

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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July 27, 2009
Start: 1:35 pm
Recess: 1:45 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
JOEL RIVERA
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Council Member Maria del Carmen
Arroyo
Council Member Inez Dickens
Council Member Mathieu Eugene
Council Member John C. Liu
Council Member Rosie Mendez
Council Member Kenneth Mitchell
Council Member Helen Sears

A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Joel Rivera
Chairperson
Committee on Health

Staff members

Inez Dickens
Sponsor Intro 642-A
New York City Council Member

Adira Siman
Committee Counsel
Committee on Health

Joseph Mancino
Policy Analyst
Committee on Health

Robert Newman
Legislative Director

William Martin
Committee Clerk
Committee on Health

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[START 1001]

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MR. JERRY STAFFIERI: This is a test for the Committee on Health. Today's date is July 27th, 2009 and the meeting is being recorded by Jerry Staffieri.

[END 1001]

[START 1002]

[Gavel banging]

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Joel Rivera. I'm the Chair of the City Council's Health Committee. Today we will be voting on a piece of legislation, Intro 642-A, sponsored by my colleague Council Member Inez Dickens which would prohibit smoking on hospital grounds. For the purposes of this legislation, hospital grounds include hospitals, diagnostic and treatment centers, as well as residential health care facilities. The Committee most recently heard testimony on this bill on May 21st of 2009.

Intro 642-A is a common sense piece of legislation. When one is seeking care at a hospital or other health care facility there should not be--they should not be subjected to a

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2 plume of harmful smoke when entering or exiting
3 the facility. Permitting smoking on the grounds
4 of these facilities send the wrong public health
5 message. Additionally similar versions of this
6 legislation have already been enacted throughout
7 our country by numerous states and localities
8 including the states of Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho,
9 Washington and cities such as Duluth, Minnesota,
10 Sioux City? Sioux City, okay. Iowa. Buffalo in
11 New York. The cost of smoking is grave and
12 bystanders should not be subjected to unwanted
13 second-hand smoke as they are entering or exiting
14 hospitals of all places.

15 A study by the City Department of
16 Health and Mental Hygiene revealed more than 2.5
17 million non-smoking adults in New York City have
18 been exposed to such a level of second-hand smoke
19 that measurable residue can be found in their
20 bodies. Clearly this legislation further protects
21 innocent bystanders. I would like to thank the
22 staff of the Committee for their hard work. And
23 before we begin, let me introduce my colleagues
24 who are here with us. We have Council Member
25 Mathieu Eugene. We have Council Member Mitchell--

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2 sorry about that. We have Council Member Helen
3 Sears, Councilwoman Maria del Carmen Arroyo and
4 Council Member Inez Dickens. And at this point in
5 time, let me introduce my colleague who sponsored
6 the piece of legislation, Inez, Dickens, who will
7 make a statement about this particular piece of
8 legislation.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [Laughing]

10 Thank you Majority Leader Rivera for allowing me
11 to make brief remarks in support of Intro 642-A
12 which bans smoking around entrances to hospitals.
13 When people are on their way to treatments,
14 appointments, visits or other business in New York
15 City hospitals, they must not be forced to walk
16 through a cloud of smoke to get into the
17 buildings. This does not promote good health or
18 wellness. This ban is a common sense measure that
19 will prevent bad habits from impacting on the
20 health of those who are entering a hospital to
21 improve their own well being.

22 You wouldn't hold an Alcoholics
23 Anonymous meeting in the back room of a bar. In
24 the same way, people on their way to a smoking
25 cessation program or any other medical appointment

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2 should be in a smoke-free environment. It's just
3 common sense. I want to thank the staff who
4 helped me and worked on this piece of legislation,
5 Adira Siman, the Committee's Counsel, Joel Mancino
6 and Policy Analyst Rob Newman, Policy Director. I
7 urge my colleagues to vote in favor of 642-A.

8 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Seeing no
9 others looking to give some testimony at this
10 time, I will ask the clerk to please call the
11 roll.

12 MR. WILLIAM MARTIN: William
13 Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call on the
14 Committee on Health, Introduction 642-A. Council
15 Member Rivera.

16 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I vote aye.

17 MR. MARTIN: Sears.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: I vote aye.

19 MR. MARTIN: Arroyo.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

21 MR. MARTIN: Dickens.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye.

23 MR. MARTIN: Eugene.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye
25 and I would like to have my name added as a co-

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2 sponsor.

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MR. MARTIN: Mitchell.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MITCHELL: I vote

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aye.

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MR. MARTIN: By a vote of 6 in the

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affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,

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the item has been adopted. Council Members,

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please sign the Committee report.

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COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Flavored

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cigarettes next.

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CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: My colleague

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just stated flavored cigarettes are next. We're

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going to keep the vote; we're going to keep the

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vote open for a few minutes so other members who

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are on their way over will have a chance to vote.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you.

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[Background conversations]

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[Pause]

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MR. MARTIN: Council Member Liu.

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COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: I want to

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thank the Chairman for holding this hearing and

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this vote. I vote yes.

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[Background conversations]

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[Pause]

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MR. MARTIN: No we're good.

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Council Member Mendez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I vote aye.

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[Background conversations]

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MR. MARTIN: Final vote on the

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Committee on Health is now 8 in the affirmative, 0

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in the negative and no abstentions. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Okay. The

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meeting is adjourned.

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[Gavel banging]

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[END 1002]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Laura L. Springate certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura L. Springate". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Signature _____ Laura L. Springate _____

Date _____ August 15, 2009 _____