

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS

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January 22, 2019
Start: 1:12 p.m.
Recess: 1:16 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
14th Fl

B E F O R E: CHAIM M. DEUTSCH
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Justin L. Brannan
Mathieu Eugene
Alan N. Maisel
Paul A. Vallone

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

2 [sound check] [pause] [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON DEUTSCH: Thanks for joining
4 us today, and I'd like to extend my warm welcome to
5 the veterans who have joined here this morning. The
6 Department of Veterans' Services, DVS has been
7 actively helping our veterans almost three years now.
8 Since its creation through Local Law in 2015, the DVS
9 has grown into a robust agency that operators an
10 impressing area of programs. These programs such Vet
11 Connect, and Vet Thrive NYC help veterans by
12 connecting them with affordable housing, providing
13 assistance to find and apply for good paying jobs,
14 referring them to legal and benefits assistance
15 services, and helping them with appropriate metal-
16 mental healthcare treatment when they need it. DVS
17 also has liaisons with every other city agency go
18 ensure that veterans have the smoothest possible
19 interactions with city government. Now that the
20 department is fully operational, and fully staff, it
21 is appropriate for us to track its services in a
22 comprehensive and holistic way. In order to figure
23 out what is working and what is not working for our
24 veterans, manage and improve the services that we
25 render, we must first have tangible and reliable data

2 on the day-to-day operations of the department. I am
3 proud to sponsor the bill under consideration.
4 Proposed Introduction 1118-A would require DVS to
5 submit an annual report to the Council, and which
6 would specify the services it provides at all of its
7 locations as well as the number of its employees and
8 a summary of their responsibilities. In addition,
9 this report would include an accounting of not only
10 the number of veterans who have inquired about DVS
11 services, but also the number of veterans who have
12 received services from DVS and the means by which
13 they learned about the agency. Those who have served
14 this country in uniform deserve the very best when
15 they come home. My hope is that this bill will allow
16 us to discover patterns in the veterans' community
17 and the service that they are asking for, what DVS is
18 providing, and how the Council and agency can
19 continue working together to serve our city veterans.
20 By passing this bill, we would ensure the department
21 continues its upward trajectory and remains an
22 example for the rest of the country to follow. I
23 would like to thank the Committee staff Counsel Luzat
24 Sadri; Policy Analyst Michael Kurt; Finance Analyst
25 Zachary Harris; and my Legislative Director Tova

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2 Chesner (sp?) for their work in making this hearing
3 possible. Finally, I would like to recognize the
4 committee members that have joined us in order of
5 when they attended. [laughter] Council Member
6 Justin Brannan, Council Member Paul Vallone, Council
7 Member Alan Maisel, and Council Member Mathieu
8 Eugene. Could I ask the Clerk to call for a vote.

9 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk.
10 Roll call vote Committee on Veterans, Introduction
11 1118-A, Chair Deutsch.

12 CHAIRPERSON DEUTSCH: I vote aye.

13 CLERK: Eugene.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

15 CLERK: Maisel.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

17 CLERK: Vallone.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Yes.

19 CLERK: Brannan.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Yep.

21 CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the
22 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
23 the item has been adopted by the committee.

24 [applause]

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2 CHAIRPERSON DEUTSCH: [gavel] Thank you.

3 We are now adjourned. [background comments/pause]

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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 January 31, 2019