

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER
PROTECTION

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October 23, 2024
Start: 10:44 a.m.
Recess: 10:49 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Julie Menin, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Gale A. Brewer
Amanda Farías
Shekar Krishnan
Chi A. Ossé

1 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION 2

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check on the Committee of Consumer and Workers
4 Protection located in the Chambers recorded by James
5 Marino on 10/23/2024.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and
7 welcome to the New York City vote on Consumer and
8 Worker Protection.

9 Please silent all electronic devices at
10 this time.

11 Chair, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: [GAVEL] Good morning,
13 and welcome to today's Consumer and Worker Protection
14 Committee vote on Proposed Intro. 991-C in relation
15 to licensing hotels. I'm Council Member Julie Menin,
16 Chair of the Committee, and first of all I want to
17 recognize my Colleagues who are here, Council Member
18 Ossé, Council Member Abreu, Council Member Krishnan,
19 Council Member Brewer, Majority Leader Farías.

20 I am absolutely thrilled that today New
21 York City is going to be joining other cities across
22 the country such as Chicago and Denver and Boston,
23 Washington D.C., Las Vegas, to just name a few in
24 licensing hotels. Licensing is a critical tool that
25 the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection uses

2 to regulate over 45,000 businesses in our city such
3 as pedicabs, tour guides, sightseeing buses, and car
4 dealerships and over 40 different industries. While
5 the hotel industry is such an important economic
6 driver and the majority of hotels are great places to
7 stay, there is absolutely need for regulation within
8 this industry. As mentioned by the New York Times,
9 oversight over the hotel industry has essentially
10 been laissez-faire. Hotels that host criminals can be
11 difficult to shut down, and we frankly saw this
12 firsthand in Kew Gardens in Queens with the notorious
13 Umbrella Hotel, which ended up being the first murder
14 in the year 2021, and we saw that the City really
15 struggled to shut that bad actor down. No longer will
16 that occur when there is licensing of hotels.

17 The Safe Hotels Act will ensure
18 protections for communities as well as for guests and
19 for workers. The bill specifically requires hotels to
20 maintain cleanliness of every guest room, equip core
21 employees with panic buttons, and provide human
22 trafficking recognition training. The Safe Hotels Act
23 prohibits subcontracting in hotels, which will ensure
24 that the hotel is held accountable for what occurs on
25 hotel premises, rather than shifting responsibility

2 for day-to-day operations to third parties. This will
3 result in safer experiences for guests and workers
4 and improved quality of service for guests and
5 tourists who visit our great city. With this bill, we
6 are finally going to address the myriad quality-of-
7 life issues that result from bad actor hotels. Hotel-
8 related complaints to DCWP have doubled in the last
9 four years. In addition, there have been over 14,000
10 criminal complaints to the NYPD originating from
11 hotels and motels over the last five years alone. In
12 addition, there have been 39 murders at hotels. My
13 bill is very clear on the new standards going forward
14 for hotels, and that is why HTC, the Hotel
15 Association of New York, the New York Labor Council,
16 32BJ, DC37, NYSNA, the PBA, and the five District
17 Attorneys, and the New York Attorney General have all
18 supported this bill. In addition to 40 of my
19 colleagues, we have a bipartisan supermajority of
20 support on this bill.

21 I first of all want to thank HTC for
22 their incredible leadership in support of this bill.
23 I want to thank the numerous hotel owners, operators,
24 stakeholders, HANAC, and others who've given us
25 valuable feedback to craft this bill, and I want to

2 thank numerous people on the Council side who have
3 helped to draft and update this bill, including Jeff
4 Baker, Rachel Cordero, Sarah Swain, Natalie Meltzer,
5 Jeremy John, and of course the leadership of our
6 Speaker in support of this bill, and from my team,
7 Jonathan Szott, Brandon Jordan, and Mercedes
8 Anderson.

9 I now turn it over to the Clerk for the
10 roll call. Thank you.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
12 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
13 vote, Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection.
14 Proposed Introduction 991-C. Chair Menin.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: I vote aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Abreu.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Permission to
18 explain my vote?

19 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: Of course.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: I just want to
21 congratulate, I know we have a lot of hotel workers
22 here today, for really your valiant fight in this.
23 This is a bill that's going to protect you, make and
24 create a safer work environment for all of you, and I
25 just wanted to say that you should be very proud of

2 yourselves, right? Continuous service, making sure
3 that there's direct employment of our housekeepers
4 and front desk, among other things here, is going to
5 really elevate the quality of your work and make you
6 safer. Very, very proud of you, and also thank you,
7 Chair Menin, for your amazing work. I proudly vote
8 aye.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: Thank you.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brewer.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Farías.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: I vote aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Krishan.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you to all
16 the hotel workers in our city, our essential workers.
17 We appreciate your fight. We always stand with you.
18 And I vote aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ossé.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: I vote aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Won. By a
22 vote of six in the affirmative, zero in the negative,
23 and no abstentions, item has been adopted by the
24 Committee.

1 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION 7

2 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: Thank you, everyone.

3 [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date October 24, 2024