

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES
Of the
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway- Committee Rm, 16th Fl.

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Chairperson

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

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[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: The hearing is coming to order. Good morning everyone. I am city Council Member Ritchie Torres and I chair the Committee on Public Housing and I am joined by no one at the moment. So we are... we are here to conduct the first ever bill hearing of the Committee on Public Housing. The subject of the hearing is proposed Intro number 1206 sponsored by Council Members Cumbo, Williams, and myself and proposed Intro numbers 1213 and 1214 both sponsored by myself. The city's vision for improving public housing must extend beyond brick and mortar. A truly comprehensive plan for not merely preserving but transforming public housing means a commitment to creating economic opportunity for public housing residents. NYCHA is more than a landlord. It is a city unto itself, home to 400,000 residents many of whom face deeply ingrained barriers to educational attainment and employment. The question of how to best breakdown these barriers lies at the heart of today's hearing. It is the question that we seek to answer. Countless public housing residents access city services and programs designed to give

2 families and individuals a fighting chance at a
3 better life. Yet we have very little information
4 about the effectiveness of those services and
5 programs. And so the bills we are introducing has
6 one overarching goal, to make that information
7 public so that the city can better serve and
8 support the residents of public housing. Proposed
9 Intro number 1206 would require public housing
10 agencies like NYCHA and HPD to report on their
11 compliance with HUD Section 3 requirements which
12 requires that employment and other economic
13 opportunities generated by certain HUD financial
14 assistance shall to the greatest extent feasible be
15 directed to low and very low income persons and to
16 businesses which provide economic opportunities to
17 low and very low income persons. This bill would
18 also require NYCHA to report on its employment
19 programs. Proposed Intro number 1213 would require
20 the mayor or an agency designated by the mayor to
21 publish an annual report on the outcome of services
22 provided to public housing residents including
23 employment related services, financial counselling
24 or banking services, income support services, adult
25 education services, and business related services.

2 The bill would also require the mayor or an agency
3 designated by the mayor to conduct a representative
4 survey of public housing residents to identify and
5 report health outcomes pertaining to public housing
6 residents. Lastly proposed Intro number 1214 would
7 require the city's center for economic opportunity
8 to develop a plan to expand the jobs plus program
9 which is a proven model for achieving substantial
10 and sustained improvements in the earnings of
11 public housing residents. So with that said you... I
12 guess we'll proceed to the first panel. Oh, I
13 forgot... I have to swear you in. Could you hold your
14 right hand? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
15 whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
16 testimony before this committee and to respond
17 honestly to the council member's questions?

18 Yes, Sir.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: You may proceed.

20 CARSON HICKS: Thank you. Good morning
21 Council Member Torres. My name is Carson Hicks. I'm
22 the Deputy Executive Director at the Center for
23 Economic Opportunity which is located within the
24 Mayor's Office of Operations. I'm delighted to be
25 here today to testify regarding Intros 2013 and

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2 2014. This proposed legislation is consistent with..
3 commitment to data driven decision making and
4 increasing opportunities for low income New
5 Yorkers. Today I'm joined by colleagues from the
6 New York City Housing Authority. CEO was
7 established in 2006 to build evidence in the field
8 of anti-poverty efforts. The center works closely
9 with city agency partners to conduct research,
10 design programs, monitor outcomes, and evaluate
11 initiatives. Regarding Intro 2013 CEO is supportive
12 of the idea of looking at outcomes for public
13 housing residents across a variety of domains.
14 We're very interested in talking more with this
15 committee and with you in particular about how best
16 to realize these goals. As part of the Mayor's of
17 Office of Operations CEO worked closely with city
18 agencies and other government partners to produce
19 the social indicators report which was submitted to
20 the council in April of this year as part of a
21 Charter mandate. The SIR as we refer to it includes
22 45 indicators and provides an overall statistical
23 portrait of social conditions in the city
24 highlighting areas in which there are unmet needs
25 and where progress has been made. While CEO

1 believes the indicators laid out in Intro 1213 are
2 appropriate for capturing how public housing
3 residents are faring we need to examine further
4 whether all of the data are consistently reported
5 or available which would impact our.. the city's
6 ability to comprehensively report on outcomes. In
7 addition, some data such as the health related
8 outcomes may be subject to privacy laws. And the
9 city's law department will need to review what data
10 can be made public. Never the less we look forward
11 to the opportunity to work with the appropriate
12 stakeholders to determine what is feasible in terms
13 of reporting. With regard to Intro 2014 Jobs-Plus
14 is an Evidence based model with three main
15 components; employment services located in the
16 community, financial education, rent based and
17 other financial incentives that help make work pay
18 and community support for work that organizes
19 neighbors to promote the benefits of working and
20 serves as a support network for overcoming
21 barriers. The primary objective of jobs plus is to
22 transform public housing developments into
23 communities that help their residents enter,
24 sustain, and advance in work. The first city funded
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1 jobs plus program was established in 2009 by a
2 collaborative effort among multiple city agencies
3 and other partners led by CEO. Since then CEO and
4 partners have expanded Jobs-Plus to a total of 10
5 programs through the federal social innovation
6 fund, New York City Yong Men's Initiative, and the
7 Human Resources Association... Administration, pardon
8 me. Nine in New York City and one in San Antonio,
9 Texas. The San Antonio grant is managed through
10 Mayor's Fund to advance New York City. These
11 programs target 24 public housing developments
12 across New York City. HRA is currently preparing to
13 release an RFP to expand services to additional
14 NYCHA developments in East Harlem, East New York,
15 and the South Bronx. Developing a plan to expand
16 Jobs-Plus so that every public housing resident has
17 an opportunity to enroll in the program is a truly
18 exciting prospect. However, we recognize that such
19 an expansion would require significant resources
20 and are concerned about developing a plan for
21 expansion without a better idea of resources that
22 may be available. Therefore, we suggest that the
23 discussion of the expansion may be better had
24 within the budget process. Furthermore, the program
25

2 is still undergoing evaluation. So it's difficult
3 at this stage to make specific recommendations
4 about geographical and temporal expansions. Last
5 year CEO released a report by MDRC which is a
6 social policy research firm that highlighted best
7 practices from the implementation of jobs plus in
8 the South Bronx and in Texas to compliment this
9 particular analysis and evaluation of the city
10 funded sites is currently underway which will
11 include an analysis of employment outcomes using
12 New York state Department of Labor wage data. The
13 results of this analysis are anticipated at the end
14 of this year and possibly early 2017. And so
15 continuing our conversation about the expansion in
16 the future will benefit from the most current and
17 relevant data available on the program. I thank you
18 for the opportunity to testify today.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you very
20 much. Does NYCHA have testimony or... Okay.

21 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Chair Ritchie Torres
22 and members of the Committee on Public Housing and
23 other distinguished of the city council, good
24 morning. I am Sideya Sherman, acting Executive Vice
25 President for Community Programs and Development at

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2 the New York City Housing Authority. Thank you for
3 the opportunity to speak with you today regarding
4 Intro number 1206. First I'd like to thank you
5 Chair Torres for your recent interview in Gotham
6 Gazette regarding the two... two of the bills and
7 touting the work of the Jobs-Plus program. I know I
8 speak for our Jobs-Plus partners and residents when
9 we say thank you for being a vocal advocate and a
10 supporter of programs that seek to provide
11 residents... NYCHA residents with more economic
12 opportunities. Intro number 1206 is a proposed law
13 that would amend the administrative code of the
14 City of New York to require NYCHA to report on job
15 creation and employment programs. I want to thank
16 Council Member Laurie Cumbo who will arrive who
17 sponsored the bill for her enduring interest and
18 the welfare of NYCHA residents and advocacy for
19 innovative policies and programming to support
20 their needs. Intro number 1206 would require NYCHA
21 to make publically available online and submit to
22 the council an annual report on its compliance with
23 the requirements of Section 3 of the housing and
24 urban development act of 1968. It would also
25 require NYCHA to make publically available online

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2 and submit to the council an annual report on its
3 employment programs. NYCHA agrees with the spirit
4 and the goals of Intro 1206. Transparency is the
5 key value of next generation NYCHA, our 10-year
6 strategic plan. We have made it a priority to keep
7 our various constituencies as informed as possible
8 about all aspects of our work through new
9 publications like our quarterly reports and
10 sustainability agenda, monthly resident job
11 placement reporting that is available through the
12 citywide performance support, dramatically expanded
13 resident engagement efforts, our stakeholder
14 committees for next generation neighborhood
15 projects and increased collaboration with
16 advocates. However, we have legal... legal concerns
17 regarding the reporting requirements that would be
18 imposed by Intro 1206 which we are happy to sit
19 down and discuss further with you after this
20 hearing. We are happy to work with the council
21 members to voluntarily report the metrics. This
22 legislation is designed to capture to the extent
23 possible and useful. I'd like to also take this
24 opportunity to tell you a bit more about the jobs
25 plus program; one of the strategic ways which NYCHA

1 works collaboratively with our partners to increase
2 economic opportunity for residents. NYCHA serves a
3 diverse community who share the dreams and
4 ambitions, same dreams and ambitions as our fellow
5 New Yorkers and all Americans to be successful, to
6 be... to better themselves, to earn a decent living,
7 and provide for themselves and their families. But
8 nearly... nearly half of NYCHA's households live
9 below the federal poverty line and a large number
10 of residents are unemployed. The majority of
11 residents who work make less than 40,000 a year.
12 The average household income for NYCHA residents is
13 about 23,000 dollars. NYCHA's Office of Resident
14 Economic Empowerment and Sustainability, REES, was
15 created to expand NYCHA's economic opportunity
16 efforts beyond Section 3 employment by increasing
17 external partnerships and attracting proven models
18 like Jobs-Plus, the public housing communities.
19 REES is committed to supporting our residents and
20 increasing their income and assets. REES works with
21 more than 50 formal partners across the five
22 boroughs to connect residents to workforce
23 development, financial counselling, business
24 development, adult education and vocational
25

1 training services. While NYCHA does not administer
2 the Jobs-Plus program, Jobs-Plus does exclusively
3 serve NYCHA residents. The New York City Jobs-Plus
4 collaborative led by the Center for Economic
5 Opportunity includes NYCHA REES, HRA, and the
6 Department of Consumer Affairs Office of Financial
7 Empowerment. It is one of our most successful
8 workforce development collaborations. The nine
9 Jobs-Plus centers serve 24 housing developments and
10 offer quality services from providers such as Bed-
11 Stuy restoration, Bronx Works, East Side House,
12 Rescare, and Urban Upbound formerly known as ERDA.
13 The Jobs-Plus model is exclusive to Public Housing
14 Residents and is designed to raise the level of
15 employment and earning among residents helping them
16 to achieve their dreams. Targeted developments or
17 clusters of development are saturated... saturated
18 with employment services, financial counselling,
19 and community building activities that leverage
20 social ties to increase employments. Jobs-Plus
21 serves adults of all ages but has been particularly
22 serve... the import... just particularly successful in
23 serving young men 18 to 24 who make up a
24 significant portion of NYCHA's population. Since
25

1 launching in 2009 the program has grown from one to
2 nine... one to nine centers. During this period over
3 35 hundred residents have been placed into jobs and
4 more than 59 hundred residents have achieved...
5 achieved at least one financial outcome or
6 educational outcome including access of the earned
7 income disallowance which is a rent based
8 incentive. Strategic partnerships are crucial to
9 NYCHA's effort to expand economic opportunity for
10 residents. We are happy to share that NYCHA in
11 partnership with the collaborative recently
12 submitted a federal application to HUD to expand
13 Jobs-Plus in East New York. We expect to hear the
14 outcome from HUD in about three months. We thank
15 the council for this opportunity to testify and we
16 appreciate the council's support to strengthen
17 NYCHA's ongoing efforts to provide economic
18 opportunities to residents. We are happy to answer
19 any questions you may have.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you very much
22 for your testimony. We've been joined by Council
23 Member Laurie Cumbo who is the sponsor of one of
24 the intros so I'd love to give the councilwoman an
25 opportunity to say a few words.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you so much

3 Chair Torres. Good morning. I proudly serve a
4 community in Brooklyn that represents a vast array
5 of diversity including cultural socio-economic,
6 ethnicity, race, religion ranging in variables such
7 as experiences, political leanings, professional,
8 and personal backgrounds. Holding these aspects
9 equal across the spectrum everyone in our community
10 desires the greatest opportunity to prosper and we
11 want the best for all of our neighbors. In my
12 council district in Fort Green Clinton Hill stands
13 five incredible public housing developments
14 including Farragut, Walt Whitman, Lafayette
15 Gardens, Atlantic Terminal, and Raymond V.
16 Ingersoll Development. Ingersoll, which is one of
17 the next gen projects will have 145 new affordable
18 apartments for low income seniors and a full
19 service senior center equipped with local health,
20 wellness, technology training, culture, and art
21 activities. Just a few miles away in Crown Heights
22 stands Ebbets Field, a massive rent stabilized
23 apartment complex occupied by many low resident
24 neighbors. Woven throughout the district both the
25 people and the housing stock represents an array of

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2 faces and professions, a tapestry, and multiplicity
3 of jobs. Some gainfully employed, many are not.
4 Gentrification has been evolving in the district
5 for well over three decades. Far from a new
6 development but a slow evolution. In the most
7 recent years we are experiencing a massive vertical
8 boom in development. And what I see is a direct
9 correlation to Section 3 opportunities. If every
10 Section 3 opportunity were provided to my
11 residents, we would celebrate the tremendous
12 employment and opportunity contracts that are
13 flowing into our neighborhoods. Unfortunately, at
14 this time I can't be certain of that. With
15 residents particularly from low and low income
16 households we need every single job to flow back to
17 the community. We must stop the displacement of the
18 original founders of our communities. It's
19 heartbreaking to see so many people displaced when
20 there's so much development going on in my
21 community. When employed and unemployed divide us
22 neighbors become polarized. Programs like Section 3
23 and other recommendations that will be discussed in
24 this package of legislation will work to change
25 that. There's little information available locally

1 to determine if Section 3 or other HUD related
2 projects have met their obligations under the law.
3 I am not aware of adequate controls and oversight
4 in place to ensure that Section 3 meets its
5 purpose. We ask for bills such as this to hold
6 NYCHA and the Department of Housing, Preservation,
7 and Development to the highest standards. And the
8 annual reports are in compliance with Section 3
9 requirements. We need transparency and honesty
10 within this process. For my colleagues in
11 government and for every neighbor that calls New
12 York City their home. We want our communities whole
13 again. Because Section 3 provides solid employment
14 allowing individuals to become more self-sufficient
15 and independent we must ensure that the employment
16 opportunities are being filled in a manner that
17 holds all accountable and that everyone including
18 agencies and developers are part of the solution in
19 maintaining neighborhood diversity and
20 authenticity. It is without a doubt that NYCHA and
21 the Department of Housing Preservation do crucial
22 work for our community and provide shelter and
23 employment opportunities for the New Yorkers that
24 need those resources. This law will allow us to
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2 understand how I Section 3 performing. It is vital
3 that as a city we continually set revised targets,
4 goals, and objectives, and make adjustments to do
5 the right thing by our constituents. And just in
6 closing I wanted to add that so many of our tenant
7 leaders have consistently asked for information
8 revolving around Section 3 and through this piece
9 of legislation we will be able to not only provide
10 that but hopefully we'll be able to provide those
11 valuable opportunities for every member in our
12 community. Thank you so much Chair Torres for
13 providing this opportunity to have this bill heard.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Of course. Thank
15 you for your comments Councilwoman. So my.. my
16 questions will largely center around Jobs-Plus. I
17 suspect the Councilwoman will ask about Section 3
18 so I'll avoid Section 3 for now. I do want to
19 address some of the concerns that you expressed
20 about Intro 1213. The privacy concerns around the
21 public health reporting requirements. I mean if.. if
22 an agency were reporting the public health data
23 about a particular resident then surely that would
24 be a violation of privacy. But if it's reporting
25 public health data at the community level, at the

1
2 aggregate level how could that... like in what sense
3 is that a violation of privacy or state law?

4 CARSON HICKS: You have an absolutely
5 valid point. I think in not knowing exactly... if it
6 was an individual, absolutely.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Sure.

8 CARSON HICKS: I'm not saying that...

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And the legislation
10 does not require reporting of individuals so...

11 CARSON HICKS: Right. I'm not saying it
12 would be a violation. I'm saying that we would like
13 to consult with the law department to understand
14 what we can report out. I... I agree from a data
15 perspective at an aggregate level as you just said
16 those should not pose any hindrances. But I'm not
17 sure what health data are available. So we would
18 like to consult with the Law Department as I said
19 and also with colleagues at the... the health agency
20 to understand what... what they may have, what we
21 might be able to share.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Could you imagine a
23 circumstance in which the reporting of aggregate
24 public health data would be... would implicate
25 privacy concerns?

2 CARSON HICKS: If only if at the
3 aggregate we're still talking relatively small
4 numbers. So like ten or less or 20 or less. I'm...
5 I'm using this as just relative benchmarks that
6 could potentially be... allow us to identify people
7 if the numbers are really really small. But if
8 they're larger, like 100 or 500 then no I wouldn't
9 imagine there would be a problem.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But if you... if I
11 said how many residents fit into this category. So...
12 obviously... more than 10 people and... and NYCHA... we
13 have 10 people fit into that category. As long as
14 you're not divulging the identity of those
15 residents how is it a violation?

16 CARSON HICKS: So I'm going by
17 guidelines that they... that other agencies, state
18 agencies for an example, wage data, what they use.
19 Basically if they have 10 or fewer people in any
20 specific category they don't report out because
21 there is a fear somehow those people may be
22 identifiable. Which I... I don't think anyone wants
23 to impinge on anybody's rights anywhere. Not
24 knowing about the health data specifically I'm not
25 sure that anyone would be falling into such a small

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2 category. Just... just putting it out there to
3 respond to your question.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I get the
5 impression that the administration seems resistant
6 to Intro 2014 which would require the city to
7 create a plan for the citywide expansion on job
8 slots and you... you cited two reasons if I
9 understood your... one was I guess the... the question
10 mark around funding and the second was it's still
11 undergoing... testing. I would submit to you in fact
12 most of the government programs that we fund we do
13 so without empirically testing it. I suspect Jobs-
14 Plus has undergone more empirical testing than most
15 of the programs we fund. So is that a fair
16 precondition for an expansion?

17 CARSON HICKS: So I... I represent the
18 Center for Economic Opportunity. I don't wish to
19 speak on behalf of the administration. And from our
20 vantage you know we like to evaluate things a lot.
21 We have a strong record for evaluation. Yes, it's
22 quite true that most government programs don't have
23 that. We feel if we're going to be investing
24 dollars as government it make sense to do things
25 as... do so in things that work. Jobs-Plus certainly

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2 has a lot of evidence. What we don't have is impact
3 evidence here in New York City which is what we
4 hope to have later this year. And you know we are
5 hopeful that those findings are going to be
6 positive but we would like to see them and think
7 that they will help inform on an expansion.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And if... if the
9 findings confirm what we believe we know about
10 Jobs-Plus would you then modify your position in
11 relation to 2014 or...

12 CARSON HICKS: We're absolutely
13 generally supportive about expanding this program.
14 And we... this is a program that we fund and my
15 apologies if I conveyed otherwise. I think it's in
16 the absence of knowing about resources available.
17 It's... it's hard to develop a plan.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I have a... I'll
19 start with an open ended question. What... what... what
20 is the Jobs-Plus theory? I guess would you describe
21 Jobs-Plus as a Workforce Development Program? Is
22 that an accurate description?

23 CARSON HICKS: Yes, I would.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And... and what is
25 the Jobs-Plus Theory of Workforce Development. How

2 is it distinct from your run of the mill workforce
3 development programs?

4 CARSON HICKS: I would say community
5 support for work is a main component meaning that
6 you have a large group of people who are generally
7 supportive for work and they're all living and
8 residing in generally the same area. I think
9 there's probably more theories about why Jobs-Plus
10 is unique. And I would defer to colleagues at HRA
11 and NYCHA to expand on those?

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Does anyone want to
13 expand on...

14 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure. So I mean one of
15 the things that's been really... really unique
16 component of Jobs-Plus is the incorporation of the
17 earnings and disregard which is a rent based
18 incentive. It really is designed to make work pay.
19 And so it's a... a work... a rent based incentive that
20 is available to all NYCHA residents. But what's
21 unique about the program that the Jobs-Plus
22 providers are really well trained to understand
23 that rent policy to really incorporate it into the
24 service delivery, incorporate it into the financial
25 counselling. There are a lot of lessons learned

2 from the Jobs-Plus site and the work that they do
3 with residents.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What are those
5 lessons learned?

6 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So we've learned a lot
7 about outreach strategies that are effective. So
8 many of the sites employ NYCHA residents as their
9 coaches. They're credible messengers within the
10 community that's proven to be effective. As I
11 mentioned the incorporation of the... the... the rent
12 based work incentive, incorporation of financial
13 counselling and workforce services as a really
14 successful model. There... you know each site is... is...
15 or... are operated by community based organizations
16 who really understand the neighborhood and also
17 bring a unique set of services throughout their
18 other programs as well.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now the program has
20 been studied. Can you explain the studies that have
21 been done in relation to Jobs-Plus and what
22 findings have emerged from those studies?

23 CARSON HICKS: Absolutely. So back in
24 the 1990s there was a demonstration project in six
25 different cities not including New York City at

1
2 all. And it basically assigned some developments to
3 get jobs plus and some developments not to get
4 Jobs-Plus. There were impacts on employment and
5 wages that persisted over time. So basically this
6 is a proven model outside of New York. But just... we
7 all know that New York is unique. We have not
8 established impact here in New York. So that's the
9 historical evaluation. We've also done evaluation.
10 We've also done implementation studies for New York
11 City and Texas and some of the best findings were
12 just cited by Sideya that really talked about you
13 know how you roll out jobs plus and developments...
14 about the EID and things like that but didn't
15 actually point to you know is this having an
16 impact. That's the study that we have currently
17 underway.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I guess as a... not
19 only as a chair, as the local councilman, what I
20 care about is whether it's putting more money in
21 the pockets of public housing residents. So what
22 has been the impact on the pocket books of public
23 housing residents?

24 CARSON HICKS: So I'm going to site from
25 statistic..

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah, no please.

3 CARSON HICKS: So for... for outcomes here
4 in New York City and this comes through performance
5 monitoring that actually is conducted by HRA we
6 know about a third, a little over a third of folks
7 do get jobs through Jobs-Plus which is wonderful
8 and that those folks are staying in their jobs at
9 sort of a 90-day marker and the hundred day... 180th
10 day. So three months and six months respectively.
11 So we feel that that's very positive. What we don't
12 know is for an example would those people be
13 getting jobs, absent jobs without Jobs-Plus. So
14 that's kind of what we're trying to understand, how
15 much of a difference is Jobs-Plus itself making for
16 the lives of residents.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But couldn't you... I
18 think the... the advantage of Jobs-Plus is that it's
19 zoned right? So you can compare the employment rate
20 of the Jobs-Plus Developments from those that have
21 no Jobs-Plus.

22 CARSON HICKS: So that's... that's
23 actually part of what we're doing in the
24 evaluation. So we're going to be looking at the
25 sites that have Jobs-Plus both employment rates and

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2 wages and we're going to compare those to
3 developments that don't have Jobs-Plus to answer
4 that question. Because right? That's the most
5 important question; is this program making a
6 difference for NYCHA residents.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now... have you... have
8 you done a study? Because we know the... we have some
9 sense. We know the... the... the aggregate impact of
10 jobs plus. But have we isolated the effect of each
11 component? Because it has a rent incentive
12 component, a financial empowerment impotent, an
13 employment service component, a social capital
14 component. Do we know the effect of each component
15 and which one is driving the increased earnings?

16 CARSON HICKS: So in the... the
17 demonstration project that was done in the 1990s by
18 MDRC they concluded that it's actually all of those
19 components working together meaning that it's not
20 one in particular thing. And it's very important in
21 fact that all of the components of jobs plus are
22 fully implemented in order to get those very
23 impressive outcomes that they had an impact that
24 they had in the demonstration project. We have not
25 yet looked at that here in New York City. That's a

1
2 really interesting question once we establish
3 impact, to look further to... to see is it absolutely
4 strictly necessary that all three or four
5 components of Jobs-Plus are implemented and if not
6 to your point is there one that's more important
7 than the other.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I know the
9 clients who are served by Jobs-Plus varies widely.
10 But can you give me just... what's the median profile
11 of the Jobs-Plus client? What's the median level of
12 educational attainment, income... just want to have a
13 sense of the barriers to employment.

14 CARSON HICKS: Okay so I've got some
15 answers to those questions. What I have is age and
16 gender. And then I will defer...

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Sure.

18 CARSON HICKS: ...to my HRA colleagues. So
19 we know that for existing Jobs-Plus members about
20 30 percent are between 16 and 24, a little over 30...
21 31 percent are between 25 and 34. 16 percent are
22 between 35 and 44. And 23 percent are 35 plus. And
23 then we know 54 percent are female and 46 percent
24 are male.

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you have a
3 gender breakdown in the 16 to 24 range?

4 CARSON HICKS: I do not. Well not with
5 me. We could probably... we... I can get back to you on
6 that.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I'm curious as
8 far as outreach as they are particular outreach to
9 I guess the category of... I mean everyone concerns
10 me but I have a particular concern about young
11 males, disconnected young males as there are
12 particular outreach to those young males in... with
13 respect to Jobs-Plus.

14 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure so... so the
15 outreach is primarily conducted by the sites
16 themselves you know as we mentioned that the
17 program has been particularly successful with young
18 men which is why it's funded through the Young
19 Men's Initiative. As I mentioned the sites also
20 hired community coaches so they also are hiring
21 residents who are in the demographic in the age
22 range of the people that they're trying to reach so
23 that in addition to having providers perform
24 outreach there are also neighbor to neighbor
25 outreach. NYCHA obviously also supports those

2 outreach efforts through our communication
3 channels.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And you gave
5 me information about placement and retention.
6 What's the nature of the jobs in which we're
7 placing these residents? Is it mostly low wage
8 jobs, what industries...?

9 CARSON HICKS: If I recall correctly and
10 then I'm going to again have to defer to HRA
11 colleagues. The implementation study I talked
12 about, the one that looked at New York City and
13 Texas. I think they said for the most part they...
14 they were sort of entry level positions. I do also
15 recall that one of the best practices pieces of
16 advice if you will from the... from MDRC was her... for
17 folks who are already employed because some are to
18 undergo training to help with advancement. And then
19 I guess one last thing that I would mention sort of
20 ancillary to your question, one of the things Jobs-
21 Plus is undergoing right now is sort of trying to...
22 trying to really make it align more with career
23 pathways in an effort to really help people get
24 better jobs and... and higher incomes. If colleagues
25 at HRA have anything to add.

2 HRA: We can certainly provide the data
3 that we have in respect to the job type and
4 industry and the wages associated with those.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Although would it
6 be fair to conclude just out of general level that
7 mostly these jobs are low wage in nature given the
8 clientele you're serving or...

9 CARSON HICKS: I wouldn't automatically
10 assume that...

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Actually can you
12 identify your... I know who you are but can you
13 identify yourself?

14 HRA: Erin Drinkwater, HRA. I wouldn't
15 automatically assume that. It is possible
16 certainly.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I think we... we
18 know not here in New York but elsewhere in the
19 country the impact of Jobs-Plus on earnings,
20 employment... are you attempting to track the impact
21 of Jobs-Plus on educational attainment, the number
22 of clients who obtained GEDs, college degrees?

23 CARSON HICKS: Yes, and I have some
24 performance monitoring data on that. So looking
25 back to 2013. Let's see we have... where is this,

1
2 apologies. We are tracking... I'm sorry I'm going to
3 have to get back to you. I thought we had this. But
4 yes we are looking at GED attainment, post-
5 secondary enrollment, post-secondary attainment,
6 things like that.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Do you have
8 data regarding the percentage of clients you serve
9 who have a critical record?

10 SIDEYA SHERMAN: I'm not sure... question
11 was asked... think that... not sure that's required or
12 disclosed but we could... we can certainly...

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah, and I'm just
14 curious about the... the impact of obviously...
15 criminal record as a barrier to employment.
16 Obviously the city enacted the fair chance act
17 which prohibits an employer from discriminating
18 based on criminal history before making the
19 conditional offer of employment. And so I'm curious
20 to know whether... what's the... and I can ask that to
21 the providers whether... whether they felt the impact
22 of the legislation in the Jobs-Plus worksites.
23 What's the cost of operating a site?

24 CARSON HICKS: Approximately one million
25 dollars.

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: One million dollars
3 per site. What are the funding sources?

4 CARSON HICKS: So currently it is city
5 tax levy dollars and the federal social innovation
6 fund.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What's the
8 breakdown if you can...

9 CARSON HICKS: So the federal social
10 innovation fund is funding one site here in New
11 York City and the remainder of sites here in New
12 York City are funded by city tax levy.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What's the overall
14 amount?

15 CARSON HICKS: Well there's nine sites
16 in total. One is the Federal Innovation Fund so a
17 million there. And then the... the rest is tax levy.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And how do you go
19 about deciding where to site jobs plus?

20 CARSON HICKS: So that has changed a
21 little bit over the years as it has been operated.
22 It's a discussion first and foremost with agency
23 partners and... and looking at... Sorry, so... so in the
24 original, the 2009 site was a discussion with
25 agency partners. It was looking at you know where

1
2 there's a need, where there's work opportunities or
3 lack thereof, things that would benefit from this
4 model. And then in the RFP for the young men's
5 initiative that had all those different sites. I
6 believe we basically had honed in on a variety of
7 different community districts that basically
8 allowed proposers to suggest where they wanted to
9 host or where they felt it would be beneficial to
10 host a Jobs-Plus site. So... so far that's how... how
11 it is, how the sites were selected.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And it's a zoned
13 approach. So how do you go about structuring the
14 zones. How many residents are typically covered in
15 a zone?

16 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure so... So within
17 NYCHA within their office of resident economic
18 empowerment sustainability we have a zone model
19 where the city is divided into 15 geographic zones.
20 So within those zones there are clusters or single
21 developments that are served by Jobs-Plus. So the
22 Jobs-Plus site may serve one or a cluster of
23 developments up to a certain household level. Then
24 those would be the Jobs-Plus... the surrounding

1
2 developments also have access to partners that are
3 within that development.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And what are the
5 number of residents in a zone or households... do you
6 know?

7 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So on average this is
8 about 11,000 households per zone. And the zones
9 would cover one to... one to three community
10 districts on average depending on the concentration
11 of public housing.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And then I
13 guess my final set of questions. I have an interest
14 in the relationship between NYCHA's rent policy and
15 employment. So under federal law, Section 9, public
16 housing residents pay 30 percent of their gross
17 adjusted income toward rent. Alright the upside is
18 that you have an apartment that's affordable.
19 You're protected from the... of the job market. But
20 the downside is that in some since it punishes
21 increased income from employment. Right if you... if
22 you earn more you have to pay more in rent. How is
23 that concern addressed? Have you addressed the... the
24 perverse incentives that might result from... from
25 these rental policies?

2 CARSON HICKS: I'm going to defer to my
3 colleague but it is the earned income disallowance
4 that is the... the key component of Jobs-Plus.

5 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Actually to your point
6 when you have income based rent, increasing your
7 income could be a disincentive to doing so or... or
8 to work or increasing your earnings. So one of the
9 key components of this program is ensuring that
10 residents access the earned income disregard. This
11 is a HUD based rent incentive that would allow
12 NYCHA to essentially phase in a rent increase over
13 a 24-month period. So during the first 12 months of
14 the... the new increase in your income is not
15 calculated in your rent. And then over the next 12
16 months only... only 50 percent of that income
17 increase is calculated into your rent. What's
18 really great about jobs plus is that those
19 residents also had access to financial counselling
20 during that 24-month period while they're actually
21 accessing this rent savings. And so this has been a
22 key component to the model to ensure that as people
23 are moving into work or increasing their earnings
24 are actually able to over a two-year period move
25 into a new rent.

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I suspect if most
3 council members... I would hope all council members
4 have heard of... and most people have heard of the
5 earned income tax credit. But... but I suspect very
6 few people know about the earned income
7 disallowance. So how... I guess how will we raising
8 awareness about EID and what's the impact of Jobs-
9 Plus on EID? Because that's a big deal right? If
10 you... if you have... if there is a tax credit that
11 protects you from rent increases based on increased
12 income I think most residents would want to avail
13 themselves of that. So how do we raise awareness
14 and what's the impact?

15 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Absolutely. So in 2012
16 when we started to work on the Jobs-Plus expansion
17 we knew that getting the word out about EID would
18 critically not only for the providers but for NYCHA
19 residents at large. So we actually have a dedicated
20 section of NYCHA's website that's focused to rent
21 incentives and the EID. It provides us a quick how
22 to guide for residents to understand how to do
23 that. We also incorporate information about the EID
24 and every information session that we offer to
25 residents. We've created marketing material. But we

1
2 also now host what is called a public housing
3 module where you bring not only Jobs-Plus providers
4 but many of our other community partners into NYCHA
5 to have a full day training on policies like the
6 EID or rent based and policies so that when they're
7 serving public housing residents are able to share
8 that information. We certainly perform outreach but
9 we can always work with the council to increase
10 residents access and knowledge to... to this
11 information. So we have marketing materials that
12 we're happy to share. We've shared them with our
13 community partners, our staff certainly distributes
14 them but we're happy to get more information out.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And we certainly
16 should do a briefing here in the city council. But
17 do we know the impact? What's the impact on
18 utilization? Has there been more utilization since
19 the... the... the advent of Jobs-Plus here in New York
20 City or...

21 SIDEYA SHERMAN: There has. I don't have
22 the exact numbers on hand. But I would... so we can
23 get that information back to you. But with a
24 majority of our EID recipients have been post 2012
25

2 after Jobs-Plus as well as some internal
3 automations that NYCHA did for the EID.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I know you
5 don't have exact numbers but do you... does NYCHA
6 know the full number, the number of eligible
7 residents for EID?

8 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So NYCHA would know the
9 number of... there are a few qualifying events for
10 the earned income disregard. So certain qualifying
11 events NYCHA would know through annual
12 recertifications for instance. Qualifying events
13 such as participating in a self-sufficiency program
14 or would be the ones where residents have to give
15 NYCHA knowledge that they've done that. So those
16 are the... the types of qualifying...

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What do you mean a
18 self-sufficiency program?

19 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So attending Jobs-Plus,
20 going to a workforce program for instance could
21 all... would be a qualifying event for the earned
22 income disallowance. So those are why we also are
23 really focusing on providers to make sure that they
24 are telling the... the residents that they serve that
25 they may be eligible for this.

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: If you are a public
3 housing resident and you have increased rent from
4 earned... increased income does that in and of itself
5 qualify you for your ID or are there more criteria?

6 SIDEYA SHERMAN: There are specific
7 criteria?

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What are the
9 criteria?

10 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So without going
11 through... I don't know all of the criteria...

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: If it's too long to
13 list then...

14 SIDEYA SHERMAN: But... so the information
15 is available online but in general it's moving from
16 public assistance to work. A certain period of
17 long-term unemployment to work and then
18 participation in a workforce program.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah.

20 SIDEYA SHERMAN: But we can certainly
21 share the information and it's available online.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah. And as I
23 noted before I think we... we... at some level we know
24 the impact... the overall impact of Jobs-Plus but I'd
25 be curious to know the impact of EID on employment.

1
2 I think that's an area worth studying. And what's
3 interesting is... so it was once the case or it's...
4 it's no longer going to be the case that NYCHA had
5 two rents. You either pay 30 percent of your gross
6 adjusted income or you pay I think the ceiling
7 rent, the maximum base rent. And so the maximum
8 base rent at some level would protect you from rent
9 increases based on increased income. But now
10 everyone is going to pay 30 percent of their gross
11 adjusted income. So I'd be curious to know... I think
12 that's referred to as rent equity. What's... what's
13 the impact of rent equity on employ... employment and
14 public housing? I think that's an area worth
15 exploring as well. So with that said I'll hand over
16 the mic to Council Member Cumbo.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you again
18 Chair Torres. Your line of questioning was very
19 educational. I gained a lot from it. I wanted to...
20 you're welcome. I wanted to... well I appreciate it.
21 Wanted to... it's fascinating learning more about
22 Jobs-Plus. Just wanted to get some follow-up
23 questions so that I can bring this information back
24 to my district. In 2009 you said the program has
25 grown from one to nine centers. And during this

2 period over 35 hundred residents have been placed
3 into jobs. So over a seven-year period 35 hundred
4 individuals have been placed in employment over a
5 seven year period.

6 CARSON HICKS: I believe so but I'm
7 going to defer to my HRA colleagues for
8 confirmation on that. And..

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Because if it... if
10 it is seven years with 35 hundred residents being
11 placed then that averages out to maybe 500 jobs a
12 year, maybe on average 40 people a month across
13 nine different centers.

14 HRA: So the expansion is actually only
15 three years old. And so the total number is about
16 4,000.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay.

18 HRA: So it's not that the map that
19 you're calculating is incorrect based on the
20 expansion.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay so this number
22 here in the testimony; 35 hundred is no longer
23 accurate? It's 4,000?

24 SARAH HAAS: [off mic] At... at this
25 point... Hi, this is Sarah Haas from HRA. So it... it

1 changes. It continually... we continually adding jobs
2 and at this point the most recent numbers we have
3 are... are over four... four... 4,000.
4

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay.

6 SARAH HAAS: ...this point.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So 4,000 then
8 maybe like 600 jobs or so a year which would make
9 maybe 50 jobs a month.

10 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So the one thing I
11 would just add is... and we can certainly get this
12 information to you with HRA. Not all the sites have
13 been open for the same duration of time.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay.

15 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So this one to nine
16 sites...

17 SARAH HAAS: Most have been open for
18 three years...

19 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Yeah.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. Do you have
21 a bench mark in terms of... because if you're saying
22 that it costs about nine million dollars to operate
23 this many centers are you anticipating growth in
24 the way of... what is the ultimate goal that you
25 would like to reach now that you're working in the

1
2 capacity of nine centers at this time? Where would
3 you like to be? What is the benchmark? Because
4 right now it may not... it doesn't seem like... and if
5 you're doing the average and I understand there's
6 been an expansion that it's not an incredible
7 amount of... of jobs that are being created.

8 CARSON HICKS: I would defer to you or
9 HRA colleagues.

10 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure. So I think... you
11 know as we mentioned there are... there are nine
12 sites. HRA is releasing a... an RFP to... to have some
13 additional expansion. And then we're working with
14 CEO to be able to evaluate the impact and be able
15 to create a plan that would really figure out what
16 is an appropriate expansion. What would the impact
17 be at expansion?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And Chair Torres
19 asked this but I guess I wanted to re-ask the
20 question to see if I can get more detail. Are the
21 industries retail, fast food, construction, day
22 care, what are the industries... technology?

23 CARSON HICKS: We will need to supply
24 that information for you. I don't have it on hand.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: It's a little
3 bit... or a lot concerning that you don't have that
4 information. Because this is a big part of what
5 this testimony is going to be. So it always
6 frightens me when everybody from NYCHA's here and
7 no one knows about the industries that the
8 individuals are being placed. It makes me feel as
9 if... I... I... say I can't understand how that could
10 happen, that you don't know. Now I've actually read
11 some of the testimonies that were brought here. So
12 one individual did say that they found employment
13 at McDonald's and one did say that they found
14 employment at Old Navy. So I guess to give you a
15 little assistance or support here. It does seem
16 like fast food and retail are components. But I
17 feel... if this is a real program and it's having a
18 real impact everybody here would be eating,
19 sleeping, and breathing, and knowing the industries
20 that the individuals are being placed in. Because
21 that... it's important to know do you have
22 partnerships with different industries? Do you have
23 partnership with the fast food industry? Do you
24 have those sorts of... so I would be very curious to
25 get that information? Now would you say at this

1
2 time that all NYCHA tenant leaders know about this
3 program? Or is it just in the catchment area? So if
4 I go back to my five developments I can say are you
5 all aware of Jobs-Plus and they're going to say oh
6 yeah we do this with Jobs-Plus or are they going to
7 say I don't know about Jobs-Plus.

8 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure. So the 24
9 developments that are served by Jobs-Plus have
10 strong relationships with their tenant leaders.
11 Many of those providers are... are in the room today.
12 These are community based organizations that work
13 with the tenant leaders. They have regular check-
14 ins with them before the sites launched. The tenant
15 leaders were certainly involved in working with
16 the... the providers. They also support... outreach.
17 Some of the sites the tenant leaders have actually
18 found work through the site. So they have very
19 close relationships with their... the resident
20 associations and other residents at the
21 developments as well to... model.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Is it that the
23 sites that exist, it's really for those
24 particularly targeted areas? If other residents
25 from other NYCHA developments let's say such as in

1
2 my district if they wanted to access the Jobs-Plus
3 program would they be allowed to do that?

4 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So Jobs-Plus is
5 exclusive to the developments that it serves
6 because it's a saturation model. So it's designed
7 to saturate one or a cluster of public housing
8 developments with workforce services. The great
9 thing however is that many of the providers who are
10 Jobs-Plus vendors also have other workforce
11 programs. So I mentioned Bed-Stuy Restoration for
12 instance or Urban Upbound as examples of Jobs-Plus
13 providers so for resident support to come to them
14 for services that are not in... catchment they
15 certainly can connect them to their Jobs-Plus...
16 their other workforce programs. And each site also
17 has a 10 percent allotment to serve residents who
18 may be from the surrounding area but they focus 90
19 percent of their efforts on the... the individual
20 development or the cluster.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. I would
22 like to just go into Section 3 now just to get
23 further clarity on your position on the bill. Can
24 you just first start off by explaining your
25 understanding or NYCHA's understanding of the

1 original intention and creation of Section 3 as you
2 understand it?

3
4 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure. So NYCHA's
5 understanding, an application of Section 3 is to
6 create opportunities for low income persons
7 generated through NYCHA's federal Operating and
8 Capital funds. So NYCHA applies Section 3 to all
9 applicable contracts. We also apply to our direct
10 hiring. And we ensure that it's enforced with our
11 vendors and that there's monitoring and compliance
12 review.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: How do you feel
14 at this time, Section 3's implementation has gone?
15 Do you feel that the original intention of Section
16 3 is living up to its fullest potential? Or do you
17 feel like there are many gaps that need to be
18 filled at this time?

19 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure. So Section 3 is
20 written as the greatest extent feasible. But NYCHA
21 certainly takes corrective measures as well as
22 additional measures to ensure that residents are
23 accessing opportunities. One of the things that
24 NYCHA did as a strategic step as part of Next
25 Generation NYCHA was really to consolidate...

1
2 consolidate oversight of Section 3 within NYCHA's
3 procurement department as a real... to be able to
4 really oversee compliance and enforcement as a
5 contract measure versus as a... as a program that's
6 serving residents. And this has been really
7 important. Section 3 is a policy that really sweeps
8 across the entire agency. And so while many
9 departments have responsibility for enforcing it we
10 now have centralized oversight of Section 3. Last
11 year... [cross-talk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And that's since
13 when?

14 SIDEYA SHERMAN: That's since last year.
15 I want... I... I can get back to you of the exact
16 switch over but it was in the last quarter of last
17 year. So with those changes there are you know new
18 measures and new controls in place. Last year we
19 connected over 15 hundred residents to Section 3
20 opportunities as well as other job opportunities
21 through our partnerships.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So last year 15
23 hundred NYCHA residents were connected to Section
24 3.

25

2 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Exactly. So... so next...
3 last year there were over 31 hundred placements,
4 15... 15 hundred of... about 15 hundred of those
5 placements were through our Section 3 program and
6 other hiring requirements that we may have.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I don't
8 understand that number. There was 31 hundred
9 placements and 15 hundred jobs.

10 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So there were 31
11 hundred placements, NYCHYA resident placements... so
12 this would be through all of our partnerships, our
13 programs... programs like Jobs-Plus for instance...

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Oh I see.

15 SIDEYA SHERMAN: 31 hundred, 15 hundred
16 were from Section 3 and other hiring requirements.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. So the
18 number 15 hundred... because we have hundreds of
19 thousands of residents, what is your take on that
20 number? Do you feel that that's success or do you
21 feel like that's a failure?

22 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So we feel that we're...
23 that's maximizing the opportunities that exist
24 through... through Section 3. But we know that
25

1
2 Section 3 is not the only tool to create jobs, for
3 sure.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So you feel like
5 15 hundred's a success?

6 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So it's a success based
7 on the... the opportunities that we were able to
8 create through our direct hiring and through our
9 capital contracting. However, we know that there
10 needs to be other opportunities for resident hiring
11 which is why we also focus on partnerships and
12 other programs that can connect residents to
13 opportunities within other sectors.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Do you know what
15 the unemployment rate is in NYCHA at this time?

16 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So I don't have that
17 exact number. We can certainly get that number back
18 to you. NYCHA can report to you the number of
19 residents who are not reporting work. It's not a...
20 a... an actual, an employment statistic similar to
21 one that you would get from the Department of Labor
22 but we can report that statistic back to you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Can I get that
24 statistic before you leave today? Because that's
25 like the greatest bar of understanding...

2 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: ...success. So if
4 we have 38,000 or we have 100,000 people that are
5 reporting unemployment or not being able to find
6 employment to have 15 hundred find... find employment
7 through Section 3 would be not a success in that
8 way. Do we know how many jobs in total that Section
9 3 in total has the potential to employ? So if 15
10 hundred NYCHA residents are given employment does
11 that mean if for whatever reason a NYCHA resident
12 does not find employment that you then seek outside
13 opportunities to open it up to a general pool for
14 employment?

15 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So Section 3 applies to
16 NYCHA residents and other low income person...
17 persons. Over 90 percent of our Section 3
18 placements are with NYCHA residents so they're
19 prioritized amongst low income people and that's
20 also the way the statute is written where it starts
21 with NYCHA residents and then sort of has a
22 waterfall to other low income people.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Wanted to ask
24 does NYCHA and HPD currently track Section 3 data
25 requested by this bill?

2 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So I can't speak for
3 HPD. Many of the indicators that are in the bill
4 are tracked by NYCHA and reported in citywide
5 performance report as well as also... as well as
6 reported annually to HUD. There are other
7 indicators that we would need to review with our
8 data and technical team to make sure that we can
9 make publically available online. But most of the
10 information around job placements and outcomes and
11 additional information around resident employment
12 programs and training enrollments and completions...
13 those types of indicators are attract... and most of
14 those indicators are in... PR report as well as the
15 mayor's management report.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. Wanted to
17 ask how does NYCHA and HPD interpret the Section 3
18 mandate from HUD. What efforts are made to comply
19 with the mandate?

20 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So as I mentioned NYCHA
21 centralized oversight of Section 3. We apply
22 Section 3 to every applicable contract that is
23 awarded. Once a contract is issued the
24 administering department for that contract enforces
25 the... the hiring requirements. Throughout the life

1
2 of the contract vendors submit hiring summaries and
3 certified documentation that is reviewed by the
4 administering department for accuracy and then it
5 is tracked centrally within procurement. NYCHA
6 takes those proactive measures to ensure that
7 vendors are complying and has... and... and that's
8 essentially the process that we use to ensure that
9 contractors meet their obligations when contractors
10 need support and sourcing candidates... outreach they
11 have that support as well from NYCHA.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Do you have a
13 number? Because at Lafayette Gardens Tyree Stanback
14 the TA Leader there invited us there to discuss
15 employment opportunities in Section 3 for the
16 residents. Bryan Holman [sp?] was at that meeting
17 as well. And basically what we understood was two
18 things that came out of the meeting. Individuals
19 are hired through Section 3 but then are often or
20 sometimes quickly let go. So do you have an
21 understanding in terms of... of that 15 hundred once
22 they're hired for whatever reason how many of them
23 actually stay on the job. And as far as the roofing
24 work that was going to happen throughout that
25 particular developments many of the residents

1
2 didn't get work on that job. So the contractor who
3 was hired brought in his own people and his own
4 firm in order to do that work and many of the
5 individuals felt left out of that work. So we do...
6 do we understand retention after someone is hired
7 out of that 15 hundred. Do they stay on with the
8 job? And do we also have an understanding of
9 training? Because there are... and on top of the
10 training can you tell me or give me a breakdown of
11 the types of employment opportunities that are
12 available for residents out of Section 3. And do
13 you also know in NYCHA proper in terms of here at
14 250 and abroad do you hire within NYCHA for many of
15 the positions that are held here?

16 SIDEYA SHERMAN: Sure. So I can't speak
17 to that specific contract at Lafayette Gardens. We
18 would be happy to get that information back to you.
19 I know off hand just because I'm familiar with that
20 development that we've had about at least 20
21 Section 3 placements with respect to some of the
22 recent projects going on there but we can certainly
23 get that information to you. In regards to training
24 that's a high priority. So you know there's one
25 piece... one... one you know way that we can enforce

1
2 with contractors but it's also important to ensure
3 that residents are trained and contractors have a
4 pool of qualified individuals. NYCHA operates the
5 NYCHA resident training academy. This is a program
6 that's funded by the Robin Hood Foundation and was
7 created to really provide high quality hard skills
8 training to NYCHA residents to ensure that
9 contractors had access to qualified individuals. So
10 many of the tracks that we operate link back to
11 jobs with NYCHA vendors or with the authority
12 directly. We graduated over 14 hundred residents
13 from the program. 88 percent have gone into work.
14 The residents... residents who have been employed
15 with NYCHA have very strong retention particularly
16 in their positions, their... their retention is
17 better on average than other New Yorkers employed
18 in those same positions. And so we've worked to
19 customize the curriculum to make sure that it meets
20 NYCHA's needs. And we've also received feedback
21 from Contractors on the construction curriculum so
22 that residents are rotating through the trades that
23 are most relevant. So that's a free training. It's
24 available to NYCHA residents.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: How would they
3 know about it?

4 SIDEYA SHERMAN: So we market that
5 program pretty aggressively. We host information
6 sessions. We have outreach events. We hosted over
7 300 offsite information sessions last year not just
8 for the training academy but for other programs. We
9 have a page of our website dedicated to that. We
10 have a bi-weekly newsletter that we share with
11 residents.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Now let me ask
13 you... Would my five TA leaders know about it?

14 SIDEYA SHERMAN: They should know about
15 the training academy, absolutely. We... they receive..
16 if I'm... in your Ingersoll, Lafayette, absolutely.
17 So we've done offsite information sessions at all
18 if not many of the developments in your district.
19 Our central office is also located near a district.
20 But we... as I mentioned we have this bi-weekly e-
21 newsletter distribution. I know firsthand that many
22 of the TAs in your district get that. But we can
23 certainly... we'd be happy to partner with the
24 council to actually co-host some of these
25 recruitment events and information sessions.

2 Because as much outreach as we do through all of
3 NYCHA's communications channels we're always happy
4 to do more and make sure that people are getting
5 this information.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I know that we...
7 we have a difference of opinion on that from the
8 last Next Gen meeting that we had recently. But in
9 everything that you're doing in our district it's
10 so critical that you let us know about it so that
11 we can further promote it and let individuals in
12 our district know. Because we have a database and
13 we have direct relationships with not only our TA
14 leaders but many of our residents throughout. So
15 it's very important that we're given advance notice
16 of anything that NYCHA's doing in our district
17 particularly around job creation because we can
18 only expand and give it further exposure and... and
19 contribute to reaching more individuals. Because at
20 the end of the day in a district such as mine there
21 should not be such a high level of unemployment
22 when you have the greatest and most expansive
23 amount of development happening arguably anywhere
24 in the city. So our resident should be having a
25 pipeline into those levels of employment and

1
2 engagement. And just on a final question you
3 expressed challenges with this legislation and I
4 wanted to know do you support Intro 1206 and what
5 recommendations would you make? Because in your
6 testimony you stated... you stated we are happy to
7 work with council members to volunteer... report the
8 metrics... and that we have legal concerns regarding
9 the reporting requirements that would be imposed by
10 intro number 1206?

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Can you hold up for
12 one second?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

14 [pause]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. So we'll
16 hold on that question and I will turn it back over
17 to Chair Torres for additional follow-up questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you so much
19 Council Member Cumbo. I want to share the
20 frustration because I feel like there was... there as
21 some basic pieces of information that we've... that
22 really should have been made available at this
23 hearing. I think if we're holding a hearing on
24 employment we probably should know the employment
25 rate of NYCHA. We probably should know the nature

1 of the jobs in which we're placing these residents.
2 The employment income disallowance is a crucial
3 component of Jobs-Plus. Jobs-Plus is envisioned as
4 a mechanism by which to increase its use. We
5 probably should know the impact it has had on... on
6 its use. I just think these are basic pieces of
7 information that I wish both the Office of
8 Operations and NYCHA had come prepared. I have one
9 more question. For me there's... there's a important
10 distinction between those residents who are
11 situationally unemployed and those who are
12 structurally unemployed. Do you track that
13 difference and... because to your point earlier how
14 do you know if a resident would have obtained
15 employment in the absence of Jobs-Plus. I think we
16 would know if we tracked that distinction, right?

18 CARSON HICKS: I think you make a very
19 valid point between the situational versus
20 structural [phonetic]... structural, excuse me. The
21 CBOs that implement the Jobs-Plus sites work with
22 members to help them if for an example they're not
23 situationally unemployed but it's really more of a
24 structural... structural issue and they need job
25 readiness and training or education they work with

1
2 members to help them get that with the idea that
3 they will eventually be able to get jobs.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. So look I... I
5 think Council Member Cumbo, the members of the
6 Public Housing Committee we have like a firm belief
7 in the transformative power of work. And I think
8 what is striking about jobs plus is that it's not
9 only about placement or retention. It's not
10 treating... workforce development is a numbers game.
11 But it's about creating a... a social infrastructure
12 for work in public housing. And I believe strongly
13 that that infrastructure should exist in every
14 single development. And so why not create a plan
15 that tells us what a citywide expansion would look
16 like, how much would it cost, how would we
17 structure the zones. And how do we get to the
18 vision of a universal structure, social structure
19 for... for work in public housing. You know it's one
20 thing to read about jobs plus or even hold a
21 hearing on it, it's something else to listen to the
22 stories of those who have been transformed by Jobs-
23 Plus. I will state on a personal level that I
24 became a... a supporter of and an evangelist for this
25 program after hearing the story of... I'm going to

1
2 embarrass her, but Esther Figueroa. And she's going
3 to tell her story later on. But I was just so just
4 amazed by the impact that it's had on her life.
5 That I... I want more Esthers in public housing. And
6 so that's my concluding thought. So thank you for
7 your test... unless you have any further questions
8 or... Thank you for your testimony.

9 [cross-talk]

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: That was probably
11 the most painless hearing for NYCHA. And I would
12 like to call Esther Figueroa. Sorry for calling you
13 out. And Bishop Taylor? Bishop Taylor? Ruth Taylor
14 from Urban Upbound and Patricia from Urban Upbound.
15 So we do have a timer, a three-minute timer, but of
16 course I have Chair's Prerogative so I don't want
17 to... if you're in the middle of a story... compelling
18 story I will... if it's interesting enough I will
19 grant it. So I... we'll start with Esther.

20 [background comments]

21 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Sorry, it's my first
22 meeting. I'm sorry. Good morning everyone. Good
23 morning Council Members, especially Mr. Ritchie
24 Torres. Thank you for having me here. My name is
25 Esther Figueroa. I am 55 years old. I'm a mother of

1
2 three and a grandmother of three. I'm currently
3 employed and it's all thanks to the Job Plus
4 program here in the Bronx. When I came to the Job
5 Plus program I was on public assistance for a long
6 time. Unemployed and on public assistance. I had
7 some skills but they weren't matched to the
8 workforce that's out there at the time. I found out
9 through the Job Plus program through a flyer that
10 was put underneath my door and I said what they
11 heck I have nothing else to lose. So I went to the
12 Job Plus program. That was four years ago. I am
13 here to say what I am today I owe it to the Job
14 Plus program. Not only were they there for me as...
15 they didn't see me as a number. They didn't rush me
16 through the door. As soon... from the first time you
17 walk into the office, from the second time... all the
18 way to everyone that... I've been through every
19 program available for the Job Plus; resume writing,
20 interviewing skills, the financial center. Like I
21 went to a... job development... was a job fair. And my
22 current... I sent out my resume and the jobs that
23 were available did not match what they were looking
24 for. Two weeks later the lady that I submitted my
25 resume to, she called me, and she said we need you.

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2 And I've been with them for two years. June 13 was
3 two years. I started out with 10.50, I went up to
4 11.50. I am full time and they love me. Oh they do.
5 They do love me. My financial situation was
6 terrible. I was zero. I had no income, no nothing.
7 Through the Job Plus program the financial
8 workshops I went to each and every one of them and
9 I finally got my credit up over 600, my credit
10 score. I owe no money... They help me open up a bank
11 account. And they helping me through... I can't
12 remember the name right now because I'm nervous. I
13 procured a loan. I am paying that loan on time. I
14 will... and I will finish it in September. And when I
15 finish that loan... that payment of loan my credit
16 will be up in the 700s. I have finally through... yes
17 through the Jobs-Plus program... [cross-talk] Any... I...
18 even when I do my taxes I go through them because
19 they work with the food bank agency. It's a... it's a
20 family. I cannot complain. I... every time I had a
21 problem with my food stamps, when I had a problem
22 with my rent which I also took advantage of the EID
23 for the last two years. Okay. Currently my rent
24 right now is 322 dollars and I have a... apartment. I
25 can't... I can't say enough about the Job Plus

1
2 program. I wish that every New York City housing
3 development had a program as Job Plus. We... it's not
4 that we do not want to go out there and have a
5 financial future. Some of us are poor. We do not
6 have the skills. We do not have the readiness to go
7 out there and provide for our families. And a
8 program like Job Plus, it was a god send. I do not
9 know where I would have been if it wasn't for job
10 plus. And I'm here to say thank you... thank you...
11 thank you. And on that good note because of
12 everything I've learned through the Job Plus
13 program I finally found another job. I start the
14 sixth of July and I went from 22,000 to 30,000 a
15 year. And I will continue with the Jobs-Plus
16 program. They are everything to me. Thank you.
17 Thank you Glen, thank you Mary, thank you
18 everybody. Okay, and that's all I have to say.
19 Thank you very much. I'm so sorry. I'm so nervous
20 and excited. Any questions... Thank you. Any
21 questions.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I could be mis-
23 remembering but to... was there an impact on
24 educational?

25 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Oh, yes.

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CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah that's a big..

ESTHER FIGUEROA: When I came into... when I came into the Jobs-Plus program I was finishing my associates. I thought that was enough but no no no. My people at Job Plus said no no no. The more you know the more you grow. So they were with me when I completed my... my bachelor's in... in Human Services. They were there with me. So thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I just want to..

ESTHER FIGUEROA: And they are talking to me so I can pursue my Master's.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So 700 credit score..

ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...a bachelor's degree..

ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...and increased...

ESTHER FIGUEROA: Stable housing.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...increased earning.

ESTHER FIGUEROA: Stable housing. Yes, increased earning, yes. All because of the Job Plus program and the belief that they had in me. They

1
2 did not see me as a number. They saw me as a human
3 being. And that's where the difference come with
4 other programs.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so I guess I'm
6 going to ask you a question. But I know the answer
7 but...

8 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...what are your
10 thoughts on... on... on my vision and the council's
11 vision for an expanded... oh.

12 ESTHER FIGUEROA: We need it more. We
13 need it more. We definitely need it more. We do. We
14 do. There is a population out there that wants to
15 get off the welfare programs, wants to... you know
16 the American Dream, provide for your family the way
17 you're supposed to.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah.

19 ESTHER FIGUEROA: With a decent job that
20 will provide you to pay your rent, put food on the
21 table, put clothing on the children's back and... and
22 which is most important to save for the future. And
23 that's where the Job Plus program...

24
25

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So that's a
3 critical piece right? Because one of the components
4 of Jobs-Plus is financial empowerment.

5 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Is that once you
7 have a job it's not enough to earn income, you have
8 to manage it.

9 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Exactly.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: You have to build
11 savings. You have to build credit... assets. And So
12 that's... that's a crucial piece.

13 ESTHER FIGUEROA: ...program to the Job
14 Plus it take you hand in hand. They will... your
15 credit, take care of your credit first of all and
16 they will teach you how to open up a bank account
17 and how to be financially responsible.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: That's great.

19 ESTHER FIGUEROA: That's what I learned
20 through the Jobs-Plus program. These are skills
21 that I will take with me wherever I go. And if I
22 ever hit the lottery I'm going to give money to the
23 Jobs-Plus program.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And even more than
25 work I think the key word for Jobs-Plus is support

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2 right. Like if you come from an affluent family or
3 middle class family you have a built in structure
4 of support. But if you're living in public housing
5 you have real barriers and... and the benefit of
6 Jobs-Plus... [cross-talk]

7 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Unfortunately, when
8 you live in public housing and you are on welfare
9 role people look at you differently. They look at
10 you differently. Unless you open up your mouth and
11 choose your words carefully they will look you like
12 just somebody from the street.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So can I ask that?
14 What... what has been the impact... this is a maybe
15 personal question. The impact of Jobs plus on your...
16 on your... your self-worth, your... your self-image.

17 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Oh before... before I
18 came to Job Plus I... I feel like a nobody. I feel
19 like you know I was just another number. I'm a... I'm
20 a mother who... who has been in the... in the vicious
21 cycle; you're born in public assistance you're
22 going to die in public assistance. That's who I
23 was. But not anymore. I'm a respectable citizen of
24 the city of New York. I pay my taxes like anyone
25 and you just can't tell me didly squat.

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2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I think Council
3 Member Cumbo had a few questions.

4 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes Ma'am.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Did you find that
6 your experience was specific to you or that... did
7 you know that through your interactions with Jobs-
8 Plus that there were many people that were
9 experiencing the success that you were
10 experiencing? Or did you find that this was a very...
11 because you have a very infectious personality,
12 people are going to want to be around you. You're
13 one of those types of people that people want to
14 help, want to be around...

15 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: ...want to support,
17 want to see you win. It would... it would almost be a
18 little bit easy to help you become a winner in that
19 way. Did you find that when you go to the center,
20 when you go to the sites that there are lots of
21 people that are experiencing what you're
22 experiencing?

23 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay.
25

2 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes, I can say this
3 personally because I... I chat up with a lot of
4 people through the various workshops that they have
5 held. I speak to them before, during, and after and
6 especially in the aftermath that we come together.
7 We have shared positive stories. So yes it's not
8 just only individual... it's for everyone. They give
9 you the tools. They sit down with, hold your hand
10 if it's possible. From the time you walk in they
11 give you a goal. What is your goal. This is what...
12 it might take one, it might take two, it might take
13 three years but they will be with you step by step
14 until you reach your goal. And once you reach your
15 goal they will not close the doors on you. They
16 will continue calling. They call you back every
17 month, every two week. They send you an email, how
18 you doing, you know anything happens you can always
19 come back to us. And that's where I am. I will
20 always stay with Job Plus, always.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Let me ask you
22 this question. Through your personal experience are
23 you... because like you said you got the flyer under
24 the door...

25 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Mm-hmm.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: ...and something
3 clicked in you to say you know what what have I got
4 to lose, right? Have you been asked to be almost a
5 recruiter or the type of person? Because you know
6 we get lost of mail under our door. And I disregard
7 most of it. But sometimes somebody coming to you
8 and saying hey this really helped me, you should
9 consider it... have you been recruited in that way?

10 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes, yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Or have you also
12 found there to be a barrier where you're letting
13 people know hey this is really working for me and
14 having friends or people around you be like I just
15 don't think that's for me. I just... I... I'm good
16 where I'm at and I just don't want to... I don't
17 believe in it.

18 ESTHER FIGUEROA: In my development...
19 houses, this is on Jackson Avenue and 49th Street.
20 When they regularly come out and put the tables in
21 front of the... the... the housing they will go door to
22 door. When they are there I scream to the top of my
23 lungs; anyone who's unemployed, mothers, fathers,
24 come to the Job Plus program. I have people knock
25 on my door asking me you know information. Go to

1
2 work... go to BronxWorks, go to the Job Plus program.
3 So I've sent a couple of individuals. The ones that
4 say that's not for me honestly to get... they just
5 don't care.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

7 ESTHER FIGUEROA: They do not care. But
8 there are plenty of people in all of New York City
9 housing that want to prosper, want to get to that
10 point. They just need the push. They just need to
11 resources and Workforce is... BronxWorks is one of
12 them.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Can I just one
14 personal and then I'll turn it back...

15 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: ...over to the
17 Chair. Where are you employed now, or what industry
18 if you don't want to go into the specifics? And
19 what industry will you be transitioning to?

20 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Okay. Right now I work
21 for the West Side Federation for Senior Supportive
22 Housing. They've been around... we have like around
23 20 buildings. We deal with the formerly homeless.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Oh wow.
25

2 ESTHER FIGUEROA: A very delicate
3 population, the formerly homeless over the age of
4 50 who have lived in the street more than five
5 years, who have physical, emotional, or mental
6 problems. That's the population I take care of.
7 Anywhere from cleaning their rooms, taking care of
8 the physical... like giving them showers, taking them
9 to their appointments, administering the medicine.
10 Through them... through them I came in contact with
11 Health People which is a CBO in house organization.
12 I am also a peer leader in the DSMP program which
13 is Diabetes Self-Management Protection Program. I
14 teach the population about Diabetes. So because I
15 did such a find job doing the workshop I was
16 offered a position with Health People. So both of
17 them are together. Both of them know me. And I will
18 continue supporting both populations.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Well I just want
20 to say you have certainly made me a believer. You
21 have an incredible personality, a wonderful story.
22 And as soon as you start your next job ask for a
23 raise.

24 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Thank you. I went from
25 22 to 30 so we'll see what happens.

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And you have two
3 council members who'd be willing to write
4 recommendations for you so...

5 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Thank... oh thank you...

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I... I...

7 ESTHER FIGUEROA: ...thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I would say I met
9 you three...

10 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Thank you. How you
11 doing.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I met you two years
13 ago and...

14 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...and I have not
16 forgotten, I probably will never forget and...

17 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Thank you. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...and I think for me
19 you personify the possibilities of Jobs-Plus.

20 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes, yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And you show that
22 we do have the tools to break the cycle of poverty.

23 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Yes, we do.
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2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: The question is; do
3 we have the political will here in the city of New
4 York so...

5 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Well...

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Just want to thank
7 you for telling your stories.

8 ESTHER FIGUEROA: Thank you. Any time.
9 Thank you. Please, more Jobs-Plus programs. Thank
10 you.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And now for me.
12 Two... two of the... two of the greatest thinkers of...
13 on economic opportunity and public housing that I
14 look to is... is Debra-Ellen Glickstein who's not
15 here and... and Bishop Taylor so Bishop it's always
16 good to see you.

17 BISHOP TAYLOR: It's a pleasure to be
18 here council member to the Chair of this committee
19 and to the other council members that are here
20 council... council member Cumbo, Councilman Richards,
21 I see the majority leader just came in; Jimmy Van
22 Bramer, and committee council. It... and Sarah Haas
23 and all the others... and the NYCHA folks and Shawna
24 [sp?] here... and then of course a couple of our
25 staff Patricia and Ruth. Council Member thank you

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2 so much for putting forth these bills. They're very
3 comprehensive. I think they're very much needed. I
4 don't think that it's really a heavy lift. I think
5 that it pushes us to look at populations that have
6 been overlooked and underserved for decades. And
7 when you talk about income inequality and the tale
8 of two cities and things of that nature Urban
9 Upbound has been beating that drum for the last 14
10 years. As you know Debra Glickstein and myself in
11 2012 begin to... I'm sorry in 2002 began to explore
12 how to really comprehensively break cycles of
13 poverty in public housing neighborhoods in a place
14 based way. And we... there was... there were no
15 initiatives operating in New York City for public
16 housing residents. And we... we started doing some
17 research. I can't take credit for it. Debra-Ellen
18 really did the... the research on this. And she found
19 Jobs-Plus. And it was a demonstration model that
20 was operating in the 90s in six housing
21 developments in the Midwest and California. We
22 visited about three of them. And after doing some
23 research and whatnot we sought out the developers
24 of that model, MDRC, and it happened to be here in
25 New York City but it was launched in the Midwest

1
2 and California. So we went down and met with MDRC I
3 guess in 2003. We met Jim Riccio and he says oh
4 yeah Jobs-Plus. He took the books off the shelf,
5 blew the dust off, said here you go how many you
6 want. And... but he began to explain to us you know
7 the equity of Jobs-Plus and how it works and how
8 they envisioned it working in the launch and in the
9 pilot. And it really intrigued us. And so we took
10 the... the tenants of Jobs-Plus and the methodology
11 and I'd like to say that Deborah Ellen and myself
12 went into the laboratory and what I call supersized
13 it. And so the first non-city-funded Jobs-Plus site
14 was launched by ERDA in 2005. And so we began... you
15 know our organization started in 2004, launched on
16 the platform and the premise of Jobs-Plus,
17 community support for work and making work pay,
18 increasing earnings over time, not just getting the
19 job but getting the next job, dealing with the
20 social interactive component of what's happening in
21 public housing. And you must understand that the
22 numbers that each Jobs-Plus site is posting... you
23 know it takes five times more of the resources that
24 an average job seeker would use to get a job if
25 you're living in public housing. So when you're

1
2 measuring the numbers and the impacts and the
3 things of that nature you have to understand that
4 you're... we're working with one of the hardest
5 populations in the city of New York. And I think
6 that if we're going to really... you don't have to
7 look far to find poverty. Just look at the 343
8 conventional housing developments in the five
9 boroughs of New York City, average income 21,000
10 dollars a year, half the people that live in public
11 housing for a myriad of different reasons do not
12 work. And yes, there's situational unemployment,
13 there's structural unemployment. There's barriers
14 that you know can be overcome you know in a little
15 bit of time. But these barriers have to... some
16 barriers have to be overcome in a long period of
17 time. And I think Jobs-Plus provides that platform,
18 that place based opportunity for residents to
19 engage in an organization and movement whose
20 objective is to get them to work, make work pay,
21 and get them to better work. And so Jobs-Plus... and
22 I'm going to say this... I know my time is up
23 Councilman Cumbo although you may find that the
24 data reveals that a lot of people are moving into
25 entry level jobs...

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

3 BISHOP TAYLOR: ...when you look at the
4 systemic barriers in public housing sometimes the
5 entry level job is just the platform that they need
6 to get to the next level.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And so... so I
8 believe that... you know I wrote a proposal back in
9 2006 myself and Debra-Ellen Glickstein, it was a
10 25-million-dollar proposal that we gave to Mayor
11 Bloomberg. We had breakfast with him and he... he
12 leaned to... what the hell is Jobs-Plus back then.
13 But it was an idea to expand public housing into
14 like 15 or 20 developments you know around the city
15 using cluster ideas because developments are close
16 together than some individual developments. But
17 this is the drum that we've been beating you know
18 over the last decade or more for Jobs-Plus to be
19 expanded. So I think that you know this is
20 something if we're serious about employment
21 services, we're serious about Workforce 1 Centers
22 that are strategically placed in the city. But if
23 we're serious about touching the hardest
24 underserved, overlooked population in the city of
25 New York we have to address public housing beyond

1
2 the brick and mortar. You know we have to deal with
3 the social economic plight of residents that live
4 in public housing. I'm sorry I didn't even read my
5 testimony but I...

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: No, but that's
7 pretty comprehensive so...

8 BISHOP TAYLOR: Okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: No I think... I... I
10 agree with you that we have to think beyond the
11 brick and mortar. Because even if we were... You know
12 it's often said that NYCHA has 17 billion dollars'
13 worth of capital needs but even if we were able to
14 get 17 billion dollars tomorrow and close the
15 capital need and close the deficit we would still
16 have these red brick structures of racially
17 concentrated poverty. And so the goal is not simply
18 to maintain these structures. The goal is how do we
19 break the cycle of poverty in public housing. I
20 know Councilman Richards had a few... I just want to
21 acknowledge we've been joined by the Majority
22 Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Council Member Richards,
23 and Council Member Mendez. Council Member Richards.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Oh I thank you
25 Mr. Chairman and Council Member Cumbo for these

1 great pieces of legislation. They will go a long
2 way. I was literally just in a meeting in the
3 Rockaways with some of my public housing residents
4 last night where this conversation came up. Even in
5 terms of how is NYCHA working with Workforce 1
6 Centers, how... how are they working with partners in
7 the communities, how can we strengthen that. So I
8 want to thank you as well Bishop Taylor for the
9 work you're doing. You're new to the Rockaways but
10 you've been doing some great work. And we look
11 forward to continuing to work with you and to build
12 your organization out there to... and to be helpful
13 as we can to ensure public housing residents have
14 more opportunities. Want to just... just one
15 question... How... so I heard you, you gave a great
16 endorsement of the Jobs-Plus program. How can we
17 strengthen and how can we strengthen the
18 organizations part of it? What are some things that
19 we are missing that we should be focusing on a
20 little bit more to make the program more successful
21 and... and is it really reaching NYCHA residents to
22 the degree that you know... of our standard are we
23 reaching the residents of NYCHA with this program?

2 BISHOP TAYLOR: Well speaking from a
3 practitioner's standpoint I think you missed the
4 HRA/NYCHA...

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: I apologize, I
6 had a hearing across the street so...

7 BISHOP TAYLOR: Yeah no no, but I... I
8 mean I... [cross-talk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: ...get to hear...

10 BISHOP TAYLOR: But I think that if they
11 were here they would tell you, give you a list, a
12 myriad of things that would help enhance you know
13 along with resources and whatnot. But I think that...
14 you know I think that the most important component
15 to the success of the jobs plus model is interest.
16 And I think that what's happening now with Council
17 Member Torres... the chair raising you know interest
18 in public housing. Since he's been chair he... he's
19 raised the interest and... and strengthened the
20 dialogue about what's needed to really break cycles
21 of poverty in public housing neighborhoods and
22 really looking at it you know from a system
23 standpoint. When you ask what could strengthen it,
24 what could embolden it... I... I think that you know
25 jobs plus is pretty much a... a precast model that

1 we're always I think all of us always kind of
2 tweaking and innovating to make better for public
3 housing residents. I... I just think that you know
4 more money, more resources to you know explore the
5 expansion. Because it would be you know... it would
6 be a wonderful thing to have it... have every NYCHA
7 development covered by a Jobs-Plus program. But the
8 question is how do you do it. And of course it's a
9 million dollars per site and there's 343 sites. You
10 know that's 343 million dollars. Of course they're
11 not 300 functional sites like that. Just say if it
12 was 200 functional sites, that's 200 million
13 dollars. But how do you zone it... and I use that...
14 that phrase zone model from NYCHA that... actually
15 created... [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I just want to
18 clarify though it's not a Jobs-Plus site per
19 development, it's a cluster of developments. So it
20 wouldn't be 200... [cross-talk] is that...

21 BISHOP TAYLOR: Well no some are
22 individual...

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

24 BISHOP TAYLOR: ...Jobs-Plus sites. And
25 then some are clustered.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right, depending on
3 the size?

4 BISHOP TAYLOR: Depending...

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: In your programming
6 in the Rockaways right now it's not considered a
7 Job Plus...

8 BISHOP TAYLOR: No we don't...

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...model right?

10 BISHOP TAYLOR: ...have Jobs-Plus...

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: We don't... so we
12 don't have it?

13 BISHOP TAYLOR: No.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: NYCHA, if you're
15 listening... requests. Okay.

16 BISHOP TAYLOR: I... I think your... [cross-
17 talk] probably be the CEO and... and...

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Oh but she has
19 people in the room and... and I will speak to... I will
20 see her tomorrow actually.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Just wanted to
22 clarify because this level of the testimony right
23 now is very valuable because we can understand
24 what's actually happening within the program. So
25 for me my question to NYCHA in terms of what are

1 the industries... [cross-talk] that individuals are
2 being placed was challenging because when we're
3 talking about budget and we're talking about
4 expansion we have to know what we're asking for and
5 we have to understand the success. We have to
6 understand per different site what has been the
7 outcome, what has been the outcome of retention. So
8 these questions, a lot of them weren't able to be
9 answered. So it would be helpful to know... and I'm
10 not challenged by Entry Level because let's say
11 this is someone's first time or this is someone's
12 first time after a gap of unemployment where they
13 have to assess skills, fine, but would like to know
14 is it the culinary arts, is it daycare, are we
15 recognizing that New York City is a growing
16 technology sector and we're training people in tech
17 jobs that may not always require an advanced degree
18 upon entry. What are... what are we doing in the way
19 of training? Where are people being placed? If it's
20 the fast food industry, if it's the retail industry
21 let us know. And I... and I think at a testimony like
22 that who does know that kind of stuff should
23 absolutely be who's here.

2 BISHOP TAYLOR: Absolutely. Well I can
3 tell you right off the bat that you know there's a
4 high level of concentration in retail jobs,
5 culinary jobs, entry level jobs to start in most of
6 our Jobs-Plus programs. But the focus is not just
7 getting the job but increasing those earnings over
8 time. So when a person has been on the job for six
9 months I know that our Jobs-Plus site, and we have
10 the director here; Patricia, and... and an employment
11 coordinator that we have Bethany Goleta here as
12 well. You know we... when a person is on the job for
13 six months we... we bring that person back in and say
14 okay you know where you at now, what's happening at
15 the job, are there any postings. And this is
16 actually ongoing during you know the first six
17 months of the job. But when they get to the place
18 where they can apply for a better job in the
19 company or if there's no availability in that
20 company we're... we're looking where can we move you
21 next. You're making \$10.00 an hour, where can we
22 get you to make \$12.00 an hour. That's still not
23 you know a game changer but it's... it's a game
24 changer for them. And so I think it's safe to say
25 that there are... there... there are entry level jobs

2 that we're placing people in. Now there are some
3 outliers. Like we have some people in Far Rockaway
4 that we placed in construction jobs making \$50.00
5 an hour you know. But those are outliers. That's
6 not the...

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: They're pathways
8 to municipal employment. So our individuals that
9 come through the centers, are they given the
10 information in order to qualify and prepare and
11 take the tests for many of the city jobs that are
12 whether it's corrections or the fire department or
13 NYPD. Is that part of it? And do you also work
14 across agency because EDC also has a job program, a
15 job recruitment that hires locally in different
16 communities for different projects. Does it work
17 across agency? And is there also a pathway to
18 municipal employment?

19 BISHOP TAYLOR: Well I think that you
20 know jobs plus now is in a transition to really
21 kind of align itself with the city's career
22 pathways movement.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

24 BISHOP TAYLOR: And I think that with
25 pathways it's really about preparing people for

1
2 that next level job in training and such alike. So
3 think that that's happening now. I think the beauty
4 of you know Jobs-Plus being something that is
5 funded through HRA we have that smorgasbord of
6 interaction between manipulates and as things come.
7 So we're still tweaking and adding those
8 components. But of course municipalities,
9 government jobs, city, state, are things that are..
10 staples that should be low hanging fruit for us
11 since we're intergovernmental. So I think that's
12 what your suggestion is. And then we have Patria
13 here. I don't want to tend.. pretend to know all the
14 stuff that's happening on the ground. At this point
15 14 years later you know I've got 56 people that are
16 doing that on the ground. So Patria can speak to a
17 lot of those. All the questions you asked earlier
18 that couldn't be answered earlier, at least from
19 our site, we can answer those.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member Van
21 Bramer.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
23 very much. I just want to say a few words to Bishop
24 Taylor who obviously has been doing this work for
25 so very long. And a few things are as important as

1
2 ending cycles of poverty. Few things matter as much
3 to... to you. And I know myself is doing that in
4 public housing. And before it became popular in
5 some respects you were doing that work... obviously
6 Queens Bridge, Ravenswood, Woodside Houses, Astoria
7 Houses, incredibly important to us in Western
8 Queens. But I know that... that you have expanded
9 your reach to include public housing all over the
10 city and maybe one day the nation. So you know I
11 just wanted to... to... to thank you. We have been in
12 so many meetings about these kinds of issues. But
13 really to speak on behalf of our little district
14 and say thank you but also to all those people who
15 you've helped and continue to help and Urban
16 Upbound and all the folks that you work with. So I
17 want to thank the chair and Council Member Cumbo
18 for working on this issue so hard. But really to...
19 to thank you for keeping going and... and never
20 stopping even in the face of adversity and... and to
21 let you know that you are appreciated. The work
22 that you do is appreciated. And... and you're
23 changing lives for the better so thank you very
24 much.

25 BISHOP TAYLOR: Thank you.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Indeed. You're a
3 pioneer Bishop Taylor. Thank you so much for your
4 testimony. We're going to move onto the next panel.

5 BISHOP TAYLOR: Thank you. Oh you know...
6 do you want Ruth to give her...

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I think we've... you
8 know... [cross-talk] We know Urban Upbound is doing
9 great work. That's... that's...

10 BISHOP TAYLOR: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And another great
12 provider I think is BronxWorks. So we have Glenn
13 Bullock and Mary Edwards. And then we have Maritza
14 from ALIGN. Where is she? I thought I saw Maritza.
15 Okay.

16 [background comments]

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And we have a... a
18 flexible time limit of three minutes. So... it
19 depends on how compelling the story is so... And
20 actually Esther is a product of the Bronx Works
21 Jobs-Plus so that's worth noting yes, yes.

22 [background comments]

23 MARIE EDWARDS: So we have just handed
24 you the information that we are actually reading
25 from today. And behind that also are the

1 testimonies of two other Jobs-Plus members who
2 could not be present today because they both
3 started new employment opportunities, career
4 advancements actually. So good morning. My name is
5 Marie Edwards. And I am the director of Jobs-Plus
6 at BronxWorks. I would like to thank Council Member
7 Ritchie Torres and members of the New York City
8 Council Committee on Public Housing for the
9 opportunity to take part in today's hearing. In
10 what I have presented to you is basically a
11 timeline of Jobs-Plus. Now the Jobs-Plus at Bronx
12 Works is part of the federal funding through the
13 social innovation fund through the Corporation for
14 National and Community Services that was awarded to
15 the Mayor's Fund for Advancement of New York City
16 and the Center for Economic Opportunity so we are
17 not part of the other components that have followed
18 us since. With regard to that I'm just going to
19 read off certain key points. As you know the Social
20 Innovation Fund was launched nationally as a five-
21 year initiative in 2011 both in the South Bronx and
22 San Antonio Texas with the support of one of our
23 funding partners one of the unique components to
24 the Jobs-Plus at Bronx Works particularly is the
25

1
2 financial empowerment component that was pioneered
3 by the city's Department of Consumer Affairs with
4 the Office of Financial Empowerment. Jobs-Plus at
5 Bronx Works has the clusters for the Tensis,
6 Cortland and Moore Houses in the south Bronx in the
7 area identified as the Hub which is the commercial
8 district area. And we're about a ten-minute walk
9 away from the actual housing developments. At the
10 time that Jobs-Plus was launched it was 15 16
11 households that extended across 34 buildings making
12 up 700... 17 hundred working adults who lived in
13 those developments according to their leases. Now
14 with regard to the enrollment, when they rolled out
15 Jobs-Plus at one point it was only about a 12.5
16 percent saturation rate meaning those who had
17 enrolled into the program based on the outreach
18 that had taken time to put into place in 2011. By
19 2012 we had rolled... enrolled 35 percent of the
20 residents within the NYCHA developments. And also
21 in 2012 we also established a relationship with
22 what was known at the time as Banco Popular and now
23 is known as Popular Community Bank. And we had
24 helped to link participants to personalized
25 customer service there as well as free and

1
2 affordable banking and credit building products. In
3 2013 at that point in time we enrolled 58 percent
4 of the residents within the targeted developments
5 into Jobs-Plus at Bronx Works. Jobs-Plus at Bronx
6 Works in 2013 established the on the job training
7 partnership with Carver Bank. 11 of our
8 participants, NYCHA residents at that time were
9 located within Carver locations and were employed
10 for three to six months on work assignments in
11 order to gain experience in the banking industry.
12 In 2014 we were granted permission to provide
13 services to a new cluster of buildings within the
14 Botansas [sp?] developments, particularly what we
15 refer to as new Batasas [sp?], five and six and
16 additional clusters two and three. In 2015 delivery
17 of the financial counselling had involved... over
18 time we had improved upon our financial component.
19 Glenn Bullock will speak further on that. He serves
20 as the community coordinator for outreach and he is
21 also the former senior financial counsellor for
22 Jobs-Plus. In regards to that that resulted in
23 Bronx Works establishing the first financial
24 fitness club. Esther is our... one of our graduates
25 of our financial fitness club. So it's an extension

1
2 of just simply providing financial empowerment but
3 for those who had gained employment through the
4 program we had taken the opportunity to extend upon
5 that and provide more in depth financial
6 counselling and structure for those.. that needed
7 career advancement opportunities and ways in which
8 to manage their financing. Also at that time we
9 launched a virtual vital referral site. Maybe.. we
10 did a partnership with food bank for New York City.
11 That went very well for the first time in 2015 and
12 2016. At this present time to date we have enrolled
13 88 percent of the NYCHA residents within the
14 clusters that we serve. So at this point we have
15 enrolled approximately 1,497 resident members as we
16 identify them as compared to the number that are
17 noted as being individuals of the 17 hundred that
18 live within the NYCHA developments. In year.. in
19 two..

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I have a... I have a
21 question about...

22 MARIE EDWARDS: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Because I asked
24 NYCHA for data about the impact of Jobs-Plus on
25 EID.

2 MARIE EDWARDS: On EID?

3 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm curious in
4 Bronx. So what has been... what's the progress...
5 behavior?

6 MARIE EDWARDS: In reference to the EID
7 Council Member Torres it has been challenging. It's
8 a very realistic situation because we came to
9 realize that many of the NYCHA residents were not
10 aware of the EID program. However... working with
11 REESE which is a component that was started at the
12 time in which our Jobs-Plus program launched in
13 2011 that helped to bring forth a fruitful
14 progression. So for us with the help of NYCHA REESE
15 who we've worked with considerably we have been
16 able to have 51 participants who have received the
17 earned income disallowance. Now there were more
18 that were eligible but...

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do we know the
20 number who are eligible within your cluster.

21 MARIE EDWARDS: We've been waiting for
22 that exact number...

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: From NYCHA.

24 MARIE EDWARDS: We don't have that
25 number yet but we know for sure there are 51 who

1
2 have received it. One of the things that NYCHA had
3 taken upon themselves to do through NYCHA REESE was
4 to meet with us on site on Jobs-Plus at Bronx
5 Works, bring the data information to us and we
6 would review it together, periodically. And that's
7 how we were able to tally the number of 51 which we
8 keep track of in our data system.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

10 MARIE EDWARDS: So referring back to
11 2016 we went into year two of the VITA [sp?]
12 virtual tax services. We were recognized this year
13 as one of the highest performing sites across the
14 board. Also we introduced a new product with a
15 partnership that we aligned with our financial
16 counselling called Alice Metro. And it's an
17 innovative product which helps New York City
18 residents and we use it towards helping the NYCHA
19 residents as another component to financial
20 counselling to help residents save and build credit
21 using their metro card. So that's something that
22 we're still working on with Alice Metro and it has
23 gone over very well. Also some of the highlights
24 I'd like to present to the city council is that
25 since the inception of Jobs-Plus at Bronx Works we

1
2 have consistently performed at high levels in all
3 components of the model. Enrollment outcomes of
4 that 1497 that we have enrolled into Jobs-Plus over
5 the course of the program we have achieved 844 job
6 placements. Most of the placements were in retail,
7 health, security, food, customer service, and
8 maintenance industries. The average starting salary
9 for these jobs has been \$13.17 an hour. The average
10 hours per week has been 30.52. Now to bring forth
11 other people such as Esther we had two members that
12 we also stand out in terms of their achievements.
13 One of our members; Yoseda Oppenheimer, she not
14 only was a NYCHA resident, she was a Jobs-Plus
15 member and also a Jobs-Plus employee at Bronx
16 Works. And with that she was selected by NYCHA
17 REESE to take part in NYCHA's competitive food
18 business pathways program and has graduated from
19 that program. Taoyuan Grant [sp?] who unfortunately
20 couldn't be here with us today but you do have her
21 testimony within what I've presented to you there.
22 She has started new employment. It's a career
23 advancement for her. She has gone from HRA to DHS.
24 And she is a recipient of an opportunity award
25 since 2015 for excellence in program achievement

1 through the New York City Employment and Training
2 Coalition. Financial counselling outcomes... Glenn
3 will elaborate more so on this but just to give an
4 overview Jobs-Plus was the first... Jobs-Plus at
5 Bronx Works was the first site to successfully
6 integrate financial counselling into Jobs-Plus.
7

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I want to... just
9 two questions and then I want to move it along.

10 MARIE EDWARDS: Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I guess one
12 question is I asked NYCHA does it track the
13 difference between he situationally unemployed and
14 the structurally unemployed, do you keep that
15 distinction in mind in your own records or...

16 MARIE EDWARDS: We don't necessarily
17 have it in our records but there would be
18 information in the case notations that we input
19 into the data system. But basically many of the
20 members that come in, not everyone is job ready.
21 You have to take other steps necessarily to help
22 them become job ready.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: How many... do most
24 of your clients have work history?
25

2 MARIE EDWARDS: Some have a work
3 history, some do not. And some of the work history
4 is scattered as they're not structurally into say
5 one specific area of employment or industry. They
6 may have different areas that they have worked in.
7 And we take it upon ourselves to create different
8 resumes with regard to the industry that we're
9 targeting.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I guess the...
11 the young men of color in public housing who are...

12 MARIE EDWARDS: Mm-hmm.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...among the most
14 vulnerable to disconnection if you...

15 MARIE EDWARDS: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Is there any
17 targeted outreach?

18 MARIE EDWARDS: We have targeted a
19 number of them through... for the first time we've
20 been able to offer onsite training and we've
21 offered that in construction. And OSHA 10
22 construction, OSHA 10 general industry as well as
23 security. And also HHA which was more Spanish led.
24 So a number of the young men who are attracted to
25 those trainings and have come through those

1
2 trainings most recently. Do you know what
3 percentage of your clients fall within the
4 category, young men of color within the category
5 of... age range of 16 to 24?

6 MARIE EDWARDS: 16 to 24, it's a great
7 percentage but I don't have the exact figure for
8 you. But a number then that I have seen come
9 through our doors fit the criteria of what you just
10 mentioned at a high rate.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And is that
12 something that happens organically or is that as a
13 result of targeted outreach?

14 MARIE EDWARDS: Both.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

16 MARIE EDWARDS: Both.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So you're going to
18 speak about the financial empowerment piece and
19 then we'll move onto...

20 MARIE EDWARDS: Yes.

21 GLENN BULLOCK: Good morning everyone.
22 I'm very privileged to be able to speak in front of
23 the... the council today. Councilman and Chairperson
24 Torres it's very nice meeting you again Sir and to
25 the other members of the esteemed members of the

1 council. Very happy to be here today. Just wanted
2 to make a quick comment. A little bit on my
3 background. I'm born and raised in public housing.
4 I'm from one of those housing developments that are
5 right outside a jobs plus catchment area. It's from
6 the Castle Hills Houses. And I'm still in that
7 area. And my experience working with Jobs-Plus at
8 Bronx Works and my experience growing up in the
9 city of New York and public housing I can tell you
10 that from the folks that I know in Castle Hill and
11 Bronx River and Bronx Dale and some of these other
12 developments that don't have a Jobs-Plus there. And
13 having work now since day one of the Jobs-Plus
14 program at Bronx Works and having that perspective
15 I can tell you this program is needed. This program
16 works. And there are a lot of people outside of
17 that Catchment area who I wish... I wish we could
18 serve every resident in public housing in Mott
19 Haven. I mean the interesting thing with Mott Haven
20 is there are two Jobs-Plus programs in Mott Haven,
21 what's considered the Mott Haven Section of the
22 Bronx. And as far as I know the Mott Haven public
23 housing developments is not one of those... is not in
24 the Catchment area in either one of those Jobs-Plus
25

1
2 programs which is a little bit ironic if you... if
3 you would have read... if you lived in Mott Haven and
4 read that wow you guys have two Jobs-Plus programs
5 that serve Mott Haven but if you live in the Mott
6 Haven developments you're not part of that
7 catchment so for me growing up in the Bronx and
8 growing up in public housing it would be my
9 absolute dream, my greatest goal would be whatever
10 work we've been able to do here for that to
11 permeate throughout every housing development so
12 that it doesn't matter where you're from; uptown,
13 the middle of the Bronx, the northeast Bronx, the
14 southeast Bronx that you'll have an opportunity to
15 at least be part of this program. Back when we
16 first began we talked a lot about outreach and
17 engagement. Although I oversaw the financial
18 counselling piece one of the things we realized is
19 that when you say the word financially counselling
20 that's not a really sexy term to get people to walk
21 in the door right. If you say to somebody hey would
22 you like help with a job, absolutely, you say to
23 somebody hey you want help with financial
24 counselling, I'm not even sure what that means. So
25 as a... as somebody who helped coordinate the

1
2 integration of it the financial counsellors were
3 integrated at every piece and at every step of the
4 program. We helped write actually a lot of the
5 marketing materials. Everything... every flyer that
6 went out not only advertised employment but it also
7 advertised financial counselling and we spoke in
8 words that people understood right. We didn't say
9 financial counselling, we said do you have any
10 debts, do... do creditors call you all the time, okay
11 we can help with that. Have you ever tried to open
12 a bank account and you were told no, we can help
13 you with that? And so we made the marketing. We
14 tweaked it to... to really terms where people
15 understood and identified with people. Is that... is
16 that the... the alarm?

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm going to ask
18 you a few questions.

19 GLENN BULLOCK: So...

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah.

21 GLENN BULLOCK: In a nutshell in the
22 four... the five years one of the beauties is
23 everybody gets financial counsel on the way in.
24 It's not one of those opt in things or those things
25 you get after post-employment. And so the 14

1
2 hundred folks who've enrolled in Jobs-Plus at Bronx
3 Works approximately 12 hundred and change have met
4 one on one at least one time with the financial
5 counsellor. 737 of those people I believe have
6 obtained at least one financial outcome. It could
7 be they improved their credit score 35 points which
8 of course as we know at least before the... the stop...
9 what's the... the act that was produced in 2015, stop
10 discrimination...

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: The Fair Chance
12 Act?

13 GLENN BULLOCK: There we go. Well where...

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...stop credit
15 discrimination?

16 GLENN BULLOCK: There we go.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah.

18 GLENN BULLOCK: Where the credit...

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Stop...
20 discrimination now... [cross-talk]

21 GLENN BULLOCK: Yeah I got it mixed up.
22 Where that... so since then that hasn't been as big a
23 issue. But before then we had people who were
24 turned down for jobs because of their credit
25 history. So improving that score 35 points,

1
2 establishing credit for the very first time,
3 assessing affordable banking and financial products
4 as opposed to relying on a lot of those alternate
5 financial services is a big part of what we talked
6 about. Because we know in the Mott Haven Section
7 about 60, 65 percent of folks are either unbanked
8 or under banked. And more than half the residents
9 walking around in Mott Haven have no bank account
10 at all. And so we know they rely on a lot of these
11 predatorily tax prep sites that operate as shoe
12 stores in the summer and... and then toy stores in...
13 in December but in tax season they run a tax site
14 and then they're gone by May and they've ripped a
15 lot of people...

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I'm going to...
17 I'm going to ask a few questions.

18 GLENN BULLOCK: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So the
20 administration... and I want to be careful not to...
21 but... but I sense from the administration some
22 resistance to expand it, to creating a plan for
23 citywide expansion? Because one of the claims is
24 that we don't know enough, we need to test it more.
25 Do you buy that? Do you believe we do know enough?

1
2 Do you believe it needs more testing? What's your...
3 what your take on that is?

4 GLENN BULLOCK: My personal take having
5 lived through it since day 1 we did a lot of
6 preparation. We... we did focus groups. We know our
7 population. We know the people who live... Cortland
8 Houses. We know where the seniors are. We know
9 where the younger folks are. We know where people
10 hang out. We know who are the... the people in the
11 neighborhood who... they may not work but they know
12 everything that's going on so if you give them
13 information they're going to spread that
14 information like wildfire. I can't necessarily
15 speak for the expansion sites. I don't know them as
16 well. I know that they were modeled after the model
17 that we... we sort of pioneered with the financial
18 counselling. My personal opinion is if you find the
19 right organizations who know the targeted
20 developments that you're looking to target moving
21 forward and they've worked with those targeted
22 developments in other ways. Maybe they've done
23 employment services or benefit services that what's
24 needed is not necessarily the expertise. I think we
25 have enough people and different programs operating

1
2 Jobs-Plus sites throughout the city and certainly
3 in the Bronx. I think what's needed is the funding
4 to make it happen the way it needs to happen. It
5 needs to be... all four parts need to be integrated,
6 all four parts.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Execution matters.

8 GLENN BULLOCK: Yeah.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But... but...

10 GLENN BULLOCK: Absolutely. Absolutely.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you believe we
12 know enough to expand it?

13 GLENN BULLOCK: I think...

14 MARIE EDWARDS: There is data. MDRC put
15 out the first part of this data component issue in
16 October 2015. And that data really expresses the
17 impact that the Jobs-Plus program has been able to
18 have in the South Bronx and community as well as
19 San Antonio Texas. So the information is in black
20 and white.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah. Yeah that
22 study indicated that there was a 16 percent
23 increase in the earnings of public housing
24 residents and the program was in place for three
25

1
2 years and those increases endured four years after
3 the program.

4 MARIE EDWARDS: Mm-hmm.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So they were not
6 only substantial, they were sustained.

7 MARIE EDWARDS: Yeah. The intent is for
8 sustainability.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right.

10 MARIE EDWARDS: Because as much as we
11 definitely want there to be funding to have the
12 continuum of these services at some point in time
13 they have to be independent and be able to carry
14 that torch on their own.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And that was about...
16 over a thousand dollars a year which over a seven-
17 year period is 7,000 dollars more which for a low
18 income family that's real money.

19 GLENN BULLOCK: That's huge.

20 MARIE EDWARDS: It is.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: That's real money.
22 Actually I want to ask one more question. You... you...
23 I think Brad Lander would be happy to hear that the
24 Stop the Credit Now Act is having a real impact. I
25 want to know your clients who have criminal

1 records, the fair chance act... or have you... can you
2 tell me about your... because how much of a barrier
3 is a criminal record..

4 MARIE EDWARDS: It is a...

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...to employment for
6 your...

7 MARIE EDWARDS: It is a barrier. What we
8 tend to do is... with Jobs-Plus we also have another
9 workforce program called
10 Strong Father, stronger families. And for those who
11 have that background we connect them not only to
12 Jobs-Plus but to the strong father, stronger
13 families program which really focuses on those with
14 that background. And then we work in coordination
15 to make sure that they have full-fledged services
16 that are provided.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right. Thank you so
18 much. Maritza?

19 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: Good afternoon.
20 Thank you. Good afternoon. Well thank you very much
21 Council Member Torres. Thank you for allowing me to
22 testify today. And thank you to the committee who
23 is here today. My name is Maritza Silva-Farrell. I
24 work at Align. We are community labor coalition
25

1
2 working a... and dedicated to creating good jobs,
3 vibrant communities, and accountable... accountable
4 democracy for all New Yorkers. Align is an
5 organization that has been working around issues in
6 terms of creation of jobs but also how do we
7 recruit good jobs in our communities for many
8 years. So today I mean you have my testimony so I'm
9 not going to read it in detail. But I want to
10 highlight a couple of things that I think are
11 important for today's conversation. Particularly a
12 piece around how are we recruiting members from
13 NYCHA to access to jobs in industries such as
14 construction which an industry that is booming
15 right now given all the construction that's
16 happening in the city. But a little bit of
17 background. Here in 2001 our organization build a
18 coalition called Trades. This coalition actually
19 did a lot of work on connecting sort of the Section
20 3 federal program to ensure that we create career
21 jobs through pre apprenticeship programs for
22 members of NYCHA. So through this... through the
23 years... since 2001, 2009 up to now there has been
24 funding given you know through... through Section 3.
25 And ensuring that if members... if affiliates of the...

1
2 the building construction creates... through the
3 outreach and recruitment on members of those
4 communities for career jobs. Because one thing is
5 just to create one job that can pay you 10, \$11.00
6 an hour without benefits, without protections.. And
7 another thing is actually to ensure that folks get
8 to the career path. And what Esther had shared
9 earlier was really compelling because it's talking
10 about the structural issues right. We had to think
11 about how do we actually structurally change..
12 changing the way we are providing jobs to our
13 communities. So that's what... something that we have
14 been focusing for years now. And what I want to
15 touch on today is on some of the programs that are
16 in place... there are no particularly super
17 successful. They are working with a working
18 progress but I think with all the information we
19 have we'll be able to get there and they bills that
20 are here today we are supporting it because it's
21 important to have that data. I was very surprised
22 to hear that some of the members of NYCHA didn't
23 have some of the answers in terms of the rate and
24 employment that is recruiting and also the
25 retention which is key. So I think we all have a

1 lot of work to do around that area and how do we
2 work together with NYCHA as well as other community
3 groups to... to ensure that that happens. So again
4 I'm not going to testify everything that's here but
5 I wanted to highlight a program that right now is
6 on the goal which is the Build It Back Program. As
7 you'll know after Sandy hit our city we have to
8 rebuild. And many communities where they're
9 rebuilding it to happen we needed to ensure that
10 those folks will be getting this... the houses build
11 but also with... with good jobs and career jobs. So
12 there is an active effort right now for members of
13 the building construction trades to recruit and
14 only displace folks in jobs but also
15 apprenticeships trainings. We're talking about
16 trainings earlier so they... here is a... we place them
17 in preapprenticeship programs. There are so fast... so
18 far successful, like new construction scales, new...
19 are some of the... the new... nontraditional employment
20 for woman to allow woman from NYCHA to access to
21 construction jobs and career jobs. And just to give
22 an example this past Friday because I'm out of time
23 there was a class that was graduated from
24 construction skills. And that class alone had about
25

1
2 30 member... 30 folks who graduated, 15 of them were
3 NYCHA members. Right. So that gives you a little
4 bit of context... just in one class that happened
5 last... ended last week. So I think the Build it Back
6 program is doing a lot of work to ensure that this
7 happened, that the career jobs are in place. And I
8 do believe that we can do better and we can do more
9 and we need to expand. So the job... you know all
10 about... continue working together on that and having
11 the data on having these bills in place will
12 definitely help not only for the construction jobs
13 but also for retail and other jobs. And how do we
14 make sure that those jobs are career jobs. We just
15 say union jobs because those are the jobs that
16 provide safety for our communities. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I know Colombia
18 University actually did a study on the
19 preapprenticeship program, construction skills, and
20 found it to be probably the most effective in the
21 country so...

22 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: That's correct.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So you know of what
24 you speak. Thank... yep, unless there are any
25 concluding comments I will proceed to the next.

2 GLENN BULLOCK: If I can just make one
3 comment on EID. One of those study... the study... one
4 of the really encouraging things about Jobs-Plus
5 studies is not only the effect Jobs-Plus has on
6 people who actually join the program but the effect
7 it has on people in the... in the developments who
8 don't necessarily join the program but hear a lot
9 about the program through the community supports
10 work and through people working. One of the things
11 to measure the impact of EID even more would be...
12 one of the things... great questions to ask would be
13 not only what are the EID numbers that are reported
14 by the Jobs-Plus providers but what are the EID
15 numbers that are actually occurring in those
16 developments. Because I suspect there are a lot of
17 folks who are accessing EID because they heard a
18 lot about that from Jobs-Plus, Bronx Works, or the
19 other providers. And they didn't necessarily join
20 the program and so that number wasn't recorded that
21 way.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah.

23 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: One more thing I
24 forgot to mention is there is right now the project
25 labor agreement between the building construction

1
2 trades council as... NYCHA that is in place right
3 now. And one example is for example the painters...
4 they were able to help 100 people which is a...
5 direct entry into the jobs and it just happened, a
6 couple months. So that's another way in which we
7 can allow folks from the...

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: The council was
9 helpful with that so...

10 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: What was that?

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah. The council...
12 that was part of the preapprenticeship program we
13 put in.

14 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: Yeah. So the...
15 the... so the members of... are actually doing a lot of
16 work on that and a project labor agreements will
17 allow us to continue doing it. So that's why it's
18 really important to ensure that there is
19 enforcement and also is required... those
20 requirements are being looked over as well as like...
21 as to look at the data. Like Build it Back, a
22 program has the Sandy Tracker which is a bill that
23 we... it was passed back then and that actually
24 allows you to see how many people from the
25 neighborhoods or the zip codes where the Sandy

1
2 impacted area happened you are able to see how many
3 people are getting into the jobs, being recruited,
4 graduated from the class. And I think that's
5 something that we should think about a little bit
6 in terms of the how to be... working as well.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And one final
8 question and then I'll move on to the next panel.
9 Do you... so the PLA applies to traditional public
10 housing developments but NYCHA has a... is
11 implementing a program known as RAD, the Rental
12 Assistance Demonstration program?

13 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: Mm-hmm.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Which would convert
15 some public housing units into Project... Section 8
16 which I imagine are outside the purview of the PLA.
17 So are you advocating at all the extension of the
18 PLA to RAD developments?

19 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: Yes. Well I
20 think it is important because of examples that I
21 just mentioned. So we do have to focus on the RAD
22 programs as well. And you right that hasn't been...
23 come up. So we really wanted to create these career
24 jobs for members of our communities in the NYCHA

1
2 neighborhoods we have to make sure that the RAD
3 program also have a PLA.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay great. Thank
5 you so much for your testimony.

6 MARIE EDWARDS: Thank you very much.

7 MARITZA SILVA-FARRELL: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Ms. Shields,
9 Geraldine, Ms. Torres. I'm going to call Ms. Rowe,
10 and Bobbie?

11 [background comments]

12 UNKNOWN FEMALE: Good afternoon. In the
13 interest of time I really just want to introduce
14 Jobs-Plus at Goodwill. So we... we've been working in
15 the Clason Point Sac-row and One Row Houses since
16 2013. And we have been part of the expansion group.
17 And in that time we've been able to help 560 people
18 to find employment. We have 15 hundred members and
19 of those members 800 have been able to achieve a
20 financial outcome. Of that membership roughly 40
21 percent are people between the ages of 18 and 24.
22 And a little more than half of that number is young
23 adults who are African American or Hispanic. Part
24 of the area that we serve has a lot of people who
25 fit that demographic. But we also have really

1 targeted membership and the strategies in order for
2 us to attract them. So we do outreach at Basketball
3 courts. We have block parties and back to school
4 events. And we recruit community coaches who
5 represent the members of the community that need
6 the services the most. So in the... in the way that
7 we service them we do have members who start out in
8 retail or foodservice careers. But the majority of
9 our placements are people who this may not have
10 been their first job but they may have shaky
11 backgrounds in employment. They don't have stable
12 you know education and credentials and all those
13 things together. So we provide the supports that
14 people need not only to get the first job but to
15 move them forward into other careers. So we focus a
16 lot on healthcare and social assistance but we
17 offer onsite training. So for those people and some
18 of the testimonies that you received earlier that
19 said they started at McDonald's or Old Navy we also
20 offer customer service training on site, food
21 handling training. We offer the OSHA... so we really
22 help them to move into what their next steps are.
23 The young men we like to offer specific things that
24 help them in ways that other workforce development
25

1
2 programs don't whereas we can go out to a
3 basketball court and bring juices and chips and
4 water and say hey you know we know you guys are out
5 here 2:00 maybe this is the group we trying to
6 reach, they're not working. And we offer a men's
7 group where we get to connect the young men with
8 older more experienced men who are part of our
9 program or part of our community that they can
10 share with... they can share wisdom and support
11 between one another in ways that they wouldn't
12 normally get at like a Workforce 1... [cross-talk]

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: That's not
14 something I've heard about. That's... that's the
15 first time... a mentoring component. Is...

16 UNKNOWN FEMALE: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Is that... okay.

18 UNKNOWN FEMALE: So we... we have our
19 Men's Group several times a month and they get to
20 come in and it's a safe space for them to talk
21 about whatever they need to talk about in addition
22 to the resume writing and interview skills we talk
23 about some of those other barriers. We also do EID
24 in a way that's a little different because members
25 may not have known about EID before we got there

1
2 but giving them a flyer that says you're eligible
3 for EID is not enough to bring them in. So we have
4 to build trust with them so that they can
5 understand why they should take advantage of it.
6 Sometimes you get a person who works and their
7 parents say oh no I don't want my rent to go up,
8 don't do it. And we have been able to establish
9 trust to help members to understand why they should
10 take advantage of it. And also... I promise to be
11 brief. But also in our developments we meet with
12 members in the tenant association, you'll hear from
13 Geraldine, we get to teach members about what
14 benefits there are to EID and even people who are
15 not members get to benefit from those outreach. So
16 we create fact sheets, we put them in all the
17 buildings. So for every one of our members who has
18 taken advantage of EID there are four other
19 residents in our developments who have also taken
20 advantage of EID... [cross-talk]

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you have... do you
22 have numbers on... on EID?

23 UNKNOWN FEMALE: You'll be able to get
24 those from HRA. We can also forward them to you
25 after...

2 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay I'd be
3 curious.

4 UNKNOWN FEMALE: But for every one of
5 ours there's about four others who are not members
6 that learned about it since we've started in our
7 development. So we really focus...

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: How many of your
9 members have been enrolled in EID, do you know?

10 UNKNOWN FEMALE: We have about 23.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 23, okay.

12 UNKNOWN FEMALE: Yeah we have about 23
13 currently. So we do a lot of outreach in the
14 community. We're visible. Our staff brings
15 employers into the community. So sometimes we've
16 learned that if you give a person an interview and
17 say hey go to Brooklyn you're going to get a job a
18 lot of times they won't go. We live in an area
19 where the MTA service is pretty awful. So we bring
20 employers and training providers to our
21 developments for that initial meeting and then it
22 empowers the members to see oh well you know I
23 really could get this job. Maybe it is worth going
24 that extra step to go outside of the community. And
25 we bring in... we have a... a current relationship with

1
2 the Montefiore healthcare professions opportunity
3 grant. So they come into our area and they present
4 to our members opportunities so they can see the
5 career pathway options in a way that they wouldn't
6 have normally seen it if we wouldn't bring it all
7 the way to where they are. Because we understand
8 the times that they need to meet people, what they
9 need to do, how to prepare them. So we have... the
10 last, my very last point is that where we're
11 located just as he mentioned the castle hill and
12 other sections around us our developments are
13 Clason Point, Sackwern, and Monroe Houses. But
14 across the street from them is Soundview Houses
15 where I grew up. And one block away is Bronx... is
16 assorta myor [sp?] and there's Bronx River and
17 Castle Hill. Those are large developments of people
18 who need our services. And with 10 percent
19 available for us to service outside of it we just
20 can't do them the justice that they need. They're
21 coming in daily from Gun Hill, Eden Wall [sp?],
22 even from other parts of the Bronx to beg for
23 services that we're... we're saying well here's a
24 referral to Workforce 1, they're like no no. I
25 don't want the Workforce 1 referral. I want to be

1 here. I want to get what they get. I need a OSHA
2 card. I can't afford a security certificate. I need
3 those things. And we're saying well I'm sorry,
4 here's your referral they can maybe help you when...
5 they need to have their own access to Jobs-Plus and
6 to the services and the way that we're able to
7 offer things to Clason Point, Sackwern, and Monroe.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

10 GERALDINE: Good afternoon. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for
12 joining us.

13 GERALDINE: My name is Geraldine
14 Nicolson Hopper and I am a resident customer client
15 of the New York City Housing Authority. But I also
16 serve in the role as the president of Clason Point
17 Gardens. This is my second time around from 2000 to
18 2007. I served as a tenant resident and I took a
19 leave of absence and I just came back December
20 2015. And for the last six months I had the
21 pleasure of meeting Job Plus and to understand our
22 demographic of Clason Point Gardens we are like a...
23 we have a little plot of land but a back and a
24 front yard and it's very hard for them to actually
25 give the information that is necessary for them to

1
2 come into Jobs-Plus because we have nothing that we
3 can post any of the information in. So Job Plus is
4 actually going door to door knocking to give out
5 the information that will service the men and women
6 and the young to get opportunity to live a good
7 quality of life. We have monthly meetings so that I
8 can understand what the program is, who is going to
9 the program. I know that they are hitting a lot
10 about 18 to 24-year-old men that were standing on
11 corners. And now they are actually going into their
12 office and sitting down and learning what it is to
13 make a resume and to learn that they are having
14 children in the community and they have to play a
15 role as fathers and to make sure they provide for
16 family. And I think that this program should be
17 extended through all of the New York City housing
18 authority. I mean there's no more community... where
19 we can have dialect in order for us to take. But we
20 have a lot of money that was allocated to us under
21 the TPA and is just sitting there. And we need to
22 know what we need to do with that to bring this
23 village and community and all of the said named
24 developments that un... that is under the New York
25 City housing authority umbrella. And I think that

1
2 this could be another factor of how we can get some
3 of that money moved and how we can contribute to
4 taking this here initiative and putting it directly
5 into the community. And I'm going to work
6 strategically with her to make sure that my voice
7 is being heard and that the children and any adults
8 in my community get a good quality of life. And I
9 thank you for my voice today.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for
11 coming.

12 GERALDINE: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Ms. Torres.

14 TORRES: Good morning. My name is Iska
15 Torres and I'm the Resident Association President
16 for Alfred E. Smith Houses. I'm in favor of this
17 piece of legislation only because... I will speak
18 only on the Section 3 because that's the most
19 impact... as you know smith houses sits on Ground
20 Zero. Also we got flooded by Sandy so we're a
21 flooding site. We had damage done even when Irene
22 came even though she didn't do but the winds and
23 the rains did a lot of damage. And so we have a lot
24 of Section 3 work that will be coming because of
25 Sandy. I will say that the people from the recovery

1
2 for Sandy actually did a job fair after me being
3 persistent and I'll leave it at that. 600 and
4 something registered and 300 and something actually
5 came to the fair. They were I think a little bit
6 surprised but residents did come out. And the
7 reason I'm in favor is because Section 3 has been a
8 mystery. When I went to Washington DC for a
9 workshop I learned a lot. It was the best TPA funds
10 that I've spent in terms of getting knowledge about
11 what is actually supposed to be. So it gives me a...
12 a bench... a sense of when I having a conversation of
13 where I stand with the contractors. Historically
14 what they do is they might hire one person. And
15 then they'll come in from another development, one
16 contractor told me well I've had this person... he's
17 my Section 3 person for 15 years. I would think
18 that after 15 years he should be your regular
19 employee. If you're making all this money from
20 federal funding. That's like outrageous and yes
21 they hired another one of my residents because I
22 wasn't having it. But the reality of it is that
23 I've been president for six years and it has been
24 so hard to understand the Section 3 piece, for
25 resident leaders to really be able to help their

1 residents get... I think this Workforce thing is
2 wonderful to really have a sense of you know how
3 are they... you know the residents going to get
4 permanent employment. And I thank the council... the
5 whole council for once again reinstating the
6 seasonal workers because that gives jobs to the
7 residents. But one of the issues that I'm having is
8 that it's only become seasonal and they haven't...
9 and right now NYCHA should be hiring new people and
10 why not take it from the seasonal people who are
11 working there making a permit. One of the things
12 that made NYCHA really really good was because your
13 workforce came from residents. I'm going to make
14 this short. And so I am real clear that the
15 contractors or anybody on the Section 3 that hires
16 a resident... and this is important because I've
17 learned this from experience, when these
18 contractors come in, if they're willing to hire
19 somebody on the Section 3 that your employ... they're
20 going to do the job. They're going to do it
21 correctly. They're not going to cheat on garbage.
22 They're not going to bring you work that's half-ass
23 done like what happened the other day, excuse my
24 French, where that house collapsed, don't ask me
25

1
2 how that happened, you know it was Sandy stuff
3 because I've already had that kind of experience.
4 And so it's important for this law so that
5 everybody's up front. Because basically the way
6 Sandy has... the Section 3 has been running it's... we
7 have the saying in Spanish... [speaking Spanish] you
8 know if you have a godfather you get baptized, and
9 that's the way the jobs have been. And I don't
10 think it's fair to the residents in general you
11 know. And I try to be real objective you know about
12 who gets the job and making sure that my residents
13 get a job. The only thing I ask for them is please
14 don't mess up because if you do then it reflects
15 badly on me and the next time I want to recommend
16 somebody they're not going to get a job. And so
17 that's the only thing that I ask of my residents,
18 you know. So... and... so this... a law like this making
19 Section 3 transparent you know for a change really
20 because it's like a mystery. It's like... you... with...
21 I... I... I say this because you know... you know me... at
22 least the chair, and you know how I can be in terms
23 of articulating and I have gotten like the
24 runaround and totally flustered over the Section 3
25 piece in terms of them hiring my residents so that

1
2 you know because that's the law, that's the law.
3 And my congresswoman, every time I see her she says
4 to me I want X amount of dollars for Section 3.
5 Make sure your residents get the jobs. And I'm like
6 really? You know. And so that's why I'm saying. And
7 my congresswoman is Nydia Velazquez was actually
8 very... very respected in HUD, that we need to look
9 at how this Section 3 is handled and how the
10 resident leaders can have better access to
11 information so that they can give it to their
12 residents. Thank you for your time.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm going to use
14 that expression; if you have a godfather you get
15 baptized, that's a good one.

16 JOY ROWE: Good afternoon. My name is
17 Joy Rowe. I'm the Support Services Manager at Green
18 City Force. In this role I partner with young
19 adults in Green City Forces Program to help them
20 problem solve around personal issues that can hold
21 them back from fully participating in the program
22 and being successful in employment or as college
23 graduates. I witnessed firsthand the impact that
24 GCS rigorous program has on young adults in NYCHA
25 who choose to join to make a change in their lives

1 and in the lives of NYCHA communities. The goal of
2 expanding jobs for residents of public housing is
3 geared to our work at Green City Force. NYCHA is a
4 city within a city. The scope of NYCHA and the
5 massive talent pool that exists in NYCHA's
6 communities merits dedicated and strategic
7 investments coordinated.. and coordinated efforts.
8 100 percent of the young adults ages 18 to 24 in
9 our program are residents of NYCHA recruited in
10 partnership with NYCHA's REESE department. Our
11 alumni body is drawn from over 110 NYCHA
12 developments across the city. I want to take this
13 opportunity to thank the city council on behalf of
14 all of us at GCF for the critical support you have
15 provided and continue to provide that helps us make
16 our program possible and for the leadership of the
17 committee in particular on issues that touch our
18 members and programs every day. GCF applauds the
19 efforts of the city council to expand.. expand
20 employment opportunities for NYCHA residents such
21 as the members and alumni of Green City Force.
22 Since 2009 we have worked in partnership with REESE
23 to recruit our cohort. In addition, we have a
24 fruitful partnership with Jobs-Plus through which
25

1 existing sites refer candidates to Green City
2 Force. It would be beneficial to grow the presence
3 of Jobs-Plus to reach even more residents and
4 partnering groups. Youth unemployment in NYCHA
5 communities is a major concern for every community
6 in NYCHA and all residents should have access to
7 the resources that Jobs-Plus provides. GCF works
8 closely with city agencies such as the Mayor's
9 Office of Criminal Justice through the Mayor's
10 Action Plan which has enlisted a broad range of
11 partners to bring resources to NYCHA sites targeted
12 through this effort. We support any effort to bring
13 additional city agency attention, resources, and
14 collaboration to NYCHA residents. GCF has had
15 graduates... employment under Section 3 in
16 partnership with REESE. We have found REESE to be a
17 creative and engaged partner. GCF is currently
18 engaged in a planning process with REESE and GCF
19 employer partners, Con Edison, L&M Development
20 Partners, and Association for Energy affordability.
21 As part of the Jobs First Learning Community
22 dedicated to expanding employment for young adults
23 in New York City. The goal of our team's
24 collaboration is to create a solid career pathways
25

1
2 for graduates of Green City Force. As part of this
3 process we have been actively working with REESE on
4 how GCF graduates can access employment
5 opportunities and the sectors for which they are
6 trained leveraging Section 3. In our experience
7 NYCHA is committed to more visibility around
8 Section 3, understands the regulations, and
9 ensuring that Section 3 can be leveraged to create
10 equal... I mean to create quality opportunity for
11 residents. Thank you.

12 BOBBY: How you guys doing? My name is
13 Bobby... from Albany Houses. I work with a
14 construction company called TBX. I'm also a Section
15 3 worker. I started in 2011 as a laborer for...
16 Plumbing and Heating Company... I mean
17 incorporations. They give me a lot of opportunities
18 as far as learning how to pipe... cut pipes and
19 fitting, brick laying, safety management, you know
20 different things in construction. They gave me a
21 lot of opportunity. After working for... Plumbing and
22 Heating I moved on to work for EVS management
23 incorporation what... was specialize in fencing...
24 extended fences on roofs or housing projects and
25 things like that... houses in Flushing Queens. After

1
2 working for them I moved on back to my... my
3 residential housing complex which is Albany Houses
4 working for TBX... construction... masonry inspector.
5 That company... they... they really took me in and
6 taught me a lot of things. I just made my 90 day...
7 [background comments] yeah. So they gave me a raise
8 and they took me into the family. So with all that
9 being said Section 3, it's a lot of odds but it's a
10 lot of evens too if you put your best foot forward
11 and... and do what you got to do. So... out there for
12 people that want it. That's all I could say as far
13 as that. If you don't want it... I mean people
14 complain about not knowing about the program but I
15 also run into a lot of people around my housing
16 complex who ask me how did I get the job. And I'm
17 always free to give them that information. Now what
18 you do after that is on you. But I... I get a lot of
19 positive results. Like right now I'm... in my housing
20 complex we have a lot of 20 30 Section 3 workers.
21 So it's there if they want it. And I just want to
22 say they did leave a positive impact on me as a
23 person so... that's about it.

24 [background comments]

25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to thank you
for your testimony.

[cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So we're submitting
for the record the following documents; a letter
from Denise Harper, a letter from the Sackwern
Tenants Association, the TA President Loretta
Masterson, a letter from Geraldine Hopper, a letter
from Ms. Riviera, a letter from Carmelita Stroiter,
a letter from Tilden Rucker, a letter from Jacob
Ortiz, a letter for Rosh... Rashed McKinsey, Rashad
McKinney, and a letter from the Assistant Director
for Jobs-Plus Staten Island Angela DAiuto. With
that, this meeting is adjourned.

[gavel]

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 July 9, 2016