

## INT. 865 TESTIMONY

Carl Goodman, Executive Director, Museum of the Moving Image &  
Vice-Chair, Queens Borough Delegation, Cultural Institutions Group.

Thank you Committee Chair Van Bramer and to the panel for holding his hearing. I'm Carl Goodman, Executive Director of the Museum of the Moving Image and a Vice-Chair of the Cultural Institutions Group, of CIG, a group of 33 Cultural Institutions operating on City-owned land and in all five boroughs.

The CIGs greatly appreciate the City Council identifying new ways to communicate and highlight all that we are doing to reach, teach, and engage students, families, in communities and neighborhoods throughout New York, as well as the success we are having in doing so.

Open since 1988 but significantly expanded in partnership with the City in 2011, the Museum of the Moving Image explores the art, history, technology of movies and digital media through exhibitions, theater programs, and, what we see as the soul of the organization, education program.

Last year over 35,000 students from over 300 New York City public schools took part in our school programs, with tens of thousands more visiting outside of the school day with their families. We have seventeen established school partnerships including a number that are funded by Council, provide free rentals of the facility to neighborhood schools and community organizations, and conduct programs at the nearby Queensbridge and Ravenswood public housing developments. Approximately 30,000, or 15% of our visitors come free of charge,

including 2,500 cool culture cardholders, 3,000 IDNYC Members, and growing, and those who take advantage of Free Fridays.

Our subject makes us different from perhaps any arts organization in the city, or the country, but our commitment to education and accessibility, and our success at delivering educational and cultural services, is something that we share with many New York City cultural organization, including the other 32 CIGs.

Collectively the CIG's see over 20 million visitors, with over 1.7 million of them being school students. We provide free and low cost programs for 2 million people annually, including 1 million schoolchildren and thousands of teachers and seniors. We collaborate with government agencies on programming for the City's underserved populations, including aged-out foster care youth and incarcerated/formerly-incarcerated individuals. These agencies include Department of Education, Administration for Children's Services, Department of Probation, Department of Parks & Recreation, Department of Youth & Community Development, Department for the Aging, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, among others. Driving these relationships forward are our valued relationships with the DCA and of course the Council.

We are especially proud of our partnership with the City in the IDNYC program, which CIG organizations offer free one-year memberships to all IDNYC enrollees. As of September 31 there were 95,183 free IDNYC memberships to CIG institutions, with the number of signups rising each month.

As you are aware, the CIG collects a significant amount of data that is submitted to the Department of Cultural Affairs in an over 50-page annual report. The data reported includes information about audiences served, where our audiences visit from, programming offered, and

outreach efforts. Given the CIG's breadth, different institutions due collect different information, and in different ways.

The data required to be submitted by INT-865 is already included in these report to the DCA. There may a few exception depending on the type, size, and type of services offered by the institution. For instance the DCA does not request student population breakdown by grade level, and the Museum of the Moving Image doesn't at present collect this data.

To the best of the our knowledge, it is already possible for the information that the CIG's provide in our yearly reports to the Department of Cultural Affairs is already being forwarded or can be forwarded, from the DCLA to the Administration for inclusion in whatever materials, and in whatever form, the Administration releases to the public.

We feel strongly, therefore, that the most efficient and sensible means by which this data required in INT 85 -would be made available is through the yearly report that we already compile and submit to the DCLA



**TO:** New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations  
**FROM:** Scot Medbury  
**DATE:** October 30, 2015  
**RE:** Testimony on Intro 865, Performance data of the cultural institutions group in the Mayor's Management Report

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Thank you, Chairman Van Bramer, and Councilmember Rose, for your leadership in putting forward this legislation to require the Cultural Institutions Group to report on the fine work that we do in a new way. I am sorry that I could not join you today for the hearing because of a longstanding conflict, but I am pleased to submit this testimony in support of Intro 865.

Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG) is an urban botanic garden that connects people to the world of plants, fostering delight and curiosity while inspiring an appreciation and sense of stewardship of the environment. In the Garden, in our community, and well beyond, BBG engages people of all ages through the conservation, display, and enjoyment of plants; with educational programs that emphasize learning by doing; and with research focused on understanding and conserving regional plants and plant communities.

BBG engages our community in ways that are real and deep, reaching well beyond the Garden's gates through GreenBridge, the Garden's community environmental horticulture program. GreenBridge includes such efforts as the Brooklyn Urban Gardener (BUG) training program, which places knowledgeable citizens out in Brooklyn neighborhoods to help with such things as school gardens and street tree care; the Community Garden Alliance, a network of nearly 150 community gardens in Brooklyn who receive technical assistance and enjoy networking at BBG; and the 20-year-old "Greenest Block in Brooklyn" contest, a strategy that has re-greened thousands of Brooklyn blocks while making every contestant a winner!

BBG is located on City-owned property and has been for the entirety of our more than one hundred years of existence. BBG is also one of 33 members of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) that will provide additional information for the Mayor's Management Report (MMR) if this legislation is enacted (or if the Mayor requests it). BBG is grateful for the substantial City operating and Capital funding that we receive which supports our programming and the operation and maintenance of our 52 acre campus.

This past year, with the support of the Mayor and the City Council, BBG welcomed over 860,000 visitors. In addition, BBG staff and volunteers engaged 150,000 students in the Garden and in schools in every City Council district, while BBG's neighborhood gardening programs worked with 60,000 local residents (and their community organizations) annually on greening projects throughout the Borough. Through the IDNYC program, the Garden has also welcomed 10,000 new members from nearly every zip code across the five boroughs.

BBG welcomes the opportunity to share this information and more with the Administration, because we are proud of our programming and our extensive reach throughout the Borough and across the City. While we already provide the data sought by this legislative proposal to the City Department of Cultural Affairs through a myriad of required reports, including the Mayor's Management Report, we are happy to provide additional data for the MMR, including a breakdown of grades that our programs serve, as the legislation has proposed.

Thank you for giving BBG the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation and thank you and your colleagues for your leadership and your commitment to culture in NYC.



**New York City Council**

**Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations**

Hearing on Int. No. 865-A Local Law to amend the New York City charter, in relation to performance data of the cultural institutions group in the mayor's management report.

Friday, October 30, 12:00 PM – Council Chambers, City Hall

Testimony Presented by New York City Department of Cultural Affairs

Acting Commissioner Edwin Torres

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Good afternoon Chairman Van Bramer and members of the committee. I am Eddie Torres, Acting Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. As you know, Commissioner Finkelppearl is on medical leave, but he appreciates these opportunities to have an open dialogue with Council and he sends his warmest regards to Chair Van Bramer and the other members of the committee. I am here to present testimony regarding Introduction Number 865, a local law that would amend the City Charter to incorporate performance data from the member organizations of the Cultural Institutions Group into the Mayor's Management Report. I am joined today by a number of my colleagues from the agency.

As you know, the Department of Cultural Affairs provides program and capital support to some 900 cultural organizations each year that collectively represent one of the most vibrant creative communities anywhere in the world. The agency also directs and engages actively in policy, advocacy, and technical assistance related to the city's cultural realm.

The Mayor's Management Report ("MMR") promotes City agency accountability and measures agencies' performance on service delivery to city residents. DCLA's section of the MMR first focuses on the department's performance with regards to timely, efficient payments and services for the organizations that receive City funding for operating and energy support, programming, and capital projects, as well as increasing the supply of donated materials available to schools and arts groups through Materials for the Arts. The second service tracked by the MMR is our ability to promote public appreciation for nonprofit arts and culture. For this, we report on overall attendance at the CIG institutions, which is something proposed in your legislation. But this aggregate attendance figure is intended to reflect DCLA's efforts in promoting the arts - not the efforts of the individual members of the CIG. Taken together, these metrics characterize our ability to support this diverse cultural sector, and are already reported every year in the MMR.

The Cultural Institutions Group ("CIG") consists of 33 private, independent nonprofit cultural institutions that occupy City-owned property and receive annual subsidies in the form of operating and energy support. As I have mentioned, the MMR tracks the performance of City agencies accountable to the Mayor. Expanding its purview to track the performance of this group of private institutions would be inappropriate and beyond the mandate of the MMR.

With respect to transparency, accountability, and public awareness, all 33 CIG members are already subject to substantial amounts of reporting and tracking by DCLA. Each publishes large amounts of information in compliance with state and federal financial reporting requirements, and also publicly releases a wide range of information through annual reports and other marketing and communications materials designed to explain and promote the benefits each group confers on its particular audiences and communities.

We also think that the proposed tracking requirements would not accurately represent the CIG institutions' performance, resulting in an incomplete and misleading snapshot of the institutions' efforts while needlessly draining their valuable resources. Each organization is its own best advocate, able to promote its strengths pertaining to its mission and audiences. If the intention is to compare groups to one another, using the same metric to compare organizations as varied as Staten Island Zoo, American Museum of Natural History, Flushing Town Hall, Bronx Museum, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music is misleading and may not be helpful in understanding how each of these institutions operates.

I'm sure that you in the Council will agree that the members of the CIG are incredible partners when it comes to enriching our city. Their extraordinary efforts to make their cultural resources accessible to New Yorkers include partnering with the Council and DCLA for the Cultural After-School Adventures program and opening up their doors to IDNYC card holders. As of September, New Yorkers from neighborhoods across the city have redeemed over 95,000 memberships at CIG member institutions.

In closing, I'd like to emphasize that my agency is dedicated to working with our partners throughout the cultural community and in the Council to increase access to and public awareness of art and cultural programming offered throughout the five boroughs. We also take very seriously our responsibility to manage this substantial investment on behalf of the City's 8.4 million residents. This committee and the broader City Council have been strong partners for this agency and our constituents and we applaud your goal of increasing the visibility of the work being done by cultural groups. We are open to discussing how to best engage and educate the public on how our City's investments in cultural organizations benefit our communities, especially as we look forward to working with you on New York's first ever comprehensive cultural plan.

Thank you. I'll take any questions you have at this time.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 865 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carl Goodman

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Cultural Institution Group

Address: 36-01 35 Ave, Astoria 11106

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

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Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/30/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EDWIN TORRES

Address: 31 Chambers + 2nd Fl NY NY 10007

I represent: NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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