

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

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February 25, 2021

Start: 11:34 AM

Recess: 11:45 AM

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 3)

B E F O R E: CHAIR CARLOS MENCHACA

COUNCIL MEMBERS: MARGARET S. CHIN  
FRANCISCO MOYA  
DANIEL DROMM  
MATHIEU EUGENE

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

TECHNICIAN 1: It's going to the computer. The Cloud is up.

TECHNICIAN 2: Backup is rolling.

TECHNICIAN 1: Nick, begin with the opening.

TECHNICIAN: Good morning and welcome to the remote hearing on the Committee on Immigration. Will Council Members and staff please turn their video at this time. Thank you. To minimize disruptions please place all cell phones, electronics to vibrate. Chair, we are ready to begin.

CHAIR MENCHACA: (GAVEL) Thank you and buenos dias everyone. I'm Carlos Menchaca Council Member and Chair of the Immigration Committee, and we are here for a vote. I would like to recognize the members of the Council who are here today and members of this committee. Council Member Dromm,

Council Member Margaret Chin, Council Member Moya, and as other Council Members come in I will...I will recognize them. Today the Committee on Immigration will be conducting a second hearing and a vote on a package of four resolutions.

Proposed Resolution Number 1416-A sponsored by Council Member Mathieu Eugene calling on the United States Department of Homeland Security to halt all

deportation proceedings for the length of the COVID 19 Pandemic as a means of restricting the global spread of this disease. Proposed Resolution Number 1417-A sponsored by Council Member Mathieu Eugene calling on the Department of Homeland Security to place a moratorium on all removal proceeding for employment-based status holders that suffered a loss of employment during or due to COVID 19 Pandemic. Proposed Resolution Number 1418-A sponsored by Council Member Mathieu Eugene calling on United States Congress to pass, the President to sign legislation that would permit employment-based status holders to retain lawful status at hospital clinic if such loss was related to COVID 19 pandemic. Proposed Resolution Number 1419-A sponsored by Council Member Moya calling on the United States Congress and the President to sign legislation that would provide immigration leave for many of our family members who derive a lawful immigration status from a frontline worker who passed away due to COVID 19. I'll let the sponsor speak on this resolution in a moment. We have much work to do. Even as President Biden signed a 100-day moratorium on deportations pending

administrative review. DHS has deported over 294 individuals to Jamaica, Guatemala and Honduras since January. All of these countries are on CDC's Level 4 Do not Travel list for extreme COVID 19 risk. The fight to end deportations is far from over. Even as we have a different administration in the White House I want to congratulate my colleagues on their thoughtful resolutions, and urge my committee members here today to vote in favor of their passage, and with that I want to hand it over to our Counsel, our Counsel Harbani Ahuja and... Well, actually, I want to say thank you to Committee Counsel Harbani Ahuja, Policy Analyst Cronk, Chief of Staff Lebanon Suttle, Legislative Director Cesar Vargas and Communications Director Tony Chairito, and now I will hand it over to our Committee Counsel.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair. I'm going to turn it over to Council Member Eugene to make a statement on this Reso.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you so very much. Thank you Chair Menchaca for your leadership on this in committee. Thank you for very much. We all know that COVID 19 pandemic has been especially harmful

to members of the immigrant community many of whom are afraid life and working in the United States and providing for their families. This public has a crisis prizes as significant and disrupt their family status and them doing so has made them legible for deportation. As Resolution 1416, 1417 and 1418 are on the United States Department of Homeland Security and Congress to stop and halt removal proceeding of status of others who have lost employment due to COVID 19. Where are they treating our culture when the with the GLOBAL 5 then sink this economy, and it is unjust and inhumane to continue to deport the deportations when we know they have risked all removal proceedings especially when a host pose together, and proper immigrant practice and not available too. Resolution 1416 calls on the United Stated Department of Homeland Security to halt all deportation proceedings for the length of the COVID 19 pandemic as a means of restricting the global spread of this disease. Resolution 1417 calls on the United States Department of Homeland Security to place a moratorium in our removal proceedings on permanent based status always that suffers the less of

employment during are due to COVID 19 Pandemic. Resolution 1418 calls on the United States Congress to pass the President to sign legislation that permits employment-based status always to retain lawful status after loss of employment if such loss was related to COVID 19 Pandemic. There are many status holders in my district and throughout New York City who have suffered a loss of employment due to COVID 19, and I believe we have an obligation to protect them from removal proceedings for the remainder of the pandemic. They are cab drivers. Businesses, business always, liberals dealing with persons and so may status holders who lost employment put their living situation into turmoil. We must protect their health and wellbeing so that they are not required to cross this this where COVID 19 remains and see this spread. These are the workers who represent the strength of our local economy, and their tireless education to our city has kept us moving forward throughout this crisis. It is not right to alert to be put in harm's way during the pandemic especially given their tremendous value and education to our great city. I believe this legislation is necessary to have

employment-based status always remain a safe and secure living environment while trying to secure new opportunities through the extent of the COVID 19 Pandemic. I want to take my colleagues and the City Council and all the members of this department, and my colleagues throughout this Council offer this legislation, and I want to thank also the City Council Legislation Division and my staff Melissa Wilson for their assistance on this very important legislation.

MELISSA WILSON: Thank you very much Mr. Chair. I will now turn it to Council Member Moya to make a statement on this Resolution.

COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Thank you so much. Thank you Chair Menchaca and good morning to all my colleagues. Almost a year battling COVID 19 Pandemic, it has shaken us in more ways than one, and we've seen who has born the brunt of this pandemic, Black, Brown, Latino immigrant communities. Frontline workers, healthcare workers who are predominately foreign born have literally sacrificed their lives to make up the difference and help save lives during one of the worst pandemics this city, this country, this globe has ever seen.



The families of these frontline healthcare workers not only had to suffer the loss of their loved ones, they've had to deal with the financial hardship and are at risk of losing their own immigration status. I introduced this resolution because we need to value the contributions, and honor the sacrifices immigrants have made for our city and for our country, and we must treat our immigrant community including and especially children with humanity. One way we can do so is by providing immigration relief to surviving family members of frontline healthcare workers who passed away as a result of contracting COVID 19. These families, these workers are already battling COVID 19 on top of suffering great loss. They should not be fighting deportation or lose the only home that they've ever known here in the United States solely because their family member sacrificed their lives to help others during this unprecedented pandemic. So, I ask today my colleagues to please join me in voting to pass Resolution 1419. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mean I'm sorry. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR MENCHACA: Thank you Council Member Moya and Council Member Mathieu Eugene for your three

resolutions today, and I think with that we're going to go right into voting.

CLERK: Well good morning. It's still good morning. William Martin Committee Clerk roll call vote Committee on Immigration. All items are coupled. Chair Menchaca.

CHAIR MENCHACA: I vote aye.

CLERK: Eugene

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

CLERK: Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I vote aye.

CLERK: Dromm.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

CLERK: Moya.

COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions, all items have been adopted by the committee. Thank you.

CHAIR MENCHACA: Thank you all and this concludes the hearing and vote on the resolutions as you had stated. Thank you. (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 March 24, 2021