

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR

JOINTLY WITH

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY  
CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

1

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR  
JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

----- X

April 17, 2025  
Start: 10:18 a.m.  
Recess: 12:10 p.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Carmen N. De La Rosa, Chairperson  
of the Committee on Civil Service  
and Labor

Farrah N. Louis, Chairperson of  
the Committee on Women and Gender  
Equity

COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE  
AND LABOR:

Tiffany Cabán  
Erik D. Bottcher  
Oswald Feliz  
Kamillah M. Hanks  
Julie Menin  
Francisco P. Moya  
Yusef Salaam

COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER  
EQUITY:

Tiffany Cabán

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR

JOINTLY WITH

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

2

A P P E A R A N C E S

Katrina Porter, Deputy Commissioner and Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services

Kadian Outar, Assistant Commissioner of Workforce Operations at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services

Silvia Montalban, Chief Citywide Equity and Inclusion Officer of Department of Citywide Administrative Services

Daniel Pollak, First Deputy Commissioner of Office of Labor Relations

Matthew Graham, Policy and Program Analyst at the Commission on Gender Equity at Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice

Damon Krukowski, United Musicians and Allied Workers

Joey DeFrancesco, United Musicians and Allied Workers

Tyler Burchfield, United Musicians and Allied Workers

Spencer Peppet, United Musicians and Allied Workers

Anne Ainslie Boccato, United Musicians and Allied Workers

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR

JOINTLY WITH

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

3

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

Paisley Fields, United Musicians and Allied  
Workers

Thom Beemer, United Musicians and Allied Workers

Andrew J Paulsen, self

Andrew Waldron, self

Francisco Cathcart, self

Elijah Diaz, self

Marshall Moran, self

Michael DeBarge, United Musicians and Allied  
Workers

Christopher Hierro, self

Yvonne D. Jennings, self

Sharon Brown, Rose of Sharon Enterprises

Raul Rivera, self

Christopher Leon Johnson, self

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

4

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. This is a  
microphone check for the Committees on Civil Service  
and Labor jointly with Women and Gender Equity.  
Today's date is April 17, 2025, located in the  
Chambers, recording done by Pedro Lugo.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and  
welcome to today's New York City Council hearing for  
the Committee on Civil Service and Labor joint with  
Women and Gender Equity.

At this time, we ask that you silence all  
electronic devices, and at no time are you to  
approach the dais.

If you have any questions throughout the  
hearing or would like to sign up for in-person  
testimony, please see one of the Sergeants-at-Arms.

Chairs, we're ready to begin.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: [GAVEL] Good  
morning, and welcome to today's hearing of the New  
York City Council's Committee on Civil Service and  
Labor. I'm Council Member Carmen De La Rosa, Chair of  
the Committee. Today's hearing is focused on  
equitable representation in the City's workforce, a  
critical issue that speaks to the values of fairness,  
opportunity, inclusion, and public service. We will

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

5

be hearing the legislative items: Intro. 675  
sponsored by myself in relation to the establishment  
of a task force to study the gender pay disparity and  
economic self-sufficiency among the labor force in  
the City; Reso. 66 sponsored by Council Member Cabán  
expressing solidarity with unionization drives across  
New York City's workforce and affirming the right to  
have union elections free from anti-democratic union  
busting practices; Reso 109. sponsored by Council  
Member Crystal Hudson, calling on the New York State  
Legislature to pass and the governor to sign the New  
York City Telework Expansion Act; and Reso. 368  
sponsored by Council Member Shahana Hanif calling on  
the United States Congress to pass and the President  
to sign the Living Wage for Musicians Act.

At a time when the federal government is  
rolling back critical civil rights protections  
targeting DEI programs, gutting support for inclusive  
education, and weakening enforcement of anti-  
discrimination laws, New York City must stand firm in  
its values. We reject the premise that equity  
initiatives are antithetical to merit. We know that  
DEI efforts are not about preference, they are about  
removing barriers that have long denied qualified

people opportunities because of who they are. Our nation has a deep and painful history of segregation and inclusion and exclusion rooted in racist laws and gender bias. Today, those legacies are still evident in persistent wage gaps. In 2024, women nationally earned just 85 cents to every dollar earned by men. The numbers are even more sobering for women of color. Asian women earned 72 cents, Black women earned 57 cents, Latina women earned 54 cents, and Native American women only earned 55 cents. Here in New York City, where women in municipal jobs still make just 87 cents on the dollar compared to men in the same roles, we must acknowledge that our work is far from finished. The latest underutilization analysis from the Equal Employment Practices Commission reinforces this point. Despite ongoing efforts, underutilization of Black, Asian, and female workers remains a persistent challenge across city agencies. In 2024, there were 223 instances of underutilization, a slight increase from the previous year. Black employees remain the most underutilized group, particularly in job titles like managers, detectives, and skilled trades, positions that offer higher than average salaries and long-term career

growth. Women continue to face deep disparities in fields like law enforcement and the trades. Just as concerning are the high departure rates among Black employees and women workers who are leaving City service at rates disproportionate to their presence in the workforce. As this Committee has reiterated time and again, it is not just about recruitment, it is about retention. Exit interviews, career counseling, and performance evaluations are tools that can make a difference, but they must be scaled and coordinated across a system to work. We need a strategy that supports City employees throughout their careers and not just at the point of hire.

In today's political climate, maintaining and strengthening DEI efforts is not only a moral imperative, it is a workforce necessity. Research shows that organizations with strong equity practices see better retention, improved employment engagement, and stronger organizational performance. As a City that employs over 350,000 public servants, our ability to recruit and retain top talent depends on our commitment to equity. This Council is committed to ensuring that every City agency is not only complying with the letter of our civil rights laws,

but also embodying their spirit. This means building a workforce that reflects the diversity of our city, values every employee, and breaks down the structural barriers that continue to hold talented people back.

I'd like to thank the Committee Staff for their hard work in preparing for this hearing, Senior Policy Analyst Elizabeth Arzt; Senior Legislative Counsel Rie Ogasawara. I'd also like to thank my Staff, Chief-of-Staff James Burke, Deputy Chief-of-Staff Kiana Diaz, and Communications Director Fray Familia.

I would like to recognize that we've been joined by Council Member Cabán, Council Member Salaam, Council Member Moya on Zoom, Council Member Bottcher, Council Member Hanks, and of course our Co-Chair today, Council Member Louis.

I now turn to Chair Louis for her opening statement.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Chair De La Rosa and good morning, everyone. My name is Farrah Louis, and I'm the Chair of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity. Thank you all for joining us for this very important hearing today on equitable representation in the municipal workforce.



I would like to take a moment to thank Chair De La Rosa for the opportunity to Co-Chair this crucial hearing and for her staunch advocacy to combat occupational segregation and fighting for equitable representation in the municipal workforce. I would also like to welcome everyone that has joined us today both in person and virtual for this hearing on oversight equitable representation in the City workforce. Additionally, I look forward to hearing the legislation Chair De La Rosa mentioned, Introduction Number 675 of 2024 sponsored by Council Member De La Rosa, Resolution Number 66-2024 sponsored by Council Member Cabán, Resolution Number 109-2024 sponsored by Council Member Hudson, and Resolution Number 368-2024 sponsored by Council Member Hanif. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of these pieces of legislation.

Recently, the current Federal Administration has taken several measures to reduce the promotion of diversity and equity in the federal workforce claiming without evidence that DEI initiatives discourage merit-based hiring. These actions compound ongoing historical practices of occupational segregation and discriminatory

practices, and we have a moral obligation to address  
this issue.

At the City level, the City Council  
continues to strive forward improving equity in the  
workforce and today we continue that fight. This  
hearing will focus on the importance and value of  
fostering the inclusion in the workforce, providing  
opportunities to workers from historically  
marginalized groups, improving cultural humility, and  
hone in on key metrics that show that New York City  
benefits from the collaborative work from employees  
across all races, ethnicities, genders, and  
religions. We look forward to hearing the response  
from our City agencies on these issues as well as  
hearing from members of the public, advocates, and  
other interested stakeholders including those with  
lived experience who have taken the time to come here  
today to join us. It is imperative we hear from your  
voices and your advocacy, and we thank you all for  
your support.

Finally, I would like to thank my own  
Staff as well as Committee Council Staff Members who  
worked so hard to prepare this hearing, Senior  
Legislative Counsel Julia Goldsmith Pinkham, Senior

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 11

Legislative Policy Analyst Christy Dreyer, and our  
Finance Analyst Ali Stouffer. I will now pass it back  
to Chair De La Rosa.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you,  
Chair Louis. I now turn to Council Member Cabán for  
her for her opening statement on her Resolution.  
Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Thank you. Good  
morning. I want to thank Chairs De La Rosa and Louis  
for the opportunity to speak about Reso. 66,  
expressing solidarity with unionization drives across  
New York City's workforce and affirming the right to  
have union elections free from anti-democratic union  
busting practices. With the Trump administration  
attacking workers and unleashing anti-union  
billionaires like Elon Musk to dismantle the National  
Labor Relations Board and perhaps attack the NLRA  
itself, it has never been more important for the city  
to reassert our commitment to all workers having the  
right to organize, to unionize, and to bargain  
collectively without intimidation, retaliation, or  
obstruction. From the fight for the 40-hour work week  
and minimum wages to the establishment of child labor  
laws and workplace safety standards, the labor

movement has always played a central role in the struggle for justice and fairness for working people in this country. But despite this, and even in the face of overwhelming public support for unions, too many workers are met with union busting campaigns, disinformation, and scare tactics when they try to exercise their rights. Captive audience meetings, surveillance, retaliation, and the use of high-priced anti-union consultants are all too common. These undemocratic and often illegal practices are an assault on our basic democratic values, and now they are being backed up by the union buster-in-chief in the White House. This resolution is a statement of our core beliefs—that New York City supports the workers who make this city run, and that we will not stand by as their rights are trampled by corporate money and fascists in Washington, D.C. As someone who comes from a working-class union family in Queens, I know how important these rights are to every New Yorker. I urge you to join me in supporting this resolution and showing our solidarity with our siblings in the labor movement. So, thank you, Chairs.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you,  
Council Member Cabán. Unfortunately, Council Member  
Hanif is unable to join today's hearing, so I am  
going to read her opening statement on her behalf.

Good morning. I am Council Member Shahana  
Hanif. Thank you, Chair De La Rosa, Chair Louis, for  
holding this important hearing, including Resolution  
348 on today's agenda. I'd also like to thank Council  
Members Ossé, Rivera, Menin, and Cabán for  
introducing this Resolution alongside me.

Most of us, myself included, use  
streaming platforms as our primary way of listening  
to music. The songs that we stream, soundtracks, and  
our commutes, our workouts, and our quality time with  
our friends. But the popularity of music streaming  
platforms has not benefited the artists that make the  
songs we listen to. Currently, the average recording  
artist receives less than a third of the penny when  
someone streams their song on Spotify. These low  
rates of pay make it incredibly difficult for  
musicians to eke out a living. We all know that New  
York City makes the best music in the entire world.  
If we want to keep it that way, we have to make sure  
musicians can make enough money to live here. The

Living Wage for Musicians Act, which Representative Tlaib has introduced with the support of the United Musicians and the Allied Workers, would do this by requiring streaming companies to pay into a non-profit fund through which artists could be paid at least one penny per stream. This would be a game changer for New York City musicians and keeps our city the music capital of the world. I encourage my Colleagues to sign on and sponsor, and I thank the members of the public here today to testify in support of this Resolution.

We will now hear testimony from representatives of DCAS, OLR, and CGE. I now turn to the Committee Counsel to administer the oath to the panel.

For this panel, we will have Katrina Porter, Katie Outar, Silvia Montalban, Daniel Pollak, and Matthew Graham. If you could please come up to the dais.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now hear testimony from the administration.

Before we begin, I will administer the affirmation. Panelists, please raise your right hand,

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 15

and I will read the affirmation once and then call on  
each of you individually to respond.

Do you affirm to tell the truth, the  
whole truth, and nothing but the truth before this  
Committee, and to respond honestly to Council Member  
questions?

COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I do.

FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: Yes.

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: Yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: Yes.

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: Good  
morning, Chairs De La Rosa, Williams, and Members of  
the Committees. My name is Katrina Porter, and I am  
the Chief Human Capital Officer for the City of New  
York and Deputy Commissioner of Human Capital at the  
Department of Citywide Administrative Services.

Today, I am joined here by my colleagues, Assistant  
Commissioner of Workforce Operations, Katie Outar,  
Silvia Montalban, OLR, and the Committee on Gender  
and Equity. Before I begin, I want the record to  
reflect that DCAS has submitted a long form of the

testimony, but will be reading a truncated version today.

Equity in the workforce is more than a goal, but an absolute critical mission, and I am proud to help lead this effort in City government. At DCAS, we remain invested in creating pipelines for people from all backgrounds to grow into good paying careers as part of the City's workforce. It is how we ensure our government reflects the diversity of nearly 8.5 million people we serve. As we continue to focus on strengthening our workforce, increasing diversity, and creating new opportunities, we are also cognizant of the challenges posed by historic and systematic inequities as they relate to occupational segregation and pay equity.

Our first line of defense has been and will continue to be our civil service system. By design, it prioritizes merit and fitness and helps mitigate issues with pay inequity. Furthermore, the salaries for the vast majority of employees are set through collective bargaining between the City, represented by the Office of Labor Relations and unions representing our City workers. This ensures



our employees themselves have a seat at the table  
through their union representatives.

But we know that there is still more to  
be done, and we are using data to build out an  
apples-to-apples comparison to better understand  
where we stand in relation to other sectors. When  
evaluating the City's workforce, DCAS looks at the  
entire agency population, which includes the  
Department of Education and the Health and Hospitals  
Corporation, which together account for nearly  
180,000 City employees, or a little more than half of  
the City's workforce. In our forthcoming Fiscal Year  
2024 Workforce Profile Report, we detail that with  
the inclusion of DOE and H and H overall, the City's  
wage gap decreases to 91 cents on the dollar.  
According to recent data from the Pew Research  
Center, nationally, women earn 85 cents for every  
dollar. And with that, the City of New York is  
outperforming national averages. Despite the progress  
in pay equity, occupational segregation continues to  
be a cause of income inequalities and has remained  
persistent and prevalent in the job market. Given the  
gravity of this issue, we continue to prioritize and  
analyze pay structures to help inform critical

policies that can further address pay inequity. As mandated in Local Law 27, we are advancing our plan to work with a vendor to conduct a pay equity analysis across 60 titles. While the initial selection took longer than we expected, we have identified a vendor to support us in this work and are nearing the completion of the contract. We look forward to seeing the results of this analysis and sharing them with the Council and New Yorkers.

Core to building equity is the development and steady flow of candidates through multiple recruitment pipelines. With this in mind, we continue to focus on creating opportunities and sharing resources for those interested in municipal employment through DCAS' Workforce Operations Team. They carry out essential functions and bolster recruitment through engagement and education. The team provides targeted, data-driven solutions aimed at addressing recruitment challenges on behalf of the City. Within Workforce Operations, we house the Office of Citywide Recruitment and the Pathway Program. OCR focuses on building relationships, advising, developing, and executing large-scale recruitment strategies and providing information to

historically underserved communities that are underrepresented in City government. In conjunction with OCR, the Pathway Program features several opportunities for people to join the municipal workforce. These include the Civil Service Pathway Fellowship, a DCAS City of New York partnership that provides recent CUNY graduates with a two-year fellowship and a pathway to permanent civil service employment, Public Service Corps, which engages current college students interested in gaining government experience, Urban Fellows, a competitive program that provides opportunities in all facets of City government, and our Summer Internship Program, which is geared towards college students looking for temporary employment.

We have also implemented new forward-thinking approaches to expand opportunities, including administering the first-ever Public Safety Bridge Exam, encompassing a multitude of titles with one exam, and reforming the City's minimum qualification requirements for civil service titles. To date, DCAS has completed the review of 90 civil service titles, and of these, 61 have been revised. These revisions impact 53,000-plus jobs and expand

qualification requirements, which were previously restrictive and difficult for many applicants to meet.

Our efforts aren't just limited to recruitment, as we recognize retention and professional development are equally as important. Other efforts undertaken by DCAS include the Salary Benchmarking Tool, which provides agencies with minimum, median, and maximum salary information at the agency and civil service title level, aggregated from employee-level data, and compares the salary information against other agencies of similar size, function, and citywide. NYCityLearn, our new learning and management system, launched last September, which increases access to training and professional development opportunities and resources. The New York City Management Academy equips mid-level managers and emerging leaders with grounding and fundamental management principles and best practices to meet the unique demands of managing and City government and provides access to more senior-level positions.

This is just a small sampling of the City's efforts to increase retention and foster increased professional development opportunities,

which supplement our additional work, like career counseling, our training expos, expanding resources for agencies, and of course, partnering with our sister agencies to increase employee benefits.

Regarding the proposed legislation, while we appreciate the Council's continued work to address the gender pay disparity, we respectfully do not support Intro. 675 as it duplicates work already underway by the Administration to address this matter. In close coordination and collaboration with the Commission on Gender Equity, and through the Pay Equity Cabinet, we are actively analyzing pay equity across our diverse municipal workforce, and implementing strategies to address disparities by gender and race. Additionally, the City is already developing a comprehensive true cost of living measure, as required by the New York City Charter, to reflect the real cost of living in New York City.

In conclusion, we thank the Council for its ongoing commitment to increasing pay equity and improving the City's municipal workforce. At DCAS, we will continue to reimagine and fortify efforts to address inequities in pay, in close partnership with our fellow agencies and the Council. Thanks again,

and at this time, we're happy to answer any questions.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Any other testimony from the panel? No? Okay. Thank you so much.

I'll begin with some questions, and then pass on to Chair Louis. First of all, thank you all for taking the time. I really appreciate the continued partnership, especially with all of you here. We've been working hand in hand to try and make some improvements, and I think we have.

So, with that said, I wanted to ask questions for DCAS along the lines of trainings. Do you anticipate making any changes to your citywide agency training curriculum in particular? Do you intend to continue to offer the cultural awareness and inclusivity and the professional development coursework?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So, we are always looking at our training portfolio to make adjustments where feasible, but the training that you mentioned, that is what we call, you know, it's a core training that we offer as a part of our diversity and inclusion portfolio, and I would like

to turn it over to my colleague, Silvia, to talk more  
about that.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Okay.

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: Thank you for  
the question. So, we have a very robust curriculum on  
equity, inclusion, equal employment opportunity.  
Besides the mandated trainings under the various  
local laws, such as sexual harassment prevention,  
Executive Order 16's LGBTQ-plus inclusion, as well,  
and of course, Everybody Matters, which is the  
overview training on DEI that has extensive modules  
on DEI, equal employment opportunity, and the fact  
that we are going to be enhancing that particular  
training by July of this year in compliance with  
Local Law 14 of 2014 with an anti-racism module. We  
have many other trainings in our portfolio that  
include microaggressions, unconscious bias,  
intersectionality in EEO investigations. So, we keep  
building on the curriculum that's offered citywide,  
both to all of the employees, as well as EEO  
professionals, which are charged with ensuring that  
their workforce is knowledgeable about DEI, as well  
as equal employment opportunity protections.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: In the Preliminary 2025 Mayor's Management Report, we see that in FY24, the number of trainings completed by City employees in equity and inclusion far surpassed the targeted rate. However, we note that the number of trainings completed by City employees in equity and inclusion during the first four months of 2025's Fiscal Year is around half that number of trainings completed in the first four months of 2024 Fiscal Year. Does this rate give rise to any concern for you, and do you anticipate seeing similar rates of completed trainings in equity and inclusion by the time this fiscal year comes to a close?

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: So, we take very proactive measures to galvanize agencies to meet the mandatory compliance of 100 percent, especially with the trainings that are mandated by legislation. And we meet regularly. This is reinforced by the citywide equity and inclusion meeting with its constituents, the EEO officers of every agency, and of course the Human Capital Division reinforcing many principles with the agency personnel officers. So, what we do is we, for many years, have given strategies on how they can reach populations within decentralized workforce



units that many agencies have to meet the challenges of training them, doing webcast types of trainings, doing instructor-led trainings, doing computer-based trainings and allocating spaces for them. We have instituted train-the-trainer models so that individuals within those agencies can also be able to facilitate and issue trainings themselves to reach individuals so we consistently develop these strategies, communicate and disseminate them, and reinforce them. We've asked agencies to submit strategy plans as well every year so that they can also be galvanized and incentivized to meet the certain goals and standards. There's no reason why they can't implement deadlines within their own agency that don't abut with the end of the training cycle as well so there's a myriad of strategies that we've implemented.

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: And I would just add that the MMR is a snapshot in time, and currently we're within the cycle seven for sexual harassment prevention training, which ends in August so we do anticipate that number will increase.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great.

I also want to recognize that we've been  
joined by Council Member Menin.

So, in 2024, DCAS launched New York City  
Learn, a training platform for New York City  
employees. How is the platform being used to promote  
equitable access to training and upskilling  
opportunities for underrepresented employees?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: Thank you. We  
are very excited about the NYCityLearn platform  
because what it does, it provides greater access to  
individuals with training. So right now, the City  
employees can just go on [nyc.gov/learn](https://nyc.gov/learn) and see all of  
the different trainings that are available and  
register for them, depending on what their interests  
are. For the cultural awareness trainings, those are  
free, so that process is a little bit easier, and  
they're able to immediately go into those trainings.  
And so we are consistently promoting all of the  
different trainings with not only our agency  
personnel officers or EEO officers, but our training  
liaisons and directly to the employees that we engage  
to make sure that they are aware of the access that  
they now have with the system.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great.

According to data reported by Mayoral Executive Order 45 of 2019, which requires New York City agencies and offices to publicly report five metrics of the City's equity-related work, only 17 percent of agencies reported offering mentorship or training programs to support career advancement for underrepresented employees. What barriers prevent a wider adoption of this initiative, and how can agencies be incentivized to implement them? And the second part of that question is, what role does DCAS play in ensuring that agencies adopt these programs as a standard practice?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So, what I can say is that as it relates to training, Council Member De La Rosa, you know that it's, you know, at the agency level, so agencies have to have a budget to send their employees to training. And so what we do at DCAS is that we are always working to highlight free trainings at our agency personal officer meetings, and, you know, just making the information available for agencies to know what's available for their employees. As it relates to Mayoral Executive Order 45, I can get back to you

with an answer on that. You know, I can't provide any additional information on that.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Okay. I wonder if there is an opportunity to sort of cross-reference agencies that may have trouble retaining underrepresented groups. Is there sort of a cross-reference that DCAS can do in order to say, hey, we're noticing this pattern in an agency, this is something you can benefit from. Does that level of communication with the city agencies occur?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: So I also wanted to add to what Katrina said in terms of the training and also respond to the question about the mentorship programs. As you know, different agencies have different levels and different budgets to be able to provide different types of mentorships. What we do in terms of the engaging and the support that we provide to the agencies, we try to figure out agencies that are doing really great things as a best practice and take that and have them present at one of our APO meetings or our APO officers' meetings so agencies can see, you know, a real life in action of how something like this can happen within their agency.

For learning and development, we know that sometimes there's a restriction in terms of the budget. So, what we have done and what we did last year is we did a training expo where we offered about 70-something free training for employees across the city so we had about 1,300 individuals that participated in those trainings. And so it's a way for agencies and employees to know that this is available for them and to build that interest, and we do work with agencies who are able to have their own. They may take an emotional intelligence training and want to give it directly to their agency so we see a lot of that happening right now. So, maybe they don't have a formal mentorship program, but they do take other initiatives to make sure that their folks get trained.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Okay. What measures are in place to track whether professional development programs are leading to actual career advancement for employees, particularly in these historically underrepresented groups?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: I'd say one of the things that we're looking at right now is the different legislation that's asking us to do the

surveys. Right now, we are working on the exit surveys. We have some results from that. We also have our career counseling programs. That's going to help us to get some feedback on action items that folks are taking after taking the training, and so we're looking at different ways that we can track that information. Unfortunately, sometimes that's at the agency level so we don't necessarily have a citywide view on what actions they're taking with that.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: On exit interviews, as you know, Local Law 13 of 2019 requires the EEPD to report on underutilization of minority groups in the City workforce. The report found increased departures in the City's workforce by Black and women employees at rates equal or greater than their representation in the workforce. For example, Black employees made up 32 percent of the workforce in 2023, but accounted for 39 percent of separations in 2024. Does DCAS exit interviews capture why underrepresented groups are leaving City service, and how is that information being used to inform policy or culture change in agencies?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: Some of the key factors that we saw from the results from the exit

interviews is, one, employees rated positively the work culture and the environment and the impact of their work and the alignment to what they're interested in so that was a positive that we saw. One of the areas for improvement or one of the gaps is that they weren't aware of the different professional development opportunities or the career advancement opportunities available for them. And so we're looking at that, because we operate on a civil service system that most of our titles, 83 percent of them which are competitive, have a career path. It's more so providing them with the knowledge that's needed so they understand that, hey, if you're living and sitting in a competitive title, then there is a path that's already laid out for you, and here's some of the steps that you can take. And so we do employee-specific civil service one-on-one information sessions where we walk employees through that process where they can find more information about particular titles that they're in, where they can find more information about training and additional resources that are available for them. So, a lot of the information that we saw, it was more so a lack of information, and we hope with the career

counseling that the agencies will be doing, that will have an impact on the population that is staying versus those that are leaving.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: I appreciate your response, and I appreciate that you all are taking the thorough steps to try and figure this out, but my question is more as to what are some of the patterns that we're seeing in terms of why Black employees are leaving City service? Is it wage-related? Is it lack of opportunity to promote up? Is it the competition from the private sector? Like, are you all seeing a pattern that is concerning that maybe can inform some of our policy decisions or changes on the legislative side?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So, the data that we're looking at, it's reflective of the entire workforce, and it really doesn't focus on, you know, Black women or any particular group in general, but I believe our partners in CEI, you know, you guys have the annual report. Would you be able to speak to, you know, any support we provide them there?

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: So, what we do is, of course, we provide tools to agencies to make



assessments, and for example, there are certain local laws that agencies have had to comply with. For example, Local Law 27, in which we've actually included a template for agencies to actually assess the data in their annual plans. Under that Local Law, they have to actually include information on compensation and efforts to address issues of occupational segregation and pay disparities. So, they have to actually take a look at their titles, their workforce numbers, the number of promotions that are happening, the number of terminations, etc. So, it's, again, they have to do a holistic review of their particular circumstances, but we actually reinforce how they utilize these sort of templates and pieces of categories and information so they can fill that out. So, we can't really speak for, you know, what's going on in terms of each particular agency, but there is Local Law 28 as well, and these agencies have to also report on their inclusive recruitment activities, things that actually engage employees, possibly contribute to retention efforts, the training programs that are related to appointing individuals to specific positions as well, the amount of funding that they attribute to recruitment, things

of that nature. So, those are all things that agencies are expected to use as tools and compliance in order to assess where these individual trends are coming from.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: I understand that. It is alarming, though, that, you know, Black employees make up 32 percent of the workforce, and in 2023, accounted for 39 percent of the separations, right? Like, that is alarming to this Council. It's alarming to us as a City, especially because we've seen, and this Committee has certainly delved into some of the vacancy rates that we have in agencies. We know that there are a lot of agencies where there are a lot of positions, and so, while I understand that this work is done on an agency level, in my view, I see DCAS as kind of like the clearinghouse of holding that data in order for us to figure out what is going wrong, you know, and why are we seeing these patterns. So, I know there's more to come on that. I won't harp on it.

I wanted to ask you, you testified that, hold on, let me find my number, that DCAS has completed the review of 90 civil service titles, and there have been 61 that have been revised. Can you

give us a little more on those revisions and what those revisions entail?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So, it's really more of an expansion, you know, taking a look at the minimum qualifications for specific titles, and taking into consideration life experience as an equalizer to qualify for the title. So, I'll give you an example. Staff Analyst is a title that's used broadly across City government, and before we expanded the MQRs, you needed a bachelor's degree to qualify, strictly a bachelor's degree. With the minimum qualification project, what we did was we expanded the minimum qualifications to include a high school diploma plus X number of years of experience to qualify for the title. And so, that's pretty much the lens through which we looked at our title structure in collaboration with labor, in collaboration with our agency partners. You know, we were able to make a tremendous stride. So, Staff Analyst is just one of those 61 titles that we expanded the minimum quals.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great. Good to hear.

I'm going to ask two more questions, and I'm going to pass this to Chair Louis, and then we'll come back. There's a lot of questions here, but I wanted to ask about inclusivity. In regards to inclusivity for individuals who speak English as a second language, and I often talk about this at hearings, or for those who have limited proficiency in English, what types of guidance for City employees does DCAS disseminate in non-English languages? For materials that are disseminated in non-English language, are those materials available only in the 10 languages mandated by Local Law 30, or can translated materials be accessed upon the request in any language?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So, I'm going to turn it over to Kadian in a minute just to talk about our recruitment practices, but I wanted to give you an update on an effort that DCAS is undertaking. We are working to have our notice of examinations translated into 190 languages, and it's really thanks to your ideas and your advice around inclusivity in the workforce. So, we're excited about this effort. We're hopeful to have everything up and running by June of this year, and that's just another

step in the right direction to ensure that all folks have more access to civil service jobs.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so much. I really appreciate those efforts. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: And I just wanted to add from the recruitment standpoint, we looked at some of our materials that are evergreen and converted those to different languages depending on the population. So, our brochure that provide an outline of, you know, how the civil service process, the exams, our FAQs. We also have an employee summary sheet. So, we're working with our partners to convert those independent on the location that we're going. If we know that there are particular language that is represented, then we'll bring those materials, but we do bring back home to the fact that, you know, the exams will be in English, but we understand that that's a need.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Yeah, absolutely, and we've had this conversation before, but, you know, even instruction, right? When you are not an English speaker and you read an instruction, in my case in Spanish, you understand that you're able to synthesize what they're asking you to do or

what the instruction is, what the guide is, even if you're able to test take in English, right? So, in school, I test take in English. I spoke Spanish at home. It wasn't until I got it that I was like, oh, wait a minute, this is how you test take in English. I could learn how to take a test. You can learn those things, but to synthesize the information that you're trying to learn, that you have to capture sort of what is required of you in order to take that test, you know, in your own language, you're able to do that better, and so I've seen people, for example, study for exams that have the material in Spanish or in another language and then respond in English. It's just the way our brains work, right? You hear it in the language that you're used to, you understand it, and then you're able to process it and it comes out in English. So, it's helpful, and I'm glad to see that our conversations have led to this change. I think it's going to be helpful just for people to understand what is required of them and then take that extra step to actually learn and take the test in English so thank you for doing that.

I'm going to pass it to Chair Louis, and then I'll come back.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Chair.  
Good morning again.

I'm going to talk a little bit about career advancement. The EEPC Underutilized Analysis of the 2024 workforce found that Black workers were the most underutilized in managerial job groups, and women were underrepresented in these fields, like law enforcement, skilled trades. These positions generally offer above-average City salaries, making their underrepresentation particularly concerning. What targeted strategies are in place to address occupational segregation?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So, the most important tool that we have in our toolkit right now is to get the contract for the pay equity analysis underway. That effort will allow us an opportunity to have a title-by-title analysis to identify the issues and then develop, you know, recommendations and ideas on how to address. In addition to that, you know, we work in a highly civil service environment. Eighty percent of the jobs that are offered through City government require participants to take a civil service exam, and most of those titles have built-in progression. You know,

1 like, you know, you come in at an entry-level title,  
2 and then, you know, once you become permanent, you're  
3 able to take a promotion exam so a lot of that stuff  
4 is built into the system. So, I think that once we  
5 get the pay equity analysis underway, we can come up  
6 with, you know, thoughts and ideas on how to address  
7 some of the underutilization at the title level.  
8

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Why do you think  
10 agencies have been unable to make more significant  
11 progress in diversifying high-paying job groups  
12 despite longstanding awareness of these disparities,  
13 and that leads to the pay equity analysis, but why do  
14 you think that that's?

15 CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So,  
16 you know, I think it's many different factors that  
17 come into play, and, you know, I think that with  
18 DCAS, you know, working to be more transparent and  
19 share information about opportunities, about  
20 training, about our examination schedule with our  
21 agency partners, that will help, you know, in the  
22 long run. You know, this situation wasn't created,  
23 you know, in a day, and it's going to take time for  
24 us to address some of the issues that are, you know,  
25 being revealed in the reports that you're reviewing.



COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 41

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Would you say it's  
like lack of coordination?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: No. I  
think that we're working toward, you know, we're  
working toward addressing these issues in many  
different ways. So, it's the examination schedule,  
our interaction with our agency partners, training,  
you know, our new learning and development system,  
the professional development trainings that are  
offered through our Learning and Development Team,  
and career counseling, which is one of the efforts  
that just came out of the City Council. I think all  
of these things together will help us to address some  
of these issues.

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: And I would like  
to add that there are other measures, of course, that  
we continuously reinforce the agencies to use. These  
are tools and approaches such as reviewing their  
workforce metrics periodically, actually on a  
quarterly basis, and they're required to make these  
assessments, put it in their quarterly reports. They  
review the underutilization and job groupings that  
are relevant to their agencies so that they can  
strategize for effective outreach so that they can

recruit and enrich their applicant pools where there is underutilization and underrepresentation of certain demographics so that is a continuous reinforcement. I'd also like to mention that Local Law 14 actually also requires agencies actually to make available fair and effective employment opportunities to women and people of color. And resulting from that, we've seen that there is a gradual impact on addressing things such as occupational segregation for women. So, for example, I'd just like to mention that there are certain categories of titles where there has been an increment in the hiring of women for FY23, for example, in the last report. It increased from 28 percent to 33 percent in protective service work. There has also been several increases as well in the areas of service and maintenance and technicians. So, the hiring of women has gradually increased, and it's important to note that because even though there sometimes, as you mentioned, may be attrition, it is a bit offset by the efforts that we continuously make with agencies to make opportunities available for women in areas where they're underrepresented.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. On February 28, 2025, 16 Commissioners appointed by Mayor Adams called for the Mayor's resignation if he failed to lay out a strategy to defend transgender New Yorkers, women, and immigrants. While this letter demanded a response within a week, we have not yet heard about any response that the Mayor's Office may have provided. Can any of you please provide us with an update on the status of the Mayor's response and what types of substantive plans the City has undertaken to protect vulnerable New Yorkers?

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: So, I can speak generally to the importance of protecting individuals based on their gender identity, gender expression, and their transgender status. Most recently, I'd like to point out that we did actually put out a set of guidelines for agencies on respecting and supporting individuals based on their gender identity, expression, and transgender individuals in the workplace so I encourage everybody to take a look at that guide. We're very proud of that. I also just want to, as an opportunity to reinforce that even though DEI, there are restrictions in the federal government under those executive orders, we've made

clear to the EEO officers, which must disseminate this information to their agencies, that those prohibitions don't change our general objective to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. Specifically, nothing changes about the prohibitions against discrimination and harassment for all under the protected status that we see in the EEO policy and the City human rights law and the New York State human rights law. It does not change our compliance with trainings mandated by local law and the City Charter. It does not change recruitment outreach to make opportunities widely known to all qualified individuals. And it does not change applying those same qualification standards for selection, which is grounded in relevant skills and competencies that match our business needs. There's always going to be objective practices. There's our non-biased job descriptions, consistent questions, structured interviewing practices. It does not change our inclusive initiatives for equal access to opportunities for success and opportunities for performance development and skills development. And also, gender identity protections, as I mentioned. There is a right to use the restroom that is

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 45

consistent with your gender identity and that is  
still protected even under the Mayor Executive Order  
16. And it doesn't change our ability to collect  
voluntary self-identification demographic data for  
purposes of Local Law 14 or EEO 4 reports that we are  
still expected to produce. So, I just want to say  
that the City's efforts to protect all individuals  
and our DEI practices continue.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. And just  
staying on DEI practices and protections, are you  
able to provide any updates on the Marshall Plan for  
Moms Task Force and the recommendations that will be  
put forth on how to best support working mothers and  
caregivers in New York City?

COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Hello. First, I'm  
Matt Graham, he and him. I'm the Policy and Programs  
Analyst. Since 2018, I've been the Policy and  
Programs Analyst working on economic mobility and  
opportunity at the Commission on Gender Equity so  
thanks for this chance to talk about CGE's work. So,  
the Marshall Plan for Moms Task Force, that is  
progressing and that work is well underway. And I  
also wanted to jump in on your previous question  
about the Administration's response to the

Commissioner's letter. Very briefly, first of all, thank you to my colleagues for their response. But Commissioner Cydia Sherman from the Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice shared her response on behalf of the Administration, which captured work across multiple agencies that addressed issues important to the Commissioners and to our City so CGE commissioners, such as yourself, should be fully abreast of the work that the City is doing and how CGE and MOERJ are fully committed and steadfast to gender equity.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. In March 2025, in the MOERJ's newsletter, we saw that Commissioner Sherman delivered remarks for a conversation focused on how New York City is ensuring the fair distribution of government resources at a discussion titled Investing in Equity for All. Are you able to give us some highlights about what was discussed and the main ways in which the City can improve the distribution of resources to improve equity?

COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thanks again for that question. So I work at CGE, which is within

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 47

MOERJ, but I can certainly go to my colleagues and  
ask for that information.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Say that last part.

COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I'll be happy to go  
to my colleagues and ask them for that information.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay. That will be  
very helpful. Thank you.

In regards to the Pay Equity Cabinet, it  
is our understanding that CGE and DCAS are Co-Chairs  
of the cabinet to create a roadmap to achieve pay  
equity and tackle occupational segregation in the  
civil service. Are there any updates on the work in  
this cabinet that you all are able to share today and  
any actions that the City Council could assist with  
for the Cabinet's work?

COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thanks for that  
question. Yes, I would just echo what my colleagues  
at DCAS have said, that we're laser-focused on this  
pay equity job title analysis and that is certainly  
progressing.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you.

This question is on sexual harassment.  
Feeling safe from harassment at work is an important  
aspect of workforce retention. Local law 97 of 2028

requires DCAS to submit a comprehensive report on sexual harassment complaints filed at every City agency. In Fiscal Year 2023, this report shows an increase in complaints with 380 complaints filed, up to 247 in the previous report. Was a study ever conducted to determine why the number of complaints rose drastically?

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: In our report for Local Law 97, we do attribute the change in number of complaints mainly to actually the success that people are more aware of their rights, responsibilities, and the resources to report. Always recognizing that the number of complaints are actually what's actually reported, not necessarily what would have been investigated with a particular outcome. Those numbers are taken more as the signifying or as evidence of the awareness there is to report and come forward and feel safe that you are protected against retaliation. We view that as a positive thing, that our outreach efforts, our training efforts, our educational efforts through other things built into Local Law 101, which is a climate survey. It educates people about where they can go, gauging their awareness of what they can do,



where they can go. The fact that we put out materials in the EEO policy, EEO handbook, that we have a plethora of information available on our website. We encourage agencies to post this information, post a transparency of the investigative process for EEO complaints. That's one graphic. Every agency has been told for years to post that. We think that if there is an increase in the number of reported complaints, it is a positive thing, because that way they can be addressed.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This is my last question for DCAS. President Trump issued Executive Order 14151 ending radical and wasteful government DEI programs and preferencing, which directs the elimination of DEI personnel, practices, and celebrations across federal agencies. This has resulted in sweeping rollbacks of protections and programs meant to advance equity in the public workforce. Has the federal ban on DEI policies and related personnel created any measurable impact on recruitment efforts or exam outcomes within the City workforce?

CHIEF OFFICER MONTALBAN: I do want to emphasize before we pass it to Human Capital that, as

I mentioned before, it should not. We have made clear to all of the personnel officials and the EEO officials to reinforce to their agencies and reassure them that our practices to do broad outreach, to enrich our applicant pools, make people aware of our opportunities, because we do have an obligation to engage in fair, effective employment practices, nothing changes, as I said. The protections against discrimination and harassment in the City under the protected categories that exist in our jurisdiction still exist. We still have practices where we apply fair reviews of the same qualification standards required for everybody, and it's grounded in competencies that meet our business needs so we don't expect that anything should be changing. Where, if at all, there are agencies that may be working with programs that may have federal funding, they have been advised to consult with the Law Department. But I'll turn it over to Human Capital if you have anything else.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: Just sticking to what Silvia said, recruitment is still the same. Agencies are still showing a high level of recruitment for diverse communities, and they're

still doing their outreach and still engaging with us, even more so in the same way so that hasn't really changed. And with City agencies going out there and even our team going out there, we're able to respond to questions from candidates about what changes and to confirm that we're still operating on our normal sense of improving DEI within the workforce.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: All right. Thank you. I'm going to hand it back to Chair De La Rosa.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you, Chair.

I have two questions, and then I'm going to pivot to OLR. Local Law 27 of 2023 requires DCAS to contract with an entity to conduct a three-year pay equity analysis on a minimum number of civil service titles. The analysis would examine civil service titles with the largest gender and racial ethnic demographic differences from the demographics found in New York City. At last year's hearing on pay disparities in the municipal workforce held in April, we learned that DCAS had recently reissued a request for a quote as part of an RFP process and we're

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 52

expecting responses from vendors at the end of April  
2024. Where's the agency on this process?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: Yeah.  
So as I mentioned earlier, we have engaged a vendor.  
The contract is signed and we're working through  
final approval so we expect to have everything up and  
ready to go within the next three months or so.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great. And one  
of my favorite topics, the Public Service Corps  
Program. We received the first report from DCAS on  
the administration of the program and its success in  
engaging student-centered activities and recruitment  
of diverse candidates. Are you able to share any  
information about your preparation for the Public  
Service Corps Program for this coming summer and what  
types of outreach has DCAS been able to do to recruit  
students for internships in the City?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: My favorite  
topic as well. So, we continue to do outreach. One of  
the great things about the Workforce Operations Team  
is that we're able to combine the recruitment teams  
with all of the internships and fellowship teams. So  
every instance that we go out into the public, we're  
speaking about all of our programs, including the

Public Service Corps Program. We're also planning another hiring event. It's an opportunity to get agencies and students in the same place and hopefully make quick hiring decisions. And we're also targeting and rebuilding relationships with our CUNY work-study coordinators to make sure that we are engaging not just the schools that we typically work with, but having a broader scale, and we are reaching out to, you know, schools in Staten Island and other areas where we don't typically engage and also looking at internally on how the program is and how we can expand it to reach more agencies and more students.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so much for those efforts. I did have one more question. Hold on. Let me find it.

Okay. And I guess this is for across the board, but does DCAS or MOERJ ever work with the Office for Persons with Disabilities to ensure that the City's workforce is inclusive of employees with disabilities? What are those conversations or collaborations like?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTAR: I can definitely speak on that. The Office of Citywide Recruitment, we manage a 55-A program, which is a

program that allows individuals with disability to be hired into government positions without having to take the civil service exam, and so we do partner with external entities, including the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. We actually just did a meeting with all of our 55-A coordinators, you know, providing them with an overview, again, of the 55-A program, reintroducing them to MOPD's NYC at Work team, and also engaging AccessVR, which is one of the State agencies that confirms a person has a disability and can do the job. And we are actually working now and working with different agencies. Just tomorrow, we have a meeting with an agency to speak to their hiring managers about the program and the initiatives that we're doing and that they can take on to move it forward, and so we're doing this in conjunction with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great. Thank you so much. All right.

Oh, Council Member Feliz, we've been joined by Council Member Feliz. Great.

So OLR, a few questions. In light of the rollbacks of federal DEI protections, how is OLR

reaffirming its commitment to equity in the municipal workforce?

FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: Thank you for the question, Council Member. So, you know, as my colleagues from DCAS mentioned, you know, DCAS obviously remains committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and you know that, obviously, as a City agency, we participate in all the DCAS-directed programs and training, etc. We also continue to work with our union partners. Obviously, our City unions are very committed to that goal. We continue to work with them on any issues that arise and, you know, continue to work with them in the spirit of promoting that goal.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great. When OLR enters into collective bargaining negotiations, to what extent are equitable representation and workforce diversity considerations incorporated? Specifically, do any contract provisions support equitable hiring, advancement, or retention of women or minority employees?

FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: I would say it depends on the unit, obviously. You know, we always, first and foremost, we listen to the union

representing the workers about what they may need and what they're looking for. If issues come up, especially related to recruitment and retention, you know, we try to work with those unions to kind of deal with those issues. A few examples, in the District Council 37 Agreement, we established with them for the first time an annual contribution to a childcare fund, which obviously, you know, the nature of it would benefit often women. In addition, we have focused a lot on some groups which tend to have more women than men, including 9-1-1 operators, the police communication technicians. OLR has been engaged for about a decade, I would say, very closely working with that union, with DC37 and the Police Department, to try to kind of enhance recruitment and retention. We have worked with them on a pilot program for some press tours, 12-hour tours, which allows fewer appearances and given kind of the location where they work can really benefit the workers by having fewer commutes to work. We meet frequently with them about that pilot. We also have established a bonus program for 9-1-1 operators, which started last year and will continue into the future.



1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 57

2 CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: How does that  
3 program work, by any chance?

4 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: So,  
5 there's an attendance threshold where as long as you  
6 meet a certain attendance threshold over a six-month  
7 period, you are eligible for the bonus for that  
8 period.

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: And that was  
10 collectively bargained, right?

11 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: Yes.

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Okay. More to  
13 come on 9-1-1 operators. This is not the topic, but  
14 you know that I am very, very concerned and a lot of  
15 us on the Council have been very concerned about the  
16 forced overtime and other issues that have been  
17 raised by the union. But that's for another topic,  
18 but just, we will continue those conversations.

19 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: And we  
20 certainly share those concerns, Council Member. It's  
21 a vital job. It's a very challenging job and that's  
22 why we've been so committed. You know, we have many  
23 staff who have been working on this for a long time  
24 and obviously we'd like to see more improvement, but  
25 we will keep working on it.

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 58

2 CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great. How is  
3 OLR engaging municipal unions in conversations about  
4 diversity and inclusion and what role can labor play  
5 in creating a more inclusive workplace?

6 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: So, I  
7 would say generally, you know, we defer to our  
8 colleagues at DCAS for their programs on diversity,  
9 equity, and inclusion. You know, we don't necessarily  
10 affirmatively reach out to unions on those issues,  
11 unless there's a program that DCAS has come up with  
12 where communication with labor would be kind of  
13 beneficial. But, certainly, if any union came to us  
14 wanting to work on those things, we are always open  
15 to it and we would, you know, work with our DCAS  
16 colleagues on it.

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: And what  
18 metrics or benchmarks does OLR use to evaluate  
19 whether agencies can make meaningful progress on  
20 equity or retention? Are there any?

21 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER POLLAK: That's  
22 not a role OLR really plays. Again, I would defer to  
23 my colleagues at DCAS who monitor that information.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Okay. So,  
25 putting it back to DCAS, are there any benchmarks to

evaluate when agencies are making meaningful progress  
on equity?

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: So,  
the most visible document that we have available as  
it relates to diversity is the workforce profile  
report, and I'm excited to announce that, you know,  
we're planning to release the FY24 report at the end  
of this month. That will be the first time that we're  
on par with the Fiscal Year so we can, of course, use  
that more readily to measure success and address  
benchmarks.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great. I'm  
looking forward to seeing that.

I think that's all our questions for  
today. Thank you all so much for your efforts and for  
taking the time to come out today. This is such an  
important issue. We have sort of a version of this  
every single year, but it's a reflection of this  
Council's commitment to equity, and I know the  
Administration is working towards those goals as well  
so we're appreciative of your collaboration.

CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER PORTER: Thank  
you. Have a great day.

I now open the floor to public testimony.  
Before we begin, 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 recording 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 for your name to be called. Once you  
have been recognized, you will have two minutes to  
speak on today's topic of equitable representation of  
the City workforce.

If you have a written statement or  
additional written testimony that you wish to submit  
for the record, please provide a copy of the  
testimony to the Sergeant-at-Arms. You may email  
written testimony to [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov) within

72 hours of this hearing. Audio and video recordings  
will not be accepted.

When you hear your name, please come up  
to the witness table. For the first panel, we invite  
Joey DeFrancesco, Spencer Peppet, Tyler Burchfield,  
Anne Ainslie Boccato, and Damon Krukowski. And if I  
messed up your name, please correct it for the  
record. Please come up to the witness table. Joey  
DeFrancesco, Spencer Peppet, Tyler Burchfield, Anne  
Ainslie Boccato, and Damon Krukowski. Thank you.

Okay. One more time. Joey DeFrancesco,  
Spencer Peppet, Tyler Burchfield, Anne Ainslie  
Boccato, and Damon Krukowski. And again, I apologize  
if I butchered your name, and if you could please  
correct it for the record.

Okay. And just for everyone on the panel,  
we have a two-minute limit. The clock is there. We  
can begin on either side of the panel. Just introduce  
yourself for the record, and you may begin when  
you're ready. Hold on one second.

DAMON KRUKOWSKI: Thank you. I'm Damon  
Krukowski. I'm here to speak about the resolution in  
support of the Living Wage for Musicians Act.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Great.

DAMON KRUKOWSKI: I'm a native New Yorker. I've been a working musician since the late 1980s, recording and performing in the indie rock band Galaxy 500, and then in the duo Damon and Naomi. My mother, who is now 94, is also a native New Yorker, also a professional musician, jazz singer Nancy Harrow. She's been recording and performing since the early '60s. I grew up with my mother and her musician friends trading stories about the music business and all the difficulties of making a life as a professional musician. I'm under no illusions about how hard that has always been. Music, like all the arts, is work without security, a predictable income. That is something we all accept. However, there's been a profound change in the last 20 years for all recording musicians that has made everything harder than before. Ever since streaming technology entered the marketplace, our incomes have plummeted. Streaming is now responsible for 84 percent of all revenue from recorded music in the United States. However, unlike previous technologies, streaming is unregulated and pays recording musicians nothing directly, nothing. This has wreaked havoc in the lives of working musicians like me and my mother, who

started our careers in a different paradigm. But what's harder to accept is that streaming is making it nearly impossible for younger musicians to build a career as professionals. This is not because streaming isn't making money. It's often said that streaming has rescued the industry for the digital era because it's now generating billions of dollars, quite literally. That's true. But none of it, zero, is paid to recording musicians directly. All the money in streaming goes to technology platforms and to the major labels. Meanwhile, nearly all musicians who make the recorded music content for streaming are working multiple jobs, struggling to survive while continuing to create new recordings that have no way to reach our listeners but through this same system. The Living Wage for Musicians Act, introduced last Congress by Representative (TIMER CHIME) Rashida Tlaiban, will change this.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: If you could just wrap up, but thank you.

DAMON KRUKOWSKI: I just want to thank the Council for taking this up and for urging the Congress to pass the Living Wage for Musicians Act. Thank you.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so much. Thank you for being here.

JOEY DEFRANCESCO: Hi. My name is Joey DeFrancesco. I'm a long-time musician. I'm a resident of Astoria here in New York, and I'm an organizer with United Musicians and Allied Workers, or UMAW. We're a national advocacy group pushing for rights for all music workers. We mobilize hundreds of thousands of musicians all over the country, including tens of thousands here in New York City. I'm here with UMAW and a whole bunch of other musicians to also urge the Council to pass this resolution in support of the Living Wage for Musicians Act. My organization, UMAW, helped to develop this legislation, cheerfully with Representative Rashida Tlaiban's office, and it remains the single strongest piece of legislation to get musicians paid fairly for our work online. Here in New York, especially, rents for everyone continue to skyrocket, costs of living continue to rise, and yet the payouts from streaming, which is the main way musicians are distributing music now, are not only minuscule but continue to get smaller and smaller, and there's no regulation on these payouts. All while



the corporate CEOs, tech CEOs who run these companies  
and the big labels are seeing soaring profits.  
Musicians create the value for these companies and  
deserve to be fairly paid. The Living Wage for  
Musicians Act is unique in that it bypasses the  
middlemen, middle people, who drain the music  
industry and instead the bill sends royalties  
directly to artists. This would make a huge  
difference for artists' ability to continue living  
and working in New York City. Tens of thousands of  
musicians have signed on to our petitions urging  
Congress to pass this Act, and just this week we  
launched a new petition just for New York City  
musicians urging the Council to also pass this  
Resolution. Over 600 New York City musicians have  
also signed on to this, and I'm going to (TIMER  
CHIME) provide this to Councilors following this  
hearing. Thank you.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so  
much.

TYLER BURCHFIELD: Hello. My name is Tyler  
Birchfield. I am a resident of Bushwick in Brooklyn,  
New York, and I am in the jurisdiction of the Council  
Member Sandy Nurse. I want to say thank you, even

though she's not here, to Council Member Hanif for sponsoring this bill and to everyone else who is co-sponsoring the bill and is in support of it. I want to thank the previous two speakers for going over a lot of great points, and something that is not always touched on when we talk about the issue of streaming technology platforms and pay issues is just how much the overhead is for independent musicians like myself and the others here to create musical content and create their albums or even create the live performances, which is yet another area where it's a struggle and where exploitation is real. As an example, to put out an album, it can cost thousands of dollars in the studio. It can cost hundreds or maybe thousands of dollars to do photography or to do album art. The cost of equipment, as a saxophonist, a decent professional saxophone costs about at least 3,500 dollars now. I expect those costs to go up with inflation and tariffs and other things like that. I think that that's just another angle that would be nice for people to consider if they're not part of the industry, is the overhead costs. The CEO of Spotify, Daniel Ek, has made it clear that he doesn't understand just how difficult and time-consuming and

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 67

costly it is to put out albums when you listen to his  
statements about (TIMER CHIME) Thank you, everyone,  
for your time.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you for  
being here.

SPENCER PEPPE: Hi. My name is Spencer  
Peppet. I am a musician living in New York. I'm in  
Ridgewood, Queens. I also am an organizer with UMAW,  
and I play in a band that tours and releases music. I  
think musicians are getting hit on all sides. We are  
facing predatory label deals, low show pay. One of  
the main ways that we begin to make being a musician  
a feasible profession in the current age is through  
the Living Wage for Musicians Act, because it's the  
first step towards creating, again, a feasible way  
for this profession to stay a profession. Right now,  
musicians are getting priced out of New York. We are  
struggling to make ends meet. If we want New York to  
stay one of the music capitals of the world and of  
the country, of course, I think that we need to  
acknowledge that people are getting priced out. The  
only way that we fix that is through higher payments  
from streaming. It's a good first step to then

address the rest of the music industry as well.

That's all. Thank you.

ANNE AINSLIE BOCCATO: Hi. My name is Anne Ainslie Boccato. I am a jazz musician and folk musician living in Brooklyn. I just wanted to speak personally about the impact of what he was saying about overhead costs. We spend so much money to put the albums out. It is money that I have had to work outside of the music industry to then funnel money into my musical career. When I first released an album with my group in 2017, I did not put it on Spotify because I already knew that their business model is stealing. I put it on Apple Music, which at the time had the model where they sold your album online for 10 dollars, and we made nine out of those 10 dollars, and I received checks from Apple until they looked over at the other guys and said, no, why don't we just do that? Now I make nothing. I'm still trying to recoup the costs of the album that I have put out in 2017. I have had to look outside of music for income in order to make a living, be able to remain a New Yorker. This has a really negative impact, not only in our lives, but in the industry, in the quality of the music that people can consume.

I am here to support this resolution. Thank you so much for taking it up.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: First, we want to thank Representative Tlaib for taking the leadership role in Congress and, here in the Council, we thank Council Member Hanif. The second part of the title of this Committee is Labor, Civil Service and Labor, and we recognize that the music industry is a workforce in addition to being a creative capital for our city. Everything that you all have expressed here is something that this Committee understands and knows, and it is part of the issues that we see with how unaffordable our city is becoming for working class New Yorkers. The difference here is that we need you all to stay, because without the creative capital of the city, it's not New York City. I personally support this legislation, and we look forward to, as a Council, being able to pass it. Obviously, that's a symbolic gesture of support for the federal level, but the work doesn't stop here. We're grateful for each of you coming and sharing your vulnerabilities. It's not easy to share personal struggle, and so we're grateful for you all being here. Thank you for coming.

All right. We have a second panel. When  
you hear your name, please come up to the dais.

Paisley Fields, Thom Beemer, Francisco Cathcart,  
Andrew Paulsen, and Andrew Waldron. And again, if I  
messed up your name, just correct it for the record  
and excuse me for that.

PAISLEY FIELDS: Sorry. My name is Paisley  
Fields. I'm a resident of Kensington, Brooklyn, and  
I'm here to support Fair Pay for Musicians. And I  
just want you to think about a song that's not been  
released by maybe the most well-known person, but a  
song that meant a lot to you and just really made an  
impact. And the person who wrote that song, the  
songwriter, the musician, the producers, that's who  
you're looking at right now. And the landscape has  
just changed so much in the last 10 to 15 years that  
it's becoming almost impossible for us to continue to  
make music, that feeling you have from that song that  
you're thinking of, we want that to exist for the  
next generation so that's why we're advocating for  
this Fair Pay, and thank you for your time.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you.

THOM BEEMER: Hi. My name is Thom Beemer.  
I'm a recording engineer and mixer. I live in

Flatbush. I just wanted to speak a little bit on the kind of wider ecosystem that's affected by these streaming payouts. When musicians are hurting, there's a whole industry of people associated with the music industry that also hurt. Recording engineers, mixers, producers, people in the live sound field, down to like luthiers, composers, music copyists, and the list goes on. All of these people are affected by musicians not getting fair pay. Obviously, this is related to the cost-of-living crisis, the housing affordability crisis in this city. But we're seeing in the past, especially 20 years, we've seen a lot of these jobs, not just musicians, but this broader ecosystem, a lot of these jobs being moved out to L.A., Nashville, Austin, other cities that are more affordable. And I think that having musicians being able to actually make a living from their music, aside from the cultural impacts, obviously that economic impact on the city would be hugely beneficial. Thank you.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you.

ANDREW PAULSEN: Hi there. My name is Andrew Paulsen. I live in Hell's Kitchen. I'm a singer-songwriter. I'm a member of the performing

rights organization, ASCAP and, like most musicians, I have music on Spotify. And while I'm using my own words and representing myself, I'm also here on behalf of all of my musician friends that are unable to be here at City Hall today. I could read off a list of at least 25 incredibly talented performers and songwriters that are friends of mine with music also available on online streamers. And these are also the same people that you would find performing at cafes and bars or busking in parks all around the city each night, each day, providing entertainment relief to thousands of New Yorkers. And they would all love to be here to speak to you today at City Hall, but they're not. Why aren't they here? Well, it's because they're working. They are teachers, waiters, office workers, graphic designers, nannies, and baristas by day because they cannot survive in this city off their music alone. Every day, I see New Yorkers on the sidewalks, the subway, the bus with their headphones on or their Bluetooth speakers blaring their favorite music because it makes them happy, it gives them confidence, and it expresses how they are feeling. The stories and emotions shared with and through music help listeners make sense of



their lives and make connections for all of us to understand the world that we live in. Our art has value. Our lives have value. It's time that Spotify recognizes that. Thank you.

ANDREW WALDRON: Hi, my name is Andy Waldron. I was born in District 1, represented by Council Member Marte, and I live in District 34, represented by Council Member Gutiérrez. I'm here to speak about the, like, Civil Service and Labor Council Member De La Rosa mentioned of wanting us to stay here, and as someone who was born here, who continues to work here in what has been traditional music job and labor, like record stores, like Rough Trade, who's chosen to have their sole U.S. location in the great New York City, or Knitting Factory, who has also been a foundation for many wonderful and innovative musicians. I worked at those places because I knew that New York City had a community and a music and arts way of living and cultural epicenter that I want to continue singing along with all my friends here today. And I still have to be on Medicaid. I still have to figure out how to pay my fellow laborers, my fellow musicians, my fellow stagehands. So as one of the 14,000 working musicians

that help contribute to New York City's art sector, I would like to, like my wonderful colleagues, constituents here, share and work together to continue that song, continue that melody, and I hope my Council Members from where I was born and where I currently work also sign on to support this Resolution as well. Thank you.

FRANCISCO CATHCART: Hello. Good morning, my fellow New Yorkers. My name is Pocco Cathcart. I was born in St. Vincent's Hospital on 7th Ave, but I grew up in a part of Williamsburg, Brooklyn called Los Sures, South Side. My story is the story of countless musicians laboring in this city and elsewhere. Thousands and thousands of listeners use my product every month via streaming services, and it adds up to pennies in the bank account. If there are literally thousands of people using your product, should you not be able to comfortably pay your rent? Should you have to worry at the end of the month about covering the bills that keep going up and up? Shouldn't you be able to save even a little money? If a popular chef making healthy and delicious food that people eat thousands of times a month receives pennies for the labor of cooking that food, for their

expertise, for their contribution to the culture, is that fair? We're cooks here. We cook the soul food that is music. Everyone in this room knows what I'm talking about. Music is a necessity of communal life. Are we actually a great community here, or do we only claim fleeting membership and community for political convenience? I work full-time on my craft. That is at least 40 hours a week. On top of that, of course, I work side hustles, set building, landscaping. I'm also a recording engineer, but I've forever worked at steeply discounted rates because musicians are broke. A while back, I was working in the shop with my good friend and longtime set building boss, Christian Dutrem (phonetic), and he told me, Pocco, you should not be working side jobs. You should be making music all the time and living off of it. You're too talented. We know it. We know it well. We are not lazy people. We're hard workers. My roots are in Antioquia, Colombia, and the people there are called paisa. If you know about paisa culture, you know that we are known for our borderline (TIMER CHIME) maniacal work ethic. Can I finish? Is that up?

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Don't worry.  
If you could just wrap it up.

FRANCISCO CATHCART: Thank you so much.

I'll be quick. I'm also a born and bred New Yorker, and we New Yorkers are not exactly known for laziness either, but we are at a point where having both talent and the willingness to work your ass off is just not enough to make even the semblance of a decent living. We're the victims of a broken music industry where predatory, monopolizing tech companies sell convenience to their customers at the price of artists' livelihood. Their dominance of the industry obliterates any possibility of working outside of that paradigm. Don't tell me to just keep your music off the streaming platforms if you think it's wrong. That's like telling the miner in a single industry coal mining town who is struggling to organize for better working conditions, if you don't like the conditions at the mine, just go work somewhere else. Every day. Do we not burn the coal? Every day. Do we not eat the meal? Every day. Do we not listen to the music? Thank you very much.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you all again. Same thoughts of support and solidarity that I expressed to the panel before. We're grateful for you being here, and obviously expressing your

experiences, your lived experiences, and your  
vulnerabilities is important to us as a Council, and  
we look forward to supporting the Resolution. Thank  
you.

Up next, panel number three includes  
Elijah Diaz, Marshall Moran, Michael DeBarge, and  
Christopher Hierro.

ELIJAH DIAZ: Thank you. Good morning,  
Council. My name is Elijah Diaz, and today I'm here  
as a representative for the Voices of District 45 in  
Brooklyn. I've surveyed a lot of members of my  
community, especially around the Newkirk Plaza area,  
and I've generated a couple of questions, but since  
I'm time-constrained today, I'll just get into the  
gist of it. People want to know, can Council Member  
Louis provide any data showing how women...

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Sorry. Excuse  
me. Testimony is not questions. You can provide a  
statement if you'd wish.

ELIJAH DIAZ: Okay, I can provide a  
statement.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: It's not a Q  
and A.

ELIJAH DIAZ: Okay.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: So, if you could please just read your statement, we will accept it onto the record, and it should be relevant to the topic being discussed today.

ELIJAH DIAZ: Okay. So, the community feels that there's no significant increase or noticeable equitable treatment for gender non-binary individuals and minority populations. They feel that this legislation is merely fluff, and there's no actual measurable increase in change for any of this legislation. Also, people are concerned that the task force that is supposed to be implementing these changes and making the metrics will be compromised by other candidates, potential elected officials like Andrew Cuomo so they are very concerned about, you know, the legislation being passed, and then all of a sudden the City Council has no power or has no jurisdiction to actually represent the change that it's meant to. And the people want to hear of a town hall meeting. A lot of people from my district, I don't think, frankly, anybody from my district even knew about this meeting, and so there's no representation. There's no knowledge of any of this happening. So, the people want to hear a town hall

from the Council Member or Council Members, you know,  
relating to these topics. Thank you.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so  
much, and just for public record, all Council  
hearings are noticed on the website. Thank you.  
Whoever wants to go next on this side, or just please  
introduce yourself for the record.

MARSHALL MORAN: Hi, I'm Marshall Moran. I  
live in Ridgewood, New York. I lived in New York most  
of my life now. Geez. I am an audio engineer, a  
musician, a teacher, and I just work in music like  
everybody here. We're all music workers. The entire  
industry has suffered. As streaming revenue has gone  
down for artists, as artists have lost money coming  
out of what Damon Krokowski was talking about, the  
eras before streaming, I've watched this community  
contract. It's horrible. I just always wanted to be a  
music worker. I just wanted to be able to play cool,  
fun music with my friends and work jobs that would  
support everything. I've watched the entire ecosystem  
contract as people can't pull in revenue. I've  
watched experimental jazz musicians, like people  
who've been here. I've watched it. They've lost major  
forms of revenue. They always had to work other jobs.

This isn't right. Like everybody said here, we don't want to lose any of this. One part of the LWMA that's important to me, I should mention, I'm an organizer with UMAW as well. One of the aspects of this bill that's very important to me personally, and I just want to say here, is the revenue stream it would create carves out money for non-feature performers. What that means is if you're someone that worked on a record, you gave it your all, you get money for that. You get a special, like, you're getting royalty and you're getting acknowledged for that so there's a lane for like awarding people who worked on your records to make sure that they also are compensated fairly. And that, in the spirit of everything with the LWMA, that's what we're looking for, is to compensate everybody fairly so, to what everybody has said here, we can have a sustainable music ecosystem because, yeah, I don't think anybody doesn't feel that way who's spoken here, that we need to (TIMER CHIME) protect this. So, thank you for letting me speak.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so much.



MICHAEL DEBARGE: My name is Michael DeBarge. I'm from Ozone Bar, Queens, and I'm the owner of Midtown Radio and Records. It's a firm that handles artist management, music publishing estates, and radio promotion. I'm here in support of the Fair Wage for Musicians Act. These people moved to New York City to live their dream. This is the culture hub where musicians come to thrive. Over the last 25 years as a writer, producer, radio promoter, I've been very blessed to have many of my records go platinum. But the artists that I know and that I meet and that I interact with, they're all struggling. Basically, they're broke. A couple of years after the streaming started, I opened a studio. I had it for 10 years. It was on 39th and 8th, and I never charged a single artist for a session. I would go in there for 16 hours a day on the weekends and let anybody who wanted to come, come record whatever they wanted, free of charge. They would own their masters. I did this because I knew they couldn't afford it, and I knew that the way that things were going, it was not in their favor. Fast forward to 2025, not even I could maintain keeping that studio in business. None of us can afford to keep going doing what we're

doing. I've even had to diversify the way that I earned through bookings and other matters. I even had to just move on from helping independent artists, and it's terrible. I still try to do it where I can, but I'm watching them struggle all the time. I know I'm coming from the other side of the fence, but I know how important this is to all the other artists that really need it. I really want the Council and everyone to understand that these are not just musicians that are doing something they're passionate about. These are the people that write the soundtracks to your lives, and it should be appreciated, and it's not. The most disgusting part of it is that the streaming companies have made more money, and they now control 70 percent of the market, and they continue to pay less and less and less every year. At (TIMER CHIME) one point, the streaming companies paid about 9.1 cents per stream. Some companies like Xbox Live paid up to 3 cents per stream, and now it's a...

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Could you just wrap it up?

MICHAEL DEBARGE: Fraction of that.  
Spotify is the worst culprit of it all. I yield my  
time.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so  
much. Thank you.

CHRISTOPHER HIERRO: Hello. My name is  
Christopher Hierro. I'd like to speak to the entire  
Council, but I'd like to speak especially to Mrs. De  
La Rosa. As a fellow Dominican, maybe you or your  
parents will remember there was a band called La Gran  
Manzana from the Dominican Republic. My father was  
one of the frontmen in that band, Henry Hierro. They  
had numerous hits, very beloved in the '80s. I grew  
up in a home where my father helped raise all five of  
us, three kids, him and my mom, solely off of music.  
I remember days when my father used to get royalty  
checks and be able to pay the bills, buy us food with  
royalty checks. I remember when my father used to be  
working all the time. My father used to be playing  
gigs all over the city. It was normal for me. It was  
like I used to go to school. My other friends, their  
parents did other things. My father was a musician,  
and that's how we made a living. I followed in his  
footsteps. I'm also a songwriter, producer, singer.

I'm one of the lucky ones. I get to go on tour as a musician with a very big artist from Latin America. But not all musicians have that luck, and they're not that fortunate. They're being told on one side that, yes, we've evened the playing field now, everyone can release their music and be out there just like the big artists. But simultaneously, our royalties have been dwindling. The money that we're making is less and less. It's really ridiculous. It's one of the only industries where we put in all this work, and we're expected to just shut up and take whatever we're dealt, take the promotion, whatever it is, the exposure, whatever that accounts for. (TIMER CHIME) It just makes no sense. I think we need this bill. We need to be paid a fair wage.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you. Thank you so much. Again, thank you to this panel for your meaningful words and for being here today. We really appreciate it. Thank you all.

CO-CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I didn't get an opportunity to address the last couple of panels, but I just wanted to just thank everyone here from the Musicians Union and those that are here just in general to support the bill. I'm one of the co-

sponsors of the bill, but I do want to say that while your art is very important and we need it each and every day for different and myriad of reasons, it is very important that you all are here today and you remain consistent in adding pressure. It's very important on all levels, both within the Council and on the other side of the aisle. It is very important that you're here today. We are in full support. I know some of the funding that I give to folks by New York Plaza, to some of those musicians, they utilize that money as an added measure for wherever they have a deficit. I just want to thank you all for being here today. My brother's a musician, so I understand the struggle. I just want to tell you, let today not be the only day that you're here advocating for this bill, but for the additional resources that you need. Thank you.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you,  
Chair.

Now I want to call our last in-person panel before we move to Zoom, Yvonne Jennings, Sharon Brown, and Raul Rivera. Mrs. Jennings? You may begin, Mrs. Jennings.

YVONNE D. JENNINGS: Hi. Gender equity?

Stalking issue started in 2006. Her name was  
Jacqueline Ebanks. She used to be with the Gender  
Equity. I have her card. I met with her five years  
ago, then I went with her before. The last time I met  
with her, there was a whole table of different people  
from her office, and they all saw the letters that go  
to the White House since 2009 to the four presidents.  
I called your office yesterday, I think, and spoke to  
your Chief-of-Staff. It's an urgent issue where I am  
staying. The man over me, don't take this the wrong  
way, he's trying to K-I-L-L me, and on February the  
5th, I had a pain across my chest for an hour when I  
couldn't move. Everything goes in my diary. I have a  
diary, I keep a good diary. I told the mayor, the  
governor, and most of all then Biden about that  
because the letters of 5,000-plus that go at every  
camera I pass. June the 25th, he gave me a heart  
attack, the man over me. He has a device. He moves  
around. I don't know what it is, and I got very sick.  
The heart attack started before noon and went until 3  
in the morning, and at North Central Hospital from 11  
p.m. to 3 a.m., the wonderful staff marched back and  
forth like the wonderful people are marching up.

That's what they did. No one helped me. I laid and moaned and cried in pain, excruciating pain. I'm now not well. It's so bad we can't go there, and I spoke here on February the 24th. I spoke here, and I had reached out to then, what's his name, Yusoff (phonetic), the Chair, you know, and his Chief-of-Staff, Ms. Stevens, and that was, I spoke on February the 24th. You would see the meeting. I don't hear from anybody. I'm not well due to the man upstairs, and repeat... (TIMER CHIME) emails and everything went in February to the mayor, the governor, and then the heart attack came.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: We want to assist you, so my Deputy Chief-of-Staff, Shubhra Mishra, is here, so she's going to, we'll meet with you right after this.

YVONNE D. JENNINGS: When I leave here, I'm gonna be grabbed and harassed. I'm over here watching your wonderful with a gun and a badge creep around me. I don't know why.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you, Ms. Jenkins. She's offered help. And I just want to remind the panelists to stay on topic. Thank you so much.

Go ahead.

SHARON BROWN: Hello. My name is Sharon Brown. Before I begin, remember Israel released the hostages. Let Yahweh's people go. Defend Israel.

Okay. For employment, we cannot employ homosexuals and transgender in the workplace. Homosexuality, transgender, LGBTQIA must be banned from the workplace. I ask that the City Council and Mayor acknowledge we are a Judeo-Christian nation, and homosexuality must be barred and removed. I am currently suing Spotify, Google, and a couple of other companies concerning my music. It is a terrible situation for the musicians. A lot of the situations, there are bigger artists out there, and instead of you getting your streamings, other people are getting streamings. There's a whole lot of criminal activity that is going on with Spotify. If you look on the search engine to look at your music, you'll notice that Spotify and Google are removing some of your searches. So, if I have a song called heterosexuality or something like that, Google and Spotify together remove it so that people are not clicking to be able to go to your music. Some people that were looking for my music, they said they tried to click on it.



They were not able to access the music. So, some of these streaming platforms are doing it intentionally, and they are still collecting the monies for however, whatever they're doing with the monies, but you're getting clicks. People aren't able to listen to your music so there's a lot of different shady things that are going on, and I am currently in federal court with a bunch of the different companies. Some of the songs and things they don't (TIMER CHIME) want to..

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you.

SHARON BROWN: Put out there. Just one last sentence. Some of the songs they don't want to put out there, but then like a week or two later, someone else comes out with a song similar to your topic so there's something going on there.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you so much. Thank you for your testimony.

RAUL RIVERA: Can I go? Give me the green light. Okay. So my name is Raul Rivera. I'm a TLC driver and a TLC advocate. We fight for the drivers. I just want to point out to Ms. De La Rosa that in the same fashion that you advocate for yourself to get reelected, you don't merely tell your constituents to go to the website, because I just

heard what you told the other gentlemen there so you don't just say, go to the website. You actually advocate so, in the same fashion, you should advocate for your constituents.

Now, I want to bring up the sugar daddy. I don't know if anybody knows the sugar daddy, but his name is Mark Gorton. He's worth over 2 billion dollars. He's the founder of LimeWire, and he settled out of court for 105 million dollars for theft of royalties that belong to the musicians. Nobody mentions Mark Gorton. He is the founder of Open Plans here in New York City, a non-profit, an NGO, that are trying to monetize our city, and Mr. Gorton gives a lot of money to the Council Members. I don't know if you guys receive money from him, but this guy is filthy rich. He's up on the Upper West Side, and he's helping Transportation Alternatives. He's helping Open Plans. He's the current founder and Chair to Open Plans, and he's funding all these NGOs to monetize our city. So, I think that's something that needs to be said here. If you guys are receiving money from Mark Gorton, I think you should consider giving that money back. I think your constituents should know about it. I think New York should know

about it. This guy is nothing. He's just a thief.  
That's all he is, trying to masquerade as some kind  
of advocate in the city. He's no advocate. He's  
actually from New Jersey. He's a disgusting  
individual, and a lot of people here in the City  
Council support him. I think the Council should know  
about that. If he gave you money, you should give it  
back. Thank you.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Thank you all  
who came here to share your thoughts and experiences  
today.

If anyone in Chamber wishes to speak but  
has not yet had the opportunity to do so, raise your  
hand and fill out an appearance card with the  
Sergeant-at-Arms in the back.

Seeing no hands in the Chamber, we will  
now shift to Zoom testimony.

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah, hello. My  
name is Christopher Leon Johnson. I'm here to support  
Resolution 066. While at the same time, I think the  
City Council needs to come together and put our  
Speaker, Adrienne Adil-Adams, on as to be removed  
from Speaker to City Council because she's completely  
discriminating against a Jewish elected official

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 92

named Lynn Schulman and an African American elected  
official...

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Please stay on  
topic.

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: On topic  
because you guys are city workers. Remember, you guys  
work for the City just like we do. Remember this. At  
the same time, I need to remove that lady as a  
Speaker of City Council. But at the same time,  
Resolution 066, the members of these unions have to  
understand that, look, there's a lot of election  
rigging, there's a lot of retaliation that goes on  
with these unions, especially with the incumbent  
slates of these unions. They love to weaponize their  
position and their resources to oppress members of  
the unions that are against them. I am totally for  
union organizations of many of the job sites, but I'm  
really against Unite Here 100 because they want to  
unionize in places where they shouldn't be unionized.  
But at the same time, with these current unions like  
32BJ, HTC, and DC37, you members have to understand  
that the incumbent union slates, they have big  
advantages when it comes to putting their members  
over. So, I support Resolution 066, but at the same

time, the City Council needs to come together because they're all City workers, and defend and support two of the women, Lynn Schulman and Selvena Brooks-Powers, to keep their spots on the advisory board for the budget. I understand they're supporting the other guy, I can't say his name on this platform because I know they'll cut me off, but that's wrong. We have the right to support who we want to support. You should not be retaliated against because you're supporting someone that the Speaker doesn't approve of. Like I said, if this can happen to these women, Selvena and Lynn Schulman, (TIMER CHIME) this can happen to anybody in the City Council.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Your time has expired.

Thank you.

CO-CHAIRPERSON DE LA ROSA: Okay. We're making final call for Zoom registrants who have not yet spoken. There seems to be no one else on the Zoom. If you're currently on Zoom and wish to speak, but have not yet had the opportunity to do so, please use the raise hand function, and our Staff will unmute you.

Seeing no hands, I would like to note that everyone can submit written testimony to

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR JOINTLY WITH  
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 94

2 testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours of this  
3 hearing.

4 We thank the Administration and the  
5 public for attending this hearing to share your  
6 thoughts on the oversight topic and attached  
7 legislation. We look forward to following up on these  
8 issues.

9 With that, this hearing is now adjourned.

10 [GAVEL]

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

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 May 15, 2025