

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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November 29, 2017  
Start: 2:57 p.m.  
Recess: 3:02 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,  
16th Fl.

B E F O R E:  
DARLENE MEALY  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Mathieu Eugene  
Daniel Dromm  
Andy King  
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.

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

[sound check]

[pause]

[gavel]

ACTING CHAIR DROMM: Good afternoon. I am Danny Dromm; I'm a member of the New York City Council's Committee on Civil Rights. I am chairing this hearing on behalf of Civil Rights Committee Chair Darlene Mealy, who will not be able to join us today.

I'd like to start by introducing the other members of the Council who have joined us; that's Council Member Andy King and Council Member Mathieu Eugene.

Today the Committee on Civil Rights will vote on Introductory Bill 1650-A, an important piece of legislation that would prohibit charging consumers in New York City for services that seek to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

As ridiculous as it seems, this practice known as conversion or reparative therapy still persists even in New York. At this Committee's June 19th hearing we heard harrowing testimony about one young survivor's conversion therapy ordeal, during

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2 which he endured years of being bombarded with  
3 negative messages about himself and his family.

4           In recent years, other survivors have  
5 sought to expose this quackery for what it is. For  
6 instance, reports have surfaced of a teenage boy  
7 being told to undress in front of a mirror while ex-  
8 gay life coach stood so close he could feel the man's  
9 breath on the back of his neck. He was then cuddled  
10 by an older ex-gay man in order to allegedly  
11 reestablish the bond with his father. On another  
12 occasion, this boy was made to endure a group session  
13 which entailed striking a tennis racket on a pillow,  
14 meant to represent the overbearing mother who had  
15 caused the survivor to become gay.

16           Conversion therapy is a form of  
17 psychological torture, pure and simple and so it is  
18 fitting that New York City is banning this odious  
19 practice. Vulnerable individuals, including minors,  
20 are susceptible to the hucksters and scammers who are  
21 eager to earn a quick buck in this insidious way. As  
22 a city we need to protect consumers and I am very  
23 proud to work with Speaker Mark-Viverito to be doing  
24 so with this legislation.

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2 The Committee will also be voting on two  
3 resolutions today:

4 Resolution No. 614 calls on the State  
5 Legislature to pass legislation that would prohibit  
6 discrimination on the basis of gender expression or  
7 identity and expand the State's hate crime statute to  
8 include offenses committed against someone on the  
9 basis of their gender expression or identity.

10 The second resolution we will be voting  
11 on, Resolution No. 1287 calls on the United States  
12 Congress to pass and the President to sign the  
13 Equality Act which would amend the Civil Rights Act  
14 of 1964 and 1968 to include sexual orientation and  
15 gender identity as prohibited categories of  
16 discrimination or segregation with respect to  
17 employment, public accommodations and housing.

18 I hope that my fellow committee members  
19 will support this legislation today so we can vote on  
20 it at Thursday's Stated Meeting. Thank you again for  
21 making the time to vote on such an important  
22 legislation.

23 And with that, I am going to ask the  
24 clerk to call the roll.

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COMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,  
Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Civil  
Rights; all items are coupled. Council Member Dromm.

ACTING CHAIR DROMM: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Eugene.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: King.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: I abstain.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Salamanca.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 3 in the  
affirmative, 0 in the negative and 1 abstention, all  
items have been adopted by the Committee.

[pause]

ACTING CHAIR DROMM: Alright, and with  
that.. [background comment] oh.. [background comment]  
[pause] Okay, and with that I am going to adjourn  
this meeting at 3:02 p.m. Thank you.

[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 December 18, 2017