

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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December 18, 2025

Start: 12:41 p.m.

Recess: 12:57 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - 8TH FLOOR - HEARING
ROOM 3

B E F O R E: Pierina Ana Sanchez, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Alexa Avilés
Eric Dinowitz
Oswald Feliz
Crystal Hudson
Lincoln Restler

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Gale A. Brewer
Amanda Farias

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check on Housing and Buildings recorded by James
4 Marino on December 18, 2025, in Hearing Room 3.

5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good afternoon. Welcome
6 to the New York City Council vote on the Committee on
7 Housing and Buildings.

8 At this time, please silence all
9 electronics and do not approach the dais.

10 Thank you for your cooperation.

11 Chair, you may begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [GAVEL] Good
13 morning. I'm Council Member Pierina Sanchez, Chair of
14 the Committee on Housing and Buildings. Today marks
15 the final Housing vote of this Council term and,
16 while we did not reach resolution on every housing
17 issue that we set out to tackle, we nonetheless leave
18 behind a clear agenda and strong track record, one
19 defined by confronting the housing crisis, protecting
20 tenants that live in unsafe conditions, expanding
21 fair pathways to home ownership and keeping New
22 Yorkers safe in their homes.

23 Today, the Committee will be voting on
24 the following slate of legislation. Intro. 571-A,
25 sponsored by Council Member Gale Brewer, directs the

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2 city to study the feasibility of building affordable
3 housing on Wards Island, an important step in
4 identifying new publicly controlled sites where
5 deeply affordable housing can be created.

2 My Introduction 1321-A creates the New
3 York City Existing Building Code, a modern,
4 standalone set of rules specifically designed for
5 older buildings. This code replaces a confusing
6 patchwork of outdated standards with clear, more
7 practical requirements that make it easier for
8 existing buildings to comply with while keeping
9 residents safe, and is the product of a 10-year
10 process led by the Department of Buildings.

11 Intro. Number 1422-A makes technical
12 updates needed to align the Ad Code and the
13 Construction Codes with the new Existing Building
14 Code.

15 My Proposed Introduction 1490-B updates
16 the City's Energy Conservation Code to align with the
17 New York State Energy Code with amendments tailored
18 to New York City's building stock. This ensures
19 energy standards that improve safety and efficiency,
20 lowering long-term costs, and reflects the realities
21 of maintaining older buildings in the city. I know
22 that's what everybody's here for today.

23 Thank you to the Housing and Buildings
24 Committee Staff, Senior Legislative Counsel Austin
25 Malone; Legislative Counsel, Billy Eck; Senior Policy

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2 Analyst, Jose Conde; Policy Analyst, Dirk Spencer,
3 Finance Analyst, Carla Naranjo; and Data Scientist,
4 Reese Hirota. I also want to thank former Committee
5 Counsel, Taylor Zelony, and former Policy Analyst,
6 Andrew Bourne, for their service to the Committee
7 during my tenure. And finally, of course, thanks to
8 my District Team, Chief-of-Staff Maria Villalobos,
9 Deputy Chiefs Ben Ratner and Kim Castellanos, Gerard
10 Fernandez, Dylan Campos, and the entire team.

11 I am joined today by, roll call, Council
12 Member Abreu, Council Member Dinowitz, Council Member
13 Feliz, Council Member Avilés, Council Member Hudson,
14 Brewer, Restler, and Fariás.

15 Before I ask the Clerk to call the roll,
16 I will call on my Colleagues to talk about their
17 legislation. First, Majority Leader, Amanda Fariás.

18 MAJORITY LEADER FARÍAS: Thank you, Chair
19 Sanchez, and thank you to the Members of the
20 Committee on Housing and Buildings for allowing me to
21 speak on my bill, Intro. 1120-A. This legislation
22 establishes timeline and communication requirements
23 in the cooperative sale and purchase process,
24 addressing a longstanding deficiency where applicants
25 have been left without any response at all. At its

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2 core, the bill prioritizes transparency and fairness
3 while combating discrimination in one of the most
4 significant transactions a New Yorker can make,
5 purchasing a home. Since its introduction, Intro.
6 1120 has benefited from extensive discussion,
7 stakeholder input, and collaboration with City
8 agencies and my Colleagues in government who co-
9 sponsor this bill. As a result, the version before
10 the Committee today reflects important refinements
11 that strengthen enforcement while ensuring the law is
12 workable for cooperative boards and managing agents.
13 Most notably, enforcement will now be handled by the
14 Department of Housing Preservation and Development
15 through an escalating penalty-based system. HPD will
16 issue summonses returnable to OATH for any violations
17 that were found, which is an approach consistent with
18 how the agency already enforces housing laws across
19 the city. This is intended to ensure accountability
20 without disrupting cooperative governance or forcing
21 outcomes that may not be commensurate with the
22 infraction. The bill also includes procedural
23 safeguards where cooperative corporations will be
24 required to provide application and transfer
25 requirements upfront, acknowledge receipts of

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2 applications within a defined period, identify
3 whether applications are complete or not, and if it
4 isn't, provide feedback on how the application was
5 incomplete and issue decisions within a reasonable
6 timeframe once completeness is established. While
7 many cooperative boards already operate responsibly
8 and in good faith, the absence of basic procedural
9 expectations has created inconsistent outcomes,
10 delayed transactions, and a system where
11 discriminatory practices can persist without
12 accountability. Intro. 1120-A is the remedy. For
13 those reasons, I respectfully urge my Colleagues to
14 support Intro. 1120-A and to vote to advance it out
15 of committee today. Thank you, Chair, for a moment to
16 speak.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Majority
18 Leader, and congratulations.

19 Now, Council Member Brewer.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very
21 much. I'm talking about Intro. 571, which initiates a
22 study on the feasibility of building affordable
23 housing on Wards Island, looking at factors like
24 cost, restrictions, and potential scale. I want to
25 thank Sierra Townsend for her work on this. I

2 remember when Ed Townsend, you have to have gray hair
3 to know who he was, but he founded Roosevelt Island.
4 It was called Welfare Island. And it was an idea that
5 he had, and then now you know what is there, housing,
6 many other aspects of our city. So I would like to
7 look at the same thing for Wards Island. There's a
8 lot, it's in Manhattan, by the way, in case people
9 don't understand that part. And it's a bit crazy.
10 There's certainly a state institution there. There's
11 a fire training program there. There's a shelter
12 there. Two shelters that I know for sure, and a water
13 treatment plant. So it's an unusual place to think
14 about housing. Love to see Mitchell-Lama 2.0, that
15 would be certainly affordable forever, not like
16 Roosevelt Island that went private. So anyway, I
17 appreciate the work that went into this, and we look
18 forward to a very robust study, because there's a lot
19 of available land on Wards Island. If you haven't
20 been there, you should go see it. Thank you very
21 much. Take the M35 bus, and you're right there. And
22 by the way, don't pay, because nobody pays on the M35
23 bus. Thank you very much.

24 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: All right. Thank
25 you, Council Member Brewer.

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4 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so
5 much, Chair Sanchez. I just want to begin by just
6 acknowledging that I think you've done a phenomenal
7 job leading this Committee. When I end up talking to
8 constituents about policy issues in the Council, I
9 think you're the only Chair that I regularly
10 reference the work that you're doing, and the effort
11 that you've made to really help us address the
12 affordability crisis. You are as smart and as
13 dedicated as any Member of this Body, and we're
14 really fortunate to have you leading this Committee.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: They're two
21 different islands.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: All right. You
23 tell me. It's in Manhattan. It all seems connected,
24 but I am very proud to be talking about Intro. 994
25 today. New York City keeps getting hotter and hotter

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2 every single year, and this extreme heat is extremely
3 dangerous. Indeed, the Health Department has
4 estimated that 580 New Yorkers are dying annually
5 from extreme heat, disproportionately, not
6 surprisingly, in low-income, Black and Brown
7 communities. The number one risk factor from climate
8 change is extreme heat, and when you look at who's
9 dying from extreme heat, the most common factor
10 amongst those people is their lack of access to
11 cooling in the home. 107 years ago, back in 1918, New
12 York required landlords to provide heating for
13 tenants following a coal famine, I didn't know there
14 was such a thing as a coal famine, but in researching
15 this, it's long past time that we do the exact same
16 for tenants and provide access to cooling. An
17 apartment is simply not safe, and it's not habitable
18 without cooling. This bill will allow all tenants who
19 need cooling to request it, and landlords have five
20 whole years to comply. We're going to work closely
21 with our colleagues in Albany to push for increased
22 utility assistance to subsidize electricity bills for
23 low- and moderate-income tenants in need. Two years
24 ago, WEACT brought this idea to my attention, and we
25 have worked closely with them and so many others to

2 get this, to move this forward. I really want to
3 thank Sonal Jaisal (phonetic) and Caleb Smith from
4 WEACT, the NYJA team, especially Eunice Koh
5 (phonetic), Sharmanti Kanakal (phonetic), and
6 Victoria Saunders (phonetic), the New York League of
7 Conservation Voters, NRDC. Getting this bill over the
8 finish line, including an environmental review was
9 quite simply exhaustive. It was an exhaustive effort,
10 and I've described this legislation as an emotional
11 rollercoaster that has kept many, many, many public
12 servants up working through the night over the past
13 number of weeks. I'd like to just thank a number of
14 them by name. Really, I've never been more impressed
15 in the Council Legislative Division than in
16 partnering with them on this bill. Their dexterity,
17 their hard work, their sharp intellects were on full
18 display in the drafting and the research and the
19 analysis that went into it. That team is led
20 impressively by Jeff Baker. C.J. Murray did masterful
21 work drafting this bill, and he did it while his wife
22 was just about to have her second child. Fortunately
23 for everybody, that child happened a day after bill
24 aging, and they are all in good health. Congrats to
25 C.J. and his family. I want to thank Billy Eck, who

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2 was the primary bill drafter on this and new to the
3 Council team, but did a superb job. Thank you so much
4 to Billy. Deputy Director Brad Reed, Austin Malone,
5 Audrey Sun, and the whole Housing and Buildings
6 Committee team. On the Administration side, the work
7 that MOCJ, led by Elijah Hutchinson and Paul Luzzito
8 did on this was quite simply phenomenal. These guys
9 worked through the night, through the weekend, time
10 and again. Ahmed Taghani not only worked for Gale
11 Brewer, but he's been a friend of mine for almost 20
12 years, and he cleared his schedule for days amid all
13 of the work that HPD has on their plate to work
14 through this issue and to get this done. I am
15 enormously grateful for his hard work and his team's
16 hard work to make this happen, especially AnnMarie
17 Santiago, Jen Leone, Kim Darga, and really many, many
18 others at HPD. Rit Aggarwala, our Chief Climate
19 Officer, has been just an extraordinary champion for
20 this bill. Hilary Semel at the Mayor's Office of
21 Environmental Coordination worked incredibly hard.
22 The entire Environmental Law Unit in the Law
23 Department, Chris Rio, Hilary Meltzer, Chris Harned,
24 those guys are terrific. The team at HCR partnered
25 with us closely, especially Betsy Mallow, the

2 Executive Deputy Commissioner, really want to thank
3 her. My former staffer, who's now at City Hall,
4 helped to quarterback so much of this effort. He is
5 an extraordinary, he's really a very special person.
6 That's Arvind Sindhwani, who did tremendous work on
7 this. But this wouldn't have happened without the
8 support of the Speaker. Jeremy and the Speaker had my
9 back at every step of the way in supporting this
10 legislation. I really am grateful to them. I think
11 that my Colleagues would agree that I work pretty
12 hard, but my Chief-of-Staff, Molly Haley, works way
13 harder, and she is the smartest person I know. I am
14 just incredibly lucky to get a chance to work with
15 her, and this bill would not have happened if she
16 didn't pour herself into it. And so we're going to
17 save a lot of lives. We're setting a model for the
18 state, the nation, the world on how to handle extreme
19 heat, and I'm really proud of everybody who
20 contributed to it. So thank you all so much.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Congratulations,
22 Council Member. Well, we're about to be able to say
23 that. Thank you so much.

24 I will now ask the Clerk to call the
25 roll.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
3 afternoon. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
4 vote, Committee on Housing and Buildings. All items
5 are coupled.

6 Chair Sanchez.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Aye on all.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Feliz.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Aye on all. I want
10 to congratulate Council Member Restler on a very good
11 bill.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Dinowitz.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Aye on all
14 except I abstain on 902.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Abreu.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: I vote aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Avilés.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Aye on all.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Aye on all.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Restler.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Very proudly,
23 aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: With a
25 vote of seven in the affirmative, zero negative, no

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2 abstentions, all items are adopted by the Committee
3 with the exception of Proposed Introduction 902-B,
4 which is adopted by the Committee with six in the
5 affirmative, zero in the negative, and one
6 abstention.

7 Madam Chair, that is a full Committee.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you all.

9 Thanks for bearing with me for all this
10 time. This hearing is adjourned. [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 December 31, 2025