



**New York City Council
Committee on Technology
December 13, 2018**

Good afternoon Chair Koo and members of the Committee on Technology.

My name is Geoff Brown, and I am New York City's Chief Information Security Officer and Head of New York City Cyber Command. I am here today to speak with you about the important issue of cybersecurity, specifically with respect to issues associated with the Committee's consideration of four distinct pieces of proposed legislation: Intro 1152, Intro 1153, Intro 1154, and Intro 1297.

At New York City Cyber Command, we believe that thoughtful legislation and regulation at the Federal, State, and Local levels plays a critical role to enhance our collective and increasingly interdependent cybersecurity posture.

This is our first time to appear before the committee, and we see today as a welcomed opportunity.

Before we turn to the proposed legislation, I'd like to take a moment to provide some context on New York City Cyber Command, and the perspective we offer today.

I would be remiss if I did not mention at the outset the important work protecting the City from cyber threats that predates the creation of New York City Cyber Command. This work was performed by the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, as well as technology and security teams within the agencies themselves. These teams continue today and are our strongest partners.

Recognizing the importance of cybersecurity to the City and its residents, visitors and businesses, the Mayor built a distinct, stand-alone cybersecurity function that would have the appropriate responsibilities and authorities to apply a uniform, consistent approach to cybersecurity across all City Agencies--including DOITT as the core technology services Agency.

Our plan's foundation rested on the premise that to continue to be the world's leading City, New York must remain the safest and most secure City. As a first step, we needed to establish a mechanism for the City to have a cybersecurity conversation as a peer to the technology conversation and with the agencies delivering critical services each and every day to New Yorkers.

In support of this effort, the Mayor signed Executive Order 28 on July 11, 2017. It is a concise but thorough document that sets forth the intent, direction and authority of the City's unique approach to cybersecurity with a clear mission to make New York City a cyber-secure place to live, visit, and do business.

Under the Executive Order, we are charged to undertake the following activities with regard to City owned and managed systems:

- Ensure compliance with information security policies and standards;
- Mitigate cyber threats and direct incident response;
- Mandate deployment of technical and administrative controls;
- Review cyber related spending; and
- Collaborate with federal and state government agencies and private sector organizations.

In addition to Cyber Command's specific mandates under the Executive Order, I also would like to highlight just one example of how New York City Cyber Command helped define the role of the City government in cyberspace: the NYC Secure initiative. NYC Secure re-conceptualizes the role of the City in cyberspace under the principles that:

- Cybersecurity is a public safety issue and an essential need of all New Yorkers; and
- Cybersecurity for New Yorkers should protect and respect New Yorkers' privacy.

I am proud to remind the Council that, in support of the NYC Secure initiative, New York City Cyber Command released a free mobile threat detection app. This app embodies our NYC Secure principles – it reduces the risk of malicious activity when it's installed on mobile device. AND it was built under the concept of privacy by design – we developed the app to ensure that privacy principles were embedded into the app's code. Similarly, New York City Cyber Command is also working with Agencies to deploy a privacy-centric WiFi security solution in the locations where the City provides free WiFi.

The creation of New York City Cyber Command was a critical step to better protect our City and prepare for its future. It is a future in which New Yorkers expect our City to rapidly adapt to new ways of engaging in commerce and culture through technology. And this future must be secure.

The complexity of cybersecurity coupled with the challenge of preparing to defend against future unknowns is daunting. This Committee knows that cyber threats have evolved and are evolving in concerning ways. Cyber threats do not respect international boundaries. Cyber threats do not respect national boundaries. Cyber threats do not respect state boundaries. And cyber threats do not respect local boundaries. And since the inception of New York City Cyber Command, we have routinely dealt with and are currently handling a variety of cybersecurity matters related to the City government ecosystem.

But I say with confidence that New York City is setting a new standard on how a city addresses these threats. We can't eliminate cyberthreats. But we can take decisive action to mitigate the risk that these threats will harm the ability of City agencies to deliver critical services, and we can respond quickly to minimize their impact if they do.

Accordingly, today presents an opportunity to work together as a City on additional measures to assist our City's preparation. We welcome this and all opportunities to work with the Committee on thoughtful legislation that will advance our shared objectives for a safer City.

We appreciate the overall objective of the proposed legislation--to enhance the cybersecurity of our City. I make the following brief observations with respect to each of the proposed bills and would be delighted to discuss them further and in greater detail following the hearing today.

Intro 1152 - We agree with the premise that people should not incur late fees associated with a system outage. We will work with Council to identify the appropriate agencies that should also be a part of this discussion.

Intro 1153 – This proposed legislation outlines four important cybersecurity objectives. The first, NYC Cyber Command would refer to as vulnerability management, the second we would refer to as education and awareness, the third we would refer to as compliance, and the fourth we would refer to as incident response reporting. While we will continue to support strengthening education and awareness throughout the City's workforce, we are concerned about certain aspects of the proposed legislation, particularly the concept of an immediate reporting requirement

during incident response. As currently written, the bill would require us to divert resources from responding to an attack to brief the City Council, in a manner outside of the traditional hearing and oversight processes outlined in the Charter, and it may force the public exposure of information that would make the City an easier target of cyber attack.

Intro 1154 - Website encryption is important, and our partners at DOITT have made significant progress toward this end. HTTPS has already been implemented on nyc.gov, and we support the committee in moving more City-maintained websites to HTTPS.

Intro 1297 - We support centralization of authority within City government to manage cyber threats. Our organization, with the authority to establish technical controls, with oversight ability, and the resources to engage and educate across City government is the most effective approach to address the cyber threats we face. Executive Order 28 clearly defines the powers and duties of New York City Cyber Command, acknowledges the unique importance of the cybersecurity of critical infrastructure and underscores the need to organize around this important issue in a way that best protects all New Yorkers and the services that they rely on each day.

Today's Committee hearing is a signal to New Yorkers that their government is in firm agreement about the critical importance of cybersecurity. It is a signal to New Yorkers that their government recognizes that partnership can strengthen New York City, and that New York City can set an example for others to follow.

And in the spirit of our shared responsibility to protect and defend the people of New York City, I want to once more thank Chair Koo and the Committee on Technology for the opportunity to speak today, and welcome the discussion.

**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: Geoff Brown

Address: NYC Chief Information Security

I represent: head of cyber command

Address: _____

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