

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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November 2, 2023  
Start: 10:23 a.m.  
Recess: 10:30 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Lynn C. Schulman, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joann Ariola  
Charles Barron  
Oswald Feliz  
Crystal Hudson  
Mercedes Narcisse  
Julie Menin  
Marjorie Velázquez  
Kalman Yeger

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Check one, two.

3 Prerecorded sound test for the Committee on Health.

4 Today's date is November 2, 2023. It's being recorded  
5 by Michael Leonardo, City Council Chambers.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and  
7 welcome to today's New York City Council hearing for  
8 the Committee on Health.

9 At this time, we ask that you silence  
10 cell phones and electronic devices to minimize  
11 disruptions throughout the hearing.

12 We thank you for your cooperation.

13 Chair, we are ready to begin.

14 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: [GAVEL] Good  
15 morning. I am Council Member Lynn Schulman, Chair of  
16 the New York City Council Committee on Health.

17 Today, the Committee will vote on two  
18 pieces of legislation, Proposed Introduction number  
19 687-A sponsored by Majority Leader Powers and  
20 Proposed Introduction number 968 sponsored by Council  
21 Member Narcisse.

22 I would like to thank the Members of the  
23 Committee who are present and on Zoom. I want to  
24 acknowledge we've been joined by Majority Leader  
25 Keith Powers, Council Member Gale Brewer, Council

2 Member Velázquez, Council Member Barron, Council  
3 Member Narcisse, Council Member Ariola, Council  
4 Member Oswald Feliz, Council Member Menin, and on  
5 Zoom Council Member Hudson.

6 I am proud to be a sponsor on both of  
7 these bills. Yesterday, I joined the Mayor and the  
8 Health Commissioner to announce the launch of Healthy  
9 NYC, a new campaign to increase New Yorkers' life  
10 expectancy by 2030. It is unquestionable that these  
11 bills will help us move towards achieving those  
12 goals.

13 Introduction 687-A will require chain  
14 restaurants to post added-sugar icons and warning  
15 statements next to menu boards, menus, and on or near  
16 food items on display that exceed a specified level  
17 of added sugars. According to the U.S. Centers for  
18 Disease Control and Prevention, eating and drinking  
19 too much sugar can lead to health problems such as  
20 weight gain and obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart  
21 disease. I would like to invite Majority Leader  
22 Powers to make a brief statement on his bill.

23 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Thank you to  
24 Chair Schulman and thank you for your support. Good  
25 morning and thank you for letting me give a brief

2 statement on Intro. 687-A, the Sweet Truth Act, which  
3 the Committee is voting on here today. I'll keep my  
4 remarks short and sweet.

5           (INAUDIBLE) bill to help New Yorkers make  
6 dietary decisions and lead healthier lives. With  
7 diabetes and heart disease claiming far too many  
8 lives each year, the Sweet Truth Act is a necessary  
9 step to inform New Yorkers about the added sugar  
10 they're consuming when they eat out at large chain  
11 restaurants. Research has shown that about one New  
12 York City resident dies every 90 minutes from  
13 diabetes-related causes. With November marking  
14 Diabetes Awareness Month, there couldn't be a better  
15 time for the City Council to take this important step  
16 forward to address this national epidemic.

17           The Sweet Truth Act builds on a law that  
18 we passed last term requiring chain restaurants in  
19 New York City to post a sugar warning icon on the  
20 menu next to all items that exceed the FDA  
21 recommended daily value for added sugar. Just as  
22 we've been accustomed to seeing calories, sodium  
23 warnings, and other nutritional information when  
24 we're ordering food, this bill will raise awareness

2 about added sugar so we can better regulate our  
3 intake.

4 I want to thank my partners in this  
5 legislation including Chair Schulman and all the  
6 Health Committee Staff, Manhattan Borough President  
7 Mark Levine who spearheaded this issue last term, and  
8 my 37 Colleagues who have signed on as co-sponsors. I  
9 want to thank the advocates who have supported this  
10 legislation, particularly the Center for Science in  
11 the Public Interest who are here today, the  
12 Interfaith Public Health Network, Korean Community  
13 Services for Metropolitan New York, Gambian Youth  
14 Association, and the Association of Senegalese of  
15 America.

16 All of us deserve to know what's really  
17 in our food so we can keep ourselves and our families  
18 healthy. I think today is a big step to make sure  
19 that when we talk about sugar we're giving New  
20 Yorkers a better opportunity to regulate and eat  
21 healthier.

22 Thank you, again, and I look forward to  
23 passing this important legislation.

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2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you, Majority  
3 Leader. I would like to invite Council Member  
4 Narcisse to make a brief statement on her bill.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you, Chair  
6 Schulman and my fellow Members of the Health  
7 Committee. I'm here to express my sincere gratitude  
8 to your support of Intro. 968-B.

9 This bill is a vital step toward  
10 improving care for New Yorkers with sickle cell  
11 disease, and your commitment to this cause has been  
12 unwavering. Your partnership is invaluable. Together,  
13 we are championing early detection, unbiased  
14 treatment, and equitable health outcomes. My goal  
15 with this legislation is clear, to educate, to  
16 prevent, and to manage sickle cell disease with the  
17 highest standard of care. It is about providing  
18 equitable health opportunities and ensuring that pain  
19 management is free of bias and based on the best  
20 practices and understanding. I look forward to  
21 working with you all to see Intro. 968-B enacted,  
22 affirming our City's unwavering commitment to health  
23 equity. Thank you for joining me in this crucial  
24 fight. Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you, Council  
3 Member.

4 In closing, I would like to thank my  
5 Staff and the Health Committee Staff for their work  
6 on this.

7 Clerk, we are ready to begin the vote.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good  
9 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call  
10 vote Committee on Health, both items are coupled.  
11 Chair Schulman.

12 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: I vote aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Yeger.  
14 Feliz.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: I vote aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Barron.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: To explain my  
18 vote. I want to vote aye on both, but I want to  
19 extremely commend Council Member Narcisse for the  
20 piece on sickle cell anemia, but anytime we mention  
21 sickle cell anemia, we must mention the Black Panther  
22 Party because in the 1960s and early '70s it was the  
23 Black Panther Party that made sickle cell anemia, put  
24 it on the map, and required testing, and every state  
25 across the country was appreciative and honored the

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2 Black Panther Party for making sickle cell anemia a  
3 national issue. With that, I say aye on both.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Aye on all.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
7 you. Menin.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Narcisse.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: I want to say  
11 thank you to all the Staff that worked on this bill  
12 and, yes, Council Member Barron, I heard about the  
13 Black Panthers and I say thank you for that, and I  
14 vote aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:  
16 Velázquez.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: I vote aye on  
18 all.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ariola.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: I vote aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: One  
22 moment.

23 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: We've been joined  
24 by Council Member Yeger as well.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Council  
3 Member Yeger.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I vote aye on 968  
5 and no on 687. Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: With a  
7 vote of nine in the affirmative, zero in the  
8 negative, and no abstentions, the Committee has  
9 adopted Proposed Introduction 968-B, and with eight  
10 in the affirmative, one in the negative, and no  
11 abstentions, the Committee has adopted Introduction  
12 687-A.

13 Madam Chair, that is a full Committee.

14 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you everyone.

15 I now declare the hearing closed. [GAVEL]

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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 November 7, 2023