent: Dept of Cultural Affairs  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 12-15-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bridget Quinn-Carey  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
I represent: Interim President of the Queens Library  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/15/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EVA RALSON

Address: 10 GRAND ARMY PLAZA

I represent: BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Address:

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/15/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ROSEMARY DELUCA

Address: ~~WCS~~

I represent: Wildlife Conservation Society

Address:

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: David Froudenthal

Address: 881 Seventh Avenue, 11418

I represent: Carnegie Hall

Address: 881 Seventh Avenue, 11418

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Caryl Soriano

Address: NYPL

I represent: Director, Mid-Manhattan Library

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: 12/15/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHERYL ADOLPH

Address: 42 SMITHER, SI, NY 10304

I represent: STATEN ISLAND MUSEUM

Address: 75 STUYVESANT PL, SI, NY 10301

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