

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER
PROTECTION

----- X

February 13, 2025
Start: 11:14 a.m.
Recess: 11:19 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Julie Menin, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Gale A. Brewer
Amanda Farías
Shekar Krishnan
Chi A. Ossé
Julie Won

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Crystal Hudson

1 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION 2

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mic check, mic check.

3 This is a mic check on today's vote on Consumer and
4 Worker Protection. Today's date is February 13, 2025,
5 recorded by Walter Lewis in the Chambers.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and
7 welcome to the New York City vote on the Consumer and
8 Worker Protection.

9 Please silence all electronic devices at
10 this time.

11 Chair, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: [GAVEL] Good morning,
13 and welcome to today's Consumer and Worker Protection
14 Committee vote on Proposed Intro. Number 88-A and
15 Proposed Intro. Number 901-A. I first want to
16 recognize my fellow Colleagues who are here today,
17 Council Member Ossé, Council Member Won, Council
18 Member Brewer, Council Member Krishnan, Council
19 Member Hudson, Majority Leader Fariás, and Council
20 Member Abreu is on Zoom. Thank you.

21 For many New Yorkers, their home is their
22 greatest financial asset. Unfortunately, scammers
23 seek out financially vulnerable homeowners to
24 fraudulently take ownership of their property.
25 According to the New York Attorney General's Office,

2 deed theft occurs when someone takes the title to
3 someone's home without the homeowner's knowledge or
4 approval. Two of the most common ways scammers steal
5 deeds are forgery, where the scammers fake the
6 homeowner's signature on a deed and files it with the
7 County Clerk, and fraud, where the homeowner signs
8 the deed over to the scammer without realizing what
9 they are really signing. In the past five years, the
10 City has received almost 3,000 deed theft complaints,
11 45 percent of which occurred in Brooklyn, and
12 primarily in communities of color and among older
13 adults. Deed theft can be particularly catastrophic
14 for retirees or those who are on fixed incomes, often
15 leaving them without the resources to secure
16 alternate housing and increasing their risks of
17 homelessness in New York City's high-priced housing
18 market. Deed theft also disrupts generational wealth
19 transfer, which is particularly impactful in
20 communities of color where families may rely on
21 passing down property to achieve economic mobility.
22 Stripping families of these assets perpetrates
23 economic disparities.

24 Today, we're voting on two bills that
25 seek to ensure homeowners know how to protect their

2 assets and are better able to identify deed theft
3 scams. Proposed Intro. 888-A, sponsored by Council
4 Member Hudson, would require that when a purchaser
5 submits an offer to buy certain residential property
6 that the owner has not listed for sale, is not
7 actively selling, or did not intend to sell, the
8 purchaser must disclose in writing in a clear and
9 conspicuous manner the estimated market value of such
10 property. Proposed Intro. 901-A, sponsored by Council
11 Member Riley, would require the Office of the
12 Homeowner Advocate to consult with the Department of
13 Consumer and Worker Protection to provide support and
14 counseling to homeowners and their heirs to protect
15 their assets, which could include financial planning,
16 mortgage counseling, and scam prevention. Council
17 Member Hudson will now make a statement about her
18 bill.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you so much,
20 Chair Menin, for giving me the opportunity to discuss
21 my bill, Intro. 888. As our city's housing crisis
22 deepens, longtime homeowners, particularly in rapidly
23 gentrifying neighborhoods, are being targeted by
24 predatory real estate practices. These schemes
25 disproportionately impact black and brown communities

2 and older adults. Unsolicited housing offers, often
3 dangling quick cash, exploit asset-rich and cash-poor
4 people, especially older adults on fixed incomes.
5 These homeowners are pressured into selling far below
6 market value, ultimately losing their most valuable
7 asset, their home. Intro. 888 takes a critical step
8 to protect homeowners from these bad actors. The bill
9 would require purchasers making unsolicited offers on
10 certain residential properties to disclose, in
11 writing, the estimated market value of the home. This
12 ensures homeowners have the necessary information to
13 make informed decisions. Violators of this law would
14 face civil penalties and property owners would have
15 the right to take legal action. This is a simple,
16 common-sense measure to safeguard longtime homeowners
17 from exploitation. I urge my Colleagues to take this
18 meaningful action to protect New Yorkers from
19 fraudulent real estate schemes and help ensure they
20 can remain in their homes and communities by voting
21 yes on Intro. 888. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: Thank you very much.

23 And I'm now going to turn it over to the Clerk to do
24 the roll call.

1 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION 6

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
3 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
4 vote, Committee on Consumer Affairs and Worker
5 Protection. Both items are coupled. Chair Menin.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Abreu.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
10 you. Brewer.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye. Thank you.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Farías.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: I vote aye.

14 Congratulations to my Colleague.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Krishnan.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ossé.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Won.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote
22 of seven in the affirmative, zero in the negative,
23 and no abstentions, both items have been adopted by
24 the Committee. Madam Chair, that is a full Committee.

25

1 COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION 7

2 CHAIRPERSON MENIN: Great. Thank you. We
3 will now close the vote. [GAVEL]

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date February 14, 2025