

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND  
BUILDINGS

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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

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Chairperson

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

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Public Advocate

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Thomas Cayler

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Inside Airbnb

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

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Tonya Channell

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Jeanne Raleigh

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

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Linda Ortiz

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

Erica Marrero

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the Committee on Housing and Buildings. At this time, can everybody please silence their cell phones? If you wish to testify, please go to the back of the room to fill out a testimony slip. At this time and going forward, no one is to approach the dais. I repeat, no one is to approach the dais. Chair, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [gavel] Good morning and welcome to today's hearing on the New York City Council's Committee on Housing and Buildings. I'm Council Member Pierina Sanchez, Chair of this committee. Thank you to the many members of the public, the administration, and my colleagues who have joined us. I want to start with a procedural note. We'll first hear from the administration, followed by Council Member questions, and then public testimony. Please maintain decorum. If you wish to express support, use the silent approval gesture. Given the number of speakers signed up today, several hundred, Council questions will be limited to three minutes, and public testimony to 90 seconds. I will also ask administration witnesses to keep their answers brief, but I want the public to be aware that

we do anticipate between two and three hours of testimony and questions with the administration prior to the public. I ask that you please do plan accordingly. I apologize in advance if I have to cut you off at any point, but we want to ensure that we hear as many voices as possible during today's debate. Today, we will be hearing two sets of legislation. Bear with us, it's the end of the session and there is a lot to do. First, we will consider several bills that modernize the New York City construction codes, support small businesses and improve our response to rodent complaints. Intros-- I know that's why everyone is here. Intros 1321 and 1422, which I sponsor, would create a New York City existing building code to align the rest of the construction codes-- and align the rest of construction codes accordingly. Right now, work on existing buildings must navigate both the 2022 and 1968 codes creating conflicts, delays and confusion. The existing building code is the product of a decade-long DOB-led consensus process with hundreds of experts, unions, and industry representatives. It gives owners a clearer, safer framework to maintain and alter existing buildings and finally allows us to

retire the 1968 code for existing buildings in a responsible way. Importantly, this new code also codifies changes to the definition of ordinary plumbing work, further changes that this Council already passed in Intro 429 several months ago. Changes that some groups suggested came out of nowhere, where in reality those provisions were debated and agreed upon during DOB's extensive code revision process. We were also-- we will also hear a pre-considered bill updating the New York City Energy Conservation Code to align with the 2025 New York State Energy Conservation Code and a 2024 International Energy Conservation Code with New York City specific amendments. This keeps us on track with state law and ensures our buildings meet modern energy standards as required under existing law. Next, we will hear Intro 1465 by Council Member Brannan which extends a moratorium on fines for awning and accessory sign violations, and requires the Department of Buildings and Small Business Services to provide education and outreach to small businesses. Small businesses have told us clearly that the sudden \$6,000 fine for signage without education has been devastating. This bill continues

the approach, enforce truly unsafe conditions, but don't balance the budget of our city on the backs of mom and pop shops. Finally, in this set, we will take up Intro 1217 by Council Member Zhuang, which strengthens inspections and public reporting in response to 311 complaints related to rats and other pests, requiring the Department of Health to inspect within 10 business days and to make inspection data available online-- part one. Part two: The second set of legislation is on short term rentals in one- and two-family homes. The second set of bills, Intro 948A, by Council Member Narcisse, and Intro 1107A by Council Member Louis would loosen certain requirements for short term rentals in one- and two-family homes. I want to start by sharing that in the last weeks, I have heard from many colleagues on both sides of these pieces of legislation, but many concerned about there being movement here. I want to share that as Housing Chair and as someone who's spent the last 15 years working on housing and economic development policy, I know how hard it is for both renters and small homeowners to stay in our city. My district is 94 percent renters, and I myself became a small homeowner only by finding a

diamond in the rough, something that I could barely afford, and even now struggle in many ways to maintain with essential repairs. I carry that reality into this debate. Short-term rental policy is one of the most contentious issues before this body, and in that context we have to remember that we are in a historic housing crisis. The 2023 Housing Vacancy Survey shows that just 1.4 percent of rentals are vacant citywide. In that context, I enter this hearing with serious concerns myself about Intro 948A and 1107A as drafted. These bills would, among other things, allow for up to four adult short-term guests in one- and two-family homes, remove the requirement that a permanent occupant be present, and permit into arear locks that limit access and change the building code and housing maintenance code definitions of family to accommodate these arrangements. What looks like small changes or small language tweaks could fundamentally alter how our homes are used in the City of New York. Why I'm worried: The data is clear. A report released this week by Community Service Society finds that one- and two-family buildings make up 14 percent of the city's rental stock, with roughly 327,000 units in total and close

to 894 tenants, a total when you include both rental and owner-occupied of 27 percent of the city's housing stock is being affected by these bills. Those homes are more likely to be occupied by Black and Brown and low-income families, and their rents to be lower than other market-rate apartments. If we normalize a hostless short-term rentals in the stock, even inadvertently, we can drive up property values, push up rents, and create powerful incentives that could displace exactly the tenants who have the fewest protections. Some point to analyses that show that rents kept rising even after Local Law 18 took affect and use that to claim that restricting short-term rentals doesn't matter, but correlation, my friends, we know is not causation. What these numbers really tell us is that New York City's broader housing crisis continues, not that we should weaken the one tool we have that prevents apartments from turning into hotel rooms. Small tweaks, major challenges. These bills are presented as technical cleanups aligning definitions, allowing flexibility on host presence and interior doors, but small language changes can create big problems. When we move from a clear, host presence rule to un-hosted

stays, more guests and locked-off areas, enforcement becomes significantly harder for an already stretched office of special enforcement. It is much easier to verify that someone actually lives in and is present in a home than to untangle, after the fact, whether the unit has quietly become a full-time business. We've seen this before in places like Santa Monica and San Francisco, early attempts at carve-outs and partial fixes produced confusion and abuse, and only when those cities moved to strong universal registration and host presence requirements did illegal hotel activity drop and apartments come back into the housing supply. We can learn from that history and to repeat missteps. And I do want to highlight that some of the concerns that have been raised in the past few weeks are not theoretical. They are lessons from municipalities that also include New Orleans, San Francisco and Barcelona. Looser rules were harder to enforce and hosted short-term rentals had large negative impacts on local rental supply, and restrictions on short-term rentals were necessary to protect the supply of permanent homes. I also want to say gently, but clearly that as we have this debate, we must be careful not to

fall into narratives where we treat renters as inherently risky or undesirable as compared to tourists. Millions of New Yorkers, many of them across our districts, pay rent reliably every single month and are the backbone of our city's economy. When we talk about preferring short-term rentals because we can't count on renters, we risk reinforcing long-standing class and even perhaps inadvertently racial biases that have no place in our city. In my district, 94 percent of residents are renters. My neighbors are the backbone of our economy and culture and any reform worth supporting must protect both small homeowners and the tenants who make up the vast majority of our communities. If there is to be further conversation about adjustments in the future, I believe it must be far narrower than what is before us today and should be anchored in clear ideas. Perhaps owner occupancy instead of permanent occupancy, making sure that we have strong FDNY alliance safety standards for any internal locks or access restrictions, no weakening of the family definitions that could have spillover effects into our building or housing maintenance codes, no path intentional or otherwise for a second unit or

accessory dwelling unit to become a fulltime short-term rental in a manner that our agencies are confident that they can enforce, and clear and enforceable limits on the amount of time that any units could be used as short-term rentals. That is the lens through which I will ask my questions today. In closing, this might go on record as one of my longest-- I apologize and thank you. Before turning to my colleagues, I want to remember Michael McKee [sp?], a tireless tenant advocate who cared deeply about these issues and tenant rights through his work over many years at tenant's pack and other organizations. I also want to thank my team, Chief of Staff Maria Villalobos [sp?], Deputy Chief Ben Ratner [sp?], and Kim Costellanos [sp?], Gerard Fernandez [sp?], Brenda Muniz [sp?], Stephanie Kusi [sp?], again for wearing multiple hats and our legislative fellow, Dylan Campos [sp?]. I would not be here literally if it wasn't for y'all. Thank you. And I thank the Housing and Buildings Committee Staff, Senior Legislative Counsel, Austin Malone [sp?], Legislative Counsel, Billy Eck [sp?], Senior Policy Analyst Jose Conde [sp?], Policy Analyst Dirk Spencer [sp?], Finance Analyst Carla Naranjo

[sp?], and Data Scientist Reese Hirota [sp?]. We're joined today by my colleagues on the Committee. I'll call them out and then I'll call them by name, and then Council Member Zhuang followed by Louis, yes, will make opening remarks about their bills.

Acknowledging that we are joined on Zoom by Council Member Ariola and Feliz, in-person by Zhuang, Narcisse, Dinowitz, Riley, Louis, Avilés, and Nurse. Thank you. With that, turning to Council Member Zhuang.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you, Chair.

I-- today, we have a hearing about my bill, Intro 1217. Imagine a mother call 311 for two years about the rat [inaudible] her kitchen cabinet, in her children's bedroom, and no city agency comes to help. And this is actually real story. We can't-- we find those pictures in the news. When city agency finally showed up two years later, they find 18 rat burrows. This is a true and documented story, and our city government is allowing this to happen. I just don't understand. This is not the responsibility for our constituents to fix the rat problem. Yes, we see rats in our home, and we try to fix everything. But we cannot-- as a constituents, we cannot tell our

rats only stay in my home, I'm going to kill you.

And then don't go to my neighbor's home. Can we do

that? Of course not. And our city agencies-- this

is our city agency's responsibility. The more time

we wait, the more families will get affected, the

whole neighborhood is going to get affected, and the

more value, more money going to cost for the family

and also for our city agency. And according to OMB,

estimates my bill response to the rat inspection in

10 days will cost nothing. I bought the rat academy

[sic] to my district, and a lot of people come. Our

former Rat Czar visit too, and told me Department of

Health address complaints mostly in the area where

the most 311 calls-- all rat activity. But people

call 311. No response for [inaudible]. Our

Department of Health also stated inspection are

needed for them to get the rat out of our city. So,

let's require them to inspect every call within 10

days to perform an inspection. Simple. It's our

City Council-- let's our City Council to pass a bill,

Intro 1217, make our city agency accountable and keep

everyone healthy and safe. We have serious problems

in our city. Let's get to the bottom of this rat

problem now, and we can focus on making New York City

a better place where families can thrive. Instead, we have to fight to survive. Please support my bill, Intro 1217, and I want to thank everyone who support this bill. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council Member Zhuang. Council Member Narcisse?

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Good morning, everyone. I feel like I'm in the story of David and Goliath, but when you have your own Chair-- I have 94 percent of renters, and I'm not here for the big numbers. I'm here for the small voices, the smaller folks that cannot afford their home. I am a union person. Two days ago, I believe I was in the front with NYSNA. I was past member of 1199. I worked closely with TW-- I work closely with ATC as well, but this not about any specific group of folks, but the smaller group of folks, the Black and Brown folks that cannot hold their home, their lower income. When they talk, they don't have a voice. My job as a nurse is to give voice to the voiceless. I came here not to be cute, but to address the issues when they come to me, and as legislators, when the legislation passed and other folks crying they have foreclosure over their head. That's the reason I'm here, pure

and simple. I'm not looking for power. I'm not looking for anything else, but giving the voice of the voiceless. That's my responsibility. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to my colleagues. I want to speak today in strong support of my bill, Intro 948A, because for so many New Yorkers, especially in my communities that I represent, the community like mine, this issue is not abstract. It's real for them. It is not political. It is personal. It is about whether a long-time homeowner can afford to stay in the home that works so hard for their entire life to maintain. Some of my folks, HHA, CNA, LPN, working three, four jobs sometimes to hold a home and they're losing it, and they need that option. They need that lifeline. That's the reason I'm here. I want to-- for them to stay in their home they worked their entire life for. I want to ask everyone here to focus on the facts, the real people affected, not the fear, not the rumors, not the misinformation that has been circulating over my head, too. Some folks ask me if I'm scared to even go forward before I forget about it, but when I look back to those that come to me, that's circulating those rumors over folks that losing their home as we speak right now-- there have

1                   been a lot of statements made about this bill that's  
2                   simply not true. And when misinformation spreads, we  
3                   know that. Lies move faster than the truth. It  
4                   doesn't just confuse people, it hurts the very  
5                   families we are trying to help. This bill not  
6                   creating hotels in our neighborhoods and is not  
7                   taking the hotel business out. I would be against  
8                   that, because when I travel, sometimes if I'm-- if  
9                   I'm by myself, I use hotel. If I'm with my children,  
10                  back in the days, I use Airbnb, because it was what I  
11                  could afford. This is-- let's not open the door to  
12                  corporate takeover which I've been hearing of one or  
13                  two families homes, they're going to board the whole  
14                  block. That's not what this is about, because you  
15                  have to be in the home. You have to own it. You  
16                  have to be part of it. And when you go away, if you  
17                  go to see a sick family, you have to come back,  
18                  because that have to be your home, your prime  
19                  residence. That's not allow investors to run short-  
20                  term rentals without living in there. And it  
21                  absolutely does not allow unlimited numbers of people  
22                  to pack in our homes. None of that is this bill. If  
23                  it was that, I would walk away from it. What this  
24                  bill does is quite simple. It gives responsible,

home [inaudible] home owners the ability to earn a little supplemental income, safely and legally without violating rules that were never written in their mind. I don't think my homeowners [inaudible]. In my district and in district across the city, homeowners, especially seniors, immigrants, nurses, CNA, LPN, and all the working families, union workers, too, they talk to me, who have been crying out for relief. Some of them have tenants who have not paid their rent in years, and they are desperate for ways to stay afloat. Others are facing rising taxes, rising insurance, rising everything around them. They are not asking for special treatment. They are asking for fairness, a lifeline. They are asking for the chance to stay in the homes they love and the neighborhood they helped to build. You know how many New Yorkers, Black folks that left the city of New York, we all know. And if you want to talk about the health of our neighborhoods, then come walk the business corridors with me. I have people that have small businesses. Ever since the law passed, Law 18, they don't see the folks coming around to buy in their stores. They're losing out. You will meet the merchants who are desperate for the foot traffic.

Small businesses in my district are struggling because there simply are not enough people coming through the doors. Allow what I'm asking, allowing responsible homeowners a way to legally host guests. Give our local businesses a fight, a fighting chance, and bring to life an energy back to our commercial corridors. This is not about me today. This is about hearing the cry, and New Yorkers can create the possibilities. We are the legislators, my colleagues. Let's talk about it. Let's make sure if there's one line you disagree with, but you cannot tell me all of the lines from 948A. Local Law 18 was well-intended, and I will be here to say yes, but we need to learn to carve out. Maybe because I learned how to carve frogs, open them, and fix them up. Maybe we can fix that. So, I'm asking my colleagues, let's stand together for the voiceless folks that we have, give them a voice, give them a possibility. Please listen to the voices of the homeowners, and I will not leave here to tell you again, I'm not in a fight with labor. I'm not in a fight against, you know, big folks. I just want to be the person that I am, that I'm addressing the cry. So, I'm asking you again, my colleagues, please listen to the voices of

the homeowners. I know a lot of you don't have a lot of homeowners, but some of us do, and those are the Black, Brown people and low-income people that are trying to stay in New York City. Listen to the people who in the verge of losing their homes, because the simply emergency or simply-- or single bill can push them over the edge. Single homeowners, their homes, because a single emergency or a single bill, extra water can push them over the edge. We have seen on TV folks lost their home because they could not pay the water bill. That's a fact of our lives. Maybe not mine or yours, but it is for some New Yorkers that build this city, and in my word-- I don't want to curse in this space-- build that, you know what. Listen to them, not to the media campaigns, or fear-based narrative that ignore the reality of the community we represent. This bill is a balance. It is a responsible-- it is responsible. It is response to a very real need in our city. I want housing. I don't want to take the housing apartment, big three, four families out. No, no, because I want people to be off the street. We need to do our part and we need to keep on pushing. I urge my colleagues to support it and to stand with the

families who simply want a hand up, not another hurdle. Give them a hand up to keep the home they love. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council Member Narcisse. Thank you for the good early behavior on everybody's part. Thank you. Council Member Louis?

COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you, Chair Sanchez, for holding this important hearing, for your leadership and for including my bill. Introduction 1107 which provides fair and responsible flexibility for one- and two-family homeowners who seek to offer short-term rentals. Local Law 18 was created to address illegal hotels and protect our housing stock. Yet, it's implementation has placed a severe and unintended burden on small homeowners. These are families who live in homes they own and who are fighting to remain stable in the economic climate that has become increasingly unforgiving. Across Brooklyn, one- to two-family homeowners have lost more than \$81 million. These losses are not abstract. They are monthly mortgage payments, long deferred repairs, and the only financial cushion that families have. At the same time, Brooklyn has now

become the foreclosure center of New York City. In the second quarter of this year, Brooklyn recorded 129 first-time foreclosure filings, a 36 percent increase from the previous year. The city's foreclosure hotspot is in Canarsie and East Flatbush where 17 new cases were filed in a single quarter. These are neighborhoods with large populations of Black homeowners who already deed theft, diminishing equity, and a housing market that undermines their long-term financial stability. Council district 45 is 60 percent Black, making the sixth highest Black district in New York City. And these consequences fall hardest on the very families who have already faced generations of obstacles to wealth building. Introduction 1107 is designed to provide essential flexibility for owner-occupied homes. It ensures that homeowners can responsibly host guests, maintain the safety of their homes and generate the income they need to stay rooted in their communities. Short term rentals in owner-occupied homes do not remove housing units off the market. They do not diminish the city's housing stock. They provide a lifeline for families who want to remain in the neighborhoods they have helped to build. Introduction 1107 works in

tandem with Introduction 948 to allow responsible hosting, permit responsible flexibility when the homeowner is not physically present and to protect against the exploitative practices that Local Law 18 sought to stop. I also want to address the concerns that have been raised in the press. Some have claimed that these bills will remove housing opportunities or create new pressures in the market. The data proves the opposite. The crisis unfolding today is not caused by these homeowners trying to make a living. It is caused by rising costs, inequitable access to credit, deed theft schemes, and policies that treat small homeowners as commercial operators. We must preserve Black homeownership in this city. We must protect families who are on the brink, and we must provide real solutions and strengthen both housing stability and economic opportunity. This is urgent necessary legislation that will help keep homeowners and New Yorkers in their homes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council Member Louis. I'd like to acknowledge that we've been joined by Council Member De La Rosa, Abreu, and

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams. Public Advocate, you have an opening statement?

PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Madam Chair. As mentioned, my name's Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate for the City of New York. I thank Chair Sanchez and the members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings for holding this hearing. I would say the last 48 hours has been pretty excruciating with back and forths [sic] in a way that I had not quite anticipated. So, I'm going to go in and out of my written testimony to make sure I'm up-to-date with where I'm at. So, one, just for context, when Local Law 18 was passed, I happened to be not as graceful as Council Member Chair Sanchez, but the Chair of this Committee, and one of the things that we said then very intently was that we did not want that law to be enforced on one- and two-family homeowners, knowing in particular the stress that they're being faced, particularly Black and Brown and immigrant homeowners, and so I view what's happening here today is a way to try to correct that, because a lot of them did come under stress. So, I came in with really trying to figure out how I can support this bill. At some-- but there is some flags

that have been raised that are concerning. So, as written, I'm not quite there yet. And so what I'd like to do with my testimony is really put forward the flags that I think are issues. And I'm hoping that Airbnb really answers the questions that are being asked today and commit to addressing some of these with the sponsors of the bill. Most of my testimony will be around Intro 948, and I know Council Member Narcisse very well, and I know that she will work with everyone to try to get where we need to go which is I believe get a version of this bill through so that we could protect the homeowners that we never expected to be impacted this way in the first place. I think it's one thing for someone who lives in neighborhood to utilize a short-term rental while on vacation on a way to keep their home. It's another to rent that same space for half the year while living in a completely different city or state, or in some cases corporate LLCs who may fabricate proof of occupancy to run what is essentially an illegal hotel in a residential area. The first thing for me is making sure that even I believe that you shouldn't be able to Airbnb your space. So, if you're owner-occupied or resident-occupied, you

1 should be able to do that, but you certainly should  
2 not be able to do that for six months. And so I'm  
3 hoping that in the new version of this bill there'll  
4 be a time limit in how you can do that particularly  
5 if you are not present. I think if you're present  
6 it's differently. I also just want to make sure we  
7 confirm-- because I keep hearing different things--  
8 that if it's a two-unit, you cannot Airbnb that  
9 second unit, because that would take units off the  
10 market, and we do not want to take units off the  
11 market. It's very, very clear that we allow people  
12 to do this to save their homes, but maintain the  
13 stability of the market, particularly in the rental  
14 units. The two things I heard recently which I  
15 hadn't heard before, one is changing the definition  
16 of family. So, I'd like to really get a better  
17 understanding if that is happening or it is not  
18 happening. I also heard that we may have already  
19 done that with some of the zoning changes that passed  
20 recently. So that is or isn't. And lastly,  
21 something that came up to me was that this may not be  
22 allowed in many homeowner's insurance or mortgage  
23 policies. If that's the case and we find a way to  
24 move forward this addressing the flags that I and  
25

some others have mentioned. I just want to make sure we made clear to homeowners that they need to read their policies so they don't inadvertently get themselves into problems. So, I am thankful for the sponsors for pushing this forward to try to correct and make the law what we intended the whole time, and I'm hopeful we can get to a point that either addresses those or very clearly says in the law the way it's written so it's different than what we think it is or provide some more language to address those flags so that we can help our Black and Brown immigrant homeowners stay in their homes, use this modality, but also not take units off the market, not violate any policies that they have, and we want to make sure it's also enforceable. So, there may have to be some changes in how we enforce this to make sure that people aren't abusing the system. Lastly, I'll just say people abuse any system. They're abusing it right now, so the best we can do is just make it as enforceable as possible. So, hopefully some of these answers-- questions get answered and we can get a commitment to make any adoptions and changes to this so that we can get it across the finish line. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Public Advocate. Before I turn it over to our Committee Counsel to administer the oath, I just do want to highlight that despite my own concerns with the legislation, you know, I know that my colleagues have pure intentions. I know that they're trying to do right by folks who do need help, and I don't believe in cutting off debate, so here we are. That's why I didn't cut off my colleagues who are sponsors in their intro remarks, but just looking at my colleagues for some nods, like let's try to keep it tight for the rest of our exchanges, and I look forward to powerful and productive discourse today. Counsel?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please raise your right hand? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer all Council Member questions honestly? Thank you. You may begin when you're ready.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I have some good news on timing. I'll be covering testimony on behalf of all the city agencies. The others will be HPD and DOB right here for questions, but hopefully we'll pick up some time there. Chairperson Sanchez

and Committee Members, other Council Members and Public Advocate Williams. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Intros 948A and 1107A. My name is Christian Klossner, I'm the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement, or OSE, which is overseen by the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. While the bill's stated intent is to be about one- and two-family homes, both bills impact every unit of housing in the city and threaten to fundamentally alter New York City's housing market. In my testimony I will focus on four important points. One, how New York City's existing short-term rentals currently operate. Two, how these bills could negatively impact the local housing market and for the many New Yorkers struggling to find stable housing. Three, how the bills will create a more dangerous environment for residents, guests, and first responders. And four, how significant increases in short-term rentals will negatively impact quality of life. First, it is important to be clear about the current laws in New York City. For decades, the city's housing maintenance code and building code have required the legal use of the city's housing stock in both

apartment buildings and one- and two-family homes to be for permanent occupancy by a family. The term family allows not more than two boarders, roomers, or lodgers-- it's a common phrase in the defined phrase-- to rent part of the unit so long as the permanent occupant is occupying the unit and maintaining a common household with the lodgers. according to the legislative history, the limit of two boarders was proposed in 1967 to prevent excessive occupancy that would lead to "inadequate facilities" and "neighborhood deterioration." When online booking services arrived, the short-term rental market significantly increased, taking thousands of long-term rental units off the housing market, and according to numerous studies, driving up the cost of rent. To combat this significant increase in illegal activity and its impacts, City Council adopted the short-term rental registration law also known as Local Law 18 of 2022. But let me be very clear. For far longer than these online companies have existed, it has been illegal to rent out your entire unit for less than 30 days or to rent part of your home to more than two guests, no matter how many units were in your building. Local Law 18 did not change the

laws I just described. It simply required hosts to follow them. It did not ban short-term rentals. Instead, it made enforcement of existing protections far more efficient. It requires hosts to register and it requires platforms to verify the registration status. Local Law 18 allows the city to actually prevent illegal activity from depleting our housing stock. It prevents the additional upward pressure on rents associated with short-term rentals, and it provides hosts the chance to know their rental is legal before putting it on the short-term rental market. Now, Intros 948A and 1107A risk undoing the significant gains made under Local Law 18. Let me start with the discussion of the impacts these bills could have on our housing stock. While both bills suggest they apply only to one and two families, each changes the definition of family in city laws. Changing the definition of family would apply to every home in the city, not just one- and two-family homes. For instance, 948A would allow every tenant in the city to host four adult guests and an unlimited number of people under 18 in their apartment. 948A also redefines one- and two-family homes from exclusively for permanent use to primarily

for permanent use. And 1107A contains the same provision, although just for two-family homes. While that may seem like an insignificant change, it is not. During litigation over Local Law 18, it was our view that one- and two-family homes should be allowed to have un-hosted rentals for 182 days a year, relying on the phrase as of rule in the relevant building code occupancy classification. The city responded that the building code definitions of one- and two-family dwellings required they be used exclusively as permanent housing. The litigation against the City was dismissed, but now through these bills the City Council is being asked to legislate this interpretation and open the flood gates to unposted short-term rentals. Here's what could happen when those flood gates open. As have been discussed already, one- and two-family homes make up over 28 percent of the city's housing stock, and just over 14 percent or 320,000 units of our rental stock. This bill allows for the potential loss of this entire group of homes to the short-term rental market which would be devastating, especially in the context of an ongoing housing crisis and in a moment when the New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey shows our

net rental vacancy rate is just 1.41 percent and under one percent for the lowest-cost homes. While difficult to quantify, the bill also has the potential to drive up purchase costs, making it even harder for families to afford their first home. Those who buy and take out a mortgage based on short-term rental income may be severely over-extended the next time New York sees a tourism slow-down or an international pandemic which would worsen the fears of foreclosure that we've heard about so far. Ultimately, if these bills increase speculation and reduce inventory, they will also increase market-rate rents. 948A, in particular, would also incentivize investors to shop for properties as large as possible to accommodate four adult boarders and an unlimited number of children in order to maximize revenue. That will squeeze large New York City families, especially multigenerational families who will have to compete for the same inventory in already tight housing market. We hope the Council will also consider that tenants generally have fewer rights in one- and two-family homes when compared to other parts of the city's housing stock. This legislation will incentivize displacement of current tenants to

use the unit for tourist rentals instead of for homes. Not only do these bills pose severe threats to the housing market, they create conflict with critical safety requirements. For example, allowing four boarders and an unlimited number of children will likely conflict with provision of the housing maintenance code related to how much light, ventilation, and space each occupant is required to have. It would also incentivize cramming large parties into small spaces or illegally-converted basements, cellars, and attics. And according to my colleagues at the New York City Fire Department and the Department of Buildings, these bills pose unacceptable safety risks and do not make sense from a life safety point of view. One- and two-family homes which are also referred to as private dwellings are exempt from many of the safety precautions required for the kind of activity these bills would allow. They don't have sprinklers or fire alarms that automatically summon the Fire Department. They aren't required to be built with the same level of flame-resistant materials. They are among the city's most combustible buildings and amongst the most dangerous buildings in which the Fire Department

conducts search, rescue, and firefighting operations.

In fact, over the past few years, approximately a

quarter of all structural fires in the City have

occurred in private dwellings, and fires in private

dwellings have accounted for a greater--

disproportionately greater percentage of serious

fires and deaths from fires. These bills compound

these existing dangers by one, allowing commercial

level use; two, dramatically increasing the occupant

load, effectively allowing conversion of private

dwellings into multiple dwellings, including allowing

an unlimited number of children who are some of the

most vulnerable and likely to require assistance when

escaping a burning building; three, eliminating the

required presence of a permanent occupant who knows

the layout and location of exits; and four, allowing

a significant expansion of locked interior doors that

pose safety risks for occupants and firefighters

alike. In a fire situation when seconds matter, any

barrier that slows firefighters conducting search and

rescue operations or that prevents a quick exit could

cost lives. Finally, I will turn to concerns about

the impact on our neighborhoods. OSE has received

over 2,000 complaints both this year and last and

almost 3,000 in 2023. Complaints from neighbors of short-term rentals express concern over quality of life impacts such as excessive noise, late night parties on weekdays, trash piling up, and tourists ringing the wrong doorbell in the middle of the night. Some tenants allege that the illegal activity is done to harass them into giving up their lease, and more and more short-term rental guests are reporting concerns about consumer deception, unsanitary conditions and a concern that their stays were illegal. It stands to reason that a sharp increase in short-term rentals where the host is not present will turn into a sharp increase in the impacts that lead to these complaints. I have attached to my testimony a chart that I will display here as well that shows the percentage of complaints each year broken down by building type. In 2018, the vast majority of complaints, 69 percent, were about units in multiple dwellings. Since then, as you can see in this chart, complaints about one- and two-families have made up an increasing percentage, and as of earlier this month, 2025 will be the first year in which there are more complaints about activities in one- and two-family homes than in multiple

1 dwellings. These are people who have asked the city  
2 for help, and OSE asks this committee to consider  
3 these complaints as though the people filing them  
4 were here today to testify. For all of these  
5 reasons, the administration opposes these bills, and  
6 I ask the Council to seriously consider their harmful  
7 unintended consequences. Thank you again for the  
8 chance to testify, and I look forward to your  
9 questions.  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Good  
13 morning, Chair Sanchez, Public Advocate, and Members  
14 of the Committee on Housing and Buildings. I'm  
15 Corrine Schiff, Deputy Commissioner for Environmental  
16 Health at the New York City Department of Health and  
17 Mental Hygiene. On behalf of Commissioner Morris,  
18 thank you for the opportunity to testify today  
19 regarding the Health Department's pest control  
20 program and the legislation before your committee.  
21 The Health Department takes a multi-pronged evidence-  
22 based approach across New York City to control rats,  
23 building on decades of experience. Our approach  
24 called Integrated Pest Management emphasizes  
25 inspections, monitoring, and removal of conditions

that rats need to survive. Rats thrive when they have ready access to food and water, a place to live, and effective transportation routes. That means that reducing the rat population requires managing garbage, eliminating nesting areas, and repairing cracks and holes in sidewalks, structures, and buildings. Safe, targeted treatment using best practices is the final piece of an effective IPM program. Key components of our IPM program include proactive inspections of every property in a particular area, enabling the Department to learn rat activity is greatest and track progress over time. Inspections in response to 311 complaints, enforcement actions against property owners who fail to maintain their properties free of rats, exterminations by our licensed pest management professionals on private properties where the owners fail to act, and billing the owner for the work, monitoring guidance and technical assistance for city agencies to help them address areas in need of rat control, sealing or collapsing rat burrows in the public realm, and conducting outreach and education to help residents, property owners and pest management professionals learned best practices for

controlling rats. Many Council Members have sponsored our popular Rad Academy sessions and we look forward to continuing to hold those with you. We describe our pest control activities on our environment and health data portal and provide detailed inspection information on our Rat Information Portal. New Yorkers can look up a specific property to learn what we observed at the inspection, whether we took enforcement action, and about any bating by the Department at the property. We know from the Health Department's inspection data that rat activity in New York City neighborhoods is not equally distributed. Some neighborhoods bare a higher burden of rat infestation. Those neighborhoods tend to be densely populated with high foot traffic, an abundance of food service establishments and a higher proportion of public property. To effectively address rats, city agencies, property owners and residents in these areas must work together. Rats do not observe property lines or distinguish between public and private ownership. To reduce rat population in New York, everyone in the neighborhood both private and public must work together across our usual boundaries

in times and places that matter most to rats. Turning the legislation being discussed today. Introduction 1217 would require the Health Department to conduct inspections for pest activities and conditions conducive to pests within 10 days of receiving a 311 complaint, record information about our inspection findings, determine whether the location passed or failed the inspection, indicate whether the inspection resulted in a summons subject to civil penalties, and make such information available to the public. The Department responds to every 311 complaint. Our current response time is nine days and we record our observations, make a pass or fail determination and provide inspection and enforcement information on the Rat Information Portal. The Department has no concerns about mandating these rat control activities in the administrative code. We would like to work with the Council to clarify certain terms and components of the bill such as the broad use of the term pest, references to enforcement activities under the purview of other agencies, consideration of a range of factors when setting our 311 response time, and regarding the details and timing of information on the Rat Information Portal.

We look forward to working with you on the legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm happy to take questions.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Good morning, Chair Sanchez, Members of the Committee of Housing and Buildings and Public Advocate. I'm Gus Sirakis, Deputy Commissioner for Development and Technical Affairs at the New York City Department of Buildings. I'm joined today Joseph Ackroyd, the Assistant Commissioner for Technical Affairs and Code Development, as well as colleagues from the Department's Sustainability and Enforcement Bureaus. We're pleased to testify before the committee regarding Intro 1321 which would establish the first New York City existing building code to govern all alterations to existing buildings in New York City, Intro 1422 which makes corresponding changes to the New York City construction codes that are necessary to implement the EBC, and Pre-considered Intro T20254492A which addresses periodic updates to the New York City Energy Conservation Code, and Intro 1456 which would extend the moratorium on fines related to violations of Local Laws and regulations

governing signs on awnings and accessory signs, and require the Department of Buildings and the Department of Small Business Services to provide education and outreach regarding the applicable laws governing such sites. Before discussing the subject intros, I would like to thank the City Council and this committee for its ongoing partnership with the Department. Our work together ensures that this city with its over 1 million buildings and tens of thousands of active construction sites, not only has the safest built environment, but that we continue to evolve and keep pace with advancements in construction, design, and development. It is through this vital partnership that we keep those who live, build, and visit New York City safe. Intro 1321: New York City first published its first full building code in 1899, and those rules have been updated periodically, including significant code updates in 1938, 1968 and 2008. While these code updates are primarily intended for new buildings, they also govern alterations to existing buildings through a patchwork of provisions and cross-references to prior codes, Department memos, and the State Multiple Dwelling Law. As a result, the current framework for

existing buildings is cumbersome, often requiring owners and design professionals to interpret overlapping requirements. The complexity of regulatory framework can be challenging to navigate, and current triggers can make significant alterations to existing structures cost-prohibitive for many owners, as those owners may not be able to comply with all the requirements for new construction. The Department has been working toward an existing building code since the development of the 2008 construction codes, and in 2014 the Department embarked on a multi-year code development project to establish the city's first-ever EBC existing building code. The EBC is based on the International Existing Building Code, the IEBC, and is the culmination of many years of research, analysis and committee work. The IEBC is a model code developed and maintained by the International Code Council and is widely adopted throughout the country including New York State. It's framework has proven successful in providing a clear, incremental path for the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of exiting buildings while maintaining essential life safety standards. By aligning New York City's regulatory framework with this

nationally-recognized code, the Department ensures consistency with best practices already in place across the state and nation while tailoring the provision to the unique complexity and density of New York City's building stock. The EBC provides a comprehensive and streamlined regulatory framework, eliminating the need to consult previous codes when renovating and existing building. Because current triggers for upgrades to existing buildings are not incremental and often require formal variance reviews, the approval and permitting process can be lengthy. The EBC would limit the need for owners to obtain code variances from the Department for certain scopes of work, thereby minimizing impediments to modernizing buildings. Most importantly, the EBC would enhance the safety of existing building stock by creating incremental compliance triggers regardless of alteration costs. These improvements accomplished by the EBC fall into three main categories: safety in modernization, efficiency, and sustainability. These improvements eliminate barriers to renovating existing buildings while ensuring a consistent level of safety across all building types. The proposed EBC accomplishes the following: Safety

in modernization promotes compliance with modern codes by repealing the 1968 building code which currently continues to apply to alterations, repairs, changes of occupancy, additions, and relocations of exiting buildings; provides comprehensive tenant and occupant protection plans for buildings occupied during construction activities, expanding on the current code regulations; establishes new requirements for architectural investigations when the work area exceeds 50 percent of the floor area, ensuring that existing means of egress elements and rated [sic] assemblies are safe; enhances fire safety by introducing new requirements for automatic sprinkler systems that address various unique conditions that occur in existing buildings; creates a limited home improvement permit for one- and two-family dwellings to be filed by a homeowner or a licensed home improvement contractor, providing a path for homeowners to obtain work permits for specific types of home improvement alterations often performed illegally without permits; introduces limited alteration application permits for additional scopes of work including window replacements, re-roofing, and elevator repair and replacements which

will result in improved compliance with the building and energy conservation codes; increases accessibility in residential buildings when an alteration involves more than 50 percent of the dwelling units under a single ownership by requiring all common use facilities serving those units to comply with the accessibility requirements in Chapter 11 of the Building Code; provides a standardized method to verify the stability of buildings being altered, and requires a more thorough condition assessment when the proposed alterations increase the level of structural demand in the building.

Efficiency introduces the concept of work area to replace the alteration cost as the trigger for when code requirements apply which provides a more objective measure of an alteration size and code requirements; streamlines and simplifies regulations related to changes of occupancy including changes to occupancy classification and use; establishes a simplified framework for the multiple dwelling classification to comply with the complex framework of the multiple dwelling law that details the technical provision of the MDL that are applicable to alterations to existing residential buildings.

Sustainability increases the energy efficiency of the city's building stock by facilitating renovation of existing buildings while requiring incremental energy conservation upgrades; allows the use of light materials assemblies and details impartial and restorative repairs of facades and roofs to facilitate incremental energy conservation upgrades.

In combination, these reforms simplify how the Department and the public navigate alteration projects, encourage investment in older buildings and maintain public safety. The EBC will make it easier to preserve, modernize and adapt our existing building stock while ensuring regulatory consistency across future code updates. This time I'm going to go off my script for just a quick second to let everyone know the existing building code was drafted with a large number of stakeholder constituents. We put an open casting call out to those interested in participating. This committee worked from 2019 to 2023, 14 technical advisory and managing subcommittees, 523 participants, 138 meetings, more than 13,700 hours that was dedicated to this. We're quite grateful at the Department to have this much interest and expertise put forth to do this, all just

for the betterment of the work that we all do and the city that we live in. Intro 1422, the companion bill to the EBC, sets forth changes to the construction codes that are necessary to ensure proper implementation and enforcement of the requirements of the EBC. The amendments ensure consistency across all applicable regulations and support the EBC's broader goals of modernization, simplification, and safety. The bill repeals references to the 1968 building code as well as provisions of the current construction codes that have been relocated to the EBC, including ordinary plumbing work, limited alteration applications, and tenant and occupant protection plans. This bill also includes changes to streamline the electrical final inspection process and to allow for an extension of time to complete repairs following a periodic elevator inspection. The Department views the EBC as a pivotal step in continuing the modernization effort that began with the 2008 codes, building on our shared goal to make New York City's built environment safer to occupy and easier to maintain, and the regulatory framework simpler to navigate. Now, onto Pre-considered Intro T20254492A. In addition to the EBC, the Committee

also has before it Pre-considered Intro 20254492A which updates the energy code. Just as the EBC modernizes the framework for existing buildings, this updated energy code ensures that new construction advances the city's goals for safety, efficiency, and sustainability. Together, forming a comprehensive coordinated approach to improving New York City's built environment. The energy code last updated in 2020 must be revised periodically to remain more stringent than the state code and to keep pace with the evolving technology and climate standards. Buildings are the larger source of greenhouse gas emissions in New York City, and maintaining a strong energy code is essential to addressing this challenge. The proposed revisions to the energy code are based on the 2025 New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code which aligns with the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code, developed by the International Code Council and with ASHRAE Standard 90.1. While the proposed revision use the 2025 New York State Energy Code as a base, they also modify or add new language to the energy code tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of the city's built environment. Collectively, the

proposed amendments will results in an average annual energy savings of 19.5 percent of for newly constructed commercial buildings, and 17 percent for new one- and two-family homes and small apartment buildings. The energy code revisions involved over 35 industry professionals and stakeholders who volunteered their time to participate in the process and who sat on either a residential advisory committee or commercial advisory committee and who participated in various subcommittees. I'd like to take a moment to thank the residential and commercial advisory committees and their members who contributed their expertise in time to the energy code revision process. These improvements will bring the most advanced standards for building envelopes, mechanical systems, and equipment to new development, ensuring that building constructed in New York City use less energy and are better prepared to support the city's path toward carbon neutrality. Finally, while this energy code update is the most stringent in the city's history, it represents only one component of the Department's climate work. Looking ahead, the Department will begin developing a performance-based energy code. Intro 1456, turning now to Intro 1456

which would extend the enforcement moratorium concerning business accessory signs. Since 2019 when the initial moratorium was implemented, the Department has taken several steps to further support businesses and assist them in complying with applicable regulations. This includes educating businesses about sign regulations, conducting outreach to businesses who have received violations from the Department for illegally installed signs, establishing the small business team, a dedicated resource to assist small businesses with any issues they might have, and launching an annual no penalty accessory sign inspection program. The Department is supportive of Intro 1456 which will extend the moratorium on the issuance of accessory sign violations for three additional years. We recognize and appreciate the need to continue to support small businesses. As such, we'd like to recommend two amendments to the bill. The first recommendation is expanding the universe of signs that would be covered by the moratorium. As drafted, the bill would extend the moratorium for signs installed prior to February 9, 2019. We suggest amending the bill to allow coverage for signs installed prior to February 9,

2025. This would provide relief to additional businesses, including small businesses. The second recommendation is expanding the pool of individuals who are allowed to install signs. Pursuant to Local Law 28 of 2019, there was a taskforce convened to evaluate the relevance and appropriateness of regulations concerning accessory signs. That taskforce issued several recommendations including expanding the pool of individuals who are allowed to install signs to include other licensed trades with relevant experience and expertise to safely install the subject signs. There are approximately 43 licensed sign hangers. It is possible the limited pool of licensed individuals may contribute to delays in businesses compliant with applicable regulations. Expanding the pool could enable businesses to more timely comply and could result in cost-savings for the business. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. We look forward to working with you to move these important and critical pieces of legislation forward. We welcome any questions that you may have.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. Thank you. Thank you so much. I just want to say this is

like so exciting on the existing building code front. All of us who are small homeowners, we should be very excited. It's a-- it represents a huge step forward in how we can address challenges in our home. And thank you for your patience as we go through this hearing. So, I'm going to start with questions for the administration related to the short-term rental legislation before us. So, first, a recently published report from the Community Service Society shows that one- and two-unit rentals house about 900,000 tenants. They are more affordable than other market-rate units, and disproportionately house Black and low-income New Yorkers. The report also notes that the vast majority of these renters are not covered by tenant protections. Nearly half don't have a lease. Rent stabilization only applies to buildings with more than five apartments and good cause eviction laws only cover tenants in buildings where the landlord owns more than nine units. So, first, let me ask how many one- and two-family dwelling units are currently registered as short-term rentals under Local Law 18?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Currently, approximately 2,223. They make up approximately 60

percent of applications and approximately 66 percent of approved registrations.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Can you repeat the last two numbers again?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Yeah, 60 percent of applications and 66 percent of registrations.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Is there a number of units the administration sees as at-risk of conversion to illegal hotel-type use as a result of the amended legislation? What analysis has the administration done on how allowing unhosted short-term rentals in the stock could increase rents and displacement for those tenants?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I will turn to my colleague Lucy to fill in, but potentially all of them, because the bills change the definition of family. They change the definition of what is allowed in the unit, and certainly as market forces marshal themselves to make these changes seen and felt, it could have an effect across the entire housing stock.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: I'll just add that as part of the New York City Housing and Vacancy

Survey, we've been tracking some version of seasonal or held for occasional use as reasons for a home being vacant and not available. And over the last few cycles we've amended that, given the housing market has changed, and in particular in 2021 and 2023, this is a larger group than just short-term rentals. It includes [inaudible], units that are held for investment purposes, but also--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] I'm sorry, Deputy Commissioner, can we please have quiet in the chamber? Continue.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: But also short-term rentals. We don't consider these homes to be part of-- to be vacant and available because they are not on the market. They're there for the category that we call vacant not available for rent or sale. They're effectively not options for New Yorkers when they're seeking to move. In 2023, or as recently as 2023, we added logic to the Computer-Assisted Personal Interview called the CAPI that better enabled us to identify based on the questions that field interviewers are asking, both as part of the occupied interview and as part of the information captured when we're assessing occupancy status. So

1 we actually expect to continue to improve on this  
2 data moving forward. But we did see across the  
3 market some change between 2021 and 2023. You all  
4 have heard me talk a lot about our findings from the  
5 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey over this  
6 time. We went from some of our highest vacancy to  
7 some of our lowest vacancy. This is across basically  
8 every category that we measure, but of those that are  
9 not available, about 102-- almost 103,000 or 29  
10 percent are in this category of seasonal or  
11 occasional use in 21, and that like all other numbers  
12 went down in 23, but it was still at 58,810 units  
13 that were not available for rent or sale as a result  
14 of this category. We-- it is very difficult to  
15 predict-- I agree with my colleague-- who would opt  
16 in to any policy change. The best indicator is past  
17 behavior, but we do certainly track things like this,  
18 because we know that changes in laws and rules do  
19 impact behavior and we would certainly expect for  
20 applications to increase.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. If this  
23 legislation were adopted as written, what would  
24 prevent a private company from buying a one- to two-  
25 family home and evicting the tenants? What tenant

protections exist for these New Yorkers who live as renters in these homes?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Why don't you start with the second part?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: So, I'll start with the second piece of that in terms of tenant protections. This is our relatively less protected part of the stock. Most of rent stabilization applies mostly to larger buildings over six units. Good cause evictions which was recently passed at the state level excludes most of this stock. Owners have to have a certain portfolio size larger than 10 units. So, these tenants don't have the same protections that we see in most of the other parts of our housing stock.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And what options exist for-- that the City of New York has at its disposal to support struggling homeowners of one- and two-family homes? What feedback have you heard about these programs from advocates of loosening short-term rental restrictions on private dwellings?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: So, I'll also go back to part of your last question to make sure

1 that we've answered it. The City does not have the  
2 ability to intervene in private market transactions  
3 in this way, so we would not have any ability to  
4 regulate who purchased these properties. The  
5 administration cares deeply and recognizes that there  
6 are many homeowners, particularly homeowners of  
7 color, who are struggling in the City to make ends  
8 meet, and this has been an incredible focus for us  
9 over the last few years. We have created the Office  
10 of the Homeowner Advocate in coordination with the  
11 Council. We also have expanded our homeowner help  
12 desk through these means. We are working to support  
13 thousands of homeowners who-- low and moderate  
14 homeowners citywide. We're helping them to keep pace  
15 with the cost of repairs which is an incredible  
16 obstacle we know from many homeowners who are looking  
17 to remain stable. I'd put in that bucket as well our  
18 Home Fix program. We also very recently expanded  
19 also collectively with the Council and our colleagues  
20 at the state level the ability for homeowners to  
21 build accessory dwelling units. We've received over  
22 2,800 applications from interested homeowners who are  
23 looking to build accessory dwelling units or ADUs.  
24 We also are frequently discussing here with the  
25

Council our work to support owners who live in Mitchell-Lamas or other forms of HDFC co-ops through preservation financing. The Council funds multiple housing initiatives that HPD administers with contracts, partnering with vendors or other community-based organizations, \$4 million for foreclosure prevention and \$1 million for estate planning, both which are top of mind for many homeowners. Thanks to the leadership and financial support of the Council, HPD has been making unprecedented investments in these homeownership programs, \$23 million in Open Door, more than \$3 million for the homeowner help desk. I mentioned already the \$4 million for foreclosure prevention, \$2 million related to outreach for things like the tax lien sale, and I mentioned the \$1 million for estate planning and resolution. It's about \$1.5 million for Home First and almost \$700,000 this fiscal year for Home Fix 2.0, our improved version of Home Fix.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And feedback that you've heard from homeowners, specifically for who are advocating for these types of regulatory relief?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: We know homeowners are struggling. We are deeply concerned about both renters who are struggling with the challenges of our housing market and homeowners. We have had a ton of interest as I mentioned in our ADU program that speaks both to the importance of being able to find ways to stabilize some of these folks, but also, to the interest in the program. Similarly, we've done a ton of outreach through the homeowner help desk, and that's been really successful so far. A lot of these were pilots that we've expanded and that also is in response to take up outreach and interest as we've understood them, and really successful partnership with a number of community-based organizations across the City who've been really important partners in reaching homeowners and really doing that work together.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. But no specific reactions to these programs? I've used that, it wasn't this or anything like that?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: So, unfortunately, our head of the Office of the Homeowner Advocate is not here today with some of the individual anecdotes that I'm sure she would have

otherwise loved to provide, but we do feel that the--  
as a result of the feedback she has provided about  
her team's interactions, the feedback we've collected  
from community-based organizations, we have found  
that these are positive. We don't take that lightly.  
We are still working to continue to invest and expand  
in these programs always, but we are pleased with the  
initial feedback.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Deputy  
Commissioner. Mr. Klossner, Local Law 18's host  
presence rule gives you a clear enforceable line.  
Either a permanent resident or occupant is there or  
they are not. How does the agency ensure today that  
the permanent resident is home? How do you know? If  
we remove that bright line in one- and two-family  
homes as contemplated in the proposed legislation,  
what specific practical tools could OSE use to  
distinguish a genuine primary residence from a  
defacto hotel without something like around the clock  
surveillance?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Thank you  
for the question. For sure-- you asked earlier also  
what would stop corporations from becoming the host.  
Obviously, the registration law remains-- it's hardly

1 altered by these bills. These bills really alter the  
2 underlying laws that Local Law 18 is meant to enforce  
3 and there would still be-- there's still a  
4 requirement that in order to obtain a registration,  
5 you have to be a natural person and a permanent  
6 occupant of the unit. I think the easiest way to  
7 explain part of the concern is several years ago  
8 there was a two-family that we found in Bed-Stuy that  
9 had been bought by someone in Long Island, and within  
10 six days of filing the deed, there were probably a  
11 dozen Airbnb listings. When we went, we found a two-  
12 family in a residential district had been converted  
13 to house approximately 30 transients with no host on-  
14 site. I think that kind of speculative investment to  
15 convert into short-term rentals will combine with an  
16 increase in fraud and illusory tenancies. It would  
17 have been very easy for that owner to give a lease to  
18 the person who was the host, that we would not have  
19 known whether or not was legitimate or not. The way  
20 we know now is when we conduct an inspection we ask  
21 is the host here. Did they stay here? Are they  
22 staying with you? Right? If we have an inspect-- if  
23 we gain entry into the building, then we have the  
24 ability to look and see which areas are for the  
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used for residential purposes to primarily use for residential purposes impact the regulatory framework for such homes? You touched on it in your testimony, but if you could expand.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Sure. In the lawsuits that were filed challenging OSE's implementation of Local Law 18, it was very clear that the desired interpretation by the industry was that the phrase "as a rule" somewhat like primary would allow for unhosted rentals for 182 days under existing law. And it is in my view no coincidence that when our response was no, it has to be exclusive, that these pieces of legislation now change the word exclusive to primary. That leads me to believe that the expected interpretation would be that independent of any of the other provision in the rule, but just that change, would mean that owners would have the right to live in a unit for 183 days and do unhosted rentals for 182. It's particularly concerning in 1107A that it is only in two families which potentially creates-- I would expect a challenge from the industry to say that that means so long as there was a permanent occupant in one of the units, then the primary use of the building would be

1 primarily for permanent occupancy, and the second  
2 unit therefore could be occupied exclusively for  
3 short-term rentals, something that we absolutely  
4 cannot afford to give away in our housing stock.  
5

6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. I-- I'm  
7 going to ask one more question and then turn it over  
8 to my colleagues. Colleagues, we're going to start  
9 with short-term rental focused questions, because HPD  
10 has to leave. So, make sure that you get those in,  
11 and then we'll have a second round where you can ask  
12 about anything you want. I'm coming for you DOB  
13 [sic]. Okay, so my last question for now is since  
14 Local Law-- excuse me. Over the last decade, cities  
15 like Santa Monica, San Francisco, New Orleans, and  
16 Barcellona, as I mentioned in my opener, moved toward  
17 universal registration and host presence requirements  
18 precisely because carve-outs and exceptions for them  
19 proved impossible to police and were riddled with  
20 loopholes and challenges. Why would New York now  
21 move in the opposite direction and introduce new  
22 exceptions when our vacancy rate is at 1.4 percent?

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Certainly,  
24 the administration encourages Council not to do that.  
25 I will say that in that past decade in which I've

1                   been in this position the entire time, we've watched  
2                   what other entities have done. Registration has been  
3                   seen as the key to make sure that the city knows  
4                   who's doing it and what's there. Early models were  
5                   regularly successfully challenged by short-term  
6                   rental industry. It wasn't until Santa Monica passed  
7                   their version that holds the online booking sites  
8                   accountable for not processing transactions unless  
9                   they verified that we had a workable prevention for  
10                  unfettered short-term rentals. I also want to add,  
11                  New York is somewhat unique. Most other  
12                  jurisdictions adopt new rules to apply to an  
13                  explosion or a proliferation of short-term rentals.  
14                  In New York City, it has always been illegal to rent  
15                  out your entire home, and so we have always had the  
16                  good fortune to simply be able to enforce our  
17                  existing laws and invent new ways like Local Law 18  
18                  to ensure that those Local Laws are followed.

19  
20                   CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent.

21                   DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: I'll also--  
22                   If I may. A huge part of my role at HPD is to  
23                   evaluate new program changes, changes in laws, new  
24                   programs put into effect, and while I know there has  
25                   been research evaluating this issue coming out on

both sides, what I would say with quite confidence is that two years is a very short amount of time for us to see the impacts of any change in the law or new programs and its effect on the market. So, you know, I don't expect that while we share some of the data that we have about this part of the stock and how that's changed from 21 to 23, I would just caution that everyone that this is a very short time period.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. Thank you. Thank you for that first round. Council Member Narcisse? Oh, I'm sorry, I need to acknowledge that we've been joined by Council Member Paladino

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: I want to be clear on that, because I am for structure. I love structure, but there's one thing that is in the room that-- the elephant in the room that we need to address is the fact that people are losing their home for real, and it's Black and Brown folks and low-income. What would you have me say to seniors, immigrants, workers, hard-working people, homeowners in my district and across the city that have been told short-term rentals are the lifeline they have, the only way they can afford their mortgage and stay in their homes and the city they love, and the

1 generational wealth we talk about-- if you oppose  
2 this path, what is your alternative for those folks?  
3 I hear the nice lovely statistic you gave, how you're  
4 helping, but when I'm looking on TV, I'm seeing  
5 somebody losing their home over \$5,000. That's  
6 tough. And what we do-- we're not saying Local Law  
7 18 is the wrong one. I am 100 percent to understand  
8 it, but all I'm asking is [inaudible]-- I mean, we  
9 have to kind of carve this little space for the  
10 people that need to breathe. So, what do I say to  
11 those folks?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: Council  
14 Member, you're right. We share your concerns. This  
15 is an incredibly difficult issue and some of the most  
16 difficult issues that we have in the housing policy  
17 space are when we are looking at how we protect both  
18 low- and moderate-income homeowners and low- and  
19 moderate-income renters at the same time. And some of  
20 that-- in those moments what we find that we try to  
21 do is to look at all the potential consequences, and  
22 can we find policies or ways that were to the every  
23 extent possible helping both sets of communities who  
24 are all at risk in our housing market--

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: [interposing]

But right now, there is nothing. There is no recipe for those people that's losing their home. They're losing their home over \$5,000. How many of the city folks call them and say, I have that money for you. Let me take your deed, your home that you worked so hard back to you hand. It has not been done. So when we're talking about why we're going to this direction-- I'm not a person that like conflict. I'm a nurse. I like to solve problem, come with a solution. I'm looking for that solution for those folks, and right now, would you say that New York City have the toughest law in the book right now for Airbnb protection? I think that we have--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: [interposing]

Well, so I'm not going to--

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: one of the toughest one in New York City with structure, with the law and policy for short-term rental.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: So, on that piece, if you don't mind I'm going to defer to my colleague, but I do want to respond to your earlier comment. It is incredibly important to us that we continue to invest in this space and make sure that

we have the best possible programming. I did describe some of the ways that we've rolled out new opportunities, new things through our Office of the Homeowner Help Desk. We want your feedback. We want to work with you to make sure that we are offering as many opportunities to stabilize people as possible.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: But while you're rolling it, people are losing their home. They don't have a space. They're homeless, and their tenant become homeless with them, too. That's the problem we're facing. And what's the percentage are we talking about in the housing market? We have vacancy in NYCHA we cannot even fix right now. So why don't we fix that, administration? Fix that and make sure people have more opportunity before we touch an area that people invest their livelihood in. Give them a chance. That's all I'm asking. No politics. Nothing like that. I'm not interested in politics. A lot of people that knows me, I'm more like straightforward, talking about it, let's find a solution. I don't want to fight with anyone. I just want a solution for those folks that coming to me. And I feel like that's my responsibility to carve it out, to make sure that we give them room to breathe,

1 and yet, make sure that people not ten-- that we  
2 don't have developers buying the whole block and  
3 doing all that. That's not what I'm in for. I'm not  
4 in that. I'm not interested, but I'm interested in  
5 those people that crying on my shoulder. Now, you  
6 can answer your question. Thank you.

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Sure. And  
9 I appreciate your passion, and I can say that I share  
10 the sympathy and understanding. We've heard-- I have  
11 personally heard from hundreds if not thousands of  
12 hosts at this point. We did extensive rule-making  
13 hearing, and what we heard from people is that they  
14 wanted to use short-term rentals to pay their  
15 mortgage, to pay their bills.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: It's real.

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: We  
18 understood that. We heard that loud and clear, and  
19 we're also mindful that small homeowners and two  
20 families, if a tenant stops paying rent are at  
21 greater risk than an owner of a large building. That  
22 was a very clear takeaway. I will say a couple of  
23 things. All the folks that bought these homes,  
24 bought these homes with the rules in place that  
25 prohibited them from having entire home short-term

1 rentals, and that it cannot be that the solution to  
2 allow them to generate income which they can do  
3 through legal short-term rentals-- my office has bent  
4 over backwards to help people, to help them  
5 understand the process to clear violations that would  
6 prohibit a registration, to help them understand that  
7 the property they bought doesn't have a certificate  
8 of occupancy that allows what they were led to  
9 believe. We've heard from a lot of homeowners who  
10 were sold properties with illegally finished  
11 basements and attics that they thought this is  
12 valuable living space, and in fact, it's illegal and  
13 dangerous living space. We've-- you know, we work  
14 with them to correct them. I-- you know, when we had  
15 a huge backlog, I was in the office until nine  
16 o'clock at night giving people 20-30 minutes of my  
17 time walking them through point by point here's what  
18 the law is, here's what you can do. The other thing  
19 that we can do and that we need folks to do,  
20 especially if it's a two-family, is rent the unit to  
21 a permanent tenant. We--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: [interposing] I  
24 have folks that rent out the unit. People cannot  
25 pay. They have disabled folks, and because of the

lifeline of the short-term, they're able to maintain the roof over their head and the person that it needs in the New York City instead of being on the street of our city. We talking about legalize the basement. Not-- many places we cannot do that, especially in the coastal areas. That's a problem. So, in the meanwhile, the little less than one percent we're talking about, we're not taking the right away. We give them a lifeline and we let them stay in their home, and the structure we have-- I'm for structure. I am for rules, and then New York City have the toughest one in New York City. So, let's make sure that we give them a little way-- a little wiggle way for them to maintain it legally, legally, and for them to be able to pay the mortgage. I don't want to see extra folks, more folks on the street of New York being homeless because they cannot maintain the home that they love, they invest in, and to stay in their community. That's all I'm asking. I'm not being difficult, and they're not being difficult. If they were being difficult, I would be the first one to walk out.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I certainly know and no one thinks you're being difficult.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: I'm not a difficult person.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I--

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: [interposing]  
I'm a easy-going, but we have to get solution to a problem, and the problems right now, the way it is, they don't have a lifeline. It's just like I have a lifeline. I'm in a hole, in a deep hole. Somebody give me a rope and you come, you cut it totally. That's what Local Law 18 did to them, dropped them back. So, let them go forward and give them a chance to breathe. That's all I'm asking. And HCC, everyone, I'm ready to talk about it. this have to go through to give a lifeline, because it's--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Black and Brown people and low-income. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you to our bill sponsor. I'm going to go through the Council colleagues who signed up for questions, and then if there's a second round and you have more questions, of course, you can let us know. You can let me know. So, next up is Council Member Abreu.

COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Thank you, Chair.

New York State's Multiple Dwelling Laws bands on hosted rentals under 30 days unless a permanent resident is present. If Intro 948A removes the host preference requirement, how would your office enforce permanent occupancy?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: 948A

actually doesn't remove the host presence requirement in multiple dwellings. It only removes it in one- and two-families which is in its own somewhat problematic to treat people differently depending on where-- what kind of unit of housing they live in. but the larger question about permanent occupancy is a very good one. It is very challenging to prove permanent occupancy. When Local Law 18 was adopted, part of the goal was to let legal short-term renters have a very clear path forward by knowing before they put their listing up-- I mean, look, if you go online right now, you'll be told that if you rent your entire place for seven days, you can make \$2,600. That's illegal, right? But that's the recruitment, and when a host does that thinking oh, it's online-- and we've heard this from defendants in lawsuits. If it's online, how is it not legal? Then, people are

1 putting themselves in harm. They're getting fines  
2 because they're breaking the law. So, protecting  
3 them from those fines by giving them a clear path  
4 registration showing that they live there was part of  
5 the goal. Knowing that we were going to be regulating  
6 legal hosts, we made it very easy to prove permanent  
7 occupancy. Two pieces of mail that show that you are  
8 getting mail at the address that you are trying to  
9 register that are not the kind of mail that you would  
10 want to go somewhere else, utility bills, tax  
11 statements, things like that. If they don't have--  
12 and in the course of doing that, people are sending  
13 us false documents on a regular basis and lying to us  
14 about where they are, and if they have multiple  
15 homes-- I've had applicants say I live in two places.  
16 The kind of investigation that we would need to do to  
17 prove which place they live in advance would require  
18 far more documentation, would likely require proof  
19 that they're paying income taxes in New York City.  
20 And then if we had reason to believe that they  
21 actually had lied to us and were not the permanent  
22 occupant and they're not required to be there during  
23 a stay, requires a degree of enforcement that nobody  
24 wants, right? Like, are we going to have to go to  
25

1                   their house 180 days a year to prove that they don't  
2                   actually live there? Do we have to do a pre-  
3                   inspection before we grant a registration? Right  
4                   now, we don't do that. That was the original  
5                   proposal and OSE said we don't need to have--

6                   COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: [interposing] Thank  
7                   you. I want to be able to get in one more question  
8                   before my time's done.

9                   EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: inspection.  
10                  Okay.

11                  COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: I think you've  
12                  answered it.

13                  EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: And also,  
14                  if anything is about housing, I think we're running  
15                  out of time with Deputy Commissioner Joffe.

16                  COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: If property owners  
17                  begin buying homes with mortgages dependent on short-  
18                  term rental income, how does OSE envision enforcing  
19                  permanent occupancy when the financial structure  
20                  depends on non-permanent use?

21                  EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I don't  
22                  envision that we would get to the point where we  
23                  thinking about the wisdom of the mortgage, but I  
24                  appreciate the question, and we touched on this in  
25

our testimony. Just like COVID was devastating to homeowners, many of whom are here to testify today, any slow-down, any pandemic when you are assuming a certain amount of mortgage payment based on income that could evaporate either through competition, through changes in regulation, etcetera, could be potentially devastating, and I don't know if Deputy Commissioner Joffe has anything else to add about foreclosure?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: Well, I think what I would note is that-- which may be relevant to your question. What we're talking about here is like the rest of our stock, mostly occupied homes. We have an incredibly low vacancy rate. It plummeted between 21 and 23. So, when we talk about the potential impacts either because someone is newly purchasing the home or existing and someone is saying that they are now going to start using short-term rentals as a lifeline for helping to stabilize. There is already someone living in that home currently, someone who is also likely to be vulnerable. The income of renters in one- and two-family homes is significantly lower than the income of owner-occupied residents of ones and twos. It

doesn't mean that they're not both struggling to keep up with costs, but this just is something that we have to think about when we talk about any expansion or this as a new lifeline for folks. We are talking about the necessary-- potentially the necessary removal of the current tenant which exacerbates some of our current challenges.

COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council Member Abreu. I'd now like to call Council Member Hudson, followed by Zhuang.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you so much, Chair, and forgive me in advance if you've shared some of these numbers, but I just want to make sure I have them correct. How many one- to two-family homes are currently registered to host under the existing provision of Local Law 18?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: 2,223.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you. And to your knowledge, how many one- to two-family homes that were previously short-term rental hosts no longer did so after Local Law 18 passed?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I'm not-- I think we'd have to look for more data to get there.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: So, you can just--  
- you can follow up?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Yeah, I  
think we'll have to follow up.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: With us? Okay.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: So, one of  
the things I can note, it is-- apologies, Council  
Member. I noted this that we group seasonal or  
occasional use together. That includes but is not  
limited to short-term rentals. Of those that were  
available for rent, meaning they were not being used  
as seasonal or for seasonal or occasional use in 21,  
by 23 we actually saw an increase of six percent of  
those were now being used for seasonal or occasional  
use as of 23. Some of the data, obviously, we'll be  
back in the field in 27. So, this is not the perfect  
timeline to which to look at a recent law change, but  
we have seen both plummeting vacancy, an overall  
decrease in-- across the board and in the units that  
we consider to be off the market because they're off  
the market for occasional or seasonal use. But of  
those that were available for rent in 21 when we had  
more vacancy in the market, some have moved towards  
seasonal or occasional use as of 23.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay, thank you.

And how many one- to two-family homeowners do you anticipate will apply registration should this law pass?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: We really can't--

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: [interposing] I know it's hard to say.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: It's hard to say, right? But there is nothing to limit. Right? There's no group that you could say this group could and this group could not, at least as currently contemplated under the law.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay. And then my last question. How do you interpret the bill's use of the term "primarily" rather than exclusively regarding host occupancy? And what do you believe this means regarding what types of one- to two-family homeowners may be eligible to list their homes for short-term rentals?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I think with respect to my colleagues time and the Committee's time, and the other folks, we did touch on that earlier and I would like to just rest on the

prior comments just to not retread on ground, or I'd be happy to meet with you to go over that point.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you, Council Member Hudson. Council Member Zhuang?

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Deputy Commissioner, come to testify. I want to-- I have a couple questions. The first one, on your testimony you said the Department responds to every single 311 complaint. Our current response time is nine days. I just want to know how accurate it is.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: So, our current response time to 311 complaints for an inspection is nine days, and we do respond to every 311 complaint. Not every response is an inspection. We may get, for example, multiple complaints about the exact same location within a short period of time, and so not every complaint requires an inspection, but every complaint is reviewed by one of our staff to assess whether an inspection is needed or some other response.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: But very often we see from our constituents the 311 complaint that

filed, they never get a response [inaudible] closed.

And also, according to current law requiring inspections done within 90 days. So, this issue have to be fixed. And all those news-- according to the information you gave, all those news affect news, right?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: So, we do respond to every 311 complaint. In order look into your comments that there are complaints that we haven't responded to, I would need to see the details of that, but we do respond to those complaints. We will-- a staff person would review and as I noted, not every response requires an inspection if for example we have recently conducted an inspection and are working to-- with that property owner to make sure that the rat conditions are addressed. And we do encourage people to check the Rat Information Portal where we list the-- every-- all of the inspection work that we do, we list there so New Yorkers can go and check on a-- you can type in a specific address and check to see our activity, the date that we were there, whether we conducted bating, whether we've done enforcement action. To respond to specific 311 complaints, I would need to see those,

and we would be happy to follow up. Sometimes those can help us troubleshoot if something went wrong, but I can't answer specifics about specific 311 complaints.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: We have a lot of 311 complaints in my district, and yesterday I got one. The person lives next to the subway station. Subway station has a lot of rats. They bait-- the homeowner baits their home and the rat come to their house and bite the small dog.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: So, we would-- I would be happy to follow up with you about that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: They filed 311 complaint. The 311 complaint just closed.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Why don't we follow up with you about that specific complaint.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: We have a lot of cases needed to follow up. Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council Member Zhuang. So, entering round two I have just two more questions for-- that I think are-- might be for HPD. And then I think Council Member Narcisse

also has some questions. So, has the City tracked investor or private equity purchase of one- and two-family homes in recent years? If 948A were to allow more profitable unhosted short-term rentals, do you anticipate the intensification of speculative buying in working-class neighborhoods as advocacy organizations have raised concerns about, and what data are you relying on?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: Thank you for that question, and I am deeply sorry for the inconvenience of-- I have a family obligation to leave for. So, we do not have a role in regulating these transactions, as I mentioned earlier. We attempt to track as much as we can about what's happening in the housing market. This is one of the very challenging things for us to look at, and the state actually recently took action. They passed a law that will go into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026 which would require non-exempt LLCs to disclose beneficial owners, because it's one of the biggest obstacles to us really understanding who is purchasing or owns homes across the city. So, unfortunately, right now it's pretty difficult for us to have good insight into that. We are hoping that that will be easier.

1 We don't actually know of I'm not totally clear on  
2 our access to the data eventually, but hopefully  
3 that'll be something that we can get a better sense  
4 of over time. It's always quite difficult to predict  
5 what will happen in the future for any number of  
6 reasons, both directly in response to a change in the  
7 law, but also with just the fact that so many  
8 different things, unpredictable things, can happen  
9 that influence behavior. You know, I can't say I can  
10 rule-- I can't say we can rule out that that could  
11 happen, but it would be hard for me to say what we  
12 think would happen.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And  
15 just a quick clarifying question. You said which  
16 kinds of LLCs are required to disclose beneficial  
17 owners?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: Non-exempt  
19 foreign and domestic LLCs will have to disclose  
20 beneficial owners.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: In regular people  
22 terms?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: It is a very  
24 good question. I don't have a definition of exempt  
25

with me today, and I would be happy follow up.

Apologies for not catching that.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: No problem. Thank you. We just want to make sure we know what we're getting, and if there you know, legislation that the Council should, you know, consider to--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: make it for further clear. Okay, so next question, I have deep concerns that the permanent resident rule and unit-specific registration, would mean that a second unit or an unnecessary dwelling unit in a two-family home will be illegally turned into full-time short-term rental use, even if that's not the intention of the sponsors. So, I think you touched on this a bit, Mr. Klossner. So formal, right? I think you touched on this a bit, but again how would OSE verify that that second unit is not being used exclusively for short term rental guests once the owner is allowed to be off-site. You talked about documents, how does that help-- and you talked about sending inspectors more frequently, but what does it really look like?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Sure. When the Local Law 18 was being negotiated, OSE took the

position that we did not want to do a pre-registration inspection. But I think a pre-registration inspection would be critical to determine that someone's personal belongings were on site. And of course, you know, we know from San Francisco that people would stage their units to make it appear. It would be that we would perhaps have to have audits and then consequences for not being granted access. That is not something that we want. I don't think it's something that hosts that are here to testify here wants. It would be very hard, though, if-- proving that someone lives there when they actually are not there for most of the year is guaranteed to be an intrusive process in order to be effective. Or it is guaranteed to not be effective.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Can you that with-- let's move into a world where this is the case. Can OSE conduct pre-registration inspections with existing resources? Because I did note that both we and OMB saw a fiscal impact of zero, but that sounds like a lot more work for your agency.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: If there weren't additional resources, then it would mean taking all of our enforcement staff away from

1 actually responding to complaints that I discussed in  
2 my testimony, something that I think would not meet  
3 the city's obligations to do. I also note that a pre-  
4 inspection would subject the homeowner to any  
5 violations that an inspector saw when they were on-  
6 site. We do not have a capacity to do advisory  
7 inspections. For one- and two-family homeowners who  
8 have never received a violation, many of those would  
9 instead result in a request for corrective action  
10 instead of a violation, so it may not be that risky,  
11 but if the property had a history of violations, it  
12 could be that, you know, going ot make sure someone  
13 is a permanent occupant could result in lots of fines  
14 that, you know, could simply be avoided by not  
15 getting rid of the permanent occupant rule.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Have  
18 you seen false or misleading documentation? Do you  
19 expect there to be more?

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Yes, I  
21 have. Yes, I do.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And last  
23 question and I'll turn it over to Council Member  
24 Narcisse. Since Local Law 18 took effect, has-- does  
25 the city have an estimate of how many units have

1 attempted, or how many owners, or yeah, apartments  
2 have attempted to or have returned to short-term  
3 rental use to the long-term rental market? If we  
4 pass 948 and 1107, what is your best estimate of how  
5 many-- I think you actually answered this earlier.  
6 So, apologies-- if you did, just say I already  
7 answered that, but I just want to make sure not to  
8 miss this question.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: So, as you  
11 know, because we have the occasion of talking to you  
12 a lot about the New York City Housing and Vacancy  
13 Survey, it's a longitudinal study, and within the  
14 decade we go back to the same homes which gives us  
15 the unique opportunity to see how exact occupants of  
16 a home and that home has changed over that time. So  
17 we are two surveys into this decade. Normally it's  
18 three. We are doing four for extra credit this year  
19 because of conflict with the decennial census in  
20 2020. So, we will-- I mentioned that we saw a-- of  
21 the homes that were on the market and available for  
22 rent in 21 when we had actually a pretty high vacancy  
23 rate, the highest that we've had in decades, and then  
24 when that vacancy rate plummeted in 23, we saw about  
25 six percent of those homes not become occupied as

rentals, but instead become occupied or taken out of our vacancy calculation and become unavailable for rent because they were now being used for seasonal or occasional use. That reflects a change in how we think an improvement of how we are assessing. To some of the point, it is quite difficult to assess a seasonal or occasional use, and we made improvements on that for 2023. We will be back in the field starting in this-- starting this January and in front of the Council with findings in 27. I know that's not timely enough for this bill, but we will-- we do expect to be able to share at least what we've seen over that time period at that point.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Council Member Narcisse?

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you for being here, and I can help by saying the reason that you're cannot figure a good number, because what we talking today is so minuscule. It's less than one percent. And I want to ask a question. Do you what's the vacancy rate at NYCHA houses right now? Do you know by any chance?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: I actually don't work at the New York City Housing--

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: [interposing]

You don't have no clue what the vacancy rate in NYCHA right now?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: I don't know. I'd have to defer to my colleagues.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Because that will help me, because I love numbers. that will help me to tell you what we can do right now to make sure people that's homeless, people really need [inaudible] can get a place, a roof over their head. Let's do that and concentrate on that. That would be very helpful. For the help desk for the homeowner, how many foreclosure that you were able-- you were instrumental in making sure that they don't go through the process of foreclosure, that were able to hold their home in all the work, that wonderful work that we're doing?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: I'm looking to see. I don't know that I have numbers for a specific on foreclosures. I can absolutely check with my colleagues and get back to you on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: You'll get me. So, did you make any effort in the light of what you saw on TV of that guy that was crying for help saying

1 that his house in foreclosure for about I think  
2 \$5,000? Or have you ever had a chance to collaborate  
3 with the court system that we have? Because a lot of  
4 foreclosure go through the court system. So, have  
5 you made any attempt of getting the list to see how  
6 we can help folks out? Because sometimes in need  
7 they don't even know who they reach out to. They  
8 don't even know about the owner help desk. But now,  
9 we have a few folks, very minuscule, less than one  
10 percent that asking for help. They're suffering  
11 because of the law that we passed. So, now, we  
12 cannot be stubborn and hard-headed and not looking  
13 for a solution to this problem. That's all I'm  
14 asking. Because like I said, I don't like not having  
15 solution to problems, because if a person tell me  
16 they're sick-- I used to do home care or I was in the  
17 ER. I have to bring a solution. You the expert. You  
18 the smart people. So, let's try to see how we can  
19 help those that crying. I cannot ignore them,  
20 because they're real. They're coming to my office,  
21 and once upon a time I think a few years back,  
22 Canarsie area had the highest foreclosure, and this  
23 is real, and that's all I'm asking. I'm not being  
24 difficult. I know some folks may say why she touching  
25

1 it. I'm touching it because my heart is touching,  
2 because I can understand how somebody struggling and  
3 they cannot get help, and they just need a lifeline.  
4 They're not asking us to be in our shelter. They're  
5 not asking us for the money, but give them  
6 opportunity to hold their home, that's all. Simple.  
7 I'm very simple, by the way. Thank you. Appreciate  
8 you.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: Your  
11 partnership on this issue, your advocacy on this  
12 issue is incredibly important, and we look forward to  
13 continuing to work with you. I do want to note that  
14 the homeowner help desk received over 2,900-- or  
15 provided foreclosure prevention services for over  
16 2,900 households. We just kicked off a public  
17 awareness campaign about the help desk on November  
18 14th. one of the issues that you talked about,  
19 making sure that folks really know who and where to  
20 reach out to are aware of our programs. We know this  
21 is a major obstacle and something we're really  
22 working on, and that's part of the structure of how  
23 we set up some of our homeowner support services.  
24 So, not only is it HPD, but we are then partnering  
25 with the Center for New York City Neighborhoods who

1 is then also contracting with 17 community-based  
2 organizations to make sure that we have the widest  
3 reach possible. We've done direct outreach events,  
4 counseling, even individual door-knocking. We held  
5 66 lien sale events. We had about-- or more than  
6 1,500 attendees. 2,885 received counseling by that  
7 network of local community-based organizations that I  
8 mentioned. We've knocked on over 6,500 doors. We've  
9 also done some remote outreach. So, almost 475,000  
10 mailings, 71,000 phone calls, 16,000 emails, 18,000  
11 fliers. We've also attempted to do some marketing  
12 across traditional digital and social media. So,  
13 we've received millions of views through LinkNYC  
14 kiosks,--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: [interposing] I  
17 love your work. You don't even have to go, because  
18 we partner. But I want to know how many that we  
19 stopped from having a foreclosure and that number if  
20 we can tally that number, then I can say, okay, that  
21 we're doing amazing work. I'm doing all that. You  
22 know I'm big on that.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: Yeah.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: But there's--  
25 my colleagues probably not as much as I'm afraid of

1                   foreclosure, because I don't want nobody to have  
2                   foreclosure, and when I'm hearing those stories, they  
3                   hurt. They hurt. And my last question, if I may.  
4                   You know 50 percent of folks that live in the City,  
5                   the highest ever, happen to be Black folks, and a lot  
6                   of them happen to be those folks that own a home.  
7                   They cannot afford to do it, and that's the reason I  
8                   am asking let's do this. Let's carve it out a little  
9                   bit like the frog that I used to do in nursing school  
10                  to give people a lifeline. That's all I'm asking--  
11                  and the businesses and the small and the Black and  
12                  Brown folks and low-income folks, that's all. So, we  
13                  going to work this together and then reach an  
14                  agreement to make sure people have a lifeline.  
15                  That's all I'm asking. Thank you, Chair, for your  
16                  amazing time, for being so understanding of my  
17                  passion, because I'm hearing it over and over, and  
18                  now I'm like this. What do I do? What do I do? So,  
19                  we can do this. Let's clean out the vacancy. Put  
20                  more apartment in the market. The law that we have,  
21                  let's make sure it's fair and folks can hold their  
22                  home they work hard for. If anything-- I have to run,  
23                  because I have turkey giveaways, so I appreciate you.  
24                  I'm going to have my-- in the hearing, I'll be  
25

1 following you guys. But let's do it. We are New  
2 Yorkers. We don't want New Yorkers to lose,  
3 especially those that work so hard for our city to  
4 hold it down. Let's hold it down. Thank you.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Don't  
7 want you to get booted. Thank you, Council Member  
8 Narcisse, for joining us for that much time today. I  
9 really appreciate your presence here and you speaking  
10 first-hand. Thank you, Deputy Commissioner Joffe,  
11 for your daily installment of HPD hearings in the  
12 Council the last few weeks.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: Thank you.  
14 Appreciate your time.

15 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: So, now I want to  
16 move to the existing building code. First question  
17 is: rather than another incremental update to the  
18 2022 code, the Department of Buildings has chosen to  
19 create a full existing building code. In plain  
20 terms, can you describe why that was necessary and  
21 how will owners, especially of older housing stock  
22 like me, benefit from having a separate, clearer  
23 framework?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Thank you,  
25 Council Member. So, I think the current regulatory

scheme around doing alterations in existing buildings is a challenging one. Some of you may know the adoption of an existing building code was actually part of the model code program back in 2003.

Unfortunately, the National-- International existing Building Code could not be adopted wholly by the consensus committee at that time, and we needed to do a lot of work to draft something unique for New York.

The provisions that you see here have been specifically crafted around the fact that we have so unique things including the New York State Multiple Dwelling Law. Right now, if you were to alter a building, three-quarters of the City is one- and two-family homes, and three-quarters of the City was built before 1938. So that means if you're, you know, a property owner there's a high likelihood you're living in a one- or two-family home that is approaching 100 right now. The new modern standards that are in the International Building Code that we've adopted, the plumbing code, the mechanical code, the fuel gas code, they're geared towards new construction. And it's not a good fit for our older building stock that's approaching a century. We took the International Existing Building Code as a

1 framework and then worked with our team, both  
2 internally at DOB, outside consultant experts, as  
3 well as committee members across a broad set of  
4 stakeholders to make sure that we took into account  
5 all of these provisions, but right now if you were to  
6 work in one of these buildings, for instance, you  
7 would have to start with the administrative code  
8 which is 2022 administrative code. Then hopefully  
9 the scope of work, you try to use the 1968 code as a  
10 provision. So, you have to go back to the 1968 code.  
11 Then, if that code permits you, because the scope of  
12 the work you're proposing to do is less than 30  
13 percent of the cost of the building, a very  
14 subjective number that you now have to prove to the  
15 Buildings Department. Then you can go back to the  
16 1938 or earlier codes that your building was actually  
17 designed to, but at the same time, because technology  
18 and safety has advanced. There's still a list of 20  
19 items in the administrative code that must comply as  
20 new or with some other set of regulations. Now, if  
21 that building happens to be a three-family, then  
22 you're also required to comply with the New York  
23 State Multiple Dwelling Law. So, you have 22 admin  
24 codes and 1968 code, the 1938 code, the 1929 Multiple  
25

Dwelling Law, and the current plumbing mechanical fuel gas codes, and maybe parts of the building code for fire safety. That is overly complicated not just for property owners, but the Buildings Department has to train our examiners. We have to train the staff to answer questions about this to everybody from a small property owner to land use attorneys, to you name it from that standpoint, and we have to interpret for the public and for the City Council as well.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Just clarifying, did you say that in 2003 the consensus committee could not adopt--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: [interposing] They started. They were unable to conclude which is how we ended up with the 28101.4.3 and the 1968 code continuing on. And the long list that I think it started out as like 10 items and it is growing to 20.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And you were here for that in 2003?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: I was not. That predates me.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Oh, okay.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: That predates me, but--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] I was going to say--

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: [interposing] we do have--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Gus knows it all.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: We do have some folks at DOB that are still-- still remember those days, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: How often does that patchwork lead to errors in alteration applications or delays in approvals, and how does the existing-- well, we know how the existing building code was resolved at, but what have seen in the past in terms of mistakes?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Oh, this is significant in that, you know, there's debates let's say when there's changes that impact let's say fire or life safety system that is in some instances required to comply as new, and in other instances permitted to stay using the same existing system design but with updated components. These end up being determinations that require going to Borough

Commissioner that can then be later appealed. They can hold up a project for a significant amount of time. It may require you to-- in some instances the uncertainty, and then finding out after plan review and denial of an appeal or a variance request, it may be the end to your project, because you can no longer afford to go forward. What we're hoping to do here is give clarity and understanding as to what the requirements are up front for everyone so that way people can make an informed decision before ever visiting DOB as to what the requirements are.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. One concern that has-- excuse me. One concern has been that code triggers can force very costly all-or-nothing upgrades. Can you give us some real examples where the existing building codes, work area, and level of alteration concepts will reduce unnecessary costs while still maintaining safety? And my pet from your items highlighted in the testimony, you mentioned that you're creating-- EBC creates a limited home improvement permit for one- and two-family dwellings to be filed by the homeowner or a licensed home improvement contractor. Can you talk a

1 little bit about the scopes of work that this change  
2 contemplates?

3  
4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Sure. So,  
5 two-part question there. I think some of the changes  
6 as far as being incremental improvements as opposed  
7 to wholesale upgrades, there are instances the  
8 current scheme that's adopted in the 1968, for  
9 instance, is cost-based. It requires the property  
10 owner and the professional to present the cost of  
11 construction and demonstrate that the cost of  
12 construction as compared-- for the last 12 months--  
13 as compared to the value of the building. So, now,  
14 we're expecting our examiners to be experts in five  
15 different sets of codes and be property assessors and  
16 construction cost estimators and to debate, you know,  
17 whether or not sprinkler work should cost that much.  
18 One of the scenarios, for instance, seismic retrofit  
19 has been a challenge. New York City has had seismic  
20 requirements since 1995. Right now, I think if  
21 you're adding new foundations or reinforcing new  
22 foundations to an existing building, and then  
23 increasing the weight on those foundations by 20  
24 percent, you're required to do a full seismic  
25 upgrade. That in some instances prevents people from

1                   doing work on older buildings. The proposed existing  
2                   building code before you has incremental improvements  
3                   that can be done. So, for instance, when you're  
4                   working in a building with wood joists and bearing on  
5                   masonry walls, when you're within the work area, the  
6                   area that you're actually proposing to touch, you're  
7                   now required to connect those wood joists back to the  
8                   masonry wall. We provide prescriptive details of how  
9                   to go about doing that if you don't want to pay  
10                  someone to design them, but the idea is that the  
11                  designer can come up with their own detail, and as  
12                  you're renovating a space, you're providing this  
13                  incremental improvement that will improve the  
14                  building's structural stability overall. And it's a  
15                  quick and easy thing to do when you're already  
16                  renovating the space. So, for instance, if you're  
17                  completely renovating an apartment, you have the  
18                  ceiling down maybe for some other reason. You have  
19                  the ability to provide this very cost-effective  
20                  measure to improve structural stability which would  
21                  not only improve the building performance in wind or  
22                  in earthquake, but adjoining construction and just  
23                  overall, you know, long-term care of the building.  
24                  As far as the limited alteration applications  
25

1 themselves, that was something that the Department  
2 has had good success with on the plumbing, fire  
3 suppression piping, and boiler areas, and we thought  
4 there's good ways to expand this. Right now, there's  
5 probably a lot of ongoing work, construction work,  
6 that requires a permit happening in one- and two-  
7 family homes that it's not getting the benefit of a  
8 plan review. It's not getting a benefit of a licensed  
9 contractor. It's not getting a benefit of a maybe a  
10 DOB inspection to help steer it in the right  
11 direction, and you know, those buildings, they're  
12 going to be around for some time, and you know, could  
13 present hazards. Our attempt here was to come up  
14 with prescriptive work that can be performed probably  
15 by a homeowner or reported by a homeowner. So that  
16 way, we can at least track, identify, and you know,  
17 provide guidance to what the criteria would be for  
18 that scope of work. You know any particular examples?

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ACKROYD: Yeah. I  
21 think we're really excited about the home improvement  
22 alteration, limited home improvement alteration. The  
23 fact that a homeowner can now do some of this work as  
24 well as a home improvement contractor would be a  
25 savings in that you wouldn't have to hire a

1 registered design professional or an architect or  
2 engineer to file plans with the Department. Some of  
3 the scopes of work include creating storage closets,  
4 insulating roofs-- the attics, I'm sorry-- as well as  
5 alterations to existing kitchens, bathrooms, and  
6 toilet rooms. So that's a very common type of  
7 alteration in these homes, and obviously you would  
8 still have to hire a licensed plumber and an  
9 electrician to do that type of work, but we think  
10 it's really going to be a benefit having a home  
11 improvement contractor doing these alterations  
12 without having to go through the plan review that  
13 would be required if you did it with a licensed  
14 design professional.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. You  
17 gave me a lot of ideas. Lastly, and then I'm going  
18 to turn over to Council Member Riley-- some  
19 stakeholders have implied that certain provision like  
20 the updated ordinary plumbing work definition were  
21 sprung on them as we've had discussions over the last  
22 few months. Can you briefly describe the committee  
23 process on how consensus was reached to make clear  
24 that industry representatives were at the table for  
25 these decisions?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Yes, definitely. So, all of the provisions of the code, whether it's the existing building code or any of our other code revision processes-- I'm going to give a plug for our 2022 code which is already under revision by Joe and his team for future adoption, and we have active committees right now, hundreds of stakeholders meeting on a regular basis going through the requirements. Our consensus process states that if any one member of the committee has an objection such that they cannot live with the text, they don't have to love every word of it, but if they cannot live with the text, that they can declare mediation, and we can move the text to out of the committee consensus process and into the mediation process. There were attempts through this process to try to come up with some kind of language that addressed everyone's concern and obtain consensus. That is common for our mediation process, and ordinary plumbing work was the only item that we could not get everyone back to the table and get consensus on. The Department took positions from all the stakeholders. We have-- we hear them out. Then we come up with what we propose as the solution, and we issue a

mediation memo out to both the managing committee, the Admin and Enforcement Committee in this instance, as well as the Plumbing Committee. The mediation memo was actually issued June 11<sup>th</sup> of this year as the final document, and it included background and all the key parties who testified as well as the final text that the Department chose to put into the document. I think, you know, on the positive side, the fact that, you know, this whole front half of my three-ring binder is the hard work of the committee members. The only thing that they could not agree on was that one item where we addressed the concerns, but it was an open concern for quite some time and we did do a lot of outreach as part of the mediation process to make sure that everybody was at least aware of what the Department's final position was going to be.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner. Council Member Riley?

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you, Chair Sanchez and thank you for your leadership on hosting this hearing today. Thank you to the administration for being here. I just have a few questions. Given the data indicating that rents have increased and

vacancies have remained flat since the implementation of Local Law 18, despite a significant decrease in short-term rentals, what specific evidence does the agency have to demonstrate that the current regulations are effectively addressing the housing shortage and the affordability crisis?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Local Law 18 wasn't meant to address it in its entirety, right? Rent is a complex set of factors, and people who are described-- let me say what Local Law 18 was intended to do. It was intended to stop permanent housing from being used from short-term rentals because it was linked to rent increases. It was not intended to lower rent. It was meant to stop people from taking units of housing out of the housing stock. So--

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: [interposing] So, I understand that. Commissioner, I only have three minutes. So, I understand that. I'm not saying it does. That's the argument that's being portrayed, so that's the only reason I brought that up. So, I understand that was in the cause of Local Law 18, but that's the argument that's being brought to us as legislators. So, I'll move on to the next question, because you said that wasn't the cause [inaudible].

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER:

[interposing] If I may? I just--

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: [interposing] Of course.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I would refer back to the legislative history, right? You can read what was said at the prior hearings and during the adoption and it was not promised. The promise was if we prevent these units from being used for short-term rentals, the sponsor of the bill actually said our hope is that they will be returned to the rental market.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Okay.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Many of them have been.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you, Commissioner. Were you finished, Commissioner?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Alright, thank you. Is there any specific data or analysis the agency conducted to assess the impact of Local Law 18 on different demographic groups, particularly Black and Latino homeowners, and how does proposed

amendments like Intro 948 address any disproportionate burdens identified?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I would refer you back to the record. We didn't do any studies on the impacts of the bill.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Okay. How will the agency ensure that if this is passed, the implementation of Intro 948 will prevent potential for speculative purchasing or the conversion of housing units into de facto hotels while still allowing owners, homeowners the benefits from home sharing opportunities?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: I'm not sure at this point. This is part of-- you know, the laws have an effective date of one year and it will take a lot of creative thinking. As the Chair of the Committee recognized, it could potentially take additional resources to ensure that we could do adequate investigations to make sure that it's a permanent, that the people are permanent occupants. And we would likely have to make far more stringent the application process to ensure that we had enough information to be sure it was someone's permanent occupancy.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you, Commissioner. And I just want to state for the record, I appreciate the service and appreciate your answering all this, and I think my approach and my advocacy is just for homeowners. We have a lot of homeowners within our community that their houses are going up for sale. There feels like there's no relief for homeowners whatsoever. When we have conversation of affordable housing, we have to talk about those who work hard for their homes that they actually have, and currently right now with the Housing Court system that we have, we have property taxes going up with deed theft, foreclosures happening, there is nothing for homeowners out there. So, I think that's where we're coming with this conversation, and we just want to have a conversation. It feels like we're being turned into a cartel because we just want to have a conversation just, you know, to supply some form of relief for homeowners. So, I appreciate your answers. I appreciate you for having us here, Chair, and thank you.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KLOSSNER: And absolutely we're available to continue that conversation.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council Member Riley. Moving back-- we're having like four hearings in one. It's really fun. Moving back Department of Buildings and the Energy Conservation Code. State law requires that our energy conservation code is at least as stringent as the state's. In two or three examples, how does the New York City code go further than the 2025 state code, and how did the advisory committees make sure that those provisions were still cost-justified and feasible for owners and designers?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Thanks, Council Member. I'm being joined by some colleagues from our Sustainability Unit.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: We'll have to swear you in first. Welcome.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and to answer all Council Member questions honestly? Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED: Sorry, can you repeat the question?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Sure. The energy conser-- the State Law, State Law requires the Energy Conservation Code to be at least as stringent as the State's. in two or three examples, how does the New York City code as proposed in the bills before us today further than the 2025 State Code, and how did the Advisory Committees make sure that those provisions were still cost-justified and feasible for owners and designers?

UNIDENTIFIED: So, the-- our proposed code that's in the draft is more stringent in terms of insulation values which were already more stringent than the state values. We're increasing the air leakage testing requirements for the housing stock, that new construction, and we've also kept the-- the sort of lighting values for buildings that were also already more stringent than the state code at this point in time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Once this new energy code is adopted, what is the Department of Building's concrete plan to ensure that design professionals, contractors and small owners--

woah, sorry-- actually understand and comply with the changes before the effective date?

UNIDENTIFIED: So, as in the past, we've updated our website with information about the new code. There'll be a published-- or a website-published version of the code itself. We will update our how-to guide, the training materials that contains, and we'll also be doing sort of presentations to industry professionals and applicants that could be sort of-- they'll be recorded, and then those can also be posted on the website.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. I'm going to stop touching the microphone at this time. Thank you. I would definitely want to stay in communication with the Department about these outreach attempts and scope just because I-- this is so dense, and for the homeowners and the owners themselves they can often go beyond our head and just be hard to find even on the Department's website. Third question here is what is the Department's position on including performance-based compliance pathways such as a passive house-- such as passive house in the energy codes?

UNIDENTIFIED: That's something that we did have discussions with the state about, and they advised us that we should pursue that in more detail over the course of time with them, but it's definitely something that I think we would have under consideration.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: But it's not happening in this code?

UNIDENTIFIED: Not in this code cycle, no.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Do you have an estimate of when we would be entertaining it, entertaining adding it to the city code?

UNIDENTIFIED: An estimate is difficult, but certainly--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing]  
Because of us.

UNIDENTIFIED: Certainly-- yes, certainly part of the performance-based code that we're looking to introduce as was previously mentioned.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Turning to the Department of Health. Intro 1217 moves us from a typically two weeks "inspection window" on rat complaints to a 10-day requirement. How many adc;

1 inspectors would the Department of Health need in  
2 order to comply with this new requirement?

3  
4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: So, our  
5 service request protocol is 10 days. The 14 is  
6 calendar days, the 10 in the bill is business days.  
7 But it is a-- it is our target. So, we're still  
8 assessing what additional resources we would need if  
9 this were an actual mandate.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Okay.  
11 so we're not that far apart. And does the 2025--  
12 wait, no. That's the wrong question. Okay. Thank  
13 you. One more for the Department of Buildings. Does  
14 the 2025 New York City Energy Conservation Code  
15 create any new energy efficiency credits? If so, how  
16 would they work?

17 UNIDENTIFIED: That's actually a part of  
18 the code that is new. There is a section now where  
19 you're required to meet a certain number of credits  
20 based on things like improved insulation, more  
21 efficient HVAC, even better air leakage in your  
22 building, and much like this, the lead [sic] program  
23 that's very common for a lot of architects and  
24 occupants, you have to meet a certain number of  
25 credits in order to demonstrate compliance.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you.

And one more question, and-- it's just you and I, Eric, so let me know if you have any. It's all good. One more question from me-- well, two more questions from me on awnings and the small business relief bill. We're here proposing to extend the moratorium on awning fines-- well, we have extended the moratorium on awning fines several times now, because the initial wave of \$6,000 penalties blindsided small businesses. How will this bill shift Department of Building and Small Business Services from a fines first posture to a predictable, multi-lingual education and outreach model so that businesses understand the rules before they get cited? I believe we have to swear you in.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and to answer Council Member questions honestly?

UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED: I'm sorry Madam Chair, I think I may-- just may need you to repeat your question.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: No problem. How will this bill shift the Department of Buildings and Small Business Services from a fines first posture to a predictable, multilingual education and outreach model so that businesses understand the rules before they are charged?

UNIDENTIFIED: So, I think in this bill it does require the Small Business Administration to partner with Department of Buildings in putting out some educational material to small businesses, especially those who have signs up on their structures. And those for the Department would include service notices that can be-- that would elaborately explain the process of permitting, and especially now that the moratorium would be expanded would give time to these businesses to legalize and get those-- penalty-free, by the way-- to get those signs that they may have that identified as illegal or potentially illegal if they don't know for sure, to get those permits in place before the moratorium ends. We do have also a penalty-- a no penalty

relief program that we extend-- no penalty inspection program that we extend annually to the-- to accessory signs so that we can come and we can inspect and tell you if your sign is legal or not. And if not, then you have time, of course, to get them legal.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

Specifically, do you provide education materials when you're issuing these fines or when you're issuing these warnings?

UNIDENTIFIED: No, we do not at the present, but we're not doing that. We're not issuing-- for those that are covered by the moratorium, we're not going back and issuing violations for the new ones, no, because there was-- the moratorium has expired. But that is certainly a great suggestion that we have considered already that we'll have these information material ready that we can-- we do that for other violations as well, so we can do it here in the future when the moratorium is again lifted.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Understood. Thank you. Are there business owners that were-- that received fines since the moratorium lapsed in

February of this year and today, and if so, would those fines be going away?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, that's true. Yes, and there are provisions to have those violations withdrawn if this bill passes. Yeah, the Department will draw those violations through OATH, and there are refund policies with OATH for them to get-- if they did pay the fine already, to get it refunded.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And is that something that the Department will do proactively in terms of recalling the violations with OATH and reimbursing?

UNIDENTIFIED: We will. We will.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: I believe we also pointed out in our testimony to extend the applicability date which would add more folks to this.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And also add them to the OATH rescindment of violations and reimbursements?

UNIDENTIFIED: So, yes, so we will first just have-- when this bill passes, of course, we'll go back and identify those violations that were issued for no permitting legal signs going back to

1 the moratorium date, and we will administratively  
2 withdraw prosecution or summonses, summonses that  
3 we've issued to the OATH Tribunal, and of course the  
4 respondents of those violations do get notice of our  
5 withdraw, and so it is incumbent on them to then ask  
6 for a refund from OATH if they already had a paid a  
7 fine.  
8

9 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: So, it's not  
10 automatic. OATH, the refunds will not issue--

11 UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing] Respondent is  
12 not an automatic, but we can probably speak to OATH  
13 and see what can be done. I'm not sure if that's-- if  
14 that can be an automatic thing, but I'm sure we can  
15 reach out to them. Or educate those folks in the  
16 letter, that we withdraw the summons to give them  
17 process also for asking for a refund if they already  
18 paid.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you.  
20 And just to state on the record, that is an amendment  
21 that I'm interested in seeing, just more clearly  
22 reflected in the bill, but folks are having those  
23 violations withdrawn proactively by the Department  
24 and by OATH and also are receiving reimbursements in  
25 a way that is coming proactively from OATH and the

Department. Okay, and finally, this is just because I have received a constituent concern in the two days before the hearing. But can you share why there's a distinction between accessory signs and illuminated signs, and whether illuminated signs are treated differently? Are they subject to the moratorium?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: In general-- I'd have to go back and look at it a little bit more, just a little bit more in detail. But the idea is an illuminated sign versus-- an accessory sign is obviously-- or I shouldn't say obviously. The intention there is that it's accessory to something that's going on the business, on the lot itself. An illuminated sign, though, ends up being more-- projecting more light. It typically has carried more weight in the past. I think while technology is advancing, but there is a lot-- there was a lot more that goes along with this, an electrical permit to provide the illumination. So, there are a lot of-- a lot more complications that come along with an illuminated sign which can also be accessory or advertising as well. But the weight, the electrification, the complexity of the install, those

are all three things that make an illuminated sign something that's unique.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you. And so are they subject? Are illuminated sign violations subject to the moratorium?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: I believe so. They would be if they're accessory-- if they're also an accessory sign.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent, okay. With that, I believe our Council Member questions for the administration's panel is concluded. Thank you so much for your time, and we will be turning shortly to public testimony. Okay. Alright, I just want to inform everyone. So, we're going to take a 10-minute break, resume at 1:13 p.m., at which time I will open the hearing for public testimony, and I will read a script at that time, but just want to let everybody know we're going to resume at 1:13, because this lady has drank way too much coffee. Thank you.

[break]

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon. If everybody can find a seat. Everybody could find a seat. We are getting ready to continue. If everybody could please find a seat and settle down.

Everybody settle down, please. Everybody settle down, please.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Alright. I now open the hearing for public testimony. I remind members of the public that this is a formal government proceeding and that decorum shall be observed at all times. As such, members of the public shall remain silent at all times. The witness table is reserved for people who wish to testify. No video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony, but may submit transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant at Arms for inclusion in the hearing record. If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant at Arms and wait to be recognized, and when recognized, you will have 90 seconds, a minute and a half, to speak on today's hearing topic of Intro's 948A, 1107A, 1217, 1321, 1422, 1465, and Pre-considered Intro. If you have a written statement or additional written testimony you wish to submit for the record, please provide a copy of that testimony to the Sergeant at Arms, and if you have testimony that is written that

is longer than the 90 seconds allotted, I will ask you to wrap up and submit that testimony. You may also email written testimony to [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov) within 72 hours of this hearing. Again, audio and video recordings will not be accepted. The first panel consists of Dorothy Mazzarella, Margery Perlmutter, and Brad Keffer. You may begin when ready.

DOROTHY MAZZARELLA: Thank you very much. This is a very historic day, so I'm very happy to be here. Chair and Committee Members, and of course, staff, my name is Dottie Mazzarella. I'm the Vice President of Government Relations at the International Code Council. We produce the building construction codes that many states, U.S. territories, international and most of all, the New York City adopts. I am very, very, very thrilled to be here to lend support for Intro 1321 as well as 1422, and I would be remiss, and I failed and I will be sending testimony to also support Intro 4492 on the energy code. I was so caught up with the existing building code, that I totally blanked. So, I will be sending that forthcoming. So, as you're aware, New York City construction codes are based on the

international building, plumbing, mechanical, fuel, gas, and energy codes, and now very excited that it'll also be the existing building code. The IEBC was first released by the International Code Council in 2003, and the IEBC has now adopted and enforced in 45 states and U.S.-- three U.S. territories. As was mentioned by the Department of Buildings, when New York City first adopted the international codes back in 2008, the basis for the New York City construction codes, it was intended to adopt an existing building code. However, it was decided to post-pone that effort for future code cycle. And here we are. Accordingly in 2016, the effort was revised and the creation of a team to focus their efforts on this transparency-- that's it? Oh, my gosh.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You can conclude.

Yep.

DOROTHY MAZZARELLA: The last thing I just want to say is there's been so many training sessions, and the Department of Buildings is so dedicated to just inform the public, and I couldn't be more thrilled to be part of this. So, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much for your testimony.

BRAD KIEFER: Good afternoon. My name is Brad Kiefer. I am a practicing professional engineer in New York City, and a Co-Chair of the Structural Engineers Association of New York's Code Advisory Committee. We are a group of over 500 members. If you have-- some of us-- many of us have participated in the development of the EBC. I'm here today to urge the adoption of this code, Intro 1321. I share your excitement in this. We have been working a long time at this, and this will go a long way to help the profession and bring New York City into the forefront of engineering once again. We have one of the oldest building stocks in the country and we are working with codes that are over 50 years old. It's time that we come to the current codes and work with the latest technology. The proposed EBC will have several benefits. First and foremost, it's going to improve public safety. We have engineers who are working under best judgment that differs from one company to another company and from one professional to another professional. It'd be great if we can standardize this. it will increase-- it will decrease the time it takes for the Building Department to review our filings which will help the public in

general to start construction projects quicker. This will help keep the building stock in use rather than having to tear down buildings because they're not maintained. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And I just want to say to all who participated in this revision work. These super wonky topics have really been part of the highlight for me as Housing Chair is working with you all on this, because of your excitement, the expertise you bring to the table, and Austin's [sic] expertise. So, just thank you so much for that work. And just in time, Ms. Perlmutter? Whenever you're ready.

MARGERY PERLMUTTER: Is this on? It's on, right? Thank you so very much for allowing me the time to speak today. My name is Margery Perlmutter. I'm a Land Use Lawyer and an architect and the former Chair of the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals in the de Blasio administration. And I am going to speaking about the existing building code. New York City has tens of thousands of three to six-story occupied walk-up apartment buildings that are without elevators. This poses many hardships and dangers for the disabled, the elderly, EMTs who must

carry patients down the stairs to the ambulance, and for any person who become temporarily disabled or simply has too much to carry. Such buildings, most built before World War II, comprises significant portion of the City's actual affordable housing stock. The absence of elevators prevents everyone from aging or disabling in place, creates isolated shut-ins, and forces others out of their affordable homes into compromised living conditions in unaffordable apartments located outside of their original neighborhoods and away from long-time neighbors and friends, or into nursing homes with limited availability. Hence, the absence of elevators represents both a health emergency and an affordability emergency. In New York City, elevator regulations in the New York City Building Code-- uh-- oh, that was three minutes already?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: 90 seconds because we have 100 people signed up--

MARGERY PERLMUTTER: [interposing] Oh, it's 90 seconds.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: to testify. Thank you for your participation. But you may conclude, please.

MARGERY PERLMUTTER: Okay. I can conclude? Thank you. The International Building Code and the New York City Building Code prohibits the installation of elevators in five-plus story multiple dwellings that do not accommodate a stretcher. While installing such an elevator is an option in existing buildings that are being gut renovated, these enormous elevator shafts and cars generally cannot be installed as retrofits. In shorter buildings, the minimum clear dimension of the cab is very large, too large to fit it in a retrofit of an occupied tenement building where the areaways and yards would be the most practical location for the elevator. This means that an elevator installation would require a major renovation of a three to four-story occupied building, resulting in loss of space and apartments on every floor and major disruption if not removal of tenants. The New York City Zoning Resolution was amended in 2024 to permit elevators to be constructed in yards and courts, but limited the size to 20 percent of the area of the yard or court. This-- there's an image attached to my testimony that shows how it won't fit. I submitted

the testimony. I could just leave this with you.

Appendix K of the New York City--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you. I'm sorry, I do have to--

MARGERY PERLMUTTER: [interposing] It's just one paragraph. Appendix K of the New York City Building Code--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] I'm sorry, I can't. I'm sorry, just because-- especially this is the first panel.

MARGERY PERLMUTTER: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: But please do submit your testimony and we'll review. This is the codes panel, so we will be reviewing your testimony in connection. I'm sorry, just before you go, Dorothy, I want to acknowledge that you flew in to be here with us today, and just wanted to give you an opportunity if you wanted to share a bit more about your work.

DOROTHY MAZZARELLA: Oh, well thank you so much. You know, I've been so lucky. And when you did make a joke before when you were asking the Deputy Commissioner if had been here for that long-- I have been here since the adoption of the

1 international codes, and I was lucky enough to be at  
2 the very beginning. I used to work for the State of  
3 New York when New York went down the path to adopt  
4 the international codes, and then was lucky enough to  
5 start working here on the city. So, I have been  
6 intimately involved, and I will tell you this project  
7 to adopt the existing building code has just had so  
8 much passion and involvement. And we not only met  
9 with city agencies, but we wanted to also meet with  
10 every-- virtually every industry affected, and they  
11 are part of our team. So, we really did tremendous  
12 due diligence, but also knowing that as things arise,  
13 the City's always welcome to listen and hear  
14 comments. So, I couldn't be more thrilled to be a  
15 part of this team. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. Thank  
18 you so much, Dorothy. Thank you for all your work. I  
19 just want to make sure folks in the audience know  
20 that you do have to register to sign up. The way  
21 that you do that is you approach the Sergeants. They  
22 have these yellow slips, two-layer slips. Please do  
23 so that we have you on record and can call you up.  
24 So, now I'm going to move to the second panel. Just  
25 so folks know as we pull this up, what we do is we

alternate between for and against when we have heated topic. And so, we'll be doing that today. Okay?

Okay, so the first panel is Robert Desir from Legal Aid Society, Sam Stein from Community Service Society, Charlie Dusick-- sorry if I said that wrong-- Esteban Giron from Tenants PAC, Whitney Hu from Churches United for Fair Housing-- although, let me know if it needs to be someone else. I think you mentioned-- okay. And then Darius Gordon from Met Council. And whoever is ready first can begin.

Please make sure you say your name at the top of your testimony and if you're affiliated with an organization, your name and your affiliation.

SAMUEL STEIN: Thank you, Chair. My name is Samuel Stein. I'm a Senior Policy Analyst at the Community Service Society, long-standing anti-poverty organization in New York City. I did not know about the rest of the bills that were being heard today, but they sound great. In the interest of time, I'm testifying today in opposition to the Intro 948A and 1107 which would among other things open the door to allowing owners of one- and two-family homes to convert residential units into unregulated hotels. As CSS demonstrated in our recent report, Homes Not

Hotels, going down this road toward deregulation would be a grievous error which could lead to displacement of largely low-income plurality African-American tenants, make homeownership even less attainable for first-time home buyers. Our argument is essentially that there are hundreds of thousands of tenants who do not have leases, are not covered by rent stabilization. Most do not have good cause. Allowing this change could basically escalate property values dramatically which could basically make it harder for regular folks to buy a home, and then if they do buy that home, incentivize using short-term rentals instead of long-term rentals, thus exacerbating the housing crisis. We recognize that struggling homeowners desperately need ways to maintain their affordability of their homes, and we urge the city to pursue public policy interventions that address the problem directly.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

ROBERT DESIR: Good afternoon, Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Robert Desir. I'm testifying on behalf of the Legal Aid Society and Tenants Not Tourists, and I'm testifying in opposition to Intros 948 and 1107A. Local Law 18 is

doing exactly what it was designed to do. The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement reports that it has eliminated tens of thousands of illegal short-term rental listing, restoring transparency and protecting those units for long-term New Yorkers. these bills threaten to undo that progress. First, they weaken the core enforcement mechanisms of Local Law 18 by redefining who counts as a permanent occupant, and expanding short-term rental eligibility to arrangements that are difficult or impossible for the city to verify. Second, these proposals create serious risks for tenants in multi-family buildings. Altering the definition of family and common household to include lock-door configurations and absentee hosts opens the doors to unsafe transient occupancy conditions that the housing maintenance codes regulations were designed to prevent. Third, these bills are inconsistent with the state multiple dwelling laws which require Class A units to be used for permanent residents. Weaken occupancy definitions at the city level undermines the legal foundation that supports Local Law 18 and state housing protections. At a time when New York faces an acute housing shortage, every permanent unit matters.

These bills risk putting scarce housing back into the tourist market, destabilizing neighborhoods and undermining tenant protections. If I could just close? Local Law 18 protects tenants. It protects neighborhoods, and it protects the very housing stock that the city can't replace. For these reasons I urge the Council to reject 948 and 1107. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

WHITNEY HU: Good afternoon. Thank you, Chair Sanchez for bringing us together and holding down the fort alone right now. My name Whitney Hu and I'm the Director of Civil Engagement and Research at Churches United for Fair Housing, and I'm testifying against Intro 948A and Intro 1107A. From Crown Heights to Bushwick and Flatbush to Southeast Queens, we provide housing services and work with families trying to stay in their homes. Parents working two to three jobs, elders who want to remain near their churches, tenants who have survived every kind of hardship and yet are still being priced out. That is the reality we see every day. Intro 948A and Intro 1107A moves us in the wrong direction. It weakens Local Law 18 and reopens the door to unhosted short term rentals ,and one and two-family homes which make

up almost a third of the city's housing stock. Removing the requirement that a permanent residents be present conflicts the state law and invites the same speculative pressure that have already pushed out long-term residents across Brooklyn and Queens. We also need to name the risk of this bill shifts on to small homeowners. Many mortgages like FHA loans, with the majority of low to moderate income homeowners have, and insurance policies simply do not allow unhosted short-term rentals. Homeowners could lose coverage, violate their loans, or face serious liability if something goes wrong. Airbnb, meanwhile, assumes almost none of that risk while encouraging homeowners to take it on. We agree there's more to do-- be done to support Black and Brown homeowners, but we believe that means exploring more avenues for mortgage relief, investing in HPD programs like Home Fix, and of course, the very needed and long overdue property tax reform. We should be helping homeowners build long-term stability, not steering them towards a private company and business model that puts them at higher risk without proper safeguards. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

ESTEBAN GIRON: Good afternoon. My name is Esteban Giron. I'm the Political Director of Tenants Political Action Committee. Thank you, Chair Sanchez, for recognizing my mentor Michael McKee [sp?]. he considered Local Law 18 to be some of this best and most important work. The passage and implementation of Local Law 18 was a huge win for tenants across the City. As expected, Airbnb brought a legal challenge which ultimately failed. Almost overnight the crisis of short-term rentals came to an end. For most legislation that goes before the Council that would be the end of the story. Write the law. Pass the law. Survive a legal challenge and move on. But we found ourselves facing Intro 1107, a clear threat to tenants living in one- to two-family homes across the city. We mobilized and informed the tents not towards coalition and managed to weaken and finally stop that. And yet, here we are. We have to point out that Airbnb spent \$1.3 million this cycle to re-elect the sponsors of Intro 1107 and Intro 948. No-- now having a hearing three weeks before the end of session, because Airbnb knows tenants elected a pro-tenant incoming mayor who has vowed to oppose any weakening of Local Law 18. This

is a last-ditch effort to rush these bills through at the 11th hour with as little oversight and public input as possible. Tenants and workers won. Local Law 18 is working. And I say to these Council Members, respectfully, that came up with these bills that next year we will back to undo the mess if you pass these bills. Trust us when we say that we will come for every piece of this law that you steal from us, because tenants always stand ready to defend our homes and our neighbors. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

DARIUS GORDON: Let me have--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Extra points for the six extra seconds.

DARIUS GORDON: I was going to say, let me have some of this time since he finished early. Good afternoon. My name is Darius Gordon and I'm the Executive Director with Met Council on Housing standing with my colleagues to my left and right to say no to Intro 948A and 1107A. New York is in a real housing emergency. Rents are at a record high. Homelessness continues to climb, and the City has one of the lowest vacancy rates in decades. Every housing unit matters. But these bills will make it easier to

take thousands of homes off long-term market and turn them into short-term rentals and illegal hotels.

Currently, Local Law 18 enforces state law by requiring permanent residents to be present during short-term rentals. These new bills will remove these requirements and allow more transient use for one- and two-family homes, nearly a third of all of the New York City housing. This could push many units off the rental market and into speculative use, further increasing rents for millions of New Yorkers already struggling to stay housed. The truth is that Local Law 18 is effective. It has restored units to the rental market, improved accountability, and protected tenants from illegal conversions and rising rents. Instead of reversing progress, we should focus on expanding real solutions and keep both tenants and small homeowners stable, including fair property taxes, foreclosure prevention, and home repair programs to help families stay in their homes. At this moment, when tenants are asking for stability, affordability, and safety, these bills will move us in the wrong direction. The City Council should stand with renters, working families,

and communities to make sure the city runs, and reject legislation that turns homes into hotels.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

CHARLIE DULIK: Hello. My name is Charlie Dulik. I am the Director of Organizing at Housing Conservation Coordinators and I'm here to testify against Intros 948A and 1107A. HCC is an organization that has been fighting for renter on Manhattan's west side for more than 50 years, and since 2005 we have been deeply involved in the effort to regulate illegal short-term rentals. Much has evolved in the city's housing landscape since then, such as the founding of sites like Airbnb, but the need to support long-term housing for New Yorkers has only grown more urgent. Prior to Local Law 18, tens of thousands of illegal short-term rentals have flagrantly violated existing law, removing homes for New Yorkers off the market and creating a host of safety concerns and livability concerns for neighbors. Local Law 18 which west side tenants fought for nearly two decades to win has been an unqualified success, finally creating the tools for the city to enforce what has already been longstanding law. Today, I'm here to speak against

Intros 948A and 1107A, two pieces of legislation that would reverse this progress. These proposals would effectively create an open season for speculation, targeting one- and two-family homes which currently hold roughly 319,000 units, or about 15 percent of the city's rental housing stock. As the Community Service Society notes in their reports, Homes Not Hotels, renters in these properties are disproportionately likely to be Black and low-income and live without the basic security of rent stabilization or good cause eviction. I urge the City Council to vote no on Intros 948A and 1107A. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you. Two quick follow-up questions for this panel. There are individuals and some of my colleagues who argue that these bills do not intend to allow for second units to be short-term rented. Does that change your analysis as conducted in Homes Not Hotels? And secondly, another claim is that prior to Local Law 18 when there were one- to two-family homes that were short-term renting, that the majority of those were renting for short periods of time, much

shorter than 180 days. Does that change your conclusion in the Homes Not Hotel report?

SAMUEL STEIN: As the first author of that report, I'll start to answer. So, our analysis did not assume that these units would be on Airbnb all year. It assumed a 50 percent occupancy rate. You might say that that's high, and so if we went with a lower one, we would still have the same trend which is that there's a lot more money to be made by this short-term rental model than tenancy. And while the current homeowner may be totally responsible and wants to keep their tenant, we cannot guarantee that the next buyer will, especially if the next buyer is willing to put out a whole lot of money up front under the assumption that they'll be able to short-term rent it for as much time as the law allows.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And wondering if you all have a perspective on whether there are conflicts between the zoning resolution, the multiple dwelling law, and the changes contemplated in these proposed bills with respect to the definition of family and the number of boarders allowed?

ROBERT DESIR: Yeah, I think the multiple dwelling law contemplates the Class A units. That's the three or more being used for permanent resident purposes. So, you know, where the bill runs afoul that is, you know, some of the terms that are used are not quite defined, and then also the notion that the permanent resident does not have to be present during the short-term rental period. So, that kind of runs in conflict with the spirit of the multiple dwelling law, and I think that is something that, you know, if this is passed it's going to have to be reckoned with.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much. And it would be helpful if you can follow up with what terms are not defined and any more color that you would want to place on our considerations about disconnects between codes.

ROBERT DESIR: Sure, we'll be offering our written testimony in due time, and then that gets a little more into those questions.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. Alright, that is what I have. Thank you to this panel. The next panel is Alex Spyropoulos, Gia Sharp, Warren Gardiner, Nathan Rotman, Lisa Grossman,

Jason Mondesir-Caesar. Whoever is ready can begin when ready.

GIA SHARP: Can you hear me now? Oh, thank you. Okay. I'm going to start. Hi, my name is Gia Sharp, proud renter of 15 years and homeowner of 12 years in Sunset Park in Brooklyn in Council Member Avilés district. I'm one of the co-founders of RHAR, Restore Homeowner Autonomy and Rights, representing 700+ homeowner households throughout the five boroughs. Owner-occupied one- and two-family homes are not housing stock and we are not hoarding units. We live in our homes with our families and it's been that way for generations. These private homes have long been examples of communal living shared among family members pooling resources to support each other and remained housed in one of the most expensive cities in the world. But even with pooling resources, many families still need the survival tool of home-sharing to afford their housing expenses and the ever-rising cost of living which is why we support Intro 948A and 1107A and thank Council Members Narcisse and Louis for their leadership. This false narrative that owner-occupied homes are housing stock is partly based on the misuse of census data.

When families living together in private homes complete the census, they report their street address only, like 123 Carroll Street, whether it's a one-family or two-family. There's no distinction of a unit. So, when the city and other housing policy organizations interpret the data, they mistakenly attribute all the family members to one unit.

However, the reality is that the family is sharing the entire home together and there's no empty unit. Basing policy on inaccurate data is harming renters and homeowners alike, including the false narratives being pushed today by the billionaire hotel-backed coalition against illegal hotels and Tenants Not Tourists. Please vote for Intro 948A and 1107 to keep homeowners in their homes and make homeownership sustainable. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Gia.

LISA GROSSMAN: Hi, my name is Lisa Grossman. I'm a lifelong New Yorker. I am not being paid to be here, and I actually wrote my own testimony. Our incoming mayor was elected because he believes New York City should be a place for everyone, not just a place where the rich and big corporations rule the city. However, in 2021, Local

1 Law 18 was funded by the multimillion-dollar hotel  
2 lobby. Yes, I agree changes were needed, but Local  
3 Law 18 went too far. It should be no surprise that  
4 the tenant groups and opposition you were hearing  
5 from today are funded by the hotel lobby. Their  
6 claims that by voting yes on Intro 948A thousands of  
7 apartments will be taken off the market from needy  
8 New Yorkers. I don't know where those thousand are  
9 coming from-- and that 948A is a loophole for  
10 speculators and investors. They are wrong.  
11 Speculators and investors will benefit, rather  
12 regular hard-working outer-borough New Yorkers will  
13 benefit along with their communities. I urge each of  
14 the Housing Committee members to go home this evening  
15 and log onto the OSE website and attempt to register  
16 your home to home share. You will then see that the  
17 system in place already makes it impossible for an  
18 investor to register. 948A is easy and it's simple.  
19 It simply increases the number of guests from two to  
20 four. It allows locks on our doors, and it reasonably  
21 does not require a homeowner to be present 100  
22 percent of the stay. That's it. It's simple, smart  
23 and straightforward. Please vote yes.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

ALEX SPYROPOULOS: Chair Sanchez, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Alex Spryopoulos and I'm here on behalf of Tech NYC which represents New York's tech ecosystem from early-stage startups to global technology leaders. Our mission is to ensure that New York remains a place where innovation, economic mobility, and opportunity can thrive. The core part of that mission is advancing policies that keep our city affordable and livable while recognizing the constructive role technology can play in supporting that goal. We support Intro 948A because it represents a thoughtful, balanced updated to New York's short-term rental regulations. This bill preserves strong protection against illegal hotel activity while creating a narrow pathway for owners of one- and two-family homes to responsibly share their primary residences under clear enforceable rules. This approach gives every-day New Yorkers the ability to earn supplemental income without undermining the city's housing stock or neighborhood stability. When Local Law 18 was enacted, its goals were understandable: curb illegal activity and safeguard long-term housing. But the implementation has not

addressed those goals. Even after more than 90 percent of listing were removed, rents have continued to rise and vacancy rates remain largely unchanged. This demonstrates that enforcement alone cannot solve the affordability challenges, and that we should calibrate regulations to reflect real world impacts. Intro 948A offers that calibration. It restores fairness and flexibility while maintaining guardrails. It allows primary residents host, not commercial actors, to participate in the short-term rental economy in ways that allow them to stay in their home, support local businesses and contribute to neighborhood vibrancy, and importantly, it recognizes that technology can be part of the solution. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

WARREN GARDINER: Good afternoon, Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee. My name is Warren Gardiner and I'm the Senior Manager for Public Policy at Airbnb, and I'm joined by my colleague Nathan Rotman, our Director of North America Policy. I'm here today because affordable homeownership in New York City is very personal to me. I'm the son of immigrants who came to this city with nothing but

determination. For decades my parents drove a yellow taxi through these streets. They worked 18 hours a day, seven days a week to afford our home in southeast Queens. Like millions of working families across this city, they sacrificed everything, and they still have a mortgage because they had to refinance their home several times in order to survive in the city they helped build. This is what many New Yorkers face today. This is why we are here. Airbnb at its core, our mission reflects the same principles that founded this company, helping ordinary people stay in their homes and in their communities. The message you're going to hear from homeowners today is that New York City has become the most restrictive short-term rental market in the entire country. And we're not here to dismantle Local Law 18. The registration system works, but the law's unintended consequences have created an untenable situation for homeowners. Even the bill's original sponsor has acknowledged that it went too far. The current restrictions are crushing opportunities for the very families we should be protecting. New York City has lost over 200,000 Black and Brown families, and we can't afford to lose

any more. Intro 948A is simply a modest correction to an overreach. The bill applies only to one- and two-family homes where a permanent resident lives. These commonsense adjustments remove--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you.

ALEX SPYROPOULOS: do not remove a single unit of housing from the market. This is not just about policy, but about values and keeping New York City the true American dream that it is, and we want to work with the Council in order to make this law palatable for everyone. Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to testify today.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you.

JASON MONDESIR-CAESAR: Oh, hi.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Oh. Sorry. I thought we were--

JASON MONDESIR-CAESAR: [interposing] Good afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I thought we were going that way.

JASON MONDESIR-CAESAR: Oh, yeah, no. I let everyone go first. Good afternoon. My name is

1 Jason Mondesir-Caesar. I'm a native New Yorker and  
2 I'm a homeowner in Bed-Stuy Brooklyn. I home share  
3 in my unit of my home which allows me to keep my rent  
4 affordable for my tenant on the top floor. Opponents  
5 of this bill will come and tell you that every unit  
6 in a home sharing platform, you know, is a unit taken  
7 from the affordable housing market. This is  
8 demonstrably false. Local Law 18 currently allows  
9 you to participate in home sharing only in your unit,  
10 right? Intro 948A and 1107 do not change that.  
11 Therefore, there is zero change to any count of any  
12 unit of availability, right? Affordable housing,  
13 there's no change, because I'm using the units that I  
14 live in, been using the units we live in. Home  
15 sharing and lease tenancy are not mutually exclusive,  
16 and they allow-- they should be able to work hand-in-  
17 hand to ensure that small homeowners are able to  
18 employ what works best for them, right, and their  
19 household. If you have a tenant who has moved out,  
20 you should be able to use home sharing in order to  
21 continue to earn income in that interim while you  
22 look for a good fit for another long-term tenant,  
23 right? All-- everyone here, I know they're not here  
24 right now, but their constituents are suffering from  
25

the tax liens and deed theft, right? Every last one of them. Home sharing is a solution that-- is another resources, excuse me, is another resource-- oh, wow, that was quick. Okay.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You may conclude.

JASON MONDESIR-CAESAR: Can I-- thank you. Lastly, I wanted to urge you to end the cycle of scapegoating that allows the affordable housing crisis to continue, right? Because last time it was home sharing and it short-term rental. This time, it was City Council with the passing of ballot proposals two through four that the-- you know, and we know it's not true, but the story was that oh, City Council is blocking all the affordable housing construction, so let's take the-- you know, strip them from their autonomy and rights, right? Let's not allow this. Please vote yes on 948A so small homeowners like myself can afford to remain in our homes and remain in the city. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. First, I want to just acknowledge our meetings. RHAR, I know you met with my team just this week-- what is time? Recently. And we've met over the past three years. We've had several conversations. So, thank you for

1 your continuing advocacy. And to Airbnb, thank you  
2 for the ongoing conversations. I know that you know  
3 what my concerns are before coming into this  
4 conversation and that you have been thoughtful in  
5 getting us responses. Although, as you can hear, my  
6 concerns remain. My first question is for  
7 homeowners, fellow homeowners who are here at the  
8 dais. I understand the sponsors-- my colleague  
9 sponsor's intent and what you're saying is the intent  
10 of the legislation do not allow for the second unit  
11 or third unit to be short-term rented. But are you  
12 concerned that the legislation can have unintended  
13 negative effects for homeowners such as a rise in the  
14 assessed value and higher property taxes?

16 GIA SHARP: Thank you for that question.  
17 I don't really have a concern about that. I mean, I  
18 think what we're really talking about is survival.  
19 So, we first have to actually afford our mortgages  
20 and our housing repairs and our current property  
21 taxes before even get to that, you know, speculative  
22 point. I mean, people are losing their homes within  
23 six months. You know, so thinking about something  
24 that's far off is just not what we're-- we have the  
25 luxury of doing. We're actually trying to survive.

JASON MONDESIR-CAESAR: I do have the luxury of thinking that far ahead, because I trust in-- because I went through the registration process with Christian Klossner, and what I observed in that is that he was very diligent about making sure that I chose a unit in my home because I was only allowed one unit to rent, you know, on the short-term market or home share, and it's his office who would be regulating the abuse, you know, to make sure that there is no abuse of the platforms. And yeah, he was good at it. You know, it was to my dismay that I was only able to home share with my unit that I live in. So, I trust that he would do his some due diligence in making sure that anyone who engaged in that would follow the same rules.

GIA SHARP: I just want to also add just the thought that, you know, hopefully the property taxes don't get out of control. So, I don't quite understand what plan the city has. But we do live in our homes. We're homeowners, and there are homeowner occupancy exemptions, and so this is about people who live in their homes. And because we're really just trying to survive.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yeah. I like that you said that this is about people who-- owner occupants who live in their homes. The bill does not say that. The bill says permanent residents that is open to renters. So, would you-- would you be willing to have that conversation about being owner-occupied versus any permanent resident occupied?

GIA SHARP: Yes, our group has always been advocating for owner-occupied one- and two-family homes. I mean, I don't know what the legality of owner occupancy versus, you know, something else, but I mean, we are definitely primary residents, and that's easily provable and it's a legally-defined term, you know, federally, state, and locally. So, it should be really easy to figure out who is actually an owner of the home. I will say really quickly, that I did go to a housing conference and they were talking a lot about tangled titles and heirless property, and so I do have a concern that people who do feel like they do own the home because they inherit it from someone somehow would be locked out of this, and they're already marginalized and wouldn't be able to, you know, afford their home.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, thank you.  
To Airbnb, do you support the change from exclusive  
to primarily for residential use?

WARREN GARDINER: Yes, we think it  
remain-- the rules remain quite strict that you must  
be the-- sorry-- that you must be the permanent of  
that property whether an owner or a tenant under the  
existing rules today.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Also,  
to the company, how do you reconcile the profit  
incentive to push permanent housing into the tourist  
market with the city's obligation to protect the  
long-term housing stock, particularly in the midst of  
this severe housing shortage? Again, we're talking  
about the incentives created, potentially created or  
created through the bill, not the intent of the  
legislation.

WARREN GARDINER: So, this bill doesn't  
allow any investor or anyone who has extra-- has a  
second unit to become a short-term rental host. In  
order to be a short-term rental host today in New  
York City or if 948A was passed, you would have to  
live in that home a majority of the year. It has to  
be your permanent residence, your primary residence

1 which would fall in line with every other major  
2 municipality in the United States that allows at  
3 least the primary resident of a property to become a  
4 short-term rental host. It wouldn't take a single  
5 rental unit off the market. It would only allow a  
6 homeowner or a tenant to short term rent their home  
7 on an occasional basis.

9 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: The platform prior  
10 to the passage of Local Law 18 did have that history  
11 of allowing illegal hotels to operate including for  
12 many years in our city. What concrete mechanisms  
13 will you use to prevent commercial operators from  
14 exploiting these pieces of legislation.

15 WARREN GARDINER: Great question. We  
16 work extremely closely with the Office of Special  
17 Enforcement on a regular basis. Every listing  
18 operating on Airbnb has gone through a process to be  
19 approved by the Office of Special Enforcement before  
20 it's allowed to operate on Airbnb. The registration  
21 system is the most robust in the world. It is the  
22 most robust regulatory agency that we have worked  
23 with anywhere in the world, and both the registration  
24 requirements, the system and the approach that we  
25

take working with the OSE is the most robust in the United States by far.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Going back to the change from exclusive to primary, what does that mean to Airbnb? How many days per year? And you know, very specifically, do you think it would be okay for a permanent resident to be living in a different state, country, different place for 182 days of the year?

WARREN GARDINER: So, that's-- so, first of all, we've had a legal opinion drafted to showcase that none of the changes in 948A contravene any of the other existing codes, and that if anything, that this lines up more closely with the most recent changes in the City of Yes Zoning Resolution. With regard to additional restrictions, you must be the permanent resident of that property. New York City, in particular, has the strictest residency requirements in the United States for tax purposes. And so, the New York City regulators, tax regulators, know exactly who is living in New York City or not. And so, we don't think that there are additional restrictions required, but certainly that is an option before City Council if they choose to.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And on that distinction that the zoning resolution as amended by City of Yes for Housing Opportunity did make changes-- you may not have this today, because this came up during the testimony that we heard earlier, but would love your perspective on inconsistencies with the state multiple dwelling law as described by the previous panel.

WARREN GARDINER: Yeah, so previous panel was misinformed. The state multiple dwelling law has restrictions for hosted only in Class A buildings, so three or more units. There are no restrictions for single-family or one- and two-family homes private dwellings under the multiple dwelling law. This 948A lines up both with the zoning resolution and the multiple dwelling law as well as the-- there's four of them, and they all contradict each other. The housing maintenance code.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: We're trying to fix that. Did you hear there were other bills today? Great, okay. And then finally, and you know, perhaps most saliently for me, how do you reconcile that Office of Special Enforcement was just here for quite some time testifying quite vehemently that they don't

believe they could enforce these changes in an effective manner?

WARREN GARDINER: What I would say is the exact same people who are eligible today would be eligible if 948A was passed. The only change is that they would be allowed to leave if they-- they would be allowed to rent out that property if they were on vacation, if they were away for work, if there was a major concert coming to town and they wanted to move in with their in-laws to make a few extra dollars-- when the U.S. Open is here, or the World Cup is here or Taylor Swift is giving a concert. Any of those are good reasons why friends of mine short-term rent their home on an occasional basis. But the eligibility requirements do not change. You still have to be the permanent resident. You still have to go through the very robust registration system, but you're allowed to leave your home on an occasional basis, and you're allowed to have up to four adults in your home.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great. Is 182 days okay to short-term let your home in New York City?

WARREN GARDINER: Today?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Will it be in  
Airbnb's purview, perspective, excuse me.

WARREN GARDINER: We believe people  
should have the opportunity to short-term rent their  
home when they want to or when they need to. The  
home-- as long as at least according to this law, as  
long as it is their permanent residence, their  
primary residence, where their-- we call it the  
toothbrush test, where your toothbrush lives most of  
the time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Alright, well with  
that, I want to thank this panel for your  
participation. I really do encourage you to submit  
verbal test-- written testimony. You can't submit  
verbal testimony. But I appreciate you all being  
here today and for your patience. Thank you. I'll  
now call the next panel, Hazel Hazzard, who has a  
very cool name, Michael Leonard, James Inniss, Dorca  
Reynoso, Alexander Gleason, and Jack Spillane.  
Apologies if I said that wrong. And as you approach,  
you can begin when you are ready.

HAZEL HAZZARD: Thank you. My name is  
Hazel Hazzard and I am a Vice President of HTC. I'm  
a room-- first, I was a room attendant and worked my

way up organizing and mobilizing other non-union hotels. I'm here today because it's up to the union members like me to tell you what's at stake. HTC is a voice for those who cannot be heard, for the benefit that we offered, the benefit that we fought for, for our members is truly a life-changing issue for us. All of these things I take pride in being able to provide for the workers. At HTC, we love to say, "When we fight, we win." And that is so true. If-- this is not a complicated issue. There is a right side and there's a wrong side to be on. Airbnb doesn't care about New Yorkers. They just care about profits. If we allow Airbnb to get away with passing Intro 948 and 1107, especially before the World Cup, hotels will lose out of tens of thousands of guests per year, and the industry will stop cutting jobs. That means, when they cut jobs, we don't have health benefits. Our livelihood is at stake. We are fighting so that we can continue paying our mortgage, sending our kids to college and living our lives with dignity that we reserve.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Ms.

Hazzard.

HAZEL HAZZARD: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You don't have to leave yet. I may have questions. But just testimony over.

JACK SPILLANE: My name is Jack Spillane. I'm a Battalion Chief of the New York City Fire Department. I'm here speaking on behalf of the Uniformed Fire Officers Association, the UFOA, which strongly opposes Intro 948A and 1107 which has the potential to render search and rescue in one- and two-family dwellings more difficult, impeding access to victims and increasing the risk to firefighters tasked with searching these buildings. The UFOA is the labor union representing the lieutenants, captains, and chiefs of the FDNY. While we are the supervisors at fires and emergencies, we are not remote from the risk, positioned with the firefighters who are fighting the fires and searching for victims. We advocate for the safety of our members and for policies and laws which reduce the likelihood of victims becoming trapped or harmed at fires and emergencies. With those principles in mind, we advocate against the passage of these proposed laws 948 and 1107. Specifically, the law seeks to amend multiple sections of the New York City Building

Code and Administrative Code which will allow for locked rooms in one- or two-family dwellings. These locks will waste precious time available to firefighters, not just to locate a victim at a fire, but to render first aid. While the FDNY is trained in quickly gaining access through doors, it still takes time in doing. Gaining access in a wood frame building, the construction of most one- and two-family dwellings will pose additional challenges which will lead to more loss of life due to the combustible structure of these buildings. Additionally, this law will inevitably increase the chances of a firefighter becoming trapped above the fire and have their egress cut off. Fire travel can be unpredictable and even more so in private dwellings. We had such an instance up in the Bronx where two our members were killed on Black Sunday, one died 10 years later due to her injuries and three other members have been seriously impacted by those injuries. The lessons of the past help us guide to best protect our current members and the public which we serve. It's with these lessons that we staunchly oppose the passage of 948 and 1107.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

MICHEL LEONARD: Thank you, Council

Member Sanchez. It's a pleasure to be here. My name is Michel Leonard, the Chief Economist and Data Scientist at the Insurance Information Institute. We're a non-lobbying and partisan organization. I've been asked to speak directly to the issues of homeowner's insurance today as they relate to short-term rentals in residential dwellings. We provided a report which looks at the insurance implications of short-term rentals in single-unit, two-unit, or multi-unit residential properties. Regular homeowners' insurance treat short-term rentals as commercial activity which are not covered under typical residential policies. This may result in claims denials, limited liability, and higher deductibles. As a result, short-term rental owners and their neighbors could be partially or completely unprotected against losses associated with operating a short-term rental. Operating short-term rentals in residential units impact a rental owners homeowner's insurance, and for multi-dwellings, the shared master policy insurance of their neighbors. Increased commercial activity, including short-term rentals and single or multi-unit dwellings and in areas deemed

residential can impact the cost, policy terms, conditions and exclusions of homeowners, renters, condo and master insurance policies. This typically leads to higher insurance premium, complexity, and costs for all involved. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Bonus points, 10 seconds.

ALEXANDER GLEASON : Good afternoon, Council Member. My name is Alexander Gleason, and I'm here on behalf of the New York City Central Labor Council. We're representing one million members and over 300 affiliated unions in the five boroughs. We urge the City Council to reject Intro 948A. The bill would remove core protections established by Local Law 18 which created the regulatory framework for short-term rentals. Local Law 18 was enacted to preserve scarce housing during a time of extremely of low vacancy and to prevent homes from being converted into unlicensed hotels. Weakening these protections would bring back a problem New Yorkers have already fought to solve, fewer available apartments, higher rents, and greater strain on community health and stability. At the height of the short-term rental boom, about 67,000 homes were taken off the long-term

market and listed to tourist. A city analysis found from 2009 to 2016, nearly one-tenth of the rise in rents could be tied to short-term home rentals. Entire blocks in Brooklyn and Harlem saw rents climb faster than wages, displacing long-term residents and altering the character of neighborhoods and streets. The harm has been most acute in Black communities. In predominantly Black neighborhoods, Airbnb hosts were five times more likely to be white, and white hosts earned more income. Gains went to newcomers while longstanding residents lost homes and stability. Local Law 18 addresses these inequities by requiring hosts to live in the unit, remain present during rentals, and register with the Office of Special Enforcement. These rules were created-- needed safeguards. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Alex, I'll give you a chance to conclude if there's anything that you missed that you wanted to add. But first I'm going to just ask a few questions. Jack, starting with you. I had a five-alarm fire, five-alarm fire, at a single-- no, it was a two-family home on Devoe [sp?] Terrace in my district in the Bronx this summer. There were hundreds of firefighters there, and it

1 took hours and hours and hours to put that fire out,  
2 and it was exhausting. It was hot. It was dangerous  
3 conditions all around for our first responders. So,  
4 just wanted you to ask you to put a finer note on  
5 that example. What is a five-alarm fire, for the  
6 benefit of the public? What it does mean about how  
7 many folks are on the ground and what the fire is  
8 like? And second, what are the challenges inherent  
9 already in putting out fires in these older one- and  
10 two-family dwellings? And again, what would these  
11 bills, specifically with the locks provision-- how  
12 does that make it more challenging or different for  
13 firefighters?  
14

15 JACK SPILLANE: Well, thank you.  
16 Appreciate it. We appreciate your interest in this.  
17 when you have a five-alarm fire, you have over 250  
18 firefighters on the scene and on top of that is EMS  
19 and chiefs and other members of the Department. A  
20 five-alarm fire is large vine [sic] fire that's  
21 probably extends to multiple buildings, three or four  
22 buildings most likely. I'm sure that your building is  
23 connected at the rooftop level, the common cock [sic]  
24 loft [sic] which is an avenue of extension that  
25 causes fire to spread in either direction away from

1 the original fire building. What concerns us the  
2 most, though, about one- and two-family buildings is  
3 there's a flaw-- a fire protection flaw in most all  
4 these buildings, and that is the open interior  
5 staircase from the cellar or basement area to the  
6 first floor and more likely the first floor to the  
7 second. When you have a fire in the first floor, it  
8 inevitably goes up the stairs, because there's no  
9 door to stop it. Let me use as an example if you're  
10 in a multiple dwelling. We always tell people to  
11 shut the door. Well, there's no door to shut on the  
12 first floor of a private dwelling, okay? And that  
13 fire will go upstairs, it will extend. So, that's the  
14 main cause of fire damage and civilian injury between  
15 the smoke and the heat going up the stairs into the  
16 bedroom areas. Having to force entry into individual  
17 occupancies in those areas will delay the time of the  
18 rescue and recovery of the people that are in those  
19 buildings and delay the discovery of the fire that  
20 had extended, and that extended fire could go to the  
21 rooftop level and extend to adjoining buildings if  
22 they are there.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. You talk  
25 about the impacts on insurance. Have you-- have you

quantified how increasing insurance are capitalized into housing prices?

MICHEL LEONARD: This is an excellent question, and we have actually looked in the issue, and we decided that a quantification itself is probably not that useful. The bottom line is that getting into short-term rentals, we feel that there's a lot of education that needs to be done, and without that education, proper education, folks may be underinsured. So even before we get into the added cost. Now, to try to be as specific in answering your question, though, on average all things being equal, it is a bit more expensive to have those commercial add-ons because they do tend to cover extended risk-based liability, for example, liability from someone who's drinking on the premises and so forth.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Alex, did you want to conclude with anything?

ALEXANDER GLEASON: Council Member, I appreciate that opportunity, and I'll just-- the Reader's Digest version is, you know, labor is the community. Community is labor. We represent a million people in this city. When people are being

displaced, our members feel that, and our members are the ones being displaced, and we want to protect our members in every aspect of their lives, because we understand the social determinants of health are important.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much to this panel. The next panel will consist of Tony Lindsay, Amy Werblowsky, Marjeray [sp?] Moore-Robets, Sharon Jones, Randy Peers, Jessica Walker, and Laurie Kellogg. While this panel gets settled, just foreshadowing for everyone that in our infinitive wisdom, this room is booked at five, so we're going to get kicked out at four, and what we're going to do is we're going to go across the street to 250 Broadway, Hearing Room One. So, I look forward to that trip with you. And whoever is ready can begin.

JESSICA WALKER: Good afternoon, Chair Sanchez. Good to see you. I'm Jessica Walker, President and CEO of the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, and I actually have to-- I want to start by expressing my shock at the administration's testimony today. They completely ignored the upcoming the FIFA World Cup and Seal [sic] 250 events which will bring

more than seven million visitors to the metro area next summer. In many ways, this is larger than hosting the Summer Olympics. Yet, we only have 135,000 hotel rooms citywide. Local Law 18 and other policies have artificially strangled supply, driving hotel prices to record highs. We are effectively telling these tourists to stay in New Jersey and spend their dollars there. This inaction is devastating. Local Law 18 is already denying \$1.6 billion from being spent in our local stores and restaurants, and driving foot traffic away from neighborhoods like Harlem and Washington Heights. We could certainly use the 21,000 jobs that would be created by this level of spending. Other global cities have figured this out, protecting housing without destroying their tourism economy. New York must do the same. We see Intro 948 as being that solution. As we talked about, it only targets owner-occupied one- and two-family homes, not apartment buildings. We cannot host the world with a closed sign on our door. We urge the Council to pass Intro 948. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. How many tourists?

JESSICA WALKER: How many?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: How many tourists--

JESSICA WALKER: Seven million, seven million between the two events.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Extra points for time.

RANDY PEERS: Good afternoon, Randy Peers, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, small business champion. Let me take my 90 seconds to remind you of a couple of things. You're hurting Black and Brown homeowners and immigrant homeowners who are at risk of losing all they worked for just to get a piece of the American dream. You are hurting neighborhoods in the outer boroughs that are transit-starved and don't have any hotels. You are hurting families in these same neighborhoods who have no affordable way to host their family and friends when they visit from out of town. You are hurting the tourism citywide, especially in advance of FIFA and the World Cup, and you are hurting small businesses in the outer boroughs who rely on this-- on foot traffic and visitors coming into these neighborhoods and driving that foot traffic. And you are doing all this without making a dent or progress on the housing

1 crisis in New York City which has worsened since  
2 Local Law 18. The only one benefiting from this law  
3 are the big hotels. Double-digit profits since Local  
4 Law 18, while our homeowners are struggling. Look,  
5 if HTC wants help, let's get rid of the special  
6 permits law and let's build more hotels in New York  
7 City and make them union hotels. That's the  
8 compromise here. But let's pass Local Law 948A.  
9 let's make some reasonable accommodations so that our  
10 residents here in New York City can keep their homes.  
11 Do the right thing.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Mr.  
14 Peers. Appreciate you.

15 TONY LINDSAY: Hello, my name--  
16 [inaudible]. I have to hold it. Yeah, hi. My name  
17 is Tony Lindsay. I'm the President of New York Home  
18 Owner's Alliance. I'm actually the person who  
19 drafted the language that led to Intro 948. I'm  
20 disappointed to see all of the false talking points  
21 that have been delivered here today, and it's  
22 particularly troubling, because I hear a lot of  
23 language that is being wrapped in equity and  
24 protection of Black people while at the same time,  
25 Local Law 18 has accelerated the displacement of

1 Black people out of their communities. Even the HTC  
2 members here today, many of them are homeowners  
3 themselves, but as union members, they're prohibited  
4 by the HTC from sharing their own homes. So, I just  
5 want people to understand that a lot of the talking  
6 points that you've heard today here, they are false.  
7 And I want to make something clear, tenants, renters  
8 are not impacted whatsoever, and all of the-- and the  
9 only thing it does is it creates a narrow carve-out,  
10 and to see the campaign of misinfomriaotn that has  
11 been pushed behind this bill, it's astounding to me.  
12 So I just want to make sure that we make one thing  
13 clear, because Christian Klossner was here earlier,  
14 and I've spoken to him many times about this, and he  
15 was basically arguing to violate the rights of people  
16 within their own domiciles because of a possibility  
17 of a bad actor breaking the rules, even though they  
18 already have rules in place for that. And probably  
19 the last thing that I want to say, because I know  
20 it's like I'm on limited time is that-- I've been  
21 trying to squeeze everything in. I'll just-- yeah,  
22 you know what, hopefully you'll ask me some  
23 questions, because I've been trying to squeeze  
24 everything in here.  
25

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'm going to ask you to highlight the two top points.

TONY LINDSAY: Yeah. Oh, it's one thing.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay.

TONY LINDSAY: Okay, yeah, because it was a lot that I was hearing. But Klossner also argued that passing Intro 948 was somehow creating an advantage or unequal protection as it's providing one- and two-family homeowners with this specific rule that is catered to them. But you can't argue about unequal protection while you're subjecting private homeowners to unequal enforcement, when you're subjecting them to enforcement that is tailored for commercial operators. These are private dwellings under state law, and that is the problem-- that is what's missing from this conversation. One- and two-family homes are private dwellings, which means they are your private residence. Nothing in this bill has anything to do with renters. And I'll leave it there.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

: Good afternoon, Council Member Sanchez and to the honorable members of the Housing Committee. I thank you for hearing testimony today on

1 Intro 948A. When we think about the story of Jesus  
2 and Mary in Bethlehem, we are reminded that even in  
3 the most sacred moments in history unfolded in the  
4 homes of strangers. They found shelter where there  
5 was no room and that act of hospitality became the  
6 foundation of a story that has inspired billions.  
7 Housing is not just about property, it is about  
8 community, compassion, and the freedom to open our  
9 doors to the guests in ways and reflect both the  
10 economic realities and our shared humanity. To  
11 restrict this is to forget that the very origins of  
12 our faith and culture were built on the generosity of  
13 households willing to share our space. Our homes are  
14 not merely units of a regulatory system, that they  
15 are extensions of our liberty. When government  
16 overreach is into private domain, it risks eroding  
17 the very alienable rights that define homeownership  
18 and sovereignty. I urge you, Council Members, and  
19 this committee to move forward Intro 948A forward,  
20 not only as housing measure, but as a defense to  
21 freedom and to decide how we use our own homes.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Oh, I'm  
24 sorry that I've been acknowledged by-- I've been  
25 acknowledged. I can still speak English. I want to

acknowledge that I've been joined by my Council Member, Council Member Gutiérrez. I need food. Yeah, go ahead.

MARGENETT MOORE-ROBERTS: Good afternoon, Chair Sanchez and Council Member Gutiérrez. My name is Margenett Moore-Roberts. I'm a homeowner in Brooklyn. I'm not being paid for my testimony today. I am living it. I urge this body to approve both 1107 and 948A so both bills can be fully considered by the entire Council. When 948A is-- whether it's approved or blocked by this committee today, this bill will make history and impact generations. The question is, what kind of history? Throughout our history, government regulations have been a key determinant for who is afforded the opportunity to buy and stay in a home. From the destruction of Seneca Village to redlining racial covenants, predatory lending practices, and mass displacement due to underregulated corporate landlords and investment banks, Black and Brown families have repeatedly been boxed out of economic opportunities that homeownership provides. Now, in a city where buying a home takes a small miracle and keeping a home requires multiple streams of income, the overly

restrictive regulations of Local Law 18 threaten to continue this devastating trend. While some reform was necessary, the current regulations have thrown one- and two-family homeowners out with the proverbial bath water. We have been discarded as political roadkill. Without supplemental income from responsible home-sharing, middle and lower income homeowners are losing and will continue to lose their homes. This is not hypothetical. It is a fully realized fact. Foreclosure rates are up. So, what kind of history will we make today? Passing--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you.

MARGENETT MOORE-ROBERTS: 948A will curtail the economic harm that's been done-- that's been perpetuated by government regulations for far too long.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you.

LAURIE KELLOGG: Hello. My name is Laurie. I'm a Brooklyn homeowner for 33 years. I've worked for 47 years helping workers, immigrants through union membership and as a union staff person for 50 years. So, I want to speak to you. My Social

1 Security isn't enough to pay my house bills. I didn't  
2 make money serving the public. So, sharing my space  
3 when I have some availability has been a lifeline. I  
4 use my space for my family. My brother is a  
5 periodically homeless vet. Do you want me to put him  
6 out on the street, or can I use my own house to house  
7 him? My elderly father cannot go stay in a Manhattan  
8 hotel when he comes. I share my home when I'm not  
9 using it for my family. Why is that a prob-- why is  
10 that anyone's business. Okay. I share my home so I  
11 can keep it, and you know what, I'm about 20 minutes  
12 from losing it. after 50 years of serving this city.  
13 And by the way, making many contributions to my  
14 beloved City Councilers [sic] and progressive causes.  
15 Who have I helped? School teachers from Oklahoma and  
16 Chile, marathoners, COVID nurses, poor dancers, poor  
17 artists, poor students. My students pay 25-- I'm  
18 sorry. I got to keep going, because I've been  
19 waiting years for this. And you--

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] You  
22 can conclude, yes.

23 LAURIE KELLOGG: 90 seconds was not-- is  
24 actually fair, okay. I'm going to talk a lot faster.  
25 Okay. Mostly I house families of my neighbors. And

1                   guess what, I house the families of City Council  
2  
3                   Members. No names today, okay? I host your  
4                   families. I host the families of immigrants who come  
5                   to see their kids. My neighbor's parents came when  
6                   she was deathly ill, and guess what, they had to take  
7                   care of the kids and her, and I took care of them. I  
8                   had to move into my own downstairs apartment when I  
9                   had double knee replacement. What? I'm not allowed  
10                  to use my own apartment for six months? But  
11                  sometimes I also rent it out long-term. Okay, to the  
12                  union folks here. I love you. I've been there. I've  
13                  done this for 50 years. Okay. We are not going to  
14                  take one single union job away. Guess why. Because I  
15                  host people who couldn't even afford a bathroom in a  
16                  Manhattan hotel.

17                   CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Laurie, thank you.

18                  Thank you.

19                   LAURIE KELLOGG: So, I'm not taking away-

20                  -

21                   CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing]

22                  Laurie?

23                   LAURIE KELLOGG: your job or your client.

24

25

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Laurie, I really don't want to-- I don't want to have the Sergeants turn off the mic. I don't want to go there.

LAURIE KELLOGG: I super appreciate it. I'm trying to be respectful. May I just say my last thing. This hurts me. The city is hurt when I'm kicked out on my derriere. Local small businesses are hurt. They thrived from the thousands of meals that my guests ate. Who wins when some LLC comes and boots me out? Nobody.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

LAURIE KELLOGG: The city does not win. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you. I want to thank this panel for your candid and passionate testimony, and that's why we're here. I'm sorry we don't have as much time to air every single concern, but we are here to receive all feedback, all feedback. So, this is valuable. It's on the record, and we look forward to any written testimony you submit. Thank you. Did you want to say anything else?

TONY LINDSAY: Yeah, just briefly. Local Law 18 is simply a law that require registration, and

1 I want to make that clear. The reason why it only  
2 requires registration is because the rules that have  
3 been created under the OSE cannot exist in the law,  
4 because it overreaches into the private domicile of  
5 people who reside in their homes, and I think that's  
6 just something that you guys really need to consider.  
7 and the last thing I want to make very clear is that  
8 Black people in this city are facing the highest  
9 rates of foreclosure. They are the highest rates of  
10 homelessness, and I really am offended when I see the  
11 hotel union use these beautiful people here to come  
12 out hear and protest against--

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Okay,  
15 thank you.

16 TONY LINDSAY: because at the end of the  
17 day, Intro 948 has absolutely nothing to do with  
18 anything that they're doing here, and I'm sure many  
19 of them are homeowners and this is about their  
20 autonomy--

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank  
22 you.

23 TONY LINDSAY: and their rights.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Mr.  
25 Lindsay, thank you. Thank you to this panel. I'm

going to ask you to please not be offended if you see me chewing, as I will do that shortly. The next panel is Paul DiBenedetto, Jamie Kazi, Katie Drager, Carlos Calderon, Aisatta Bocoum, Kwadwo Opoku Berko, and Michael Angelo Savino. I just-- I want to make sure that I say this point of order. If you've ever watched a Stated, you know that Council Members are not to address each other, they're only to address their comments at the Chair, and the same applies for you. This is a public hearing. You are not to address the audience or any individuals outside of the Chair of the hearing. That is a procedural requirement. Please maintain decorum. We want to make sure that this remains a civil procedure, civilized procedure. Whoever is ready may begin.

CARLOS CALDERON: Good afternoon, Madam Chair. My name is Carlos Calderon. I am a veteran, a Brooklyn resident, and a proud member of the Hotel Trades Council. If Intros 948 and 1107 pass, I could lose both my job and my home. I am not the only one. These bills displace tens of thousands of working people who call New York home. The only reason we are here today is because Airbnb has spent millions of dollars on elections and lobbyists to push these

bills. It doesn't matter how much money they throw at organizations to make it seem like they care about New Yorkers like me. They don't. They care about making money ahead of the World Cup when millions of tourists come to New York. Just like tourists, though, Airbnb still come and go without giving a second thought to the damage they will leave behind. We already saw what happened when Airbnb's flood the city. Out-of-town investors buy up our homes to make it mini hotels. Landlords realized they make more money with tourists than renters, and people who have made their lives here are forced out. If we wanted to help New York, homeowners and New Yorkers, you can help connect people to mortgage support programs or work to lower costs of groceries and keep home prices down. Instead, any Council Member that supports this bill is sacrificing New York and workers.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

AISATTA BOCUM: Hi. My name is Aisatta Bocum. I am a proud member of Hotel Trade Council. I'm here today to urge you not to pass any bill that would expedite, shorted ranked. I watch my friends, neighbors and co-workers pushing out as rent spike-- as rent spiked and long-term lease. Long-term lease

1 is disappearing. We cannot call-- we cannot call  
2 this harmless side hustle when they contribute-- when  
3 they contribute to legalize and expedite short-term  
4 rent, will put even more-- will put even more  
5 pressure on neighborhood that are already fighting to  
6 survive. Please vote no Intro-- please vote no Intros  
7 948 and 1107. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

9 MICHAEL ANGELO SAVINO: Good afternoon.

10 My name is Michael Angelo Savino. I'm a hotel worker  
11 in New York City, a life-long New Yorker and a proud  
12 union member for the last 29 years. I'm here today  
13 to oppose Intro 948 and 1107. I live here in Brooklyn  
14 with my husband Rolando who is also a hotel worker  
15 and a union member. Thank God for that. I am not  
16 exaggerating when I say our jobs have transformed our  
17 lives, gave us the ability to live and afford what we  
18 have. Having union jobs has enabled us to build a  
19 life together, buy a home, stay in New York, even as  
20 it becomes more and more expensive and unaffordable.  
21 These bills put both our jobs at risk, and if passed,  
22 threaten the beautiful life we have worked so hard to  
23 create for the past 25 years by pushing us out of the  
24 city. This isn't a guess. This was our-- I was born  
25

and raised in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, and have seen firsthand what short-term rentals did to our neighborhood before Local Law 18 was enacted. Rents rose. Homes were more expensive, and many residents who are mostly working-class people of color and immigrants were forced to leave. These neighborhoods lost the diversity, the multigenerational and strong communities that made us great. These bills will worsen, gentrify and harm New Yorkers like myself and my husband. Please vote no.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, and thank you for wearing an Orioles cap. We're an Orioles and Ravens family.

PAUL DIBENEDETTO: Thank you. Hello, my name is Paul DiBenedetto and I am the Chair of Queens Community Board 11. I have come to the Chamber today to ask you to please vote no on Intro 948A and 1107A. These proposals allow four rooms to be rented per day in a one-family home and eight clients per day in a two-family home. Meanwhile, the owner does not have to be present. This will create the incentive for hedge funds and real estate investors to start buying up our homes and turn them into full-blown Airbnb short-term hotels in the middle of quiet residential

neighborhoods, a complete commercialization of our communities. In 2025, Airbnb has already spent over one million dollars lobbying Council Members, some of whom are present here today, and has promised to spend \$5 million to get this bill passed. They have created and generously funded several organizations to do so such as RHOAR, and Homeowners for Financial Empowerment. CB11 Queens is 71 percent owner-occupied. The vast majority of our ethnically-diverse owner-occupied housing is one- and two-family homes. Thus, these proposals will put the majority of the housing in CB11 and beyond at risk of becoming full-service 24/7 commercial hotels in the middle of the low-density neighborhoods we raise our families in and commute to work from. You've heard from some people and groups today that we want this in our neighborhoods, but in my 21 years of leadership serving on Community Board 11 I have not met one homeowner who is asking for this change. Indeed, on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022, during an Airbnb party rental only one block away from home-- and I'll finish-- a shootout occurred where 21 bullets were discharged. One teenager was shot in the torso and stray bullets damaged nearby vehicles including one round

puncturing a child's car seat. Congresswoman Grace Ming, Senator John Lieu, Assemblyman Ed Bronsky [sp?], and Council Member Vickie Paladino all rallied to have Airbnb pull the rental from their listings. So, please, vote no. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you. You have to share. You have to share the mic.

KATIE DRAGER: Okay, hi. Chair Sanchez, thank you so much for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Katie. I'm a native New Yorker, and I'm a staff member at UHAVE [sic] working with HDFC affordable co-op buildings. I just want to contribute a thought on community here. Working with the most financially and physically distressed buildings, a common theme that I see is that many of the owners do not occupy the units themselves through short-term and long-term rentals. When owners do not occupy their units and their homes, it discourages cooperativism and consistent engagement between neighbors. Short-term rentals threaten community cooperation straight up. We urge the City Council to reject this bill and defend Local Law 18.

JAMIE KAZI: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on Intros 948A and

1107A. My name is Jamie Kazi, and I'm here on behalf of 32BJ SEIU. We oppose these measures because they would weaken the hard worn [sic] protections against illegal short-term rentals, and when those protections slip, working families feel it first. These bills would shrink the city's housing supply and undermine job quality, our tourism sector, and the stability of our communities. 32BJ is the largest building service union in the country, representing over 185,000 workers, 85,000 of which was the New York City metropolitan area. Our members are overwhelmingly immigrants and people of color. They're the cleaners, door people, airport workers, and school and building service worker that keep this city running, and they have fought contract after contract for living wages, family-sustaining benefits, and basic protection that make it possible to build a life here. Although 32BJ has won historic compensation standards. Our members, just like other work families, still face challenges securing affordable housing. Housing supply has not kept up with growing demand. These bills would undermine the city's progress in addressing damage caused by the influx of short-term rentals, and prior to Local Law

18 short-term rentals pulled thousands of units off the market. Communities saw rent spikes and displacement accelerate. These amendment would reopen the door to the de facto hotels in residential neighborhoods, and are counter to the intent of Local Law 18. For these reasons, we urge the City Council to vote no on Intro 984A and 1107A. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much to this panel, for your participation. The next panel consists of Tene Clark, Muzzy Rosenblatt, Gregory Anderson, Briana January, and Laura Borgess. Whoever is ready can begin.

MUZZY ROSENBLATT: Hi, my name is Muzzy Rosenblatt. I'm the President and CEO of the Bowery Residents Committee, more commonly known as BRC, and I'm here today to speak in support of Intro 948A. At BRC, our mission is rooted in helping New Yorkers achieve stability, dignity and a place to call home. We're among New York City's largest and most effective nonprofit providers of services, shelter, housing to New Yorkers experiencing homelessness. We operate homeless outreach services, shelters and safe havens, residential and outpatient treatment for people with health and substance use challenges, and

we build and operate permanent supportive housing and housing for low-income households like 237 Landing Road in your district. We provide a hand-up and a path home for New Yorkers who are experiencing homelessness. In FY25, we assisted over 12,000 individuals including over 1,300 who found more stable housing and nearly 400 who found more stable employment, and more than half successfully graduated from our programs. Denying homeowners of one- and two-family homes the ability to rent out their rooms and their homes for short periods does not help house the homeless. What the people we serve want and need is a home of their own, not a room in someone else's. that is why thoughtful housing policy which dramatically increases the supply of rental housing, affordable to those experiencing homelessness with a lease with tenant protections is the answer. I'm not making homeowners out to be boogey men. In fact, denying homeowners the ability to generate additional income from their homes is more likely to cause homelessness than solve it. As we saw during the Great Recession when homeowners lost their homes. Those who would oppose Intro 948 by suggesting it would cause homelessness are not being honest, nor

are they proposing to provide the funding and cost saving solutions to end homelessness. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. You need to turn on your mic.

TENE CLARK: I'm going to try to go as fast as I can. Sorry [inaudible] I have a lot to say. I'm a young homeowner in Brooklyn. I've been wanting to own a home since I was a teenager, and it's been really hard to maintain a home. Being able short-term rental helped me a lot. Local Law 18 is hurting a lot of us. It's really have drastically affected my income. I'm close to foreclosure if it ends. But I don't like how the HTC is using people to go against us. We are one- and two-family homeowners. They were bad actors. They're LLCs and owners of large buildings who took advantage of the short-term rental. That has nothing to do with us. We are not the enemy of the HTC's workers. I have HT-- people who work for the HTC cleaners who have worked part-time to clean for me. So, we are not the enemy. These large corporations use us to try to pawn-- use y'all as pawns to go against us, and we're not. One- and two-family homeowners have been punished since Local Law 18. It's unfair. The OSE

1 has been harassing us. You would think that we are  
2 running prostitutions links or trap houses or  
3 something like that. We're not. We are innocent,  
4 law-abiding homeowners who just want to make some  
5 money to keep our homes. We are not the enemy of  
6 these working people. We are all the same. We are  
7 all in the same exact boat, so to try to make us seem  
8 like we-- pit us against each other-- I'm sorry-- pit  
9 us against each other is unfair and we cannot allow  
10 it. We have-- we do not want to hurt HTC workers at  
11 all. We are being unfairly attacked and targeted,  
12 and it's mostly Black young homeowners, older  
13 homeowners like myself, and I would really like to--  
14 you guys to pass local 948 so that we can continue to  
15 keep our homes, because this is my biggest-- I'm-- my  
16 proudest moment was buying a house and I do not want  
17 to lose it.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank  
20 you.

21 LAURA BORGESS: Hello. My name is Laura  
22 Borgess. I would like you to support the 948A bill.  
23 I've lived in Brooklyn Flatbush for 20 years in my  
24 home. I bought it. It looked like a haunted house. I  
25 did everything I could to turn it into a lovely home,

1 but in the process having three children and my  
2 husband leaving, there was no way to maintain the  
3 mortgage. So, I didn't buy a property thinking I was  
4 going to have to rent it out, but for the last 15  
5 years I have literally rent out rooms in my house.  
6 There was even a point when I had to have my kids in  
7 the basement to protect them so I could have guests  
8 stay up, because I wanted to make sure that they were  
9 safe. But it was all I could do was to find ways to  
10 make money in my house. But we have met the most  
11 wonderful people that have come to my neighborhood.  
12 They go-- they come in. They're either visiting  
13 either family or friends. Grandparents come.  
14 Everyone's like-- or I get these wonderful foreigners  
15 that are coming to explore New York. And what  
16 happens is Cortellia [sp?] Road, they eat on the  
17 road. They buy, shopping. They actually pay for  
18 their subway ride, and then they get to go enjoy  
19 everything in the city. So, Cortellia Road, my little  
20 part of Flatbush gets a little bit of support as well  
21 as all of all New York City. My youngest daughter  
22 will be going to college next year, and I will no  
23 longer get any child support, and my goals was before  
24 this rule came in is oh, I'll just rent out the other  
25

two rooms, and now I can't. So, now I'm really at the discussion in my brain is do I sell my house? Do I leave New York after 27 years? And it's a real reality, because two rooms isn't going to be enough. So thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

BRIANNA JANUARY: Good afternoon. Brianna January with Chamber of Progress in strong support of Intro 948A. Chamber of Progress is a center-left tech industry trade association advocating for the progressive future of tech and inclusive access to that future. Our partners do include innovators like Airbnb, but unlike traditional trade associations, they do not have a voter veto on our positions. For Chamber of Progress, this is a matter of consumer choice and affordability. Short-term rentals offer New Yorkers the opportunity to stay in their homes just like you've heard today and to earn supplemental income at a time when the city faces an existential threat of the rising cost of living, and committee, it's no secret that New York is one of the most unaffordable places to both live and visit. Intro 948A and the

ability to bring in revenue from short term lodging will help offset rising housing costs, the greatest factor contributing to the city's affordability crisis. And committee, these policy updates couldn't be mor timely as the city prepares to host the World Cup next June. By increasing consumer choice for lodging and hospitality, Intro 948A will help make the World Cup for accessible and affordable for New Yorkers and visitors a like which is a worthy cause shared by both the Council and all New Yorkers. with that, Chamber of Progress strongly supports the bill and we urge your favorable report, and we look forward to working with you on this issue and affordability. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Bonus points.

GREGORY ANDERSON: Thank you. My name is Gregory Anderson and I serve as President and CEO of Bridge Street Development Corporation, a community development nonprofit that has served Central Brooklyn for over 30 years. We work every day with renters, homeowners, and seniors who are fighting to remain in the neighborhoods they helped build. Bridge Street has developed more than 600 units of

affordable rental housing. We also serve as an HPD Housing Ambassador, helping thousands of New Yorkers apply for, obtain and maintain housing they can afford. We have renovate 79 one- to four- family homes for below market homeownership, and we are currently marketing affordable co-ops. So, at Bridge Street we see the city's affordable crisis up close, every day, and from every angle. Bedford-Stuyvesant once has one of the highest rates of Black homeownership in the United States. Today, that is no longer the case. During the city's most recent tax lien sale, we worked with hundreds of homeowners whoa are at risk of losing homes that had been in their family for generations, sometimes for \$5,000 water bill. The homeowners we serve are not speculators. They are teachers, retirees, care givers, an essential workers who imply lack the financial cushion needed to absorb rising taxes, utilities, insurance. I'll end quickly. For many households renting a spare room short periods has meant fixing a roof leak before it becomes a crisis, Paying taxes on time, Avoiding predatory refinance or simply keeping up with rising cost of living in New York City. So, for the families we serve, this bill

represents not a luxury but a lifeline. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you to this panel. You may--

TENE CLARK: I just want to say one last thing. A lot of the things that the other side was saying does not even apply to 478. It doesn't change a lot of the things that these people are against. A lot of lies are being put out. 948 doesn't change the things that you are concerned about at all. If you read it and you understood it, you would know that. It's not-- it's very important that we pass this for all of us so we could keep our homes and continue to flourish as a city and bring in tourism--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you.

TENE CLARK: and money to our community.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you for sharing that perspective. Thank you. The next panel consists of Shaquana Boykin, Sonia Randolph, Yudelina Santiago, Chandra Singh, and Hilda Alvarez-Eve. If you fit, Murray Cox as well and Thomas Cayler. Cyler? Cayler? He'll tell me. Whoever is ready can begin.

YUDELINA SANTIAGO: My name is Yudelina Santiago, and I'm here to oppose--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Is your mic on, or can you bring it closer?

YUDELINA SANTIAGO: Okay. My name is Yudelina Santiago and I'm here to oppose Intro 948 and 1107. If you pass this bill, the homeowner who support might be able to cover the housing cost for a short while until the real estate company realize they can make a profit by buying up these homes and turning them into hotel. Homeowner like me will not be able to compete. Even worse, our house costs will rise even more because this bill turn residential neighborhood into tourist area. With my union job, I'm able to save up to buy a home one day in the city that I love, but if you pass this bill, home price will go up and I could lose my job, ruin any chance I have of this dream. This bill not leave homeowner better off, instead, helping tech company. We should be helping current potential homeowner by creating better pay job and lowering the cost of living in New York City. The City Council should listen to the [inaudible] resident of New York City, not just like the Airbnb spreading-- vote no on both measure.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. You may begin.

THOMAS CAYLER: Hey, thank you very much. My name is Tom Cayler. Did I not put myself back on? Hey, alright. Thank you. And welcome this afternoon. My name is Tom Cayler. The Coalition Against Illegal Housing is a housing advocacy group that wrote, sponsored, and helped to pass Intro 2309 back in 2021 which then became Local Law 18 in 2022. So, Local Law 18 is what precipitated this little brouhaha that we're having here today. So, you are welcome to blame me and my colleagues for that if you would like. But what you can't do is to say that Local Law 18 did anything other than require short-term rental platforms and hosts to register with the city as any other business in the city is required to do. Local Law 18 did not change a single existing New York City housing law, period. Which means that one- and two-family homeowners and apartments can in fact rent their spare rooms in New York City. That is legal. They can rent their spare rooms for cash to help pay for their mortgages. What they can't do is rent their entire units and then be off premise. Now, this regulation of being on-premise is the most

important one in order to keep any residential housing unit from becoming a permanent short-term rental. Once you vacate that, then you have taken out the regulation which prevents that from happening. It's that important. And thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. You are taller than I thought you were. We've only met over Zoom. But thank you. Thank you for your advocacy. Thank you for your testimony.

CHANDRA SINGH: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Chandra Singh and I'm a New York City hotel worker and resident. I came to this city from Trinidad three decades ago, and I have worked at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel for 21 years. My union job has allowed me to provide for my two daughters, own a home in Queens and be a part of a strong community. All of that will be put at risk if the City Council passes Intro 948 or 1107. My union job means not only that I could afford to buy a home, but also I can afford to keep my home. That is how to have homeowners by creating good jobs opportunity with fair wages and benefit. If workers lose-- if workers like me lose their job and whom prices increases,

families will be pushed out of New York. It is not fear at the cost of any legislation too high to pay. Please think of the hard-working people like me and vote no on this bill. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED: Good afternoon. I am a Queens resident. Let's be clear. The only reason we're all here today is because Airbnb has spent millions of dollars on electeds and lobbyists who push their bill. It doesn't matter how much money they throw at organizations to make it seem like they care about New Yorkers like me. They don't. They don't. They care about making money ahead of the World Cup when millions of tourism come to New York. Just like tourism go, Airbnb will come and go without second thoughts to be damaging-- they will leave behind-- damage they will leave behind. We are-- we already saw that happen when Airbnb flooded the city. Out of town investors buy up homes to make mini hotels. Landlords realize they can make more money with tourism than rentals, and people who give up their-- have to move-- people who grew up there have to move. When-- if you want to help homeowners you could consider people to mortgage support programs or

work-- or lower food groceries. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

MURRAY COX: Good afternoon, Committee Chair Sanchez and Council Members. My name is Murray Cox. I'm the founder of Inside Airbnb, a data activist project that provides data on short-term rental impacts in cities around the world. We also research policies, regulations, and enforcements, including I've written a report for the European Parliament on short-term rentals. That's why I respect the well-researched opening remarks that you gave, Chairman Sanchez. I also want to say that for nine years I've lived in a rented apartment in a two-family brownstone. I was part of the 319,000 households who rent in one- and two-family homes. This group of people is not made up. People rent in one- and two-family homes, and laws like Intro 948 and 1107 make it easier to short-term rent, but they take housing off the market. Another category of renters that is hidden, roommates, people that are renting, that are sharing where there might be a primary resident or the homeowner. They number 224,000 across the city. They're also directly

impacted by pro-short-term rental laws. I also want to address was Public Advocate Williams said. I think he was advocating for some type of yearly cap. Other cities around the world are going-- are moving towards restrictions. LA tried a cap of 120, and they said they couldn't enforce it. People use multiple platforms and it's impossible to enforce across different platforms. And I could talk about that after the hearing if you're interested. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. That's very helpful Murray. To Mr. Cayler, in your remarks-- Cayler, you said Cayler. Thank you. Okay.

THOMAS CAYLER: [inaudible] Cayler, it's all [inaudible] what can you do?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: In your remarks you said the biggest threat in this package of proposed tweaks, reforms, is the insertion of hostless short-term rentals. Can you describe why that is your perspective, what maybe you have seen? And maybe, Mr. Murray, if you have a perspective here, too, what you've seen in other municipalities that you think could happen here in the city?

THOMAS CAYLER: The only regulation in New York City law that keeps permanent residential dwellings residential-- in New York City as well as New York State allows for roomers, boarders, and lodgers for less than 30 days, but it allows them if the primary lease holder is on-site. Once you say the primary lease holder doesn't have to be on-site anymore, this bill 948, there's no limitations on when the primary lease holder doesn't have to be on-site. In fact, the primary lease holder can become just a paper primary lease holder. All they have to do is put their name on the paper and say, yes, I'm the primary lease holder. There's no requirement how many nights they have to actually occupy that space, period. So, once you remove that regulation, then there is no longer any way shape or form to prove that that space is being used as a primary residence anymore. Many other cities have tried this. Murray who does research on this can be more specific about that, but that is the only regulation in New York City that prevents primary residences from becoming permanent short-term rentals.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you, Tom. You did mention-- Murray, you did mention

a municipality that found it impossible to enforce.  
Which one did you say?

MURRAY COX: Los Angeles, the City of Los Angeles.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Los Angeles. Thank you. Is there anything else you wanted to add?

MURRAY COX: There are other cities that-- like, for example, in Amsterdam, they tried having caps. They started off with 90-day caps per year so they could-- the resident could rent out for up to 90 days in individual stays. They reduced it to 60, to 30, and then they tried to ban it. The entire home rentals where the owner is not present are the most profitable to rent out, and there's more incentives to do it, and so people-- people might even short-term rent for a short period of the year and leave it vacant the rest of the year. So, it takes housing off the market if you allow entire home units to be rented.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you for your perspectives on this panel. The next panel is Philip Sommer, Sanket Hendre, Margaret Smith, Eric Lundt, Ivanna Ameigeiras, Chris Chan-- did I get that right? Chris Chan and Dr. Abdo

ZanDani. Whoever is ready can begin. Look for the red light. Yep.

SANKET HENDRE: Hello, hello. Hello, how's everybody doing. My name is Sunny and I work for QEDC, Queens Economic Development Corporation. Our goal and mission is to help entrepreneurs and small businesses in the borough of Queens, and this kind of goes throughout the whole city. So, I am in support of this bill, and the reason I'm in support of it is because it gives the ability to rent out rooms for would-be entrepreneurs which are small landlords. And it makes them-- it allows them to make extra money on areas that they wouldn't have been able to rent anyway, places that I don't think they would be available to the public, allows tourists to come to under-visited areas and also bestows the right for a small homeowner to do what they've always been-- should have been allowed to do which is rent-- which is provide short-term housing. And the other thing is, you know, we need more tourism in this city in this-- in under-visited areas, and we need to be able to give-- confer people the property rights that they've always deserved. So, that's my position.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

PHILIP SOMMER: Hi. My name is Philip Sommer. I'm a proud homeowner of a small townhouse in Brooklyn, Park Slope, where I live with my wife, our two daughters and two cats. We used to Airbnb our home for about four weeks a year. We typically rent out to families of four [sic] from Europe that afford hotels and want a more personal experience to explore this great city. We point them to local attractions, restaurants, and bodegas where they spend the money, and this has been a wonderful experience. They feed our cats, take home of the garden, and the income it generates helps us pay for maintenance of our home. Let me tell you, this would be absolutely nothing wrong with doing this, but we had to stop doing this because of Local Law 18. Let me be clear, I support regulation to prevent true access, but I think it's completely wrong and unlawful for the City to reign in what homeowners that live in their properties like I do can do with their property, and frankly, I doubt that anybody in this room can explain to me why Airbnb my home, my own home that I live in for some weeks in the year, is seen unlawful by Local Law 18 or creates any other

problems. That's false information sponsored by the hotel lobby, and I hope the City Council can see through that and sees that Intros 948 and 1107 support affordable homeownership, homeowners, tourism, the local economy, in short, New York City, the place we all love.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

DR. ABDO ZANDANI: Good afternoon. My name is Doctor Abdo Zandani. I work for the New York City school system and retired after 31 years of service. I live in East Flatbush in a one-family home. We are heavily impacted by Local Law 18. Local Law 18 is erasing generational wealth from Black and Brown communities since this law went into effect. Please listen to our dying voices and pass bill 948A. One- and two-family owners should never have been part of this Local Law 18. 2,223 family homes can't possibly be the panacea for the housing crisis in New York City. I don't even know why we are here discussing this. Focus on the 5,000 NYCHA empty units. No one seems to address the big elephant in the room. It's not a lack of empty apartments, it is a lack of affordable apartments. There's a fight going on here. It's between two giants. We're not

part of that. We are not in that. We don't want to get in the midst and get lost in the shuffle and get our voices bound. So, please listen to our dying voices. We are here to speak for ourselves and our community as owners of one- and two-family homes. Asking you to pass bill 948. Local Law 18 has restricted my ability to use my-- and to share my home. As a result, I'm having difficulties paying my bills and keeping my house. In the words of one of your colleagues, former City Council Member Ampry-Samuel, this law hurts homeowners without easing the housing crisis. He continued to say New York has one of the strictest short-term rental regulations in the world. Many of our working families are still struggling to stay in their homes. In contrast, the hotel industry is laughing their way to the bank, convincing these folks that they are their saviors. They are pinning them against us. Simply, I cannot afford to keep my house. I thank you for the opportunity to speak before you. Please pass bill 948A.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you.

IVANA AMEIGEIRAS: Hello. My name is Ivana. I am an immigrant from Argentina. I am here to talk about optics, because as optics, before I open my mouth with this huge accent that I have, I look like a white lady with a nice coat that is 27 years old. I came to this country with \$900 in my pocket, and I come from a family of workers, the first person who graduated from college. Through the years of immigration I've been saving money to buy this property and it was a huge, huge effort to buy it and renovate it. I've been also supporting my family from Argentina at times. I've been hearing here today a lot of things that I don't think are true. First, that somebody who doesn't live there can't rent an establish that is a primary residency. We have to submit a lot of papers to OSE. We had to submit bank statements that were 90 years old-- 90 days old, [inaudible] driver license from New York, bills, internet that was in our names, [inaudible]. So, it's not so easy as you say. You live there, but you don't. Affordability-- it's been talking on and on and on about affordability for tenants, but what about affordability for owners? The affordability also, if today if I move out of my house and I put it

up in the market, my house would not be an affordable housing. Affordability doesn't come from homeowners. The rents right now is high, and it's not because I rent it short-term.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much to this panel.

UNIDENTIFIED: Could I ask one question?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Ask a question?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, please. I just wanted to know--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] That's not the direction it goes in. I ask the questions. You answer them. But you can ask a rhetorical question.

UNIDENTIFIED: Oh, I just wanted to know what I means to be physically present, what that entails in the law? Like, what duration of time does that actually represent?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I appreciate that question because I asked that question of the administration. I think that's one of the concerns that some of the Council Members have about what does that mean and how often somebody has to be home.

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, because as a supporter of the bill, I wouldn't want somebody-- I don't want to allow bigger corporations to come in and do any of those things, but I do support the small-time landlord, the small guy who just wants to make some money and needs to make some money and support themselves. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. But usually don't ask me questions. I'm not the one on the hot seat, you are. Okay, I actually-- I want to call back Mr. Murray. I apologize. I had some questions. If you're still here, if you can come back down to the dais, and I'll also call the next panel. So that's Murray Cox, please come back if you're still here, Sharon Lee, Mina Wu, Rose Cabe, Latoya Hilton [sp?], Roger Alvarado, and Paige Havener. Thank you so much. And Mr. Murray, my question for you-- I know you've done extensive research, analyses of Airbnb in different contexts. And so, I wanted specifically to ask you about some findings that you highlighted about Stuyvesant Heights in Central Brooklyn where you have an analysis of the demographics of the Airbnb hosts in that neighborhood versus the neighborhood demographics. Can you just

1 describe that for us in terms of your findings and  
2 also your methodology?

3  
4 MURRAY COX: So, I mentioned I was the  
5 founder of a project called Inside Airbnb that was  
6 collecting data on Airbnb. It started in 2015. And I  
7 was living in Bedford-Stuyvesant at the time. I  
8 started off by creating some maps of Airbnb in the  
9 neighborhood and putting dots on the map, and instead  
10 of putting a dot, I put host-- Airbnb host faces on  
11 the map in Bedford-Stuyvesant. And something that  
12 was pretty obvious to me as someone that lived in  
13 Bedford-Stuyvesant were that a lot of faces of the  
14 Airbnb hosts appeared to be white face, non-Black,  
15 not Black faces. So, that-- this was in 2015. A few  
16 years later I spoke to some researchers from Harvard  
17 Business School who had done some studies on racial  
18 discrimination in Airbnb, and they talked about some  
19 methods that you can use to racially identify, with  
20 errors, pictures of people and put them in different  
21 racial categories. And so I decided-- I didn't use  
22 those maps that had the pictures of Airbnb hosts,  
23 because I didn't think it was the right thing to do,  
24 but then using these methods from Harvard Business  
25 School, I racially coded every single host in New

York City in different-- so it's Asian, White, Black, or unknown, and using the expertise from the Harvard Business School where they had also manually coded the photographs as well as using technology. So they were able to advise on error rates, and we were very conservative in our coding. But the findings that we found that in almost every Black neighborhood across New York City, the majority of the-- the majority Black in the neighborhood, the majority of the Airbnb hosts were white. And we found the biggest disparity was in Stuyvesant Heights which is like half of Bedford-Stuyvesant, the part that's further east where we found basically a thousand percent disparity. So, the underlying community was 7.4 percent white. This was back in 2016/17. It's probably changed. But the Airbnb population was 74 percent white. So, obviously, there's-- I know it's very problematic to racially code people using photographs, but there's-- there was really no other option, and this was in the context of Airbnb making a lot of announcements saying that they were-- that Airbnb was good for poor neighborhoods and also they were good for Black neighborhoods. And so, as someone that lived in those neighborhoods, my

question was, well, who's actually using Airbnb? Who's benefitting from Airbnb? So, I'm not saying that there were no Black Airbnb hosts in these neighborhoods. Things might have changed since then, but in 2017 there were very large disparities between the underlying communities and the Airbnb population. And so my conclusions were that you could think of the Airbnb as a racial gentrification tool. So, it's displacing housing, but it was being done by people that didn't live there before. So, if-- especially Bedford-Stuyvesant, if you go back to let's say the 2000's, there was hardly any non-Black residents there. So, for you to be an Airbnb host there, you're either an investor or someone that's moved there recently.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you for sharing those findings on the record, and I'd be curious if Airbnb ever publicly disputed your data or your analysis. Does-- and I'm asking the room, I don't know if they're still here. I imagine they are. So, whether they disputed the data and whether they collect host demographics themselves. I don't know if you know that, but that's a question that I would have for them.

MURRAY COX: Yeah, so there was quite a vigorous response from Airbnb, and I've documented on my website like actually what the response was, who responded, and I responded to their response, including getting-- they basically said that I was using like brown paper bag methods, I was being racist. And so it's fine for them to criticize that, but I don't think they ever denied that their-- that in these communities the majority of Airbnb hosts were not Black in these Black communities.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you. Thank you. I just wanted to make sure to ask you about that study on the record and make sure it's part of the hearing record. Thank you. Okay. For our other friends here, you may begin when ready. And yes, Mr. Murray, if you like you can--

SHARON LEE: Okay. Hi. My name is Sharon Lee from Queens. I'm opposed the 948A and 1107A. Make the rent so higher. These bills are bad for our Asian-American community to run up the housing host. Mina?

MINA WU: Hi, yes. My name is Mina Wu. I think that the Airbnb is pulling too many stranger into our like central neighborhood. So, it's trying-

- Airbnb is trying by the new year. So, these bills will [inaudible] like Asian community. So, I will against the Airbnb into the New York. Okay.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

PAIGE HAVENER: Hi. My name is Paige Havener. I'm a resident and community member in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and I've lived in Brooklyn for 10 years. I'm here to express concerns over 948 and 1107. These bills would risk decreasing the amount of housing available for long-term rent in New York City, and that's a risk we cannot afford to take in such a housing crisis. This bill would also increase housing prices in rents. With the ability to rent more short-term boarders, speculators will see that there is more money to be made and will increase housing prices. This will raise property taxes and subsequently rents. This could also hurt homeowners who are already struggling with high property taxes. Additionally, this bill would remove requirements for someone to live on the property full-time. Without somebody present to oversee the rental property, there's nobody to ensure safety, accountability and community stability in our neighborhoods, and this is irresponsible. It is critical that we preserve the

intention of Local Law 18 and reject Intro 948 and 1107. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. This panel, star panel. Thank you. And so, the next panel consists of Cissie Wang, Maria Eftimiades, Sherri Culpepper, Tim Eliot, Marie Gentine, and Lynn Englum. Whoever is ready can begin.

MARIA EFTIMIADES: Hello. My name is Maria Eftimiades and I'm a two-family homeowner from Queens and a member of RHOAR. RHOAR is deeply grateful to Council Member Mercedes Narcisse for her commitment to keeping New York City homeowners in New York City neighborhoods. We're also grateful to the Housing and Building Committee for hosting this hearing. This issue is bigger than individual homeowners. It affects the entire community. In the last few weeks we have received endorsements, multiple endorsements, and met with the host of supporters including the Bed-Stuy Works Alliance, representing 70+ block associations across Brooklyn, the Harmony Park Association representing 74 households in Brooklyn. The Boerum Hill Association represents 10-12,000 members. Community Board 16 representing more than 100,000 constituents in Brooklyn, Hall Street Block

Association, 66 one- and two-family households.  
Decatur Street Block Association, 66 one- to four-  
family households, and we have support from Henry  
Butler, District Leader and State Committee man for  
56 Assembly District. We encourage you to consider  
these community organizations and their support and  
please vote yes on 948A.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Next?

LYNN ENGLUM: My name is Lynn Englum.  
I've owned my two-family home in Queens for over 10  
years. Before owning I was a renter for over a  
decade. In many ways, I achieved a minor miracle,  
owning a home in America's most expensive city as a  
middle-class American. I'm proud that despite job  
loss, life changes, and unexpected hardships, I still  
managed to keep and maintain my home, even though  
it's over 100 years old. There's always something  
breaking. One of the ways I've managed this is  
through sharing the home that I live in. It allowed  
me extra income when my boiler failed, when my hot  
water flooded my basement, and when my roof leaked so  
bad I needed a replacement. During the pandemic,  
home-sharing was literally my lifeline to keeping my  
home. Affordability as a homeowner is only getting

worse, and now because of Local Law 18, I no longer have one of the most effective tools to offset these increases. But it's not just me that's been hurt by this. it's also my community. There are no hotels where I live. There are no accommodations for families with limited means. Sixty to 70 percent of the people that stayed at my home were families and friends of the people in my community. They were visiting for weddings, graduations, the arrival of a new baby. Unlike in many places around the country, most New Yorkers don't have extra rooms waiting vacant for their family and friends. We simply can't afford it. My home was a place for grandparents to stay and help with the new birth of their grandchild just down the street. Just finish up. This is an issue of affordability, not just for small homeowners like me, but also the communities we live in and the support system we rely on. Please vote yes on 948A. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

TIM ELIOT: Hi. My name's Tim Eliot. I live with my wife in a two-family home that we own in District 11 in the Bronx. I'm urging the Council to vote yes on 948A and 1107A. My wife and I are

artists, educators and service workers, and we both lived and worked in New York City for 20 years. Six years ago we staked all of our savings and our futures to a small home in the Bronx in hopes of finally being able to host our family and friends from out of town and to adopt rescue dogs. With the flexibility of short-term rentals, we were able to reserve time in our second unit for our elderly parents to visit us with comfort and privacy, but since Local Law 18 passed, we've lost not only significant household income, but also the ability to reserve space in our own home to host friends and family. Short-term rental also allowed us to give visitors to this city an affordable, comfortable, safe, and private space to stay in our outer borough neighborhood. Most of our short-term renters were themselves visiting nearby family and friends, or exploring our neighborhood as a potential future home for themselves. We're proud to be part of the sharing economy that we have enjoyed ourselves as thrifty, cost-conscious travelers. I know you have the best interest of all New Yorkers at heart, and that you understand that there's a real need for a reasonable common-sense correction to an egregious

harm being visited on responsible working-class homeowners across the city. Please help me, my wife and our two dogs stay in the small dream home we have worked our entire lives to afford. Please help us stay connected to our friends, family and larger community by allowing us to rent part of the home we live in short-term. Please vote yes on 948A and 1107A.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

MARIE GENTINE: Hi. I'm here in support and I would like to ask for your support of Intro 948A and Intro 1107. So my name is Marie and I'm a Harlem resident. I am homeowner of a one- and two-family house in Harlem. I'm an intern architect and entrepreneur, and I also bring independent [inaudible] in Harlem through monthly series of the Mazel [sp?] Documentary Center. I take care of my three children, but I also help foreigners, students, and interns to find safe accommodation in New York City during their few months in the city. So, I'm speaking as a Harlem resident and small homeowner who can emphasize enough how vital this bill is for families like mine who are fighting to remain in our homes. Our properties are not part of speculative

housing supply. We live in our homes. We are not corporate landlords, investors or developers. We are long-time members of these community, deeply rooted here and our home represents stability, generational security, and community continuity. Due to the rising cost of living in New York City, many small homeowners have had to rely on renting part of our home simply to afford to stay. This is not a luxury. It is a necessity for survival in the neighborhood we help build and care for. Without supplemental income, many of us will be forced out, contributing to displacement and ensuring long-standing Harlem residents, but also new and young resident. May I finish quickly?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes, please conclude.

MARIE GENTINE: Okay. So, Intro 948A is not a threat to housing stability. It's threatening-- it protects the ability of homeowner to remain in this community they love. It does not harm Harlem. In fact, it helps proven [sic] displacement and keeps our neighborhood diverse, stable and thriving. Opposing this bill essentially leaves small homeowners with no path to stay in their homes.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

SHERRI CULPEPPER: Hi. I let my neighbor go first. So, I'm Sherri Greta Phyllis [sp?] Culpepper. I am a mother of three and a grandmother of three. I am a fourth-generation Harlemit and I intend on seeing my fifth, sixth, and seventh generation family live in our home. In 1929, my family of nine moved into an entire brownstone right next door, a single-family dwelling at the time, and rented for 42 years before we were allowed to purchase in 1974. I have witnessed firsthand an assault on small homeownership. Our home was unceremoniously, wrongfully identified in 1930 as a single-room occupancy, no doubt because of years of red-lining. In 1920-- excuse me. In 2014, HPD-- sorry they left-- and their alternate enforcement program identified my home as one of the most distressed in our district. And at the time, my fifth generation cousins and their friends-- 12 of them lived free for over 10 years. You heard that correct. For more than 10 years, and that program was voted on right in these chambers. There is an assault on small homeownership. The narrative is wrong. Small homeowners are not the problem of the

1 crisis. May I finish. I only have 138. The media's  
2 framed this as if, you know, owners are one  
3 monolithic group and we're wealthy moguls. We're  
4 not. We're hard-working individuals. I work seven  
5 days a week for 11 years to take care of the  
6 freeloaders in my house. I'm down to three, but it is  
7 always the enforcement of what we hear here today.  
8 It sounds good on paper, but when you go to enforce  
9 it, it is not. So, I want to thank you. For this  
10 time and thank you, and please vote yes on 928A and  
11 do not continue the assault on the small  
12 homeownership in New York City. I love New York, and  
13 I love my three-year-old Nyla watching me right now.  
14 Hi, grandma loves you.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. If you  
17 want to pull at my heart strings, just talk about  
18 your kids and grandkids. Thank you. Thank you for  
19 your testimony.

20 CISSIE WANG: Good afternoon, everyone.  
21 I'm Cissie Wang. I'm testifying in strong support of  
22 Intro 948A. So, in this season of gratitude, I'm  
23 really thankful for the opportunity to share my  
24 family's story as a small responsible home-sharing  
25 host in Queens. We're Chinese immigrants. My mom

worked very, very hard for years, taking multiple jobs so that I could go to college here, because we believed New York could give us a future. Through her determination, we were finally able to have a small space of our own in this huge city, but living here is not easy. Costs rise every year, mortgage, utilities, property taxes. Hosting a single room in our home is not a business. It's a lifeline that allow us to remain rooted in the community that we really love. You can't rob Peter to pay Paul. You can't break a hole in our home to fill another one. Without finance, home-sharing really connects people to the real New York. Many dream of visiting the city but cannot afford hotels. They want a more diverse, authentic New York experience. It's the neighborhood, the stories, it's the people, and staying with family like mine really let them see that. We welcome traveling nurses, grandparents meeting their newborn baby for the first time, students on a tight budget, New Yorkers between leases, a lot of that. time and time again, they would tell me thank you for-- this has really helped me to see New York that is a warm, a safe, and a real place. My mom and I, we host-- I will conclude. We

1 host responsibly. We live in our home. We verify  
2 every guest. We enforce quiet hours. We protect our  
3 neighbors, and in fact, we actually hired a neighbor  
4 who's a hotel worker to help with our cleaning, and  
5 we're not illegal operators or investors. We're just  
6 families trying to stay in the city that is open,  
7 diverse, and welcoming. So, thank you so much for  
8 listening.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank  
11 you to this panel for sharing your stories. Paige  
12 Havener, Lucy Raimes-- I think I said that wrong--  
13 Mark Anderson, Charlie Dulik, Tom Cayler-- he already  
14 went-- Oscar Rodriguez, and Jose Perez. I think Tom  
15 has already gone.

16 LUCY RAIMES: Good afternoon, Chair  
17 Sanchez. Thank you so much for having us. My name  
18 is Lucy Raimes. I'm Director of Strategic  
19 Partnerships and Resource Development at Neighborhood  
20 Housing Services of New York City. NHS of New York  
21 City is a 43-year-old nonprofit that supports low and  
22 moderate-income homeowners across five boroughs  
23 through housing counseling, financial empowerment,  
24 repair assistance, and resiliency services. I'm here  
25 today to speak to the proposed Introduction 948A.

1 While NHS of New York City does not take a position  
2 on specific regulatory provisions, we want to  
3 underscore the importance of maintaining viable  
4 options for small homeowners, many of whom rely on  
5 supplemental income to remain stable in their homes.  
6 Short-term rentals when appropriately regulated and  
7 responsibly managed can serve as a lifeline for  
8 homeowners, as we've heard over and over again today,  
9 with limited financial margins. The options to host  
10 a tenant or guest, particularly in a one- or two-  
11 family home where the homeowner is deeply invested in  
12 the community can mean the difference between  
13 stability and financial strain. We encourage the  
14 City Council to ensure that any regulatory framework  
15 continue to support the needs of primary residents,  
16 homeowners, especially low and moderate-income  
17 families who may not have access to other options for  
18 income generation. Preserving responsible avenues for  
19 supplemental income helps keep long-time New Yorkers  
20 in their homes, protects generational wealth, and  
21 contributes to neighborhood stability. Thank you for  
22 the opportunity to testify.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

OSCAR RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Good afternoon to everybody. My name is Oscar Rodriguez and I'm a NYC Bronx-born resident. I'm also a proud HTC union member for the last 25 years. New York City has always been and will always be a union town which is why the City Council should oppose Intro 948 and 1107. These bills will roll back short-term rentals regulations, jeopardizing jobs like mine. I'm proud to be in the union because it empowers me to advocate for myself and others in the workplace so we can get our fair share of securing high wages, getting more benefits like health insurance and retirement plans, and improving job security so we won't have to be left out and trying to squander on trying to pay for rent. We work hard and we deserve high wages, strong benefits and the ability to afford to live in the city where we work at. These bills will threaten our jobs and make housing less affordable. So, please, reconsider your decision on today's bill and thank you for your time. It sounds good on paper, like she said, but realistically we go through drastic measures. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you.

JOSE PEREZ: [speaking Spanish]

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [speaking Spanish]

So, just to translate briefly what he said for the record. He is here to ask Council Members to vote against this piece of legislation. He said Airbnb is using millions to sway Council Members. It is concerning that there are people here who want to betray New Yorkers. In the short and long term, the cost of this measure will be incalculable and insurmountable. Please vote no. [speaking Spanish]

Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

MARK ANDERSON: Hi, my name is Mark Anderson. I am the President of the Westerleigh Improvement Society on Staten Island, a civic group that represents 10,000 single and two-family homeowners. We oppose this proposed change, and we would like you to vote no, because-- especially because a proper environmental impact statement or study has apparently not been done, especially in the light of the other changes that haven't even come online yet in the City of Yes and of the proposed-- actually, the voted yes on the Charter Revision questions. Those things should be considered with this as well, and the fact that we're going to allow

1 businesses to take over houses in our residential  
2 neighborhood is very disturbing to us and it would  
3 decrease our stability and our ability to see that we  
4 have a stable environment. You know, if you don't  
5 know if you're going to get an Airbnb next to you and  
6 have people who come and go as they please and bring,  
7 you know, cars in very large numbers that add to the  
8 parking problem that we already have. We have  
9 transportation problems. We have infrastructure  
10 issues that are not even being considered here, and  
11 the effects of that need to be considered, and to  
12 vote on that is premature. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank  
15 you so much to this panel. Thank you to my Bronx  
16 testifiers. Really appreciate this perspective.  
17 Thank you. Gracias. The next panel is Neil Johnson,  
18 Katherine Draeger, Lissett Alba, Michael Leonard,  
19 Hector Nunez, Charles Safo, Henry Gray, Neil  
20 Francois.

21 LISSETT ALBA: Good afternoon. My name  
22 is Lissett Alba and I'm a proud union member for 15  
23 years, and I'm here to tell you to vote no on Intro  
24 948 and 1107. As a hotel worker, I see the  
25 difference every day between hotels that follow

strict guidelines and the unregulated chaos of short-term rentals. My hotel is required to follow fire safety rules, accessibility standards, labor protections, and tax laws. Short-term rentals operate without most of those responsibilities. This bill will endanger residents. They will allow people to lock rooms which is a major fire hazard. Also, they will take away the requirement for the host to be on-site. This means that there is no one making sure that a bunch of teenagers in the city for a vacation don't put the entire building in danger. These rules are in place for a reason. The City Council needs to put the safety of New Yorkers ahead of the need of a tech company that wants to meet their bottom line. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

NEIL JOHNSON: Hi. My name is Neil Johnson. I'm a proud union member for over 40 years and a door man at the Plaza Hotel. Please vote no. Affordable homeownership is one thing, but owning a home and renting it out short-term to make a huge profit is another. You can be sure that it would drastically increase the cost of a home in New York City, and you can be sure that it would impact all

the hotels in New York City and the hard workers who are just trying to make a living and raise their families. What's wrong with renting past 30 days? Remember, if this passes, many people would not call their house a home anymore when they sell it. They would call it a house/Airbnb/hotel room. Airbnb has spent millions to back City Council candidates who support its agenda of easing restrictions on short-term rentals in New York City. The New York Council Member Kevin Riley who spoke today accepted campaign contributions and support from a political action committee, PAC, associated with Airbnb. He says he's concerned with homeowners not being able to pay their mortgage. Basically, I heard that he's-- I think he's using this to push to make Airbnb short-term legal and hopefully without a homeowner needing to be present. Why? Well, I think we know why as far as a lot of politicians that take money from corporations. They're bought and paid for, and it's a shame. Lastly,--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you.

NEIL JOHNSON: By the way, I'm not accusing Airbnb, but when I came here today I met two

people that I know who told me that they were being paid to protest in favor of Airbnb's agenda.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Next panelist.

CHARLES SAFO: My name is Charles Safo and I oppose Intro 948 and 1107. Companies that profit from short-term rentals are not looking out for New Yorkers. Their interest is in expanding their business, even when it harms the people who actually live and work in the city. We have all seen how [inaudible] lobby elected officials, even though people like me can't spend millions of dollars on influencing laws. We deserve to be heard. We know that-- we know what happens when you let Airbnb into our communities before Local Law 18 rent rules. Communities where destroyed and long-term residents were forced out of homes. That's how it's been in their families for generations. In neighborhood like mine, Black people were pushed out as apartment that was turned into short-term rentals while newcomers made all the money. If you pass this bill you are choosing corporate interest over your own constituents. I'm asking you to vote no on this bill

to protect New Yorkers like me. Be blessed always  
and God bless we all.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

HENRY GRAY: Good afternoon to all. My  
name is Henry Gray, preferred name is Gray, and I'm a  
proud member of the Hotel Trades Council. I'm here  
today to urge you not to pass any bill that would  
expand short-term rentals. I've watched firsthand  
what happened when the short-term rentals exploded in  
our city. And the neighborhoods where I grew up and  
worked, apartments that used to house families were  
suddenly pulled off the rental market, because  
landlords realized they could make more money renting  
to tourists for a few nights at a time, and the  
people who paid the price were overwhelmingly Black  
residents. I watched some of my friends, neighbors  
and co-workers pushed out as rent spike and long-term  
leases disappeared. We cannot call these harmless  
side hustles when they contribute to displacement and  
the loss of Black communities that built the culture  
of New York City. Legalizing and expanding short-  
term rentals would put even more pressure on  
neighborhoods that are already fighting to survive.  
Please vote no on Intros 948 and 1107. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

Excellent. Thank you so much for your testimony.

I'm going to call up the next panel comprising of

Jaribu Lora, Jaribu Lora, Tim Walker, Alicia McKee,

Victor Tenezaca, Shanti Jimenez, Noma Price, and I'm

also going to ask Warren Gardiner from Airbnb to join

us at the dais to answer a follow-up question. They

might come around and testify online. Before we

begin with the panelist, I just wanted to provide an

opportunity for Airbnb to respond to the claims or

the finding of an earlier report, a 2017 report, that

was shared earlier in the hearing. Does Airbnb

collect host demographics and has Airbnb disputed

findings from that research?

WARREN GARDINER: Thank you, Madam Chair,

for the opportunity to respond. Airbnb does not

collect race-based data at all, and we do dispute the

findings of Mr. Cox's statement earlier. Even the

leading Harvard study has found that Mr. Cox's

methodology is extremely outrageous and dangerous and

offensive. I personally find it offensive as well.

You know, I think it flies in the face, as well, of

the work that this council has championed, you know,

for many years throughout this city. You know, I

1 think if a city law enforcement agent or even a city  
2 agency were conducting research using methodology  
3 like this, we'd be having a hearing solely on that  
4 that would probably last longer than this one. And so  
5 just wanted to clarify, we do not collect race-based  
6 data at Airbnb, and you know, paying attention to  
7 methodology that uses the back of the napkin analysis  
8 to scrape data, it's extremely unreliable. It's not  
9 going to help further this discussion here. So,  
10 thank you, Madam Chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And if  
13 you do not collect host demographics, does the  
14 company then-- on what grounds do you dispute the  
15 findings specifically?

16 WARREN GARDINER: Well, I mean, when you  
17 look at the study-- first of all, the study studied  
18 only two races, right? This is New York City, right?  
19 We have multiple-- I mean, this is the melting pot,  
20 so--

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Right,  
22 but leaving aside the study, it sounds like you don't  
23 know what the-- what any of the demographics are of  
24 your hosts, because you don't collect it, correct? I  
25 just want to make sure I'm clear.

WARREN GARDINER: Yeah, we do not collect that data.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Problems with the study aside, I just want to make sure to understand that on the record. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for coming back.

WARREN GARDINER: Thank you.

NOMA PRICE: Hi. My name is Noma Price. My husband and I own a home in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn in Crystal Hudson's district. I have not been paid for my testimony, and at this point, I'm very hungry. I'd first like to request that the city stop calling my home, housing stock. While our home is legally a two-family with separate units, we use and live in our whole home. My so-called housing stock is really a guest room for my elderly parents. It's a home away from home from my immigrant husband's family. It's a slumber party zone for my daughter, and a TV room for movie nights. At the same time, New York is expensive. Teenage daughters are expensive. Health care costs for my husband's chronic Lyme Disease are expensive. Our costs and taxes keep rising and our income doesn't. Before Local Law 18, home-sharing provided supplementation of our income. I could use

my home when I needed, share with families of my community when not. My neighbors also need space for visiting family and overseas guests. Despite the picture being painted today, my home was never packed with partying tourists. My guests were older couples meeting a new grandchild, parents visiting a student at Pratt, or happy kids coming to hang with their cool uncle in Brooklyn. I know that wealthy investors taking multiple units off the market to profit from short-term rentals can be a problem, and I support legislation to restrict this, but I am not a billionaire investor. My home is not now and never was a hotel, nor is it housing stock. I'd like to speak to Council Member Hudson who I hope is listening. When Local Law 18 first took effect, I joined a call with you. You said that you had never intended for small homeowners like myself to be caught up in the overly broad net of the new law. 948A is a chance for you to fix that mistake. Please vote to pass this common-sense amendment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And I will make sure she hears that. She was here earlier.

SHANTI JIMENEZ: Greetings, Chair Sanchez and members of the Housing Committee. My name is

Shanti and I'm a lifelong native New Yorker, and I'm not being paid here to support Intro 948A. My sister and I poured our lifelong savings into buying our dream house, the foundation of our family's future and our shot at generational stability. We envisioned a home where our family by proper city code definition could grow up near us, securing our roots in the city we love. But New York City is increasingly hostile to working families and we are barely scraping by. When we first purchased the house, we temporarily relied on home-sharing the second unit until my sister could financially move in. However, since Local Law 18, my sister and her family have settled in that unit, yet the cost of ownership remains unbearable for us together. Intro 948A is our lifeline, proposing very small safety and autonomy changes which will not turn our homes into hotels, not make us prone to fires, parties, wrong doorbells rung, or 20 listings, but they will give families like mine the modest necessary income to keep the lights on, something a help line won't help with. Six weeks ago, I very suddenly lost my best friend and beloved aunt, and I couldn't leave home to be by her side at her final moments. Homes are meant

to be shared, and homeowners deserve to utilize their greatest asset to afford living here. Without this, we would be forced to sell our home and flee New York, increasing the chances of it being purchased by private equity firms and undoubtedly rented unaffordably [sic]. Just one more second, please. Intro 948A is not about profit for corporations, it's about preservation, preserving our dream, preserving generational stability and preserving the very New Yorkers who built this city. Please pass Intro 948A. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Okay, we're going to do one more panel, and then those of you who remain, let us all migrate. We're going to make the great voyage across the street to 250 Broadway. We will be in hearing room one there. Phoebe Douglas, Rosa Perez, Tonya Channell, Esceta McGee, Lauren McGrath. And just clarifying, you may ask to continue your testimony. You may not continue your testimony without my acknowledgement, okay? So, please respect the procedures that we have. And anybody may begin when ready.

PHOEBE DOUGLAS: My name is Phoebe

Douglas and I live in the Bronx. I'm a licensed professional civil engineer. I live and work in my home and I'm not being paid to be here. I'm here to ask you to vote yes on Intro 948A. I want to speak from a lived reality because people like me usually disappear in these debates. I grew up poor and have experienced homelessness as a child, including being kicked out hotels with my family. Becoming a homeowner in the city is served professionally was the first time in my life that housing felt safe. My home is where I cared for my father as he battled cancer and is where I now care for my mom, now that he's no longer here. Last year, I was one of five female engineers let go from my job. Home-sharing built the emergency fund that kept me housed. It allowed me to supplement my housing cost in a manageable low-risk way while I worked to build an inclusive engineering firm with those other four female engineers. Without that, I would have been in crisis again. This conversation really isn't about the housing stock. It's about greed. If hotel groups cared about housing, they would pledge to convert even one percent of their massive real estate

portfolio into affordable homes. To my knowledge, the hotel industry has made no meaningful contributions to homeownership or affordable housing programs in New York, and actions speak louder than words. This is because they're economic model does not benefit from increasing homeownership or affordable housing. Again, this is not about the housing crisis. It's about protecting their profits. Homeowners like me who live in our whole homes are being treated if we're the housing stock and we're not. The middle-class is central to the City's stability and when small homeowners collapse-- I'll finish.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Again, I have to give the permission to every person. And you may conclude. And I will, I will give you--

PHOEBE DOUGLAS: No, it's okay. It's alright.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Just procedurally. Thank you.

PHOEBE DOUGLAS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I will-- I will most likely give you the permission. I just have to be the one to say it.

TONYA CHANNELL: Good afternoon. My name is Tonya Channell. Lifelong Brooklyn resident. I agree with so many here who have said those of us who have built this city should not be pushed out. I am the fourth generation Brooklynite in Bed-Stuy, homeowners. I went to PS93. I went to Satellite East. I went to Murray Burcham [sic], graduated from Baruch College. I am now raising my children in the home that I bought for my mother. And I didn't have a union job. So when I got laid off, this is how I'm able to keep my job-- I mean, my home. This is how I'm able to pay my children's tuition. I want to stay in New York. I love New York City. I'm avid New Yorker, serving on PTAs, Community Boards, volunteering to make New York City the city that everybody wants to be in, but now I'm struggling to be able to stay in this very city. This is not about Airbnb. This is about me. This is about me, my neighbors. Like somebody else just said, I've never had rowdy guests, parties, people ringing the wrong doorbell, and no complaints from my neighbors. Just want to make sure-- yeah, my family's lived in Bed-Stuy for five generations, beginning with my Great

Grandparents who emigrated here through Ellis Island in the early 1900s. Yeah, I'm-- thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

ESCETA MCGEE: Good afternoon. My name is-- okay. Good afternoon. My name is Esceta McGee. I live in St. Albans, Queens, New York, District 27 in a one two-family house. First, I am not paid to be here. I have resided in my home since 1986. I am asking the committee to vote yes on bill 948A. Sadly, many of my neighbors who retired cannot afford to age in place. I had it off, everybody.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Happens to me all the time.

ESCETA MCGEE: Yeah. I know I had it off, but I was checking the time. Many who are like me may have lost a spouse and can no longer afford to stay in New York, leaving for the south where housing is cheaper. I have a daughter in college. I pay tuition and would like to share my home to assist with paying taxes, utility bills and other high costs. Sharing my home makes it easy for everyone who needs an affordable space while allowing me to stay here in New York. I'm considered the matriarch of my block. Neighbors say it is a nice block. Yes,

I worked hard after the crack epidemic to set a standard that many follow today. Many neighbors will not be living in their home for long, as it has become too costly to maintain our home. I'm going to - for brevity, the expense to maintain our home without your assistance is close to unbearable.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You may conclude.

ESCEETA MCGEE: I'm asking you to vote yes to bill 948A. I love New York. Health care for us is good in New York. We want to age in place and do short-term rental. There is no other place like our beautiful city. I am in support of bill 948A, and I would like New York City Council to vote yes. Thank you. I am in District 27, proudly. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. I will be sure to remember who 27 is. I'm 14.

ESCETA MCGEE: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you.

LAUREN MCGRATH: Hi there. Thank you for listening. My name is Lauren McGrath and I'm a native New Yorker, as well, an example of a moderate income homeowner under threat from Local Law 18, and I'm here in support of 948A and 1107. I live in a brownstone in West Harlem, raised three kids there.

1 I'm in Council Shaun Abreu's district whose office  
2 has been entirely unresponsive to its constituents'  
3 needs and no invitations to discuss. I-- we are  
4 artists freelancers. We have an inconsistent income  
5 stream, no union support to protect my job or my not  
6 huge income, and we're not paid to come here, and I  
7 wrote my own speech. And this is just about basic  
8 affordability. I'm here to protect my income, too.  
9 We've relied on ourselves for income from home-  
10 sharing to provide and protect our family with  
11 financial stability. We've renovated and maintained  
12 a historic building valued by many New Yorkers and  
13 consider ourselves custodians of this building and  
14 family home. We maintain the sidewalk, façade,  
15 stoop, ironwork required, but also for the benefit of  
16 other residents of the city. What's more,  
17 responsible home-sharing which has been a tradition  
18 here for centuries has helped us pay for support for  
19 immediate family members with mental health issues.  
20 We've been able to provide a safe space and stability  
21 to children who have needed to come home in between  
22 jobs. Other times, we're affordably housing people  
23 who need to come to NYC but can't afford the  
24 astronomical hotel rates, parents of children, local  
25

colleges, professors, grandparents, patients at Columbia Pres, visiting nurses and doctors. Also, neighbors needing temporary housing.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you. You may conclude.

LAUREN MCGRATH: Thank you. Don't we want there to be room for-- in NYC for affordable options for people who would like or need to come here? We want to continue to afford to stay in our home with legal, reasonable, and safe home-sharing. Without that income, we [inaudible] or completely unstable and in crisis. Thank you for your attention. Hope you will support us and 948A and 1107.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Phoebe, was there anything else you wanted to say? You sure? Thank you for sharing your story. It's a very powerful one. Thank you all. Okay, so we are officially squatting. We're going to do one more panel here and then I'm also going to call out the names for the following panel which will be across the street. So, this will be the last panel here, and then the next panel will be across the street. So, the panel for right now is Gilberto Mejia,

Yesenia Jessie Paulino, Chandra Singh-- I think some of-- some folks have gone. Samantha Jones and Martha Bustillo. Across the street we're going to go with Karl Apelgren, McArthur Damis, Jeff Damisse, Jeanne Raleigh, Laurie Kellogg, and then-- and Alamgir Bhuiyan. Gilberto Mejia for right now, Gilberto Mejia, Jesenia [sic] Jessie Paulino, Samantha Jones, and Martha Bustillo. You may approach the dais. We'll give you a minute to approach the dais. If you do not, we will all head over across the street. Gilberto Mejia, Jesenia Jessie Paulino, Samantha Jones, and Martha Bustillo.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Once again, everyone, you're going to make your way across to 250 Broadway across the street. You're going to check in at the lobby. They will direct you up to the hearing room. It's going to be in hearing room one. Once again, thank you for your cooperation.

[break]

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [inaudible] for Housing and Buildings. At this time, everybody please silence your cell phones and nobody is to approach the dais. Chair, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Alright, thank you, Sergeants. Yes. Oh, Sergeants, the clocks. Yeah, okay. So, as soon as he sets that up, anyone can start.

MCARTHUR DAMIS: Hello. Good morning, everyone. Good morning, Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee. My name is McArthur Damis and I'm a homeowner in Brooklyn. I live in a two-family home. I'm on the first floor, and my long-term tenants, they live on the second floor, upstairs. I'm here to support Intro 948 because it protects homeowners like me who rely on home-sharing just to stay stable in a very expensive city. For years, I responsibly shared my own unit with guests. This wasn't for profit. It helped me cover rising expenses while keeping tenants' rent below market value. When they ask for rent reduction during financial hardship, home-sharing made it possible for me to honor that and maintain our affordability for them. But Local Law 18 with the two-guest limit and the requirement that I be physically present has made it nearly impossible to continue. My bookings dropped. My supplemental income fell, and it's now much harder to sustain my home and keep rent stable for my tenants. Intro 948

restores balance. It allows responsible homeowners of one- to two-family homes, people who actually live in their buildings to host short-term guests without being physically present, while still meeting registration, safety and occupancy rules. It stops bad actors without punishing residents like me. Home-sharing is what helps me maintain my property avoid raising rent on my tenants and staying rooted in my community. Without this flexibility many homeowners will struggle, and tenants could face increases or displacement. Intro 948 protects affordability, supports responsible homeowners, and strengthens our communities. I respectfully urge the Council to pass this bill. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

JEFF DAMISSE: Hello, everyone. Good evening. My name is Jeff Damisse, native New Yorker, born in Brooklyn. I bought a home in the Bronx in District 14, that of Councilwoman Sanchez. Hello, neighbor. So, I've been in New York for many, many years and I saved, saved and saved for decades to be able to afford to buy my very first and only home, two-family home in the Bronx in District 14, and in doing so, I was able to help house a small family, a

single mother, a Black single mother with a Down Syndrome son. And it has been a pleasure to be able to be a landlord for them, because they're like family to me. Sorry.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Take your time.

JEFF DAMISSE: Okay. Hold on. When I bought the home, shortly after I had lost my job, and I was faced with having to figure out if I was going to keep the family in the house. And they're like family to me. Every Christmas we exchange gifts, food, and I never intended to kick them out because of short-term renting when I had lost my job. I used Airbnb to supplement what I had lost. Sorry. But then after eight months, I eventually found another job which came with a 50 percent pay cut, but I chose that job because-- I'm in construction, construction management. And I actually work with affordable housing. We build homes in the Bronx, in your district, and other districts in the Bronx. We've built thousands of units per year, and I work with developers to provide housing for a multitude of people. The reason why I'm mentioning that is because I'm not here to destroy homes or get rid of housing for tenants. I'm here to build it. So, I'm

here. Almost done, 10 seconds. My phone keeps cutting off. I'm sorry. I was not expecting this. When I was doing Airbnb, I was not-- it wasn't just to make a profit. I was sleeping on couches, renting out my house. I was sleeping at my cousin's house just so I can keep the house, and I was able to, but then when Local Law 18 came now I'm faced with basically the same thing. It's like being fired again. So, I'm in support of Intro 948 to help make New York affordable, not just for renters, but for homeowners, too. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

ALAMGIR BHUIYAN: Hi. My name is Alamgir Bhuiyan. I'm from Local Law 206 Hotel Trade. Long time I living here 40 years almost, New York City. [inaudible] I work lot of visit for lot of European county and a lot of city. When I came to New York City, it's the best city, like my country city. I love this city. I want to [inaudible] the city. Hotel industry back bone of the city. That [inaudible] not coming here is going to max [sic] I believe, and after that, I believe this hotel industry [inaudible] employees and back [inaudible] family [inaudible] you want to try to-- my case,

bread and butter take away. I not give away as quite as I can. This my city. My kids born here. My family born here. So, I want to [inaudible] fighting for hotel industries part-time, not Airbnb [sic]. So, please help us vote for no, no. I like to-- the city, and I stay the city. So, please don't bring the criminal people here. You don't know whose Airbnb [inaudible] come to here. May be criminal. May be drug dealer. May be killer. We don't know. And that people living in my house, no way. I fight for my life for my kids, my family. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

JEANNE RALEIGH: Hi. My name is Jeanne Raleigh. I am a resident of District 50 in Staten Island. I am not getting paid to testify. My husband and I purchased our legal two-family home in 1987 when we first married. We had no children and rented our additional space for long-term for 15 years until our growing family needed more room. I am here to ask this committee to vote yes on bill 948A. Our three children are young adults now returning for family gatherings. It is imperative to keep this space available for these family visits. Sharing our home with family versus having them rent a hotel room of

1 which there are few and far between in Staten Island.  
2 Also, single and two-family homeowners like ourselves  
3 rely on home-sharing for additional income. The cost  
4 of owning a home continues to rise as we all know.  
5 However, our New York City pensions, while I am  
6 grateful, do not increase, except for an occasional  
7 COLA increase of \$1.10. My husband, a New York City  
8 mechanic with the Sanitation Department retired 17  
9 years ago, taking a reduced monthly pension in the  
10 event he passed away, ensuring the mortgage for his  
11 young family could be covered. Without home-sharing  
12 it is nearly impossible to meet all our expenses. In  
13 conclusion, I am a native New Yorker, born and raised  
14 in the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx. In the  
15 words of Alicia Keys, "I'm embedded in this concrete  
16 jungle where dreams are made of. There's nothing I  
17 can't do." Except remain in my owner-occupied family  
18 home without home-sharing. I'll be forced to sell my  
19 home, move down south and get pickled by the sun.  
20 Please vote yes on bill 948A. Thank you for your  
21 time and interest.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank  
24 you so much to each of you for sharing your stories,  
25 I do-- Jeff? Jeff. Just thank you for sharing your

1 story. Thank you for, you know, opening up about  
2 that because it's really important for us to have the  
3 real life examples. So, what happened to the family  
4 that was your neighbor?  
5

6 JEFF DAMISSE: They're still there. I'm  
7 not sure how long I can keep the house.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got you. Thank  
9 you. McArthur, I want to make sure I heard you  
10 correctly. So, you are a homeowner, you live in the  
11 home?

12 MCARTHUR DAMIS: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And you have  
14 tenants living in another part of the-- in another  
15 unit of the--

16 MCARTHUR DAMIS: [interposing] Above me,  
17 yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Above. And you have  
19 been home-sharing the unit where you live.

20 MCARTHUR DAMIS: Yes, correct.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it.

22 MCARTHUR DAMIS: Yes. So, you're the--  
23 you know, you're the-- just the kind of person that I  
24 certainly want to hear from about how you think these  
25 provisions would make a difference for you since

1                   you're home sharing today and you've been, you know,  
2                   present and compliant. So, how would it change  
3                   things for you to be allowed to not be home when you  
4                   have Airbnb guests? How would the locks provision  
5                   change, change the way that you run things and you  
6                   set up your home? And how-- and would it make a  
7                   difference to you to be able to be allowed to have  
8                   more people stay in the home?  
9

10                  MCARTHUR DAMIS: Absolutely. It  
11                  definitely make a great difference with this  
12                  adjustment to the current bill, because right now,  
13                  I'm trying my best to keep my tenants happy when it  
14                  comes to the rent. They ask for rent reduction,  
15                  which you know, I-- it was not easy to make that  
16                  decision, but at the same time, I still-- I made that  
17                  decision because I had the opportunity with being  
18                  successful with the Airbnb, and it was a struggle to  
19                  make sure that everything was in order when it came  
20                  to, you know, the expenses in my home and it came to  
21                  like making sure that everything was affordable. The  
22                  restrictions when it comes to the two-guest limit, it  
23                  brought down traffic when it came down to the Airbnb.  
24                  It came down to, you know, how much am I going to be  
25                  able to make if I have only two guests versus having,

1                   you know, a possibility of having four guests? So,  
2                   having that increase makes a big difference because  
3                   when it comes to having a family, a group of two  
4                   versus a group of three or four, it makes a big  
5                   difference when it comes to making more income, and I  
6                   need that income, especially when it comes to my  
7                   tenants. You know, they're struggling to make ends  
8                   meet. They want to make sure that they can afford  
9                   their apartment, but at the same time, you know, if I  
10                  have the opportunity to make more income with the  
11                  increased guest amount of four, that'll help me keep  
12                  their rent stable. And that's why I definitely am  
13                  strongly in favor of bill 948, as well as having the  
14                  opportunity to have locks in place. And also that  
15                  would ensure that they have their privacy. That's  
16                  very important. And you know, I go to work. I have a  
17                  nine to five, you know. I'm not always going to be  
18                  present, you know, at the time, but you know, this  
19                  would help make sure that, you know, I can allow for  
20                  them to be there and be comfortable, and at the same  
21                  time not be so restrictive with the current bill of  
22                  Local Law 18.

23                                   JEFF DAMISSE: Can I add something in  
24                                   support of what he said? In support of what he said,  
25

1 when it comes to locking the doors, people think  
2 we're locking the doors to create some type of  
3 hazard, but like there's a certain privacy as owners  
4 that we need. Like, these are the same homes we keep  
5 our toothbrushes, our personal items, and sensitive  
6 information, social security numbers and credit cards  
7 that stored away in places that-- yes, we welcome  
8 guests, but we-- like he said, we go to work. We  
9 want to give them privacy, but we also want to give  
10 ourselves privacy. So, I think that's what the  
11 support of this Intro 948 is. And lastly, we're not--  
12 when Local Law 18, it's not like my house became  
13 available. It's still my home. It's still my sheets.  
14 It's still my plates, my forks and knives. So, it's  
15 like-- it's not like now I get a unit to rent.  
16 That's not really the case. So, thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. That's  
19 really helpful. Well, thank you and especially thank  
20 you for your patience and rolling with the punches,  
21 and Jeff, I would love to connect offline, you know,  
22 since we're neighbors. Okay, thank you so much.  
23 Shakira Crawford, Jean Sooktail, Esteban Giron, and  
24 Jadore Bodie. And Winsome Pendergrass, Winsome.  
25 We're just trying to fill up, fill the four seats.

Winsome, are you here? Sean Aird? Alright.

Whoever's ready can begin.

JEAN SOOKTAIL: Good afternoon. My name is Jean Sooktail and I'm a resident of Queens, New York. I've been a resident of Queens, New York for over 30 years in District 28. I'm also a proud member of HTC. Let's be clear, the only reason we are all here today is because Airbnb has spent millions of dollars on election and lobbyists to push these bills. It doesn't matter how much money they throw at organization to make it seem like they care about New Yorkers like me. They don't. They care about making money ahead of the World Cup when millions of tourists come to New York. Just like tourists do, Airbnb will come and go without giving a second to the damage they leave behind. We already saw what happens when Airbnb floods the City. Out-of-town investors buy up our homes to make mini hotels. Landlord realize they make more money with tourists and renters which is not fair, and people who go up have to move. If you wanted to help homeowners, you could help connect people to mortgage support programs or work to lower costs of groceries or keep home prices down. Instead, any City Council Member

that support this bill is sacrificing the workers, renters, and homeowners that elected you in the first place. And you should be ashamed that this just about making sure a company worth \$85 billion dollar gets to make more money, and no amount of advertising is going to justify the action of you or Airbnb. Please stand up to this transparent and shameless power grab. Vote no to Intro--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you. You may conclude.

JEAN SOOKTAIL: 948. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You may conclude. Thank you.

JEAN SOOKTAIL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Next person.

SHAKIRA CRAWFORD: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Shakira Crawford, and I'm here to tell you to vote no on Intros 948 and 1107. Shout out to the Bronx. Shout out to HTC. Before being a member of HTC, I lived in a shelter with my three children in Brooklyn, and worked at a non-union hotel making \$8.00 an hour, \$8.00. Just imagine that. And I was doing multiple jobs. Being a member of HTC has changed my life for the greater good. Now, I have a

1 home in the Bronx, a good-paying job, and just this  
2 year, my daughter which is the youngest started at  
3 the University of Albany [sic]. Shout out to Albany.  
4 I also know how bad the conditions are for guests and  
5 workers at hotels that don't need to follow rules to  
6 keep us all safe. My hotel is required to follow fire  
7 safety rules, accessibility standards, labor  
8 protections, and tax laws. Short-term rentals are an  
9 unregulated mess. They operate without most of those  
10 responsibilities. This bill would endanger guests  
11 and residents and put entire communities at risk of  
12 being disrupted and displaced to make room for out-  
13 of-towners. May I finish? Thank you. There are so  
14 many problems with these bills, and that's why we're  
15 here today, right HTC? Opening the flood gates for  
16 Airbnb will take away the homes, jobs and safety we  
17 all want. The City Council needs to put the safety  
18 of New Yorkers ahead of the needs of tech company  
19 that wants to meet their bottom line. Thank you for  
20 hearing my testimony. Vote no.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. You  
23 should turn off your mic so we don't get an echo.

24 JADORE BODDIE: Good evening, Council. My  
25 name is Jadore Boddie and I'm here to tell you to

1 vote no on Intros 948 and 1107. Growing up in the  
2 Bronx I've had the privilege to live in a  
3 multigenerational home. So, it came from  
4 grandparents, to my mom and her siblings, to me and  
5 my brother, and to hopefully me and my family one  
6 day. Growing up in a community I've always felt a  
7 sense of comfort, people that I knew who watch me  
8 grew up, who I've seen their kids grew up, and just a  
9 self of sense knowing that that was my place that I  
10 knew that I wanted to bring my family to one day.  
11 However, with Airbnb and people trying to kick out  
12 people that I've known grow up my whole entire life,  
13 I don't think that's going to be an option for me one  
14 day, having to, you know-- having to once imagine my  
15 life where it was to one day not it being there  
16 because rent's going up, groceries is going up. We  
17 just had SNAP benefit where people in my community  
18 wasn't even able to afford groceries, and they're  
19 working two jobs, three jobs, putting their kids  
20 through college. I had to go to college and my mom  
21 still had to work and provide for our household, and  
22 she was a single parent. So, those are things in my  
23 community that I feel that Airbnb shouldn't take  
24 away. There's things that I had the privilege of  
25

growing up with that other kids that come after me,  
kids that I want to one day have, have the same  
things. And that's why you should vote no.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. What  
part of the Bronx? What-- thank you. Thank you to  
this-- oh, no, we have one more person. I'm sorry.

SEAN AIRD: Good evening. My name is  
Sean Aird. I'm a Brooklyn resident and also a proud  
member of HTC union. I've been a member for 11 years,  
and HTC has provided many things to me and all of  
members as far as job security. You know, health  
insurance. And if this bill is passed, it can take  
away a lot from us, because once we lose occupancy in  
the hotels, they can lay off many workers, and we're  
already fighting to get so many workers back to work,  
workers that's been pushed out by hotel owners that  
don't even want union workers in their hotels because  
they want to have cheaper labor such as the Suri  
[sic] Hotel. You know, we're already fighting to get  
those workers back into their hotels. And it's-- so  
a bunch of us struggle just to get the workers who's  
struggling now, and so imagine if we lose those  
workers who's working right now because Airbnb comes  
into this-- expands through the City and we lose even

more people and jobs. It's tough as it is right now. I know it's been said already that-- by some people-- that we're being used by lobbyists and also billionaires and hotel owners, but that's not true and that's not possible. We-- our union fights every day to make sure we get fair wages and it's tough enough as it is, like I said, and it's just going to get harder.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Extra points.

Thank you. Thank you so much to this panel. Appreciate your testimony. Thank you so much. So, the next panel is going to be Kirsten John Foy, Stephen Hutchison, William Gomez, Brian McNamara, and Lamount Morris. And Philip Taveda, if you're here, Philip Taveda. Xueli Zheng? Janette Stanford? Joyce Mangold? We have six seats, so I'm trying to fill them up. Shema Wallace? Shema Wallace? Matthew Pritchard? Oh, okay. You are the strong that are surviving. Cecile Lai? We're in it together. Cecile Lai? Loretta Woutens? Really? Okay. Mark Anthony Mauricio? Biviana Pereira? Biviana? Jamyang Hsu? Jean Lewis-Baptiste? Oh, okay. Michelle Sanchez? No relation. Latoya Hilton? Roger Alvarado? Paige Havener? Went already, okay.

Chris Leon Johnson? And that is who we have signed up. So, if you want to-- right, yes. We can clap. Not supposed to. That's who we have testifying in-person. If you want to testify and you're here, please tell the Sergeants so we can make sure to add you, and then we're going to move to Zoom.

JOYCE MANGOLD: Good evening, Committee. My name is Joyce Mangold and I'm proud member of the union Hotel Trade Council. I'm here today to urge you not to pass the bill that would expand-- that would expand the short-term rental. I watch firsthand what happened when short-term neighborhood where I grew up and I work-- apartments that used to housing family were suddenly pulled off the rental market, because landlord realized they could make more money renting to tourists for a few more nights at a time. And people-- and the people who paid price were overwhelmingly Black resident. I watch my friends, neighbor and co-worker push out of rent spike long-term lease disappear. We cannot call these harmless side hustle when they contribute to displace and loss of Black communities that the built the culture of New York. Legislature expand short-term rental without even putting more pressure on neighborhoods

that are already fighting to survive. Please vote no on Intro 948 and 1107. Thank you.

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah, hello.

My name is Christopher Leon Johnson. On the record, I used to be a former shop steward for 32BJ SEIU. I'm here to show opposition to Intros 948 and 1107, and I'll explain why. It's because of the fact that this bill does not cover squatter rights, and I'll make this clear that you can give people short-term rentals all they want, but they know how to exploit the squatter rights. It hurts not only the property owners themselves and it hurts the people that are seeking property themselves because of what's happening. Even if the landlord succeeds in getting that squatter out, they're going to-- they'll no longer rent to people at all, not only to tourists, tenants, people that live in the city, too. I want to make this clear that when it comes to the unions, they're correct about how this-- it hurts the hotel industry, because there's a lot of jobs in these-- mainly Airbnb, but a lot of property-- hotel owners want them cap-- they want cheap labor, because it's cheaper to have them and it's easier to fire. These days it's all about at-will employment, and they want

1 to be able to fire everybody they can without no--  
2 with no fight back. I'll go back to this. Like 30  
3 seconds left, I can say this about the-- I want this  
4 bill to die. I'm proud the Speaker did jump off the  
5 bill because she trying to save her butt from the  
6 slaughterhouse next year when it comes to trying to  
7 get a job in the Mamdani administration, but I know  
8 that's what's going on. She's trying to save her  
9 butt. She don't want no unions to oppose her trying  
10 to get a job in the administration, especially when  
11 it comes to advice and consent under the next  
12 Speaker. But I want to make this clear, like I said,  
13 let me end it right here, that this is-- I support  
14 killing these bills, but we got to make sure that the  
15 squatters don't have the luxury, the leverage when it  
16 comes to these bills. So, thank you so much. Thank  
17 you.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

20 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Thank you.

21 UNIDENTIFIED: [speaking Spanish]

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [speaking Spanish]

23 UNIDENTIFIED: Muchas gracias.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'm going to  
25 translate my best. [speaking Spanish].

UNIDENTIFIED: Perfect.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'm going to translate for the record. Congratulations on being Housing Chair. Please support Into 948. It's been two years since Local Law 18 was approved. Rents are higher, and what is more worrying is that foreclosures are up in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Small renters and small homeowners are in the same category as described by HPD earlier today. Want to mention that increased debts on homeowners don't make sense. If you can't pay your mortgage, how will you be able to pay a loan that the city is offering you to make repairs on your home. OSE is a police agency, but possibly an illegal one. They infringe on the privacy of homeowners when it is true that only natural persons can engage in short-term rentals. If we do not approve this law for one and two-family homes, then the corporations behind all of this will take advantage of one- and two-family homeowners and promote--

UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing] Rezoning.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Rezoning. Yay, autocorrect. [inaudible] Promote rezonings that support their earnings. Middle-class New Yorkers in

the city will never be able to own a home, and is  
this a city that we want for all? [speaking Spanish]

UNIDENTIFIED: [speaking Spanish]

LAMOUNT MORRIS: Alright. My name is  
Lamount Morris and I'm from the south Bronx, and I  
would like to yield my time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Lamount.  
Do you want to say if you're for or against? Thank  
you.

KIRSTEN JOHN FOY: Good afternoon or good  
evening, Madam Chair. Thank you for your durability  
and your diligence. I have come to speak in  
opposition to Intro 948 and 1104. In 2022, Local Law  
18 established the right balance between homeowners  
rights and city housing needs. I fought to establish  
that balance, and I remain proud that I did so. That  
balance we established has allowed for the  
responsible and accountable growth of home sharing  
and expanded the market for home-sharers in a  
reasonable, profitable, and quantifiable manner.  
These proposed laws, Intro 948 and 1107 would upset  
that proper balance and catastrophically redefine  
housing not just for home-sharers, not just for  
renters, but for all New Yorkers, pitting one large

group of working-class New Yorkers against a smaller group of working-class New Yorkers and this regressive change would incentivize the removal of housing stock and repurpose it for commercial enterprise that erodes both housing stock and unionized jobs. We have to protect workers, renters, and new home-sharers. These regressive changes asks the most vulnerable workers in our city to bear the brunt of convergence of unaffordable housing cost and the shrinkage of good-paying unionized hospitality jobs. Women, primarily women of color, single mothers, immigrant workers, and those already on the precipice of food and housing insecurity will now have to work harder and longer to stay in the city they love and serve and they cannot currently afford. We are asking our local capable and dedicated unionized workforce to compete with leisure travelers and tourists for beds and baths. This is immoral and economic unsustainable. We can have it all. We can have a vibrant and affordable city, record tourism, and a strong working and middle-class of homeowners and renters if we maintain an appropriate balance of the three. But MAGA tech and MAGA landlords want us to believe that we must choose and have us fighting

one against the other. These changes would inadvertently hurt home-sharing growth by concentrating capacity in legacy home-sharers, giving them a competitive edge over potential new home-sharers. We have to defend the sanctity of tenant protection. This law would incentivize an end-run around the strongest tenant protection laws in the country by trading long-term housing for short-term hospitality. New York City's affordability mandate in this most recent election, New Yorkers have established a mandate around affordability, housing and otherwise. This would regressive change would fly in the face of that mandate. New Yorkers want more affordable housing, not more hotel capacity. Affordability is not just about the availability of housing, but also of a strong, vibrant and dynamic unionized workforce that has the ability to afford the rent in this city. They're playing a divide and conquer game. While there is certainly merit to the argument that homeowners of color need relief, that relief should not come at the expense of tens of thousands of workers and millions of New Yorkers who have been priced out of New York City ownership and rental marketplaces. The scarcity paradigm that

juxtaposes working-class homeowners against working-class renters is emblematic of the MO of the billionaire class and mega landlords. They say let them fight among each other. We've got to protect progressive housing laws against a MAGA incursion. Finally, as a social justice activist who fought for homeowner's rights and fought to make this city respect them, I am incensed at the reversal of the values of Airbnb. Once a progressive tech giant who believed in supporting our immigrant community and the democratization of hospitality is now a MAGA tech company pushing and financing the values of a tyrannical regime that wishes to destabilize communities of color and immigrant communities through nefarious and insidious family separation and deportations, and now looks to infuse those fascist values into our housing laws, further destabilizing our communities, this time by appropriating the pain of middle-class working homeowners and weaponizing it against renters and unionized labors. We cannot afford to allow a MAGA tech company to rewrite our housing laws to their narrow commercial benefit. We cannot harm the many in the name of helping the few. That is the very definition of fascism we currently

resist here in New York and around the country. Don't let Donald Trump's tech millions inflict further economic violence on our people through death by a thousand little affordability cuts.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Foy. I want to give you a moment to talk about just, you know, for everyone's context, your background, the work-- you've mentioned some of it in your testimony, but the work that you've been doing at ARC of Justice, at National Action Network, before that and government before that, just to give that context of where you are coming from.

KIRSTEN JOHN FOY: Well, I appreciate that, Madam Chair. I spent my life as a social justice activist and public servant. I, as you mentioned, work both in government, in state government and in city government. I have worked for the National Action Network which is a prominent national organization, civil rights organization, and now run the Arc of Justice which is a national civil rights organization. I stood by Airbnb initially when they wanted to establish homeownership sharing in New York City, because I believe homeowners should have the right to determine their own destiny. There

1 was not an appropriate balance. There was not an  
2 appropriate system. There was not an appropriate  
3 regulatory regime that would allow for homeowners to  
4 become home-sharers without harming renters. Local  
5 Law 18 established that balance, and in fact, we have  
6 seen home-sharing grow year-to-year in a responsible  
7 way. We have seen home-sharing grow as a market. We  
8 have seen them add to the value of our economy, but  
9 what this-- what these proposed laws would do is an  
10 over-reach. They would extend not just the  
11 profitability motive. They would harm the current  
12 tenant protections and housing laws that we have by  
13 redefining housing, fundamentally redefining housing.  
14 That is a vast over-reach. We have to protect both  
15 homeowners who share and renters who rent. And this  
16 paradigm of we either have to protect homeowners who  
17 want to share, or we have to protect renters is a  
18 false paradigm. We can be creative enough to both  
19 invest in our homeowners, provide them relief. We  
20 have the money. We just do not have the will, and we  
21 can provide relief, affordability relief for those  
22 who are renting and those who are owning. And that's  
23 why I believe that we should not-- you should not  
24 support these two bills because they create a para--  
25

they sustain a paradigm of divide and conquer. They continue to inflict economic harm on renters in the name of helping homeowners, and that's immoral.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Mr. Foy.

UNIDENTIFIED: Can I add something to that?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Please.

UNIDENTIFIED: First, with all the respect [inaudible] and I respect all your [inaudible] and everything. I'm not a MAGA owner. I only one house. Second, 948 doesn't take away the registration process.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'm sorry, just make sure that you direct all comments to me,--

UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing] Yeah, okay.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: not anybody else in the room, okay?

UNIDENTIFIED: 948 doesn't take the registration process away from small homeowners. That is still in place. And I get everything, the comments about Airbnb. I'm not affiliated through Airbnb as a homeowner. I am a small homeowner who is only claiming to have the rights in my property, in my family property, actually. So I would like to add

those comments to the public. And you know, everybody's voice and be heard, but we got to be very specific and not mislead the rhetoric and the reality. One thing is a big corporation. The thing we're asking for here is one- and two-family homeowners that are separate from the rest of the housing stock, and the HPD recognized that during the afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you.

KIRSTEN JOHN FOY: Can I just say one thing?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes. I just want to-- what to acknowledge that this privilege is because this is the last panel in-person, because we were, you know, a very-- didn't I do good? Yeah. Okay, Mr. Foy, and then we're going to go to Zoom.

KIRSTEN JOHN FOY: Thank you. I appreciate the precarious position you're in as a homeowner and I'm not ascribing Airbnb values to--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing]  
Sorry, before you have to--

KIRSTEN JOHN FOY: I am not ascribing Airbnb's values to any particular home-sharer who is on the platform. What I am saying though, is that platform is exploiting both his pain and the pain of the renter by saying that in order to fix your problem we have to fundamentally redefine what housing is for everybody else, and irrespective of what the consequences are, on that larger population of people who are hurting. We're going to -- we're going to appropriate the pain of a smaller population of people who are hurting. I'm not invalidating the pain on either side, but what I am saying is when it comes down to numbers, we're talking about scale here, and the scale of renters and working-class families that would be harmed by this regressive change by several orders of magnitude, out performs any benefit that would be ascribed to homeowners and home-sharers.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

KIRSTEN JOHN FOY: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you all so much.

KIRSTEN JOHN FOY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you to this panel. Thank you. And -- thank you everyone who attended. We're going to move over to Zoom. I have my-- do you have the script? I have a script to read. But I just want to say out loud, especially to the folks who are still here in the room. If you're still watching, thank you for hanging in there with us. You know, I stated my piece. I think the Council Members stated our piece up in-- speak with the Sergeants. If there's anybody else who wants to testify, absolutely-- because I don't know your name by looking at you. So just tell the Sergeants and we'll bring you write up, okay? Yeah, you have to fill out a slip, and then I'll bring you right up. And while that happens, I just, you know, I think it might feel like we're not reacting to your testimony as you give it, but that's to keep the hwarling moving, and because many of us have stated our piece and we've asked our questions. And many of you are answering it as you're answering our questions you testify. And so we jut try to keep the flow going. It's not because the of interest. It's not because we agree or disagree with anything that you're saying. it's because it's your time to shine

and we don't want to take away from that time. So, I'm going to read a script for our Zoom participants. Again if you want to testify in-person, please let the Sergeants know please let the sergeants know. You have to fi out a slip. And then we can hopefully all go home to our kids and families. Calling up Chiron Mc-- Chiron McDonalds. Calling up Chirion McDonald. Please begin when ready.

CHIRON MCDONALD: Good afternoon, Committee Council, Chairwoman. My name is Chiron McDonald, and I'm a proud member of HTC. I'm here today to urge you not to pass this bill. I'm personally in the past was affected by it being in my community. Apartment has used families and suddenly pull them out of rental markets, because of landlords, and people who paid the price were overwhelming Black residents. Because I was around, I watched my friends, neighbors, and coworkers pushed out renters by long-term leases, contribute to the displacement of loss in black communities that build the culture of New York City. Legalizing and expanding short-term rentals would put even more pressure on neighborhoods that are already fighting to survive. Please, vote no, and I-- as I have more

time. You brought up something earlier about Aribnb focusing on the host. In 2017, I had a christening and it was just going to family members, like four, five of us, and we were looking into a place with a pool, because I rented an apartment. So, I just need facilities. And I kept applying to host. Most of them looked white, and I kept applying and I kept applying, and I kept hearing no, no, no, no. so, my fiancé at the time was Asian, so I said you kwon what, you apply. She applied and she got accepted. So I've never booked an Airbnb after that. So, this for me, is personal.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

CHIRON MCDONALD: So, if there's anybody in here--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank you for sharing that.

CHIRON MCDONALD: in here from Airbnb, I just want to tell you, I've been paying my taxes in this city for 21 years. I worked in hotels. I worked for non-union hotels and I know the benefit of being in a union hotel. I have three kids. I have a 16-year-old that's going to be accepted to college early. I have six-year-old that's going private

school, and I paid daycare for a two-year-old. So, to discriminate against me, I felt personally hurt, and I just want to tell them that you are wrong, and I know there's disparities there if they would only research it, but they care nothing to research to understand, and I know what they're doing. People like-- don't look like me in my community owns the house we rent.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

CHIRON MCDONALD: I'm both a renter and homeowner, so I know the difference.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you.

CHIRON MCDONALD: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you for that testimony. Airbnb, you keep getting follow-ups, so please let us know how you screen for any racial discrimination by hosts themselves in your follow-up. Thank you. Okay. Going once, going twice, okay? Folks in the room? We will now turn to remote testimony. Once your name is called, a member of our staff will unmute you and the Sergeant at Arms will give you the go-ahead to being. Please wait for the

Sergeant at Arms to announce that you may begin before delivering your testimony. Alicia Spears?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ALICIA SPEARS: Good evening, everybody. I just will be real quickly. I just want to state that this is not a homeowner's problem, like the gentleman said before us. Can you hear me, ma'am?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes, ma'am.

ALICIA SPEARS: Okay. With the City of Yes, the ADUs, the basement, attic apartments, more of the homeowners-- what must we endure? We have enough. That was already passed. Home people of colors, lower the taxes. You're worried about that? Nobody's addressing why we having this issue. The taxes, the water bill, the utility bills, that's why we're losing our homes. And we already know about the deed theft. But of causations, nobody wants to address that. Again, if Airbnb is so concerned with all those millions of dollars, take it and let them help them calculate since New York City claim they don't know how to calculate the taxes properly so that we in our areas who pay the highest taxes, people of color, can be fairly adjusted and fairly pay taxes. Because somebody living near the water is

1 paying less than us. Conveniently, they don't know  
2 how to do calculations of taxes. Enforcement  
3 [inaudible] mentioned that-- I'm talking fast, I'm  
4 sorry, because I want to finish and I know you guys  
5 want to go home. If you want to do some enforcement,  
6 just like with the cannabis, there's no enforcement.  
7 You got cannabis places all over and we having issues  
8 and our children are having issues. They're getting a  
9 hold of these weeds. I don't care what nobody says.  
10 Just like with the scooters all over the place,  
11 nobody taking the statistic of how many people are  
12 being harmed.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you for your  
15 testimony. Your time is expired.

16 ALICIA SPEARS: But I'm thinking  
17 Department of Buildings--

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank  
19 you so much, Ms. Spears for your testimony. The next  
20 person is Arlene Schlesinger.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Begin. Arlene, you  
22 may begin.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Barbara Larkin?

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

BARBARA LARKIN: Good evening and thank you very much for having this hearing. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a retired teacher and a New York City homeowner since the 1970s, I urge the Council Members to vote against 948A and 1170A for the safety and security of my neighborhood and others like it, many of whom are comprised of our most vulnerable, seniors like myself who have lived in homes they worked so hard for for decades. Many just want to live out their last days in these homes, in these one- and two-family neighborhoods, but they are afraid. They are afraid. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes.

BARBARA LARKIN: Okay. So, they are afraid that the property values are going to plummet because of these bills possibly being passed. Their biggest fear is that speculators will scoop of their neighbor's homes for fear they're going to turn them into mini hotels without any supervision. So, I ask you, Council Members all, how do you wish your legacy to read? That you created possible crises we often so often accuse Washington of creating, or do you wish to be remembered as--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you. Your time expired.

BARBARA LARKIN: [inaudible] with a moral compass?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much, Barbara. I'd like to call Arlene Schlesinger again. Arlene?

ARLENE SCHLESINGER: Thank you very much. Thank you very much for going back to me. Good evening, Chair and members of the committee. My name is Arlene Schlesinger and I'm the Vice President of the Hollis Hills Civil Association of Eastern Queens. I'm here to express my strong opposition to Intro 948A. Our one- and two-family neighborhoods have already under tremendous pressure with the City of Yes and not yet passed ballot proposals. Local Law 18 finally gave New Yorkers a sense of stability by shutting down illegal short-term rentals. And turning real apartments into long-term-- returning them to the long-term market. This bill would undo all of that and open the door to something none of us would ask for. Subsidizing income on two units is not perfect, but that's what it says in Local Law 18. Different from using your home and your neighborhood

1 is for for-profit nature. Under Intro 948, a one-  
2 family home could rent out four separate rooms every  
3 night to four different groups of people, and a two-  
4 family home could rent out to eight, and the owner  
5 would not even have to live there. That's not home-  
6 sharing. That's hotel operating in the middle of a  
7 residential block. I question the safety for seniors  
8 and other people, and no one has talked about the  
9 parking issues that this would cause for fellow  
10 residents. It's no better than Airbnb. Once you  
11 allow this by inviting hedge funds, investors, and  
12 absentee owners to start buying up home and running  
13 them as commercial businesses, family will not be  
14 able to compete--

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you  
17 for your testimony. Your time has expired.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank  
19 you so much, Arlene. The next panelist is Christine  
20 Yiannis Les.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: George  
23 Schneiderman?

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: George, you may begin.  
25

GEORGE SCHNEIDERMAN: Hello. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes.

GEORGE SCHNEIDERMAN: Hello, Council Members. I am here to ask that you vote yes on bill 948A as a first step in helping New York City homeowners by relaxing restrictions on short-term rentals and owner-occupied multi-family homes. I'm testifying on my own behalf and wrote my own testimony. I'm not being paid or otherwise compensated for this. More than 20 years ago, my wife and I purchased a two-family house in Harlem. We have lived in it ever since, raising our three children here. Now, we find ourselves at a point in our lives when we want more flexibility in how we use our garden-level unit which we have furnished for the purpose of hosting family members and friends. Our parents are getting older and experiencing the usual challenges of aging. All of our children are now adults. While none of them is yet in need of a longer-term apartment near us, we want the flexibility to be able to accommodate that when the time comes without first having to force out a tenant. And we also want to be able to accommodate

them for short to medium-term visits as well as other friends and family members and the family members of our many friends in the neighborhood who have expressed interest in such an arrangement, especially when they have family visiting for religious holidays and major life cycle events. New York City's current restrictions on short-term rentals in two-family homes make that effectively impossible since we depend on rental income to help pay the mortgage and other building expenses and cannot afford to keep the apartment empty most of the time. The apartment is part of our family's home, and it isn't right that we cannot use it in the way that would best accommodate our family's needs. Thank you for listening to my testimony today. Again, please vote yes on 948A to support New York City homeowners.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much for your testimony. Okay, the next panelist is Henry Euler.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Henry, you may begin.

HENRY EULER: Thank you. My name's Henry Euler. I'm the President of the Auburndale Improvement Association which is a civic organization in the Auburndale section of Flushing and Western

1 Bayside. I'm opposed to Intro 948-A. I fear that it  
2 will have a negative impact on the stability,  
3 security, and safety of my community. The part  
4 that's really very scary to me is that the owner or  
5 host does not need to live at the site of these  
6 short-term rentals in one- and two-family areas. And  
7 so it would be that the supervision of the units  
8 would not be very good. The enforcement of  
9 regulations would not be there. There's also issues  
10 with the infrastructure and parking issues. My  
11 grandparents, all my grandparents and my father were  
12 immigrants, and my mom was first-generation, and I am  
13 a native New Yorker, and at that time, they worked  
14 very hard. They didn't speak English, any of them,  
15 and they worked hard, and they managed to go grow  
16 along. They were able to buy a home after a while  
17 and live the American dream. And it's sad that--

18  
19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you  
20 for your testimony. Your time has expired.

21 HENRY EULER: Okay. I'll send in written  
22 comments, too. Thanks.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank  
24 you so much, Mr. Henry. Next up is Kevin Wolfe.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Kevin, you may begin.

KEVIN WOLFE: Thank you and good afternoon, Chair Sanchez. My name is Kevin Wolfe. I'm the Deputy Director for Advocacy at the Cetner of New York City Neighborhoods. We are one of the largest homeowner nonprofits in the city. We focus on assisting New Yorkers at all stages of the homeownership journey, from first-time home-buying to home repair, to landlord/tenant mediation through our Black Homeownership Project. We understand that the intent of Intro 948A is to balance the rights of the homeowners who want to responsibly rent their homes on the short-term rental market with the city's need to protect neighborhoods and maintain access to affordable apartments by allowing registered homes to rent up to four guests, clarifying that hosts may not need to be physical present and allowing permanent residents to lock their private spaces, but have access to the rest of the dwelling. As the Council considers 948A, we would like to see it amended to require that a portion of the revenue from short-term rentals be directed to the already existing city-funded programs for foreclosure prevention and landlord mediation that helps keep families in their homes and stabilize neighborhoods. I urge the Council

to find a commonsense solution that strikes the right balance between preserving long-time homeownership and promoting safe, legal, short-term rentals, and also investing in programs that protect New Yorkers from foreclosure. Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Kevin.  
Next we have Laura Spalter.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Laura, you may begin.

LAURA SPALTER: Good evening. I comment on behalf of the Broadway Community Alliance, a volunteer civic association in North Riverdale. Our unique sections of one- and two-family homes co-exist among high-rises in our diversified neighborhood. Do not amend New York City's Building and Administrative Code in order to expand short-term rentals in one- and two-family homes without the owner even living there. This bill will incentivize large-scale investors, private equity firms, hedge funds, etcetera to buy up private homes not to live in, but for commercial gain through transient rentals. Homeownership brings stability to our blocks and neighborhoods. The transient nature of commercialization by corporate landlords will destroy

residential character and quality of life. You won't even know who your neighbors are. The city must preserve our precious housing stock for permanent homes for New Yorkers, not tourists and other transients who have no stake in the community. This bill is not about helping homeowners cover their mortgage. Do not allow pressure from the relentless short-term rental industry to dismantle our long-held legal protections. We urge the Committee on Housing and Buildings to vote no on Intro 948A. Thank you. And please repeat the email that we could send in our testimony.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ:

Testimony.council.nyc.gov. Thank you, Laura.

LAURA SPALTER: Testimony@council--

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing]

.nyc.gov.

LAURA SPALTER: .nyc.gov. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Laura.

Linda Ortiz? Linda Ortiz?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Linda, you may begin.

LINDA ORTIZ: My name is Linda Ortiz. I'm a homeowner in District Eight in the Bronx. I'm here to implore you to vote yes on bill 948A. I'm not paid

to be here. For me, home-sharing in my space is not merely an option, it is a necessity. I have seen and heard online comments suggesting you shouldn't bite off more than you can chew, as if I were living beyond my means, but that is simply not the case. I did everything right. Born and raised in the Bronx, then raised in NYCHA, I am educated by the New York City Public School System. I'm a CUNY alum. I dedicated over 20 years to federal service, worked hard, and bought my house in the Bronx with the stability that my job provided. Yet, after two decades as a civil servant, my federal agency at the U.S. Department of Justice was eliminated, leaving me unemployed through no fault of my own. For the last four years, I rent the second unit to a wonderful Latina who works in a local garment factory. I was able to subsidize her rent through home-sharing. This summer, I had no choice to raise her rent, a clear and unintended consequence of Local Law 18. How much has the hotel industry profited since Local Law 18? Home-sharing is a way I can continue to afford living in the Bronx and hopefully find another job. I shouldn't have to sell my home. I am deeply committed to my community. I participate in

neighborhood cleanup projects of which Speaker Council Ayala has sponsored, BID and local merchant association initiatives. I help bring attention to the issues at St. Mary's Park, and as [inaudible] result, the park was awarded a multimillion dollar infrastructure overall. That was not the work of an outside organization or hotel industry, but me, a homeowner dedicated to helping the Bronx. Responsible home-sharing--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you for your testimony. Your time has expired.

LINDA ORTIZ: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Linda. Maria Cates?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Maria, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Maria Cates?

MARIA CATES: My name is Maria Cates, and I'm asking the committee to support bill 948A. I live in my home and it's a two-family house in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn with my daughter. I'm an immigrant and a single mother and have no other family. I'm elderly and hard of hearing with 80 percent hearing loss. Five years ago, I suffered a debilitating stroke and have never fully recovered. I now live

1 with limited mobility, extreme fatigue, and other  
2 complications that prevent me from holding a  
3 traditional job. To stay afloat, I share my home,  
4 and it's the only way I can support myself. This is  
5 my primary residence, my home, not a business. Our  
6 home has been a lifeline, our only means of financial  
7 stability and a way to stay in the community we love.  
8 Without short-term rental income, I will have to  
9 apply for government assistance, and ever since LL18,  
10 my income has suffered dramatically. I can no longer  
11 to pay my bills, and I want to make it very clear  
12 this has nothing to do Airbnb. We're just real  
13 people and we have real struggles and we pay real  
14 bills. It's just one of the platforms, that's it.  
15 Our home is not suitable for a long-term rental. It  
16 houses our family. [inaudible] homeowners like  
17 [inaudible] landlords is unfair. We're being  
18 subjected to enforcement designed for large apartment  
19 buildings with actual long-term tenants, not for  
20 families simply trying to survive. Illegal hotels  
21 remain illegal. This bill does not change that. Yet,  
22 currently, more homeowners are being--

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you  
25 for your testimony. Your time is expired.

MARIA CATES: [inaudible] bad actors.  
This is just wrong.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank  
you, Maria. Thank you for your testimony. Sadio  
Jonas?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

SADIO JONAS: Hello. Thank you, Council  
Members. I'm going to skip part of my testimony. I've  
already submitted it, so you can read like the first  
part which talks about caring for our elderly parents  
which means that our houses are absolutely not part  
of the housing stock at all. I want to read the rest  
of my testimony. In immigrant community like ours,  
caring for elders isn't optional. It's cultural  
responsibility. We also provide temporary shelter  
for newly arriving relatives who need place to land  
which directly reduces the burden on city services.  
These collective realities are why removing the  
ability for us to do home-sharing has not increased  
the amount of places one- and two-family homes  
available for long-term rent. Our homes were never  
part of the available housing stock as it's referred  
to. Another aspect of my personal story, of my  
personal reality, is that small homeowners like me

and my husband cannot afford to operate as long-term landlords in this city. It actually costs money to be a landlord in this city. Being a landlord here requires bringing home into compliance, maintaining reserved funds often in excess of 20 percent of annual rent just to meet-- to stay compliant, to cover repairs, to meet legal responsibilities. Utilities for one- or two-family homes in our area routinely reach over \$15,000 a year, and basic maintenance for older homes like we have--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you for your testimony. Your time has expired.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Sadio. You may submit your testimony. I think you said you already did, but thank you for your testimony and we'll be looking out for that. Sandra Sanchez Muller?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Sandra, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Victor Marrero?

SANDRA SANCHEZ MULLER: Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Sandra, yes.

SANDRA SANCHEZ MULLER: Okay. Can you hear me? Thank you. Good evening, Chair. I'm going to speak very quickly. Our names are Joseph and

Sandra Sanchez Muller and we live in community-- in Council Member Kevin Riley 12 District in the Bronx. We found it difficult to maintain our home for over 40+ years because of the impact of Local Law 18. No one has paid us for this testimony. We want our voices heard as we feel it is important for the city to realize the loss of not only its constituents, but also its residents and the lifeline that supports all of its communities. As homeowners we felt privileged to be able to forge ahead with the possibility of being able to provide for ourselves as we graciously welcomed guests into our home. So did the commercial businesses in our local communities. Even the MTA for which we provided our guests with maps on how to get around in the city so that they can also tour and see the city sites and landmarks. Everyone benefitted. Likewise, it provided an opportunity for tourists to experience the diversity and the congeniality of all New Yorkers. Much of this is lacking now. Local Law 18 caused a domino effect where many local small businesses are also struggling. We had a lovely two-family home where my parents raised me and my siblings. We raised our own children. We were never landlords. Home-sharing was supposed to be a tool to

help us support our home on our fixed income.

Unfortunately, Local Law 18 made it impossible for us to remain in the Bronx, and we had sadly to sell our home and leave New York. The decision to leave--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you for your testimony. Your time has expired.

SANDRA SANCHEZ MULLER: Do you mind, Chair, can I please finish, Chair? Please.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes, Ms. Sanchez, please conclude.

SANDRA SANCHEZ MULLER: Thank you. The decision to leave New York was a difficult one. It is our hope that the voices of our fellow homeowners are truly heard. This is about helping hard-working homeowners stay in their homes. These are New York residents who provide home-sharing services to stay in their homes as a means to survive, and New Yorkers should not have to be forced out of their beloved homes and their communities because of an overly-broad law that keeps them from the income and the home that they need to maintain. Please help pass the 948A bill so that no other residents or constituents are lost. Thank you kindly for the opportunity to speak to this Council.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you, Sandra. The next panelist is Victor Marrero.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Victor, you may begin.

VICTOR MARRERO: Hello, good evening. Council, me and my wife own a home here in Brooklyn, Fort Green, and we afford the bill. If it's alright, I wanted to give my wife my time to be able to say a statement.

ERICA MARRERO: Good afternoon. My name is Erica Andino [sp?] Marrero. I'm a Brooklyn native of 43 years and my husband and I are raising our three deeply-rooted Brooklyn babies right here in our family home. I want to point out that Council Member Hudson asked earlier-- HPD couldn't give clear numbers on how many one- and two-family homes were actually affected by Local Law 18. The data being used to justify this law is based on guesses, not evidence, and that matters, because those guesses are hurting real families like mine. Council Member Riley also asked whether HPD has studied how the law impacts Black and Brown homeowners. They haven't. That tells me the communities being most affected weren't truly considered. I want to be clear, my family isn't against regulations. We agree with

owner-occupied requirements. We followed every rule. It took me eight months to get certified legally, but we are not a corporation. We are a homeowner household. We're a small business, and short-term renting our extra space is what helps us stay afloat in this economy. Increasing the amount of guests who we're allowed to host would actually help us keep our long-term rental more affordable for the tenant living in our home. This is how families like mine create stability while also supporting our--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you for your testimony. Your time has expired.

ERICA MARRERO: Thank you.

VICTOR MARRERO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you to the Marrero family. Thank you for your time. The next panelist is Walter Mugdan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Walter, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Walter, if you're speaking, you appear to be on mute.

WALTER MUGDAN: Sorry, I apologize. My name is Walter Mugdan, President of the Westmorland Association, representing a community in Northeast Queens. Our neighborhood is primarily residential

1 with mostly single-family homes and a number of  
2 multi-family homes. We strongly oppose Intro 948A.  
3 It would permit short-term rentals for as little as  
4 one night. It would allow a rental of up to four  
5 rooms in one-family house and up to eight rooms in a  
6 two-family house, and these rentals can be to  
7 unrelated individuals. Most concerning, the owner  
8 need not be present during rentals, and the house  
9 need not be exclusively or even primarily for the  
10 owner's permanent residential use. That  
11 distinguishes from a lot of the people you've heard  
12 about here today who have legitimate concerns. Homes  
13 under this regime will become de facto hotels.  
14 Houses will be purchased by investors whose objective  
15 will be to maximize rental occupancy and income  
16 instead of by families who want to make the community  
17 their home. This is in direct opposition to the  
18 objectives of the current and future city  
19 administration to increase the amount of affordable  
20 housing. This bill would have the opposite effect.  
21 It would take housing stock out of the market for  
22 actual residential use and convert it to hotel space.  
23 By making houses lucrative for use as a hotel instead  
24 of a residence, it'll drive up the prices of the  
25

remaining homes in the community, further undermining efforts to retain and expand affordable housing. The bill applies to one- and two-family homes, but we can safely assume that if it passes, the proponents will be back soon with efforts to expand the rules to apply to higher density zones. We urge the committee to reject these bills. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Walter. Again, I want to call Christine Yiannis Les. Christine Yiannis Les? We see you on the Zoom. You must not hear us. Okay, we'll go to the next panelist. Glen DiResto? Everybody's Latino when you're in my hearing.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Glen, you may begin.

GLEN DIRESTO: Hi, thank you. My name is Glen DiResto, and I'm a third-generation resident of the Rockaways and not being paid by the union hotel industry to be here. I deeply understand the dynamics of the Rockaway community and as a former small business owner, the struggles that prevent the Rockaways from reaching its full potential. Since the passing of Local Law 18, which was basically a de facto ban on short-term rentals, local small businesses across the Rockaways have been struggling

with the loss of tourism money that flowed into our local economy. The rising cost of labor, insurance, and commercial rents has also added to the struggle. How is the local economy in the largest urban beach town in America supposed to thrive when there is only one hotel? Show me another urban beach town in America that doesn't depend on tourism dollars that doesn't allow short-term rentals and that only have one hotel to meet the tourism demands. Allowing short-term rentals would greatly help struggling small businesses in our beach town. There should be no reason not to correct the unintended consequences of Local Law 18. Since Local Law 18 was passed, rents have not gone down, they've only gone up dramatically. The only thing Local Law 18 did was make the hotels far more expensive. Remember, short-term rental hosts must first register with the city. There should be no reason to oppose owners of one- and two-family homes from doing short-term rentals. I ask that you pass these laws, but if you deep concerns about some of the problems that could be caused by these short-term rentals, I ask that you--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you for your testimony. Your time has expired.

GLEN DIRESTO: [inaudible] those concerns that you have. If Chair, if I may, just one more paragraph, please?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Please conclude.

GLEN DIRESTO: Maybe just only one registration per person, not allowing corporations or LLCs or possibly even making the Rockaways part of a pilot program. I thank you. A vote of yes on short-term rentals, making any amendments to make this a possibility for all New Yorkers. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much. Next, we'll call Joanna Vu.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Joanna, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Joanna Vu? Christine Yiannis Les? Christine? Christine? Okay. If we have inadvertently missed anyone that has registered to testify today and has yet to be called, please use the Zoom raise hand function if you are testifying remotely, and you will be called in the order that your hand has been raised. If you are testifying in-person, please speak the Sergeants. Maria Khury? Maria Khury?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Maria, you may begin.

MARIA KHURY: Unmute. Good evening. Can you hear me, please?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes.

MARIA KHURY: Thank you. I'm so sorry. I'm actually driving, so I wanted to make sure that I'm projecting.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Please be safe.

MARIA KHURY: Good evening and thank you so much to the Chairwoman, Council Member Sanchez, and to the rest of the committee. I'm Maria Khury. I'm the Chief Executive Counsel for the Dominican American Chamber of Commerce. We actually represent many-- hundreds of small businesses, obviously in the Washington Heights community area, and we actually proactively did a survey. I mean, our testimony is presented to and the survey information has been handed to you, but mostly I speak on behalf of our members. 96 percent of the members overwhelmingly are supporting the resolution, and those that are actually small business owners, because they operate their homes and they sort of rent out a part of their home or their room, they are very overwhelmingly supportive of this resolution. It is culturally

embraced, because we understand that most of their family members are visiting, and I've heard some of the testimony that was given presently there earlier, and certainly they are always observations on both sides, but there was information that was provided that sort of spoke to without actual data--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you for your testimony. Your time has expired.

MARIA KHURY: Oh, okay. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Maria, if you want to conclude, I think you-- you may be our last person. So, we'll--

MARIA KHURY: [interposing] Oh, well, thank you. And I will conclude very quickly. The resolution is a positive for the small business owners that are using their homes to subsidize their income. If not, they will be homeless. So, we speak about that particular issue. We understand that that's the feeling they have. They're bound to lose their homes. So, thank you so much for your time. Good evening.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much, Maria. Phil Konisberg [sp?]? Thomas

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COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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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 December 11, 2025