

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
AND BUILDINGS

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B E F O R E: Pierina Ana Sanchez
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Oswald J. Feliz
Crystal Hudson
Rita C. Joseph
Virginia Maloney
Kevin C. Riley
Yusef Salaam
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Susan Zhuang

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

Michael Sandler
Associate Commissioner for Office of
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Lucy Joffe
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AnnMarie Santiago
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Costadino (Gus) Sirakis
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Matt Drury
Chief of Legislative Affairs Parks Department

Linlin Liang
Pew Charitable Trust

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

Jack Connors
Open New York

Christopher Leon Johnson

Tabitha Ward

Charlene Cannady-Carlo

Ron Borovinsky

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2
3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning. Good
4 morning. Welcome to the New York City Council
5 hearing on the Committee of Housing and Buildings.
6 At this time, please silence all electronic devices,
7 and do not approach the dais. I repeat, please do not
8 approach the dais. Thank you for your cooperation.
9 Chair, you may begin.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [gavel] Good
11 morning and welcome to the February 9th hearing of
12 the Committee on Housing and buildings. I'm Chair
13 Pierina Sanchez, Chair of the Committee. On behalf
14 of our committee and the City Council, I welcome the
15 members of the public and administration who are
16 joining us today. As a reminder, members of the
17 audience must remain silent during testimony. If you
18 wish to express support, you can use the silent
19 approval gesture. We expect to hear a range of views
20 today, and ask that decorum and civility are
21 maintained throughout the hearing. For members of
22 the public who wish to testify, please complete a
23 testimony slip with the Sergeants indicating your
24 name, topic and position on legislation. Before
25 turning to the substance, I want to note that all of

1 the bills before us today have been considered by the
2 Council over the past 18 months or so. They are
3 being heard together to continue momentum on reforms
4 that diversify the types of housing available in the
5 city, reduce longstanding inefficiencies, remove
6 barriers to safety and repair and improve the
7 experience of applying for affordable housing. Taken
8 together, they reflect our council's intent on
9 responding and continuing to respond seriously to the
10 housing crisis. Our primary focus today is oversight
11 of shared housing and consideration of Introduction
12 66, sponsored by Council Member Maloney. New York
13 City is facing a historic housing crisis. The 2023
14 Housing and Vacancy Survey found a vacancy rate of
15 just 1.4 percent, and for the lowest rent units
16 vacancies are at a functional zero. More New Yorkers
17 are pooling incomes with roommates simply to stay
18 housed and many are forced into illegal or unsafe
19 living arrangements because legal options do not
20 exist. Shared housing known historically as single-
21 room occupancies, or if you're in the Bronx [speaking
22 Spanish], once made up a significant portion of our
23 housing stock. In the 1950s as much as 10 percent of
24 the city's housing took this form. Immigrants,

1 single adults, and workers relied on it as a stable
2 affordable option. Over time, neglect, stigma, a lack
3 of regulation, these led to deteriorating housing
4 conditions, and the city effectively banned new
5 shared housing in 1955. Today, we are in a different
6 moment. We now have a robust housing maintenance
7 code, stronger fire and safety standards, and far
8 greater enforcement tools. Yet, we have not updated
9 our housing policy to reflect the reality that many
10 New Yorkers cannot afford family-sized apartments and
11 should not have to live illegally to survive. Intro
12 66 takes a cautious regulated step towards
13 relegalizing shared housing. It allows the creation
14 of shared housing units in new buildings or
15 conversions from office with strict requirements
16 around minimum room size, fire protections, egress,
17 sprinkler, accessibility, and inspections. It also
18 prohibits short-term rentals in these units. The
19 goal is simple, expand affordable housing options
20 while ensuring safety and dignity for New Yorkers.
21 We're eager to hear from the administration about
22 implementation risks, impacts on family-sized housing
23 and how to ensure these units do not replicate the
24 harms of the past. We're also considering several
25

1 related bills. Intro 71 recommended by former
2 Council Member Bottcher, which I think I am
3 inheriting, addresses sidewalk sheds and scaffolding
4 that damage city-owned trees. With hundreds of miles
5 of scaffolding across the city often left up for
6 years, this bill requires permit holders to repair or
7 replace trees that are damaged by scaffolding,
8 encouraging faster repairs while protecting our tree
9 canopy. Intro 271 strengthens tenant protections
10 when vacate orders are issued. It improves
11 interagency coordination, expands relocation
12 assistance, for instance in the case of fires, and
13 requires HPD to initiate court actions when owners
14 fail to make timely repairs, ensuring tenants are not
15 left displaced indefinitely due to owner neglect.
16 Intro 418 by me creates in-person assistance for
17 Housing Connect applicants. Applying for affordable
18 housing requires navigating dozens of documents in a
19 complex digital process. This bill ensures seniors,
20 people with disabilities, and residents without
21 reliable internet can get hands-on help in accessible
22 spaces. Intro 427 improves the re-rental process on
23 Housing Connect requiring vacant affordable units to
24 be posted transparently so they can be fairly
25

1 distributed rather than sitting empty or cycling
2 inefficiently through wait lists. Last time that we
3 discussed this legislation, HPD implemented a
4 temporary process, so I'm eager to hear updates on
5 what lessons have been learned. Intro 421, also by
6 me, allows cellar apartments in newly-constructed
7 one- and two-family homes consistent with City of Yes
8 zoning reforms, ensures codes aligned to allow the
9 addition of modest housing supply while maintaining
10 safety standards. 421 is a technical clean-up.

12 Before turning to the sponsors, I want to thank my
13 team, Chief of Staff, Maria Villalobos [sp?], Deputy
14 Chiefs Ben Ratner [sp?] and Kim Castellanos, Gerard
15 Fernandez [sp?], Dylan Campos [sp?], Brenda Miu
16 [sp?], Stephanie Kusi [sp?], and Maria Jose Mares
17 [sp?]. I'd also like to thank the Housing and
18 Buildings Committee staff, Senior Legislative
19 Counsel, Austin Malone, Legislative Counsel Billy Eck
20 [sp?], Senior Policy Analyst, Jose Conde [sp?],
21 Policy Analyst, Dirk Spencer, Finance Analyst
22 Caroline Narranjo [sp?], and Data Scientist, Reese
23 Hirota [sp?]. Before I turn to my committee, I also
24 just want to take a moment, because you are two of
25 the agencies that are working the hardest during this

1 extreme cold. Thank you for everything that you're
2 doing to respond to New Yorkers, all of these heat
3 complaints that I know have skyrocketed, we really
4 appreciate all of the overtime and all of the work.
5 We are joined today by my committee members-- sorry.
6 Carolyn Maloney-- Virginia Maloney, sorry. Sorry,
7 it's babies. Always blame the babies, right? Poor
8 babies. Council Member Hudson, Council Member
9 Zhuang, and-- oh my gosh I'm sorry-- Council Member
10 Salaam. He goes right before me on the alphabetical.
11 My apologies. I love you, colleagues. You are all
12 the best. Before we turn to the administration's
13 testimony, we're going to turn it to Council Member
14 Maloney who is going to speak on her legislation.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: Thank you. I'm
17 proud to introduce this legislation. New York is in
18 desperate need of affordable housing and by our--
19 increasing our housing stock, the City Council can
20 deliver on both goals. New York City's housing rules
21 have not kept up with how New Yorkers actually live
22 today, and this bill addresses a clear gap in our
23 housing system. Right now, our codes effectively
24 recognize only two options, a full apartment or
25 outdated SRO rules that no longer reflect modern

1 safety standards or contemporary lifestyles. As a
2 result, students, young workers, seniors, and
3 immigrants, and small families are priced out of
4 legal housing options that meet their needs. This
5 legislation legalizes a form of housing that New
6 Yorkers are already relying on. Today, roughly 40
7 percent of New Yorkers live in some form of shared
8 housing, whether that's a dorm-style arrangement or
9 apartments divided by flex walls. Ensuring that
10 people who choose to live in this way can do so in a
11 safe, comfortable, and regular environment is
12 essential. By modernizing and legalizing shared
13 housing, we are creating a safer living environment
14 than outdated SRO rules and also creating an option
15 that is more affordable than a studio apartment which
16 in Manhattan now averages close to \$4,000 a month, a
17 price that people really cannot afford. This
18 legislation also supports the conversion of office
19 buildings into housing. By allowing shared housing
20 as part of office to residential conversions, the
21 bill unlocks new opportunities to bring life back to
22 struggling commercial corridors while rapidly
23 expanding the supply of affordable homes. These
24 conversions are uniquely situated for a shared living
25

1 layout and can be delivered more quickly and at lower
2 cost than traditional apartments. Right now, shared
3 housing largely exists in an unregulated and informal
4 space. This bill changes that, requiring proper
5 sprinkler systems, up to code fire safety measures,
6 and professional management, bringing transparency,
7 accountability and safety to a housing model that
8 already exists. Most of all, this bill is about
9 meeting the moment. New York City desperately needs
10 more housing and it needs housing that reflects the
11 diversity of the people who live here. This model
12 supports artists, students, young people trying to
13 make it in this city and older adults seeking
14 community, all with housing that is done the right
15 way, safely, transparently and affordably. Thank
16 you.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council
19 Member Virginia Maloney. And with that, I want to
20 turn it over to the administration to read us your
21 testimony. But first, our Counsel will administer
22 the oath.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If you're here to
24 testify on behalf of the administration or you
25 anticipate that you might testify, could you please

1 raise your right hand? Do you affirm to tell the
2 ruth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth
3 before this committee and respond honestly to council
4 questions?

5 UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may
7 begin.

8 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Good
9 morning, Chair Sanchez and members of the Council
10 Committee on Housing and Buildings. My name is
11 Michael Sandler. I'm the Associate Commissioner for
12 the Office of Neighborhood Strategies at HPD. I'm
13 joined by my colleagues Lucy Joffe, Deputy
14 Commissioner for Policy and Strategy, as well as
15 AnnMarie Santiago, Deputy Commissioner of Enforcement
16 and Neighborhood Services, Emily Osgood, Associate
17 Commissioner of Housing Opportunity and Placement
18 Services, and Stephen Erdman, Assistant Commissioner
19 of Homeownership Opportunities and Preservation. We
20 appreciate the opportunity to testify today and look
21 forward to a productive partnership with the Speaker,
22 Chair, and all the partners that make affordable
23 housing possible in New York City. Today, I'm eager
24 to discuss a few of the critical issues and
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1 opportunities facing our city. Our testimony will
2 focus primarily on shared housing, but we're also
3 looking forward to discussing the issues tackled and
4 the other bills being heard today on shared housing.
5 New Yorkers deserve choices, and our limited housing
6 supply does not change that basic fact. The shortage
7 means that we must aggressively work to expand
8 housing choice for all New Yorkers. We must build
9 innovate and learn from the past. Reintroducing
10 shared housing is an incredible opportunity to do
11 just that. Shared housing privately leased bedrooms
12 with shared kitchens, bathrooms and living spaces has
13 a long history in New York City. For decades, models
14 like boarding houses and SROs provided affordable
15 options for immigrants, young workers, and people
16 navigating life transitions. Mid-20th century
17 policies intended to improve housing quality
18 ultimately eliminated most of this housing. This
19 change meant to help New Yorkers unintentionally
20 contributed to today's shortage of low-cost options
21 for single adults. Between 2013 and 2023, the number
22 of small households grew by more than 11 percent
23 while the supply of small units grew only by 7.5
24 percent. Many single New Yorkers rely on roommates
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1 often in illegally-converted apartments that
2 compromise safety and tenant protections. Now, we're
3 seeing a striking growth of informal and
4 commercialized co-living options. There's a clear
5 and strong demand for shared housing at a range of
6 price points. Intro 66 responds directly to today's
7 reality. This legislation builds on nearly a decade
8 of research, testing, and interagency collaboration.
9 HPD's Shared Housing Roadmap released in November of
10 last year draws on lessons from historic models, the
11 Share NYC pilot and extensive engagement with
12 tenants, operators, advocates, and other
13 municipalities. The passage of City of Yes for
14 Housing Opportunity removed key zoning barriers.
15 Intro 66 now advances the remaining code changes
16 needed to allow shared housing as-of-right and to
17 regulate it appropriately. Shared housing creates
18 practical opportunities in today's market. It can
19 lower costs in office to residential conversions,
20 expand housing options in amenity-rich areas, and
21 provide safer, regulated alternatives to illegal room
22 rentals. Existing programs across the city already
23 demonstrate how shared housing can support students,
24 young adults, new parents, and newcomers without
25

1 being transitional or tied to the shelter system. We
2 want to be clear, shared housing is not for everyone.
3 Rather, it is one additional tool to address the
4 severe shortage of low-cost housing options for
5 single New Yorkers. At a time of historically low
6 vacancy rates, addressing the housing crisis requires
7 a multipronged approach. Shared housing is one part
8 of that strategy. After the original introduction of
9 this bill in November 2025, we heard feedback from
10 stakeholders that made it clear that the ratios of
11 kitchens and bathrooms are key, as well as safety
12 standards are critical to get right. We look forward
13 to hearing more detailed feedback today and working
14 with the City Council to strengthen this legislation.
15 We're grateful for the deep collaboration with former
16 Council Member Bottcher and look forward to our
17 continued collaboration with Council Member Maloney
18 and the Council to advance this legislation.
19 Switching gears, we'd like to discuss emergency
20 vacates. Needing to vacate your home because of an
21 emergency is a nightmare few of us can imagine, but
22 it is the reality for New Yorkers who've been
23 displaced from their homes due to fire or who have
24 had to vacate due to unsafe building conditions.
25

1 Intro 271 addressed HPD services and enforcement
2 following a city-issued vacate order. As you know,
3 the American Red Cross currently responds to vacate
4 orders and fires in partnerships with HPD and
5 provides multiple on-site services to families in
6 need, including informing displaced tenants of
7 available resources providing short-term emergency
8 housing and making referrals to HPD for temporary
9 housing placements. Following displacement events
10 such as fires or hazardous conditions, we recognize
11 the importance of clear, direct and coordinated
12 communication so tenants understand how the city is
13 responding and what resources are available. We
14 appreciate the Council's leadership last session to
15 pass Local Law 109 of 2025 which strengthened
16 interagency coordination in response to vacated
17 properties and supported our efforts to assist
18 displaced tenants. The administration is actively
19 working on implementing this bill to designate the
20 Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery Operations to
21 provide centralized support for residents displaced
22 by fires, natural disasters, or other residential
23 emergencies and facilitate communication between
24 impacted tenants, property owners and relevant city
25

1 agencies. We look forward to continuing this work in
2 partnership with the Council. In addition to
3 directly supporting displaced residents, HPD also
4 works through its code enforcement team to monitor and
5 support timely repair of vacated homes to facilitate
6 tenants return home after many fire vacates. HPD's
7 current enforcement and monitoring approach
8 prioritizes responsiveness and proportionality using
9 a range of tools and working collaboratively with
10 owners to achieve timely compliance and favorable
11 outcomes for residents. We are concerned that the
12 bill's requirements that HPD initiates 7A proceedings
13 which are proceeding seeking the appointment of an
14 administrator to manage the property instead of the
15 property owner within a short time frame if
16 corrections are not made is not necessary to gain
17 compliance. The 7A program is an important tool for
18 addressing extremely distressed properties and
19 persistent owner noncompliance after other
20 enforcement efforts have failed, and we support
21 continuing the use of the 7A program for that
22 purpose. We look forward to continuing to work with
23 the Council to address these concerns while advancing
24 our shared goal of supporting displaced tenants and
25

1 improving outcomes for residents of vacated
2 buildings. Now, I'm eager to dive into an extremely
3 important part of HPD's work, connecting New Yorkers
4 to affordable homes. Intro 418 which would require
5 HPD to create an in-person Housing Connect assistance
6 program in coordination with other agencies would
7 unintentionally make it harder to house New Yorkers.
8 We recognize the intent behind this bill and ensuring
9 New Yorkers can get the help they need navigating the
10 affordable housing process. It is something we as an
11 agency deeply believe in. To highlight this
12 priority, we have a number of existing relationships
13 with community organizations for our Housing
14 Ambassador Program and we'll be announcing plans to
15 expand support for these organizations this year.
16 Additionally, we recently launched a new
17 neighborhood-based initiative in partnership with
18 public libraries to provide the kind of in-person
19 support we believe the Council is seeking from one-
20 on-one digital guidance for multi-lingual application
21 assistance and help with completed paper
22 applications, these programs are connecting New
23 Yorkers to housing opportunities every day. We
24 welcome the opportunity to discuss how we can work
25

1 with the Council on these efforts. Intro 427 which
2 addresses how affordable housing units that become
3 vacant, also known as second-generation units, are
4 re-rented through the Housing Connect Portal. It
5 touches one of our highest priorities for policy,
6 process, and technology improvements right now. With
7 input from a robust variety of stakeholders, we're
8 actively rethinking how best to connect New Yorkers
9 with these important housing opportunities. We've
10 recently rolled out a new temporary update, the third
11 update announced over the last few years to improve
12 the process and a reprioritizing re-rental upgrades
13 for our next phase of work on improvements to Housing
14 Connect. Re-rentals will continue to be required to
15 be posted publicly and accessibly, but it will not be
16 necessary to send through HPD's Housing Connect
17 system, though many may continue to do so
18 voluntarily. This added flexibility is one example
19 of ways we're testing strategies to help fill units
20 faster and reduce unnecessary paperwork. We are
21 currently incorporating feedback into our plan to
22 rebuild re-rentals using insights from this pilot,
23 housing advocates, New Yorkers, building owners, and
24 marketing agents, and recommendations from the
25

1 Council to guide that work. We're grateful for the
2 deep partnership and collaboration with the Council
3 and stakeholders on this topic, and are hopeful that
4 today's discussion continue to inform and advance our
5 work. Finally, I'd like to transition to talking
6 about ADUs. Intro 421 is a cleanup bill that
7 clarifies the city's housing maintenance code to
8 explicitly allow new construction, accessory dwelling
9 units, including in cellars of one- and two-family
10 homes. Local Laws 126 and 127 of 2024 enabled the
11 legalization of lawful existing basement and seller
12 residence, and this bill corrects the omission of new
13 lawful seller residences from those bills. This
14 technical fix will enable the city to make it as
15 simple and straightforward as possible for homeowners
16 to add safe ancillary dwelling units to their
17 properties and to be able to rent their cellar [sic]
18 to use. Thank you for your continued partnership in
19 expanding access to safe, affordable housing to New
20 Yorkers. We look forward to working closely with
21 Speaker Menin, Chair Sanchez, and the Council for
22 this legislative session to deliver meaningful
23 results for New Yorkers across the City.
24
25

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Thank you,
3 and good morning, Chair Sanchez and members of the
4 Committee on Housing and Buildings. I am Gus
5 Sirakis, Deputy Commissioner for Development and
6 Technical Affairs at the New York City Department of
7 Buildings, and I'm joined by my colleague Keith Wen,
8 Assistant Commissioner for Code and Zoning
9 Interpretation. I'm pleased to testify before the
10 Committee regarding Intro 71. Intro 71 would require
11 the permit holder responsible for installing the
12 sidewalk shed or scaffolding to repair or replace
13 within six months any tree outside the property line
14 within the public right-of-way that is damaged as a
15 result of such sidewalk shed or scaffolding. The
16 Department is supportive of the intent of this bill
17 and the goal of protecting the city's urban tree
18 canopy. We recognize the values add-- the value
19 trees add to New Yorker's quality of life. We're
20 coordinating with our colleagues at the Department of
21 Parks and Recreation to determine the most effective
22 approach to address this issue. To that end, the
23 agencies are currently considering proactive measures
24 to minimize the potential impact on city-owned trees.
25 Additionally, the Department engaged consultant

2 services to reimagine sidewalk sheds and develop new
3 designs that are a departure from the widely used
4 sidewalk shed we currently see throughout the city.

5 The goal of this endeavor was to improve the
6 pedestrian and building occupant experience. The
7 design criteria required the selected firms to
8 account for a number of factors including curb cuts,
9 street furniture and trees. The Department unveiled
10 six new designs in the latter part of 2025. The
11 designs will allow for a degree of flexibility and
12 versatility to address New York City's unique urban
13 environment. The Department continues to work
14 closely with the selected firms as we move towards
15 implementation of the new sidewalk shed designs.

16 While the Department remains committed to
17 implementing strong pedestrian protections wherever
18 necessary, it also recognizes the importance of
19 reducing their visual impact on the urban environment
20 and preventing temporary structures from remaining in
21 place longer than needed. The Department and Parks
22 look forward to working with the City Council on this
23 issue. Thank you very much.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much
25 for your testimony. I'm going to begin with a set of

1 questions and then turn to my colleagues before
2 coming back. Starting with Intro 66, by Council
3 Member Maloney. The committee is committed to the
4 protection of tenants, and we understand that
5 allowing shared housing occupants to enter into
6 individual leases with landlords could increase those
7 protections. Could you walk us through exactly how
8 this could work? What are the housing arrangements
9 that legalize shared housing would replace or
10 supplement?
11

12 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Sure. I
13 think there's two main forms of shared housing that
14 we see-- a few main forms that we see today. So, one
15 would be a kind of professionalized co-living which
16 is a professional operator who's renting either an
17 entire building or a floor, renting out individual
18 rooms and managing shared spaces within those. We
19 also see landlords of multiple dwellings renting out
20 individuals rooms to tenants within those, and then I
21 think there's also a third category often referred to
22 as an illegal SRO which often has kind of temporary
23 walls that are put up, kind of carving up an
24 apartment into smaller apartments. So, all three of
25 these are illegal or quasi-illegal. Quasi-illegal in

1
2 New York City depending on the exact arrangement, and
3 within an apartment in New York City today, there's a
4 requirement that all the tenants maintain a common
5 household. So, putting a lock on a bedroom door sort
6 of makes that de facto illegal and can comprise
7 safety issues, especially if that bedroom door is an
8 access point to a fire escape. Under Intro 66, new
9 construction shared housing or adaptive reuse of
10 commercial buildings would create a new form of shard
11 housing where tenants can rent individual rooms
12 within either a suite or a dorm-style shared housing
13 dwelling, and each tenant will have an independent
14 relationship with their landlord and an enforceable
15 lease.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And how does HPD
17 envision enforcing against the sort of illegal, the
18 existing illegal activity that we see today, you
19 know, whether it's a landlord that is renting out
20 rooms within an apartment, etcetera? Are you
21 envisioning needing additional resources? Are you
22 envisioning confusion leading to more illegal
23 activity?

24 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: So, I
25 think that we don't see this as necessitating an

1 expansion of resources or new resources. We have
2 today in New York City a shared housing models of
3 quasi-legality. If HPD encounters a safety issue, we
4 do enforce now, and in the most egregious cases we'll
5 issue vacates. Under this new arrangement, HPD will
6 continue to work with our colleagues at DOB and
7 enforce the housing maintenance code to enforce
8 housing quality issues as they arise. And we think
9 that the creation of a legal model will also empower
10 tenants to be able to call 311 when they do have
11 challenges. And so I think that this is something
12 that will allow us to more effectively enforce and
13 know about safety issues where they do exist.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: For the
16 arrangements that are going to be created through
17 shared housing, what legal protections will occupants
18 have against evictions? How does those differ from
19 the protections that individuals have today if
20 they're living in illegal or quasi-legal shared
21 housing setups, and does the administration
22 anticipate that there would be a significant increase
23 in tenants who have a right to counsel in eviction
24 proceedings if this bill were to become law?

2 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Yeah,
3 that's a great question. I think we anticipate that-
4 - so, currently, today, residents that are not on a
5 lease lack some of the protections that residents
6 that are on a lease have. Additionally, right now,
7 in a shared situation all of the tenants that are on
8 a lease have sort of-- cannot be treated separately
9 in a Housing Court situation. And so if there is a
10 problem tenant within a building, it can often lead
11 to stability or de-stability for the other tenants
12 within that unit. So having an individual lease
13 means that that tenant is not subject to housing de-
14 stability because of the actions of their roommate.
15 So that's a huge benefit for tenants. We-- tenants
16 on a lease will have access to right to counsel in
17 eviction proceedings and also would be subject to the
18 new protections offered under state law.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: So, they would have
20 right to access to counsel? Thank you. And then my
21 second question and then I'll turn it over to the
22 bill sponsor for questions on this legislation or
23 anything else. This Council was contemplating and is
24 still discussing with HPD the idea of requiring
25 certain subset of HPD's production to be two to three

1
2 bedroom units, because there is a concern in many
3 communities that the projects that are financed by
4 HPD are not family-sized units. I know I have
5 several colleagues that are concerned about this
6 piece of legislation, as they view it as a threat to
7 have more production on the size of shared units or
8 small units or studio apartments. So, can you
9 describe for them and for anyone with this concern if
10 the administration anticipates that owners of
11 buildings with family-size units would convert those
12 units into shared housing, how expanding the ability
13 to have shared housing in New York City comports or
14 relates to this concern that many of my colleagues
15 share around insufficient number of two- and three-
16 bedroom units, apartments?

17 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Yeah.

18 Thank you for that question. So, I'd say first and
19 foremost the proposed Intro 66 does not allow the
20 conversion of existing housing units to shared
21 housing. So, anything that is built as an apartment
22 today cannot be converted to shared housing under
23 this legislation. This allows for the new
24 construction or adaptive reuse of office space to
25 shared housing models. We see this as a benefit to

1 families who are seeking two- and three-bedroom
2 apartments. Right now, shared housing exists in
3 today's housing market through the variety of
4 typologies that we've discussed already. Single
5 adults are pooling their resources and renting
6 multiple bedroom apartments and are increasing the
7 rent, out-competing families who cannot afford that
8 same rent. So, we see giving an option for single
9 adults, other than a roommate situation, can help
10 ease the burden on families who are seeking family-
11 sized apartments. We don't think that every single
12 adult-- some single adults are seeking roommates for
13 the community and because they desire that option.
14 And others are doing so out of economic necessity and
15 we believe that if given another option, they will--
16 they will pursue that.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. I need
19 to acknowledge that we were joined by Council Member
20 Feliz on Zoom. What would prevent an owner of an
21 existing office building from converting to shared
22 housing and then converting it to a luxury apartment
23 building? And said differently, you know, playing
24 devil's advocates around concerns that others might
25 have. What is to prevent a shared housing setup from

1
2 becoming a different kind of housing, temporary
3 housing, for instance, by the city?

4 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: So, I
5 think just on the first question, shared housing in
6 its active reuse is only allowed where residential
7 conversion is also allowed. So, there's no situation
8 where someone might convert to shared housing in
9 order to sneakily get in to being able to convert to
10 family housing or luxury housing. Short-term rentals
11 are not allowed under the Intro 66. The proposal is
12 to create a Class A permanent housing with at least
13 30-day leases. So, this is traditional housing.
14 This is housing with a lease, and we believe it'll be
15 operated that way. It is not-- it is not allowing
16 for the construction of new congregate shelters or
17 other types of housing.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. So,
19 there shouldn't be an anticipation that these-- the
20 shared housing typology would be converted to
21 temporary shelters by the city or shelters by the
22 city?

23 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: It-- I
24 don't anticipate that.

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JOFFE: We don't
3 think the legislation would exacerbate that risk. We
4 would need to use the same tools we would use today
5 to address issues like that, but this legislation is
6 instead creating a path for a legal, safe approach.
7 Our enforcement efforts as they exist would have to
8 run in parallel.

9 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: And any
10 siting rules related to the siting of shelters would
11 continue to apply.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Alright,
13 thank you. Council Member Maloney?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: Thank you so
15 much. So, you clarified that this will only apply to
16 new construction or office conversion. Do you have a
17 sense of what the breakdown might be between the two?

18 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: I think
19 as the Chair said, this is kind of a first cautious
20 step towards reintroducing shared housing. We've
21 heard from operators who are interested in both new
22 construction and in adaptive reuse, and I think that
23 as this comes online beginning next year, we'll
24 continue to monitor and kind of see, but we do think
25 that this is particularly a great opportunity for

1 adaptive reuse just given the challenges that we've
2 seen in adapting office floor plates to housing. We
3 think that this solves some of those challenges and
4 can help facilitate it.

5
6 COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: And on the
7 underutilized office spaces, are there-- do you have
8 an analysis on the office buildings that would fail
9 to pencil out with existing housing legislation, but
10 could pencil in as shared housing?

11 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Yeah,
12 we have done some analysis of this. last year, we
13 looked at the conversion of sort of a hypothetical
14 city-owned office building to shared housing and
15 looked at sort of what it would look like to convert
16 it to traditional apartments versus shared housing,
17 and we saw like a more than 40 percent reduction in
18 total development costs per bedroom converting to
19 shared housing versus traditional apartments just
20 given some of those floor plate difficulties.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: No, no further
22 questions.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great. Thank you.
24 I'd now like to turn it over to Council Member Salaam
25 followed by Zhuang.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAAM: Thank you and
3 good morning. Given the current trend of
4 gentrification and new construction in many areas,
5 how does HPD ensure that long-term residents,
6 especially renters who are low-income and elderly,
7 are not displaced by the introduction of shared
8 housing or other new affordable units?

9 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: That--
10 yeah, thank you for that question. That's an
11 important topic and one that we care deeply about.
12 Intro 66 allows for new construction of more
13 affordable housing options than we see constructed
14 today, and it also very explicitly does not allow for
15 the conversion of existing apartments to shared
16 housing. I think one of the things that we see right
17 now in gentrifying communities and lower income
18 communities is landlords that are illegally carving
19 up family apartments and renting individual rooms.
20 We see this as something that would allow a safety
21 valve to allow for that happen in a safer way and can
22 hopefully kind of reduce some of that pressure that
23 you see in gentrifying communities today.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAAM: What specific
25 outreach strategies and partnerships does HPD employ

1
2 to ensure that senior residents and non-English-
3 speaking tenants have access to housing portal
4 assistant programs, and how do you ensure that these
5 outreach efforts are reaching those who may face
6 barriers such as digital literacy or limited access
7 to technology?

8 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: I might
9 tap in my colleague, Emily Osgood, to speak to that.

10 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OSGOOD: HPD has
11 relationships with a number of community-based
12 housing ambassador organizations who-- 46 to be
13 exact-- a subset of whom have funding from the
14 Council, small amount of funding from the Council.
15 Better? Okay, thank you. And so these community-
16 based organizations meet people where they are in
17 their neighborhoods, speaking the languages tha they
18 speak, serving needs for in-person assistance, help
19 with paper documentation when needed, storefronts,
20 in-person educational events, etcetera. And so we
21 are supportive of exploring how we can further
22 enhance the services that those valued community-
23 based housing ambassadors provide for New Yorkers.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAAM: And with the
25 growing number of sidewalk sheds and scaffolding

1
2 installations, how does the Department ensure that
3 small businesses, especially those in commercial
4 corridors are adequately compensated for lost revenue
5 or disruption during long-term construction projects,
6 and what oversight measures are in place to minimize
7 destruction to those local businesses?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Hi, Council
9 Member. Let me do my best to answer that from our
10 standpoint. While we don't directly compensate
11 businesses, we do have enforcement programs circled
12 around long-standing sheds where if a shed is in
13 place more than X number of years, we take proactive
14 enforcement measures against the property owners who
15 have them in place. The idea being that there's a
16 certain amount of time necessary to make the
17 respective repairs that are ongoing typically in an
18 existing building where you have the shed overhead of
19 a commercial establishment, and by going after the
20 property owners to get them to do the right thing in
21 making it more financially impactful on them to keep
22 the shed in place, we motivate them to do the work a
23 lot faster and get the shed down as quickly as
24 possible. Right now, I believe that number is
25 greater than five years and we're working to see what

1
2 can be done to expand that effort as it is a-- we
3 think a benefit to overall to the city to get both
4 the sheds down as well as to make the necessary
5 repairs happen from our standpoint. These are
6 repairs that are necessary. The reason the shed is
7 there is there's an overhead hazard to the public at
8 large. Those same people who'd be going in and out
9 of that commercial establishment. So, we need that
10 abated before we can get rid of the pedestrian
11 protection. Actually, the shed just happens to be
12 the version of pedestrian protection that people most
13 often choose. The other effort that we're taking on,
14 head-on actually, is redesigning sidewalk sheds. Up
15 until now, sidewalk sheds have been predominantly re-
16 using the design that was first come-- developed in
17 1974, and it has become, you know, outdated and
18 outvoted from the pedestrian experience perspective
19 as well as from the commercial establishment inside.
20 If you look at the new sidewalk shed designs that we
21 shared renderings of late last year. We'll see we
22 paid a lot of attention with our selected firms that
23 won these RFPs to the pedestrian experience, but also
24 to the experience of those inside of the commercial
25 establishment on the ground floor. We're struggling

1
2 greatly to remove, for instance, the x-bracing that
3 can make you feel trapped inside of the sidewalk
4 shed. We're working to raise the elevation of the
5 sidewalk shed and utilize maybe alternative materials
6 for the decking to allow more light in both directly
7 underneath as well into the commercial spaces around
8 there. The goal of these RFPs is similar to what was
9 done with the-- I believe it was the urban canvas
10 design earlier in a couple of administrations ago,
11 but the goal here is that the city will own the
12 intellectual property and we will make these designs
13 available to any owner, property owner, designer,
14 developer to utilize directly through our building
15 code. These measures we hope will go a long way
16 while still protecting the pedestrians from the
17 overhead hazards.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAAM: And Chair, I just
19 have just one last question. With the growing number
20 of vacate orders due to unsafe living conditions, how
21 does DOB ensure that property owners are complying
22 with repair and safety regulations in a timely manner
23 to prevent tenants from living in hazardous
24 conditions for extended periods of time, and how does
25

1
2 the DOB track and enforce compliance in buildings
3 with frequent safety violations?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: So, we will
5 definitely circle back with our enforcement team to
6 make sure that we have the best answers for you on
7 that, but ultimately when we issue a violation. If
8 it's a class one violation, there's many instances
9 where there are required re-inspections by the
10 Department for immediately hazardous conditions. We
11 actively track these on our website. We encourage
12 folks to continue to call 311 for conditions that
13 haven't been abated. They can call anonymously from
14 that regard so that we can continue to stay on top of
15 these property owners. We also-- there are a number
16 of enforcement programs that as properties continue
17 to accrue violations, there are certain penalties and
18 restrictions on what else they can do within the
19 building as far as business with the Department. We
20 obviously always want them making the necessary
21 repairs, and obviously getting a permit to make the
22 necessary repairs, but we might have, for instance,
23 professional certification restrictions if we're
24 finding that they had done, for instance, work
25 without a permit on the property. That would require

1
2 them to go through full plan exam and greater
3 oversight of the work that they're doing.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAAM: Thank you, Chair.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Council
6 Member Zhuang?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you. Thank
8 you, Assistant Commissioner, here. I have some
9 questions about the shed in the commercial corridor
10 in my district. Almost everyone has put their items
11 outside. They have store license so they can put the
12 items outside. In the summer, it's very hot. They
13 like always to put a shed or umbrella in the
14 sidewalk, and every time Sanitation coming to say
15 illegal, illegal, illegal, but they never told the
16 landlord or the business owner how to correct that.
17 This is belong-- how to correct the shed. It belong
18 to DOB, right?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: If this is
20 construction that's connected to the building, it is
21 part of DOB. It's a-- the traditional temporary
22 construction shed that you see that would go up on a
23 construction site, that would also be DOB. If these
24 are outdoor dining sheds or similar types of
25 structures, I believe now there is a different entity

2 that is handling those permits. DOT, I believe, is
3 the one.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: DOT?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: We can
6 gladly circle back with you on any specifics there.
7 We can make sure that whether it's DOB or another
8 agency that we get you the right information about
9 how to--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: [interposing]

11 Yeah. The issue here is a lot of business owner tell
12 me they want to correct saying it's illegal, but it--
13 no one tell them how to correct that and how-- how
14 make that legal. And then for business they put the
15 foods outside. In summer it's very hot. So, put a
16 shade there would be helpful for the business and
17 also even pedestrian. They like to walk in the
18 shade. But there's no one really give us answer how
19 to fix that, where to fix that. Like, they don't
20 know what to do? Even ask our office. We don't know
21 which direction to send to them. I would love to work
22 with you to address that issue.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Understood.
24 Thank you. We'd be-- we'd like that.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,
3 Council Member Zhuang. So, just a couple more
4 questions on Intro 66 and shared housing. So, I
5 asked a little bit about the new rights that tenants
6 with these new leases, that didn't have leases before
7 would have, but I have a couple more questions.
8 Would these units be rent regulated? If not, would
9 they be protected through good cause protections?
10 Does HPD anticipate using subsidy, city subsidy
11 dollars to finance, to subsidize the financing of
12 these units, or using vouchers to make them
13 affordable to those who need it the most?

14 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Yeah,
15 those are great questions. I'll try to take each of
16 them. If I miss any, feel free to ask again. In
17 terms of rent stabilization, shared housing units
18 would be rent stabilized if they were created under
19 any of the state tax incentives that require the
20 creation of rent stabilized housing. So, if you were
21 to use one of those programs that require the
22 provision of affordable housing along with the tax
23 incentive then you would be creating affordable and
24 rent stabilized shared housing units through that.
25 We do believe that good cause-- you know, good cause

1 where it applies, would apply to any tenant with a
2 lease in a shared housing units as well. And then in
3 terms of rental assistance, it is allowed under all
4 of the programs, and we'll be spending the next year
5 before the new law goes into effect on January 1st,
6 2027 to make sure that we're working with all of our
7 partners at the voucher agencies to make sure that we
8 have programs and policies in place to allow folks to
9 use rental assistance towards shared housing units.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. So, and
12 this might be a very basic question just from me, but
13 good cause protections are defined by the size-- the
14 number of units in a building. How are we going to
15 quantify the number of units in a building that has
16 shared housing units?

17 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: I
18 believe that each of the rooming units would count
19 towards it, but we can follow up and clarify. I think
20 we need to look into that and can follow up.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Or is the
22 amenities, the bathroom-- number of bathrooms, I
23 don't know. Just the--

24 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER:
25 [interposing] Yeah, we'll follow up.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank you.

And another 101 question just to get an understanding of, you know, the New Yorkers that would be-- we would be supporting by enabling this kind of housing. Can you share a little bit about the characteristics of those housing-- of those New Yorkers, their ages, their income levels, what is their-- yeah. What describes them?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Yeah, I mean, I think that we see today in terms of demand within the co-living space is really high demand among young professionals, and we see that that would likely continue under the new construction typology, is that new New Yorkers who want to live in a community and location near their work and who are looking for a flexible option with built-in community we see as the type-- the kind of predominant type. But we also see today a variety of New Yorkers that are using various shared housing typologies, and we think that in the future we could see also New Yorkers going through various life transitions or who are just looking for a cheaper option in an amenity-rich area. This could be appealing to them.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great. Thank you.

Okay. Turning to Intro 71 on sidewalk sheds. Deputy Commissioner, you mentioned that DOB unveiled six new designs in the latter part of 2025. They look very cool. Can you share with us are they already in use, and if not, when can New Yorkers anticipate these new designs on the streets?

DEPUTY COUNCIL MEMBER SIRAKIS: So, the Department's still working with our design consultants that were selected winners of these RFPs to finalize their designs, and we hope to share the actual designs themselves later this year via potentially the rule-making process that folks will be able to see exactly the nuts and bolts that go into make these sheds.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Does the Department anticipate that those are going to cost more to implement than the designs we've been using in the city?

DEPUTY COUNCIL MEMBER SIRAKIS: It's going to vary based on the different scenarios of what you see out there. So, you could see some very elaborate and robust sidewalk sheds on some of the larger buildings. Potentially, these sheds would

1 cost more than your traditional BSA-design shed for
2 some of the smaller properties, but we think that the
3 overall aesthetic improvement and safety improvements
4 that we think would be a-- worth the effort, but we
5 have to wait 'til the designs are actually finalized.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. And will
8 buildings that need to have sidewalk sheds up be
9 required to use these new designs, or will the old
10 design-- the old traditional design still be an
11 option?

12 DEPUTY COUNCIL MEMBER SIRAKIS: That
13 right now is still to be determined. The goal would
14 be to, you know, discuss this and how we would roll
15 out these new shed designs and see how they could be
16 implemented in the city.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Okay.
18 Anything we can do to make it worse and bad to have a
19 sidewalk shed up, we should do, because we don't want
20 them up. We want New Yorkers to be able to walk
21 without obstruction. And if they want shade, then
22 that's fine and we can talk about that in the
23 different context then, these sidewalk sheds that
24 stay up forever. Okay. So, specifically with
25 respect to the legislation and replacing trees, do

1
2 you-- can you share with us who is liable today for
3 replacing or repairing a city-owned tree that is
4 damaged by scaffolding or a sidewalk shed?

5 DEPUTY COUNCIL MEMBER SIRAKIS: I
6 believe it would potentially be the property owner.
7 It could be the contractor if it's new construction.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Okay.
9 Any-- I don't know if we've shared these questions
10 with you in advance, but do you know how much it
11 costs to replace a tree?

12 DEPUTY COUNCIL MEMBER SIRAKIS: No, I
13 do not. That's something for-- Parks Department
14 would probably have the best available info.

15 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. And do you
16 know about-- hey. Nice to see you, Matt. Do we have
17 to--

18 MATT DRURY: I did raise my hand earlier.
19 I don't know if that counts.

20 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Oh, okay, yes.
21 That does count. So, cost per tree and then an
22 additional question for parks is how many complaints
23 do we have of scaffolding specifically to the extent
24 that we have that specificity ruining a tree.

1
2 MATT DRURY: Thanks, and very much
3 appreciate the-- my name's Matt Drury. I'm the Chief
4 of Citywide Legislative Affairs for the Parks
5 Department. So, tree planting costs can vary,
6 obviously depending on the condition and other
7 location, things of that nature. But it can cost
8 several thousand dollars for a tree replacement.
9 That's determined by a variety of factors. Separate
10 and apart from that, just to get some context here,
11 we have something in the vicinity of close to 670,000
12 street trees, and at any given time we very roughly
13 estimate maybe 25,000, roughly, trees are in close
14 proximity to a sidewalk shed. Thankfully, incidents
15 of let's call it construction-related damage to
16 street trees are pretty uncommon. You know, we
17 probably get 100, 150 sort of reports that come to
18 our attention that can be through 311 or other
19 mechanisms or staff observation on its own. So, it's
20 relatively minimal, but we do take it quite
21 seriously. In that universe, we don't track the
22 present-- we don't necessarily track whether a given
23 instance of damage was directly shed or scaffold-
24 related. So that's sort of a sub-- that's a data
25 point that isn't tracked in quite that way, but

1
2 suffice it to say, that as we are investigating a
3 certain, you know, incident we're able to kind of
4 usually piece together whether a shed was involved.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you.
6 And the instance that a scaffold or a sidewalk shed
7 was involved, it is the property owner that is
8 responsible?

9 MATT DRURY: So, there are a couple
10 different mechanisms. In some cases, the property, as
11 Deputy Commissioner Sirakis noted, in some cases the
12 property owner. In other cases, if a scaffold is
13 actually involved, there's-- that'll be, you know,
14 that'll be permitted, and there's a way to identify
15 that end. So, in that case it's often the permittee
16 [sic], if you will, that sort of engaged with, but
17 nine times out of ten, the property owner is sort of
18 involved in that discussion in one way or another.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Okay.
20 Thank you. And I think the Deputy Commissioner said
21 that Parks and Buildings are discussing the best way
22 to handle this, but it does sound like existing
23 practice is for the permittee who is paid for by the
24 owner. They are the ones that are addressing these
25 conditions. Does this bill change anything?

1
2 MATT DRURY: By in large, yeah. I think
3 there are mechanisms that are already in place, but
4 through the admin code and through Parks rules for
5 the city to seek in a replacement or a restitution in
6 case of severe damage. What this bill seems to do is
7 sort of draw a sharper focus on, you know, sheds and
8 scaffolding directly which is-- but as Deputy
9 Commissioner Sirakis noted, we're already actually
10 talking through a variety of approaches, more on sort
11 of the proactive or prescriptive end of things,
12 right, in terms of design, in terms of making sure
13 that more permittees are aware of the importance of,
14 you know, tree protection. Taking a sort of more
15 sort of positive approaches as well. We'd be happy
16 obviously to work with the Council whether it's
17 through this bill or otherwise, you know, to kind of
18 talk through that.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great. Excellent.
20 Thank you. Thank you so much. So, now moving to
21 Intro 271 on vacate orders. I just want to start
22 with this example. I know that many of you who are at
23 the dais were involved in the response. So, I just
24 want to use this example to highlight or understand
25 better an existing problem. So, about two weeks ago,

1 there was a fire in my district during the blizzard
2 at 2264 Grand Avenue. When we received notification
3 from Fire Department they told us in a very short
4 email that one unit was impacted, and it was a fatal
5 fire. So we did lose a neighbor, and her wife is
6 recovering in the hospital, thankfully. But we were
7 told that the fire was contained to that one unit,
8 that no one else was impacted. Now, as I usually do,
9 as you folks know, I myself or if not my team will go
10 on site to just see what's going on, checking on
11 neighbors because it is such a scary experience when
12 a fire happens and you just don't know what is next.
13 Now, what I found there, and it was during the
14 blizzard, so my little car could not handle that
15 snow. So, the Speaker actually picked me up and we
16 went together. What we found when we went was an
17 entire row of apartments that were impacted. Many
18 tenants in the subzero temperatures on the ground
19 having no idea what to do, having no idea if their
20 units were safe, and just, you know-- a very
21 emotional scene, right? They lost a neighbor and
22 they didn't know what to do. And so I quickly
23 understood there had been a breakdown in
24 communication. That is typically the scene where we
25

1 would have HPD responding, Department of Buildings
2 responding, NYCEM potentially coordinating because of
3 the impact on families, and all the rest. So, my
4 question is, in this fire response, what exactly went
5 wrong? Why-- there were 10 vacates issued after much
6 communication between myself, agencies, Deputy Mayor
7 himself. What went wrong that day in terms of
8 communication, and what could have prevented that?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: Good
11 morning, Council Members. Thank you very much,
12 Council Member Sanchez. As you know, I was in the
13 loop that day on this, and obviously a terrible
14 tragedy. Response from the agencies was a little
15 delayed due to the snow storm. I think we are
16 internally all discussing that particular incident to
17 identify what we can do better to make sure that we
18 are absolutely responsive to the needs of New Yorkers
19 when there's a fire. As you know, American Red Cross
20 is usually our first response after the Fire
21 Department. So, we are talking with them. We are
22 talking with the Fire Department, with the Buildings
23 Department to make sure that there are no cases that
24 fall through the cracks. And we are committed 100
25 percent to making sure that New Yorkers that

1
2 experience such an event have the full support of all
3 of those entities and the city. So, you know that
4 ARC, HPD, DOB, and NYCEM at the larger events where
5 they're coordinating often send multiple teams out to
6 buildings. We provide emergency housing to folks
7 when their units are damaged when we see either a
8 vacate order or the American Red Cross observes
9 damage that is to the level where the households
10 cannot continue to reside. And so we are happy to
11 continue conversations with you around this
12 particular incident.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Deputy
14 Commissioner. I mean, my question is-- there was
15 clearly a breakdown in communication. When I
16 contacted you and other agencies, there was not--
17 there did not appear to be awareness of the extent of
18 damage at this fire. So, does FDNY as a matter of
19 policy, does FDNY respond by sharing information with
20 HPD immediately when there's a fire, or does-- or
21 with American Red Cross? What exactly happens when
22 it's not a three-alarm fire, so NYCEM is not
23 activated? What happens in terms of interagency
24 communication?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: So, my--

2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] And I-
3 - I'm sorry. I know Buildings was there and you
4 issued one vacate for these most impacted unit, but
5 then the Department of Buildings said that because--
6 that according to the law that you enforce, there was
7 not reason for other vacates, that those were-- would
8 have to be issued by HPD. So, I'm just curious on
9 the communication required, what is the protocol or
10 policy internally?

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: Thank you,
12 Council Member. So, the FDNY communications are
13 monitored, I believe, by both Department of Buildings
14 and the American Red Cross and that is how the
15 information is usually received by the agencies. So,
16 again, you know, further discussion with you on those
17 issues we're happy to continue.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank you.
19 So, I would definitely appreciate that. So, in the
20 aftermath of a fire-- now turning back to the example
21 of Wallace [sp?] Avenue in Council Member Riley's
22 district, Heath [sp?] Avenue in mine, and countless
23 others across the City of New York. What tools today
24 does HPD have to force or incentive or force--
25 whatever word we want to use depending on the

1
2 timeline, an owner to correct conditions after there
3 has been a fire that has vacated an entire property?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: Thank you,
5 Council Member. As you know, most of the fires that
6 we respond to in the city are not full building
7 vacates, right? Most fires are partials and the
8 agencies do some monitoring around those. For the
9 two examples that you gave, the Wallace Avenue and
10 the Heath Avenue, as you stated, those were full
11 building fires. HPD in those cases monitors the
12 owner's compliance with moving towards correction and
13 a full building fire, a full building vacate can be
14 quite destructive and even in a best case scenario
15 would take some time for repairs to be made after
16 insurance proceeds and investigations. In both of
17 these cases, Wallace Avenue and Heath, HPD initiated
18 legal action against the owner, comprehensive
19 litigation, and both of those cases are in progress
20 by HPD's housing litigation division. So we are
21 seeking correction of all conditions, restoration of
22 all tenants in those properties, and that is an
23 ongoing process.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Council
25 Member Krishnan's bill 271 would require HPD to

1
2 commence 7A proceedings. I understand your testimony
3 today to sort of be against the requirement of
4 initiating 7A proceedings. But can you for the
5 benefit of the public remind us what a 7A-- what that
6 does to-- at a property, and why-- how often, excuse
7 me, how often HPD has used that in the past, say five
8 years, whatever time period you have the information
9 for? And why you would not be supportive of the
10 requirement to pursue it more often?

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: Thank you,
12 Council Member. The 7A program is a program in which
13 HPD or tenants can go into Housing Court and seek the
14 appointment of an administrator. That administrator
15 would be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance
16 of a property, would collect rent, would stand in
17 place of the owner. The owner-- we are not taking
18 the building from the owner, but the administrator is
19 managing the building. The use of the 7A program
20 right now is for tenant-occupied buildings where
21 basically the building has gone through enforcement
22 actions and the owner has been unresponsive or there
23 is no owner, and we feel the need that the building
24 is in such a condition that it needs an
25 administrator. We absolutely want to work with the

1 Council on stronger tools around vacates and the
2 enforcement of vacates, but we believe that the use
3 of this program for every building that is issued a
4 vacate within a very short time period is excessive
5 for that purpose. Not to say that it would never be
6 considered on a building, at such a building, but the
7 majority of property owners comply within a
8 reasonable amount of time and are working diligently
9 to restore the property. Wallace Avenue and Heath
10 Avenue are exceptions to the general rule around
11 vacates. And so, again, while we understand and
12 appreciate that, different or more tools could be
13 helpful in dealing with your, you know, 90 percent,
14 95 percent of your fire damaged properties. 7A is a
15 tool that is really not the appropriate one for the
16 majority of situations.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank
19 you. I know Council Member Krishnan feels very
20 passionately about the 7A proceeding and its success
21 in his time as a housing attorney. I just want to
22 state, you know, as you know I fundamentally believe
23 that HPD needs stronger tools for these very bad
24 actors, like the worst of the worst, right, that are
25 the exception to the rule. But these exceptions to

1 the rule are impacting hundreds of residents, right,
2 who are homeless, who are living in shelter, who are
3 displaced from their communities and families. And
4 so I just want to, you know, continue to have that
5 conversation about what are the strongest possible
6 tools we can use to act on these terrible actors.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: And we
9 absolutely are 100 percent in agreement with that,
10 Council Member.

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Okay.
12 Intro-- let's see, what do I want to ask about. It's
13 a lottery. On 421A, cellar apartment legalization,
14 you know, just to make sure we state on the record,
15 can you help us understand why the bill-- why this
16 cleanup is needed at this time? Again, because I
17 asked you this same question two months ago.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ERDMAN: Yes,
19 thank you, Council Member. So, just to reiterate
20 from last time we spoke about this, we believe that
21 the intention of the legislation that was passed as
22 part of City of Yes was to create more possibilities
23 for cellar and basement apartments, and we did do
24 this by modifying the housing maintenance code to
25 permit it in existing buildings, but inadvertently

1 left out the possibility for new construction
2 buildings to have legal cellar and basement
3 apartments, and so that's what this legislation would
4 do now is just correct that technical error.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank you so
7 much. Great. Okay. On Intro 418, Housing Connect
8 Services, you know my office is probably one of the
9 biggest users of the Housing Ambassador Program. We
10 want it expanded. We know we need more support. I
11 shared last time that on my-- in my office alone, a
12 tenant could be waiting six months for an appointment
13 with a housing ambassador, and so you know, there's
14 certainly the need for more resources to support
15 tenants who are looking for affordable apartments.
16 So, just can you tell us what you're hearing from the
17 community based organizations that provide housing
18 ambassador services, about their case loads and about
19 their wait list?

20 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OSGOOD: Sure.
21 Thank you, Council Member. We meet often with the
22 housing ambassador organizations, including having
23 done-- since we last spoke, I think, we-- with your
24 office, we, by the way, really appreciate the deep
25 partnership that your office and your team has

1 brought to the table on these topics. We've spoken
2 with-- and through introductions through your office,
3 I think, tenant advocate organizations like Ahora
4 [sp?] as well as our existing housing ambassador
5 partners. There is an enormous demand for their
6 services. We don't have specific numbers on the
7 timeline for a wait list, as I think you said, for a
8 housing ambassador organization, but we are very
9 committed to supporting the work of these
10 organizations and exploring how we can expand our
11 support in the future for them. I do want to add
12 that-- which I left off before when responding to
13 Council Member Salaam-- that we also have launched
14 Neighborhood Tech Help program that serves to bridge
15 that digital divide a lot of our neighbors and New
16 Yorkers may experience when applying for housing, and
17 that's in partnership with the New York Public
18 Library, and we're happy to have both of those
19 programs that-- and the housing ambassadors helping
20 New Yorkers where they are in their communities.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You mentioned
23 libraries as one of the places?

24 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OSGOOD: Yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great. Thank you.

3 I look forward to hearing more about how that's
4 going. Okay, Intro 427 related to the re-rental
5 process-- last year HPD issued a waiver to facilitate
6 occupancy of re-rental units, allowing owners to
7 circumvent the usual time-consuming process that left
8 these affordable apartments sitting vacant for
9 months. Our understanding is that this waiver is set
10 to expire in April of this year. What are HPD's
11 short term and long-term plans for re-rental units
12 and the process for re-renting once this waiver
13 expires?

14 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OSGOOD: So, we
15 have spent the last several months meeting with a
16 full variety of stakeholders, including applicant's
17 advocate organizations, owners, developers, marketing
18 agents, not to mention with elected officials and
19 teams like yours, to gather input about what the best
20 set of options could be for re-rentals for filling
21 affordable vacancies in the future. We are actively
22 reviewing all of the wide range of feedback that we
23 received, and we did receive a wide range. So, it's
24 very much in our-- it's something that we're actively
25 reviewing and actively re-thinking at this time.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Alright. Thank
3 you. Thank you so much. That concludes my
4 questions. Thank you so much for your testimony
5 today, and mark it, this is probably the shortest
6 hearing we will have.

7 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER SANDLER: Thank
8 you, Chair.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SIRAKIS: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. I now open
11 the hearing for public testimony. I remind members of
12 the public that this is a formal government
13 proceeding and that decorum shall be observed at all
14 times. As such, members of the public shall remain
15 silent at all times. The witness table is reserved
16 for people who wish to testify. No video recording or
17 photography is allowed from the witness table.

18 Further, members of the public may not present audio
19 or video recordings as testimony, but may submit
20 transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant at
21 Arms for inclusion in the hearing record. If you
22 wish to speak at today's hearing, please fill out an
23 appearance card with the Sergeant at Arms and wait to
24 be recognized. When recognized, you will have two
25 minutes to speak on today's hearing topic of shared

1 housing, including the following legislation: Intro
2 66, 71, 271, 418, 421, and 427. If you have a written
3 statement or additional written testimony you wish to
4 submit for the record, please provide a copy of that
5 testimony to the Sergeant at Arms. You may also
6 email written testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov
7 within 72 hours of this hearing. Audio and video
8 recordings will not be accepted. The first panel is
9 Linlin Liang from the Pew Charitable Trust on Intro
10 66 and Jack Connors from Open New York. Okay, and
11 you may begin when ready.
12

13 LINLIN LIANG: Testing. Alright. Thank
14 you so much, Chair Sanchez, for the opportunity to
15 testify. I'm Linlin Liang from the Pew Charitable
16 Trust Housing Policy Initiative. Pew is a
17 nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. The demise of
18 single room occupancy housing instigated by New York
19 City's 1955 ban was a major cost of the surge in
20 homelessness. We're encouraged by the Council's
21 consideration of this bill. Pew and the architecture
22 firm, Ginsler [sp?], developed a model to convert
23 vacant offices into dorm-style housing with shared
24 bathrooms and kitchens. This model complies with the
25 International Building Code and federal HUD standards

1 to be eligible for Housing Choice Vouchers. This
2 bill's requirement go far beyond either of those
3 standards. Specifically, mandating one kitchen per
4 three units [inaudible] kitchen size to 250 square
5 feet and requiring our three-to-one unit [sic] to
6 bathroom ratio raised construction costs and reduce
7 usable space requiring highering [sic] rent or
8 subsidies. HUD guidelines have a six-to-one unit to
9 bathroom ratio. For example, a 28-person floor under
10 this bill would require 10 bathrooms rather than the
11 conventional five. It is unclear if this bill
12 applies to existing shared housing or SRO units. If
13 so, previously legal units could become non-
14 compliant, risking displacement of residents and a
15 further spike in homelessness. The bill's occupant
16 low factors could reduce feasible unit counts in
17 conversions, raising per unit cost. The bill already
18 addresses density through reasonable minimal unit
19 sizes. However, the bill does not address New York
20 City's current window operability mandate which can
21 prevent office to residential conversion. Mechanical
22 ventilation is a viable alternative using most new
23 offices and hotels. Addressing these issues will
24 increase the feasibility of shared living to improve
25

1 housing affordability and reduce homelessness. Thank
2 you.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much.

5 JACK CONNORS: Hello. Good morning. I'm
6 Jack Connors, City Legislative Manager at Open New
7 York. Thank you to Chair Sanchez and members of the
8 committee for allowing me the opportunity to speak in
9 support of Intro 66 today. We commend former Council
10 Member Bottcher and Council Member Maloney for
11 championing this legislation which will allow SRO
12 units to return to New York City's housing stock.
13 Today, the lack of SROs puts single-person
14 households, the number which grew 8.1 percent between
15 2016 and 2023 according to HPD data, in direct
16 competition with families for housing. Even as the
17 stock of homes for three or more bedrooms has grown,
18 households that size declined, as multi-person, non-
19 family household roommates grew by 11.3 percent
20 between 2018 and 2023. It's no secret that if you're
21 single in New York, you can't afford a studio or one-
22 bed. Living with roommates is your only option. SROs
23 can help end this vicious cycle of scarcity and
24 displacement, but only if the law provides the
25 flexibility needed for projects to be affordable for

1 both builders and tenants. Open New York supports
2 Intro 66, but hopes to see the following amendments
3 included in the enacted law. First, amending the
4 sanitary facilities requirement to comply with HUD
5 standards for SROs. Right now, one bathroom for
6 every three units is just too stringent. We
7 recommend you comply with HUD guidelines of six units
8 per every one bathroom. Allow more units per kitchen
9 and broaden the-- number two, allow more units per
10 kitchen and broaden the type of appliances allowed in
11 [inaudible] units. As written, the bill requires one
12 cooking facility, including a refrigerator, for every
13 three units. On top of that, shared housing suites
14 composed of two separate bathrooms in a shared-- two
15 shared-- sorry-- two separate bedrooms and a shared
16 bathroom require their own kitchen and refrigerator,
17 which is far more stringent than other examples
18 across the country. It's also far more likely that
19 tenants will use microwaves, mini-fridges and
20 induction cooktops in their units which should be
21 permitted, as well. Three, eliminate the mandate for
22 at least one washer and dryer for every 20 units.
23 Federal guidelines include no such requirement.
24 While in-unit laundry is a dream of every New Yorker,
25

1 including myself, it shouldn't make or break a
2 project in the midst of a decade-long housing crisis.
3 Again, this would be detrimental for SROs and office
4 to residential conversions where sewer capacity is
5 more limited. Four, we urge you to eliminate
6 requirements related to intercoms in variation to
7 room size. Intro 66 requires installation of an
8 intercom system and discourages variation to room
9 size with no clear rationale. Once again, this would
10 pose challenges for SROs and office to residential
11 conversions where floor plates are irregular and
12 additional hardwired systems like intercoms come at
13 significant expense. We appreciate the Council's
14 time and attention to this matter, and urge a swift
15 passage of this legislation with the requested
16 amendments. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Just a
19 couple of clarifying questions. So, I hear you on
20 the bathroom ratio requirement difference between HUD
21 and Proposed Intro 66. Where we see in existing
22 housing that a ratio that is more like six-to-one,
23 where are we seeing that? Are we seeing that in
24 larger apartments? Are we seeing that in existing
25 quasi-legal to illegal shared housing?

1
2 LINLIN LIANG: I can take a-- so the
3 International Building Code actually requires
4 dormitories, also as you see NYU dorms, they require
5 one bathroom per 10 occupants in the first 100
6 occupants, and then one per 12 occupants in the
7 remaining. So, this is a lot more flexible than what
8 this bill is proposing. So, like I say, this is
9 dormitory, so it's already everywhere. And for the
10 HUD standards, so you will see, you know, any
11 buildings that are following HUD standards you will
12 see six-to-one ratio. And mostly, yeah, like I said,
13 could be multi-family apartment buildings.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. and the
15 definition of bathroom and kitchen, does that include
16 one shower, one toilet, or-- because I'm thinking of
17 dorms at NYU have multiple showers, multiple toilets,
18 even though it might be in one bathroom.

19 LINLIN LIANG: So, in our model, the
20 Ginsler model, proposed sort of converting office
21 spaces to dorm-style units, mostly because of the
22 floor plan of office buildings and we recommend sort
23 of centralizing the kitchen and bathroom areas in
24 center where the plumbing is already established. In
25 that case, we'll see probably large kitchens and

1 large shower rooms. There'll be multiple put
2 together. But I think it's probably depending on the
3 building and, you know, the floor plan that we're
4 dealing with.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, got it. And
7 do we know if the IBC is prescriptive as to how many
8 shower heads or stalls in these ratios of one-to-10
9 or one-to-12?

10 LINLIN LIANG: I can get back to you on
11 that.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great. Okay.
13 That's all my questions. Thank you. I'd like to
14 acknowledge Council Member Krishnan. Thank you for
15 joining us. Now, welcoming Council Member Krishnan
16 to make brief statements.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Good morning
18 everyone. Thank you so much, Chair, for championing
19 this bill and for all the work that you do leading
20 this committee to protect housing in our city. I'm a
21 strong believer that housing rights are only as
22 strong and worth more than the paper they are written
23 on if they are enforced in reality. We must strongly
24 enforce our housing laws and protect tenants anywhere
25 and any way that we can. That's why today we are

1 hearing the last bill in the Back Home Act, Intro
2 271. Displacement during emergencies leave families
3 in chaos, often away from their routines and daily
4 communities, further away from their children's
5 school and without the community that surrounds them.
6 When the building receive a vacate order, tenants and
7 families can be thrown into destabilization, often
8 times displaced. These families lack resources and
9 information on how to access assistance, how to
10 reacquire their belongings from their units and the
11 timeline or process of repairs so that tenants can
12 re-enter their homes. This leave tenants in
13 unthinkable situations, lost and without access to
14 the resource and rights that our city provides.
15 Every New Yorker deserves to know their rights. My
16 legislation mandates HPD to dispatch a team of tenant
17 relocation specialists to a building when a vacate
18 order has been issued. These teams and specialists
19 will provide any displaced tenants with assistance,
20 including materials in the tenant's preferred
21 language, and if deemed safe, ensure tenants have
22 access to achieve their belongings from their vacated
23 units. My bill would also require action from the
24 landlords to notify tenants if they have a right to
25

1 reoccupy their vacated unit. Our city must do more
2 to help tenants during emergency situations. Intro
3 271 is the last piece of the Back Home Act which
4 strengthens these needed protections. Thank you to
5 Chair Sanchez for all your work, for moving this bill
6 forward, and ensuring that housing and solving the
7 housing crisis in the city is not just about building
8 new housing, but by protecting tenants and keeping
9 them in their homes. Thank you.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Council
12 Member Krishnan. It's a really, really incredible
13 bill package for tenants and I'm so proud to support
14 this. This is the last piece and we're going to get
15 it right. Okay, thank you. So, moving to the next
16 in-person panel, Christopher Leon Johnson and Tabitha
17 Ward.

18 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Ready?
19 Alright.

20 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Are you ready?

21 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah. What's
22 up, man? What's up? Yeah. Hello. My name is
23 Christopher Leon Johnson. I support both Shekar
24 Krishnan bill and I support the package when it comes
25 to supportive housing, but I want to make it clear

1 that the City Council needs to be transparent with
2 their conflicts of interest with the tenants block,
3 because what's going on is that there are a few
4 professional tenant thieves, activists, who are
5 acting like they're fighting for the little guy, but
6 they're not, and they're in cahoots with this mayor
7 administration to start stealing properties from
8 these owners and their names are Dorka [sic] Reynoso,
9 Eliza Martinez [sp?], and Comie Bradshaw [sp?], and
10 they're doing the dirty bidding of Ms. Sia Weaver
11 [sp?]. This past weekend, there was a video that's
12 was on the internet where Sia Weaver is for the-- was
13 cosigning the displacement of people with NYCHA. Like
14 I said, I think the City Council needs to be on the
15 record and ask Sia Weaver the next time she has a
16 panel with you guys about what was her statement at--
17 inside Fulton Chelsea where she's supporting the
18 displacement of people. I think the City Council need
19 be more transparent and be more transparent to start
20 saying like if they really care about the tenants,
21 why are you standing next to an organization that
22 doesn't fight for the people. They only fight for
23 developers. They're with the developers. Tenant
24 Block does the bidding for developers, and the City
25

1 Council, the Mayor need to be on the record and
2 disclose to the people that this Chair-- the person
3 that runs the office to protect tenants, Sia Weaver
4 is a shill for developers. She is in cahoots with an
5 organization called Open New York for All. When it
6 comes to shared housing, I'll make this clear, that I
7 support it 100 percent, but there's a problem here.
8 A big problem is that what about the safety of the
9 women and the children that will be occupying these
10 units? There's a bill that's been law years ago, I
11 think Local Law 17, to where that a pedophile could
12 live next to your kid. If a landlord rejects a
13 person for being a pedophile, they could sue the
14 landlord. And this is called a-- I mean, this is
15 called the Douglas Powell [sp?] Act, and this is a
16 problem here. I think that the City Council need to
17 start adding protection when it comes to shared
18 housing. Where if there's people that-- a woman and
19 kids, people with certain backgrounds should not be
20 allowed to live next to them, because this is going
21 to create more problems like the Douglas Powells of
22 the world. I'm going to say, like Douglas Powell who
23 works with Vocal New York. And this is another
24 problem with the City Council. They love Vocal New
25

1 York, not Open New York. Everybody know they-- but
2 they love Vocal New York which I call a pedophile
3 protecting organization. They are a pedophile-
4 enabling nonprofit that still to this day have a
5 pedophile named Douglas Powell in their ranks. And
6 this bill, like I said, this benefits stuff-- like,
7 this bill will benefit guys like him because he can
8 say, oh, if I kicked out my-- he get kicked out his
9 apartment, he could go live in shared housing with no
10 vetting. But like I said, this City Council going
11 forward should make it where that there should be
12 more protections for [inaudible] shared housing, make
13 sure background checks. And thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

15 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Thank you.
16 That's it. That's it? Alright, thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Sorry, Tabitha.
18 Just to-- I do want to correct the record, that a
19 pedophile cannot live next to a child.

20 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: I mean, Intro-
21 - Local Law 17 allows--

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] This
23 is not an exchange. This is just a statement. That
24 is not true. Let the record reflect. Thank you.
25

1 office to include collecting rent, housing vouchers,
2 lease renewals, evictions, Housing Court proceedings,
3 and also they're able to implement a rule that states
4 that video footage of the building cannot be
5 retrieved or reviewed unless receiving permission
6 from the program director. Additionally, these in-
7 house supportive housing programs are-- have program
8 policies that automatically assigns a case manager to
9 each tenant regardless as to their participation, and
10 they will use these policies as verification to gain
11 access to the tenant's information and documentations
12 and to correspond with government agencies concerning
13 the tenants, all in efforts to establish themselves
14 and force themselves on non-participating tenants
15 and to engage with them. Subsequently, by allowing
16 in-house supportive housing programs, the landlord
17 and the superintendent will turn over daily
18 operations of the residential buildings to the in-
19 house supportive housing programs, and as a result
20 the landlord and superintendent will become
21 unavailable and unreachable for all--

22
23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [interposing] Thank
24 you. Your time has expired.

1
2 TABITHA WARD: aforementioned daily
3 operations. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank
5 you so much for your testimony.

6 TABITHA WARD: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: We will now turn to
8 remote testimony. Once your name is called, a member
9 of our staff will unmute you and the Sergeant at Arms
10 will give you the go-ahead to begin. Please wait for
11 the Sergeant at Arms to announce that you may begin
12 before delivering your testimony. The first person
13 is Charlene Cannady-Carlo.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

15 CHARLENE CANNADY-CARLO: Good morning.
16 My name, Charlene Cannady-Carlo. I am 63 years old.
17 I have a 35-year-old severe autistic daughter. I was
18 going to talk about something else, but because this
19 is a housing committee and from the testimony,
20 especially what I just heard, I just changed it a
21 little bit. I was wondering if this new law that
22 you're inputting for the SROs could somehow be
23 accessed by our older autistic adult children. As we
24 are aging out, so are they, and there is no facility
25 in the Manhattan, Bronx, in the metropolitan area for

1 this very diverse group of individuals. There are
2 many parents who are older like me who have opted to
3 take care of our adult autistic child. I do not
4 receive any OPWD services. I don't receive anything.
5 The only thing I've received is CityPHEPS and that's
6 a whole other issues that I'll-- you will be hearing
7 from me via letter regarding issues with that. but I
8 want to focus on the housing, because I think this is
9 a wonderful idea that could be used for housing for
10 our disabled adults. As we age out and we are no
11 longer to take care of them, there has to be some
12 kind of linkage where whether it's a program or a
13 procedure or a lawyer could put in place where we can
14 get to know-- you can get to know us and know our
15 kids. My daughter is known. She has had OPWD
16 services when she was younger. So, she is still
17 eligible for those, but in terms of housing and the
18 fact that our kids need 24/7 care represents and
19 issue. I'll hurry up, because I really wasn't going
20 to talk about this. My daughter also has health
21 needs that needs nursing. So, when you look at the
22 current atmosphere that's going on--

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

2 CHARLENE CANNADY-CARLO: Sorry.

3 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank
4 you for your advocacy and for sharing the personal
5 story. It really helps us as we consider this
6 legislation. The bill as written is open to all New
7 Yorkers, so we welcome your feedback to help--
8 further help this population. Thank you, Charlene.
9 Now calling Ron Borovinsky.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

11 RON BOROVINSKY: Good morning, Council,
12 and thank you for allowing me to speak today. I am a
13 builder in New York City. I've developed seven co-
14 living buildings, and I advocate for the support of
15 the SRO-style housing. I want to add that where I do
16 not have SRO or I should say co-living buildings, the
17 tenants are significantly impacted because they have
18 to share financial responsibility amongst each other,
19 and when they share financial responsibility, one of
20 them typically has to put up their credit and pay for
21 the bills and so on, and if the others fall short,
22 they are unable to be treated fairly because the
23 person with the financial responsibility has to bear
24 the depth of the repercussions. For instance, if the
25 roommate is not paying his fair share of rent. So, I

1 support the co-living from that perspective as well.

2 I also want to add which is very important that me

3 and other operators of co-living buildings have made

4 significant investment into paving the way for co-

5 living. In 2014, it was zero units, and after

6 colleagues and myself now it's up to 4,000 bedrooms

7 in the city that are being operated by co-living

8 operators. We would love to see our previous

9 buildings be also eligible for conversion into SRO.

10 This is not removing any existing stock from the-- it

11 is not removing any existing stock from the current

12 landscape of residential opportunities. They already

13 serve the same demographic, but without us being able

14 to convert into the SROs we lose the ability to have

15 that tenant-to-tenant relationship. We have to have

16 more oversight through private operators, which are

17 doing a great job, but we lose the ability to then

18 evict any bad actors who are not operating well

19 within the safety limits of the unit. So we would

20 like to see our units converted as well, and again, I

21 mentioned--

22
23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time

24 expired. Thank you.

25

2 RON BOROVINSKY: Thank you for allowing
3 me to speak. Have a good day.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,
5 Ron. Now calling Sergii Starostin.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: If we have
8 inadvertently missed anyone that has registered to
9 testify at today's hearing and has yet to be called,
10 please use the Zoom raise hand function if you are
11 testifying remotely, and you will be called in the
12 order that your hand has been raised. If you are
13 testifying in-person, please come to the dais and
14 speak to one of the Sergeants. Seeing none, I will
15 now close the hearing. Thank you to the members of
16 the administration and the members of the public who
17 have joined us today. The hearing is adjourned.

18 [gavel]

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COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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 February 14, 2026