

Honorable Speaker, Members of the Council, and fellow citizens:

My name is Jadae Argro, and I appear today on behalf of the residents of District 41. I respectfully rise in support of Proposed Resolution 1058-A, which seeks to amend the Rules of the Council to improve clarity, consistency, and accountability in Council operations.

I applaud the intent of this resolution: our rules should reflect the realities of governance, adhere to precedent, and, above all, protect the interests of our constituents. But this is not simply a technical reform. For many of us in District 41, the need for clearer, stronger rules resonates deeply with our lived experience of frustrated communication, lack of responsiveness, and the sense that our voices too often go unheard.

In my district, many residents have told me—and continue to tell me—that they cannot get in touch with their Council Member. Phone calls go unanswered, emails receive no reply, and district offices appear to lack posted hours or a reliable schedule. Uncertainty is the default: we don't know when or how to reach her, or when we might even have access to an office staffer who will respond.

These are not anecdotal complaints. Multiple media reports document that Council Member Darlene Mealy has missed a significant number of Council meetings—approximately one-third of her expected appearances during this current term. [City & State New York](#) She has also been criticized for low legislative activity and poor constituent service. [The City+1](#) One article notes that messages left at her office and by phone often go unanswered, and staff say they do not know when she might return. [The City+2Patch+2](#)

This is not just about one Council Member. It's about a broader principle: representation demands accessibility. When constituents cannot reliably contact their elected official, or don't know when that official is available, democracy suffers. When major policy changes, zoning proposals, or redevelopment plans are advanced in our neighborhoods and affecting the locals without notice or consultation, the community is left scrambling to respond.

This council should send a clear message: accountability matters. Proposed Res. 1058-A should be strengthened and implemented vigorously to ensure that Council Members are required to maintain regular posted hours, transparent contact

information, and timely constituent responses. The rules should clarify permissible ranges for staff response times, define obligations for community notification of major changes, and codify consequences for noncompliance with basic constituent service duties.

Some may argue these prescriptions are too rigid or micromanaging. But the alternative is worse: continued opacity, defensiveness, and alienation. In a community that needs help the most, Residents in District 41 don't just desire accountability—they deserve it.

Finally, I urge you to consider that when an incumbent overstays their welcome—when the mechanisms of change are stifled and new voices are blocked by systemic inertia—our democracy weakens. If rules cannot ensure a minimum standard of transparency and responsiveness, then we are complicit in disenfranchising our own constituents.

I respectfully ask that you pass Res. 1058-A, and that you commit to make its reforms real—not symbolic. Strengthen the rules so that no council office can hide behind ambiguity, and so that performance and access become as expected as the laws we pass. Thank you.

Jadae Argro

