

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND
BUSINESS LICENSING

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July 28, 2020
Start: 10:04 a.m.
Recess: 10:09 a.m.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING

B E F O R E: Andrew Cohen, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Justin L. Brannan
Margaret S. Chin
Peter A. Koo
Karen Koslowitz
Brad S. Lander
Kalman Yeger

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3 SERGEANT BIONDO: Sergeants, please start the
4 recordings.

5 SERGEANT SADOWSKY: PC recording is started.

6 SERGEANT BIONDO: Okay, good morning everyone and
7 welcome to today's Remote New York City Council vote
8 on the Committee of Consumer Affairs and Business
9 Licensing.

10 At this time, we ask all panelists to please
11 their video on for verification purposes and to
12 minimize disruptions, please place all electronic
13 devices on vibrate or silent. Thank you so much
14 Chair Cohen. We are ready to begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: I am going to place my phone
16 on vibrate because I am following directions.

17 SERGEANT BIONDO: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: Alright, good morning. My
19 name is Andrew Cohen and I am the Chair of the
20 Committee on Consumer Affairs and Business Licensing,
21 at least until we pass today's legislation.

22 I am joined today by my colleagues on the
23 Committee. I'm going to have to enlarge my Zoom to
24 figure out who is here. Let's see, I see Council
25 Member Koo, Council Member Chin, Council Member Yeger

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4 is out of his chair but he's nearby, Council Member
5 Brannan. Am I missing anybody.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Don't forget me.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Council Member Koslowitz,
8 right there in the left. I missed you, I'm sorry
9 about that. I'll introduce more as people arrive.

10 Today we will be voting on Proposed Introduction
11 1609-A that was heard last year by the request of the
12 Mayor.

13 The Department of Consumer Affairs was first
14 codified as an agency by legislation passed in 1969.
15 Since that time, the Department has acted as a vital
16 advocate for New York City's consumers. As Chair of
17 the Committee responsible for overseeing the
18 Department, I've been pleased with the different
19 initiatives that the Council and the Department have
20 been able to implement together to strengthen
21 protections for New Yorkers, especially during this
22 health emergency.

23 In the short time that I have been Chair, we have
24 codified the provisions of the Mayors Executive Order
25 related to outdoor dining and extended the renewal
time for many licenses and permits. We also enacted
my bill 1916-A which waved all fees related to

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2 sidewalk cafés. In doing so, we've utilized our
3 jurisdictional powers to provide what relief we can
4 to the city's struggling small businesses.

5 Today's vote aims to strengthen another facet of
6 the departments focus area, worker protections.

7 Since the passage of Local Law 104 of 2015, which
8 established the Office of Labor and Policy Standards
9 or OLPS, DCA has seen its mandate broaden
10 substantially. In addition to licensing and
11 educating businesses on their obligations and
12 protecting consumers, DCA is also responsible for
13 overseeing the city's labor laws. It is encouraging
14 to see the success of the Department is already at
15 gain in securing restitution for workers whose
16 employers have violated the law. Such as paid Safe
17 and Sick Leave and the Freelancers Isn't Free Act.

18 The bill we are voting on today, Intro. 1609-A
19 which formally changed DCA'S name to the Department
20 of Consumer and Worker Protection or DCWP. It would
21 also consolidate OLPS and the division of aid care
22 within DCWP and transfer their respective legal
23 powers to DWCP. Furthermore, this bill would allow
24 the department to seek restitution as a remedy at
25 oath which it previously could only seek in court.

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3 We are hopeful that with the newly named department
4 will be able to dedicate resources to protect the
5 rights of New York City's workers while of course
6 still performing its role as advocates of the city's
7 consumers.

8 I therefore encourage my colleagues to vote in
9 the affirmative on this bill and I will now ask the
10 clerk to call the roll, and that's you Billy, I
11 think. Is that you Billy?

12 COUNCIL CLERK: Good morning Chair Cohen, Billy
13 is not available today but we will start the
14 Committee on Consumer Affairs and Business
15 Licensing's vote July 28, 2020 vote on Intro. 1609-A
16 and Chair Cohen, we will begin with you.

17 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: I vote aye.

18 COUNCIL CLERK: Thank you. Council Member Chin?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I vote aye.

20 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Koo?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Koslowitz?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Aye.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Brannan?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Yeger?

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3 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: We didn't hear you.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Sorry, no.

5 COUNCIL CLERK: Chair Cohen, with a vote of five
6 in the affirmative, one in the negative and zero
7 abstentions, the item is adopted.

8 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: I'm sorry, is that all of the
9 members of the committee?

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, can we please keep the
11 vote open Johnathan, we still have Council Member
12 Lander joining.

13 JOHANNA CASTRO: Council Member Lander has joined
14 us, so we can count now.

15 COUNCIL CLERK: Thank you. Council Member
16 Lander, to vote please.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I vote aye and apologize
18 for the delay again.

19 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: Brad, if you want me to
20 repeat my opening for you, I would be happy to do it,
21 maybe I could call you, I'll just read it to you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I'd like a personal
23 reenactment if you don't mind.

24 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: No problem.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Awesome.

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3 COUNCIL CLERK: Chair Cohen, the revised vote is
4 six in the affirmative, one in the negative and zero
5 abstentions.

6 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: And I believe we have all the
7 members and I guess this will conclude the Committee
8 on Consumer Affairs, until this afternoon.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: Excellent.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Chair, are we adjourned?

12 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: We are adjourned.

13 COUNCIL CLERK: Alright if we can just gavel out
14 somehow please.
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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 August 6, 2020