

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID  
WASTE MANAGEMENT

----- X

October 29, 2019  
Start: 12:28 p.m.  
Recess: 12:41 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Room  
16th Floor

B E F O R E: ANTONIO REYNOSO  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- Margaret S. Chin
- Andrew Cohen
- Fernando Cabrera
- Paul Vallone
- Costa Constantinides
- Rafael L. Espinal Jr.
- Justin Brannan
- Chaim M. Deutsch

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

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mic test. One. Two.  
One. Two. One. Two. Today's date is 10-29-2019.  
This is a prerecorded test for the Committee on  
Sanitation. This is being recorded by Pedro Lago.

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: All right. Thank  
you. I guess.

[Gavel]

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Good morning. My  
name is Antonio Reynoso and I am the Chair of the  
Sanitation and Solid Waste Committee. Thank you all  
for being here today. Today has been years in the  
making. We will be voting on four bills. Intros  
1082, 1083, 1573, and 1574 that will bring  
comprehensive reform to the city's private sanitation  
system. I am going to make a more comprehensive  
statement at tomorrow's stated meeting, but I want to  
say a few words regarding today's committee vote.  
Waste management system is an aspect of our city that  
is out of sight, out of mind for most New Yorkers.  
As long as the trash gets picked up on time, we  
rarely think about it. You realize just how critical  
this system is to the health of our city and just how  
harmful it can be if not run properly. While the  
Department of Sanitation does an incredible job of

collecting residential ways and a sufficient and sustainable way, and is always improving, the private sanitation industry that services businesses has been engaged in a horrific race to the bottom for decades, endangering their workers and the public, wreaking havoc on our environment and providing poor service to many of their customers. Today's of marks an important milestone in bringing order to this chaos. For years, carters have chased customers all over the city, resulting in routes with hundreds and hundreds of stops and dozens of carders serving a single commercial core door. This state of play permits pressure on drivers and helpers to cut corners in order to complete their routes in a single night. Workers have till blow red lights, speed, and run across dark streets into oncoming traffic, putting themselves and the public in danger. This is not their fault. Many of these workers are vulnerable members of our society having had contact with the criminal justice system or being undocumented and are being exploited by company owners. These companies run old trucks that lack basic safety inspections and spew dirty omissions. Those submissions are further increased by inefficient routes, leaving communities

like mine to suffer with high rates of asthma and other respiratory conditions. On top of all of this, carters are not recycling, sending more waste to landfill, adding additional methane emissions to the system at a time when we are facing a climate emergency. There are a number of critics to this bill who have spread misinformation regarding with the impacts of the legislation would be. Those individuals have chosen to completely disregard three years of intense work to get to this point. A major study that was conducted by DSNY, as well as an advisory board process set up by the Department that included all of these same critics. Our legislative process involved a link the hearing, as well as meeting with dozens of stakeholders held by both my offense, as well as our legislative staff. We listened intently to everyone who chose to engage with us and incorporated numerous recommendations into the final legislation. The assertion that this bill has been rushed is disingenuous, to say the least. But, we must remember that justice delayed is justice denied and we well and must move forward. Let me be clear. Intro 1574 guarantees an end to the wild, wild west days of private carding industry.

From now on, companies will be required to comply with strict safety, environmental, and service standards. Communities across the city will benefit from reduced traffic, leading to cleaner air, safer streets, and less noise. Business as well have transparent pricing and reliable service. Workers will no longer be forced to put themselves and the public in danger to complete their routes. Today is a step towards justice. I will be making a bunch of thank you's tomorrow, but I want to give a shout out to all the advocates who worked to make this a reality, especially the folks from Transform Don't Trash, as well as my incredible committee staff. And the amount of work that they did to make this happen, I just want to thank you so much. I know it hasn't been easy. We modified this bill so many times. So many last-minute changes here and there and you were always ready to do that, including weekends. So, I just wanted to thank you for the work that you did. And, Nadia, to you, as well, I really appreciate all the work that you guys did. With that, I want to encourage all of my colleagues on this committee to vote yes. Thank you. Clerk to call the roll.

COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin committee clerk roll call Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. All items are coupled. Chair Reynoso?

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Constantinides?

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Cabrera?

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I vote no in Intro 1082A and Intro 1574A and aye on the rest.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Chin?

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Congratulations to the Chair Reynoso. After all these years. I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Cohen?

COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: I also just want to say congratulations. I know how hard you have worked in how collaborative you worked on this bill and I will also have additional comments tomorrow, you really did a really tremendous amount of effort to try to get all of these pieces together. So, I really appreciate it and, with that, I am going to vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Deutsch?

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you.

Permission to explain my vote?

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Council member Deutsch to explain his vote.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So, first of all, on a good note, I want to thank our Chair for working very hard on this bill. I do have a number of issues with this bill on Intro 1574 and also of the process of this bill. And I just want to say that I did have a meeting with the Chair with one of my bid directors when we were discussing Intro 15 actually before it was revised and that meeting was that the corner bodega right in front of two fi-- right across from 250 Broadway. And then I received an email not too long after inviting me to a meeting about the bill and explaining the process and going through the previous before the bill was revised and then, when I responded, I was told that, oh, it was sent to me by mistake and I wasn't intended to-- it wasn't intended to come to me. That email. So it was like 12 hours before, the night before, made told me that there was a briefing the next day and it was sent to me by mistake. And I am a committee member



of this Sanitation Committee, so I understand what that process was. But I feel that there was no discussion about opposition of this bill. There was more discussion of those who supported Intro 1574. Now, some of the questions that I did have was how much would this cost taxpayers? And we all know that the Department of Sanitation is going to have oversight of this bill and I still haven't received a definite response. And today we hear voting on this bill. And I think it is important for taxpayers to know how much it would cost them and how much it is going to cost the city to move forward with this bill and to have the oversights of the private carting industry. In addition to that, in California after they failed, it cost them, the state of California, millions of dollars to do some type of damage control. I also want to bring up some of the other issues that I have. On the bill it says that up to three carting companies will have this RFP. And I did ask that it should say three carting companies. It should not say up to three carting companies, although I received assurance last night, late last evening, that there will be three carting companies per zone. But that is the case, let it stay in the

bill that there will be three carting companies who will be able to win this RFP on the bill. And one carter to have up to 15 zones, to win that RFP up to 15 zones, we failed to have the competition with entrepreneurs. We all know that competition is good and I feel that if one company is able to win that-- those 15 zones. Competition won't be there and the prices will go up. And I think that's unfair for the business owners throughout the city and we also cannot allow the bigger players to win all these RFP's and we need to allow the small local carting companies whose family-owned businesses were passed on from generation to generation and they worked very hard to establish a business. And, as far as I know, the small carting companies, they are up to speed with any type of safety to upgrade their trucks. So I don't think-- I think that we need to take out those bad apples. Yes. I agree. And I also agree that we need to improve our streets. We need to improve the safety of everyone on our streets. So, I think that the smaller companies are in compliance with what the city wants to do and what the advocates would like to do. Finally, I just want to say that the staggered implementation of this process will go

smaller phases, so that will force some of those companies who win those zones to lay off their workers possibly for six months or longer and that is unfair to the employees by them telling the workers, I'm sorry. We don't have any work for you for six months. And, you know, I along with my-- with almost a dozen of my colleagues have written a letter to Commissioner Garcia and to Chair Reynoso to delay this vote on this newly revised bill. I did have a hearing back in June on the previous bill, but I think it's unfair to move forward on this revised bill without having more input from all the advocates and all the business to actors and the Chamber of Commerce throughout the city. I have received phone calls opposed to this bill from the Chamber of Commerce, from the bid directors in my district and around my district and I think it is unfair. Yes, people are saying we've worked to this bill for six years and I don't think that time should have-- proceed and have presence over implementing in voting on something that is going to have a very long impact in our city. And we always look at other states. How other states do. We look at other states and see how other states failed. I don't trust government.

I don't trust how our administration will have the oversight on the private carting industry and promises could be made today and promises could be broken tomorrow. We need to ensure that all the workers, all the private carting industry workers have the job opportunity that they deserve and also I just want to say that, as the Chair of the Veterans Committee of the New York City Council, the private carting company have open their doors to veterans and I think that having those jobs-- and I'm confident that those jobs will be lost to many of our workers in the private carting industry. And we could get to a better place if we work a little bit longer on this bill and postpone this newly revised bill from coming to of though and, with, I vote no on Intro 1574.

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And on the rest?

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: And aye on the rest.

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Espinal?

COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: With many congratulations to all the advocates that have put a lot of hard work on this bill and making sure it was a fair bill, and to the Chair, I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Brannan?

COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Introductions 1083A and 1573A are adopted by the Committee. Eight in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions. With Introduction 1082A being adopted by the Committee. Seven in the affirmative, one in the negative, and no abstentions. And 1574 adopted by the Committee. Six in the affirmative, two in the negative, and no abstentions.

CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. Thank you to all my committee members and I will see you tomorrow. Have a good day.

[gavel]

[background comments]

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 1, 2019