

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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May 25, 2017
Start: 10:20 a.m.
Recess: 4:57 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: JULISSA FERRERAS-COPELAND
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ydanis A. Rodriguez
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Corey D. Johnson
Mark Levine
I Daneek Miller
Helen K. Rosenthal
Steven Matteo

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

Dean Fuleihan, Director
NYC Office of Management and Budget

Larian Angelo, First Deputy Director
NYC Office of Management and Budget

Scott Stringer, Comptroller
Office of NYC Comptroller

Preston Niblack, Deputy Comptroller
Office of NYC Comptroller

Ronnie Lowenstein, Director
NYC Independent Budget Office

George Sweeting, Deputy Director
NYC Independent Budget Office

John Hislop, President, Local 1321, DC37

Donald Nesbitt, Vice President Local 372, DC37

Judith Arroyo, President of Local 436, DC37

Belinda Medina, Local 420, DC37

Fran Schloss, President, Local 1757, DC37

George Ferranachi UFOA, Fire Officers Association

Vincent Speciale, UFOA, Firefighters

Sarah Gillman, Supervising Attorney
NYIFUP Program, Legal Aid Society

Judith Goldner, Legal Aid Society

Helen Drook, Senior Staff Attorney
New York Legal Assistance Group, NYLAG

Kevin Douglas, Co-Director
Policy and Advocacy
United Neighborhood Houses of New York

Michelle Jackson, Deputy Director
Human Services Council

Justin Nardilla
Chief Financial Officer, CAMBA

Paul Feuerstein, CEO
Barrier Free Living

Yolanda McBride, Director of Public Policy
Children's Aid Society

Carla Rabinowitz, Advocacy Coordinator
Community Access

Ashley Flores, Harm Reduction Specialist
Community Access

Mary Havilland, Executive Director
New Yorkers Alliance Against Sexual Assault

Robin Vitale, Vice President, Health Strategies NYC
American Heart Association
NYC American Stroke Association

Hunter Citrin, Advocacy & Communications Coordinator
BOOM Health

Suzanne Robison Davis, Program Manager
Bedford-Stuyvesant Family Health Center

Clara Rondano
Access Health Center

Maria Lizardo, Executive Director
Settlement House
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation

Jenny Echen
Appearing for: Lima Berkley
Resident of Caxton Street Shelter

Scott Andrew Hutchins
Picture the Homeless Member & Activist

Shanell Lucas
Picture the Homeless Member & Activist

Cecilia Grant, Picture the Homeless

Jose Rodriguez, Picture the Homeless

Jennifer Ratner, Board Chair
Friends of the East River Esplanade

Rachel Sabella, Director of Government Relations
Food Bank for New York City

Jan Poppendieck, CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute

Pam Stewart Martinez, Citywide Council for Special
Education, ECC, Parent Member of Lunch for Learning

Maggie Moroff, Arise Coalition

Randy Levine, Policy Director
Advocates for Children of New York

Ruth Wagner, Adjunct Assistant Professor of
Anthropology, Lehman College

Jessica Engrade, Make the Road New York

Sienna Fontaine, Deputy Legal Director
Make the Road New York

Nancy Rankin, Vice President
Policy, Research and Advocacy
Community Service Society of New York

Stephanie Gendell, Associate Executive Director
Citizens' Committee for Children

Chris Hanway, Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement

Faith Bam, Advocacy and Policy Advisor
Government and External Relations Department
UJA-Federation of New York

Carlyn Cowen, Policy Analyst, FPWA

Brad Grim, Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation

Scott Daly, Director, New York Junior Tennis
& Learning a/k/a New York Junior Tennis League

Lisa Caswell, Senior Policy Analyst
Daycare Council

Charise Carruther, Strategic Partnership Specialist
Center for Court Innovation

Veronica Conan, Retired Librarian, Member of
Committee to Save New York Public Libraries

Carl Goodman, Executive Director
Museum of the Moving Image
Chair of the Cultural Institutions Group

Liz Accles, Executive Director
Community Food Advocates

Judy Liu

Clinicia Rekova (sp?), Student
New Utrecht High School, Brooklyn

John Bank, Junior, Student
Brooklyn Technical High School

Daniel Kim, Student
Brooklyn Technical High School

Jinque (sp?) Student
Brooklyn Technical High school
Teenergetic Representative

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Good
4 morning and welcome to today's Finance Committee
5 hearing. My name is Julissa Ferreras-Copeland and I
6 am the chair of the committee. I want to acknowledge
7 the members who are here. We have Minority Leader
8 Matteo and Majority Leader Van Bramer. This morning
9 the committee will conclude our hearings of the
10 Mayor's Fiscal 18 Executive Budget. We will hear
11 first from Dean Fuleihan of the Office of Management
12 and Budget followed by New York city Comptroller
13 Scott Stringer, and the Independent Budget Office.
14 Members of the public will have an opportunity to
15 testify this afternoon beginning at approximately
16 1:00 p.m. For members of the public who will be
17 testifying we will be organizing our panels by
18 topics. So, please fill out a witness slip with
19 sergeant-at-arms and indicate the topic area of your
20 testimony. Any senior or person with disability who
21 requires any accommodations for an earlier panel
22 please make a note on your witness slip so that we
23 know you are here, and can plan accordingly. Spanish
24 translation services are also available. I should
25 probably say that in Spanish. [Speaking Spanish] If

2 any member of the public would prefer to submit
3 written testimony, you can still submit your
4 testimony to the Finance Division on the Council's
5 website at council.nyc.gov/budget/testimony and the
6 staff will make it a part of the official record. We
7 will be accepting testimony until 5:00 p.m. on
8 Monday, May 29th. Before we get started, I want to
9 first thank the Council Finance Director Latonia
10 McKinney and her entire staff including the Budget
11 Unit, the Revenue and Economic—and Economic unit,
12 Discretionary and Data Support Unit and the
13 Administrative Support Unit and the Finance Counsel
14 for all their hard work in preparing these hearing.
15 I also want to thank the sergeant-at-arms who keep us
16 safe and help things run smoothly. They include
17 Director of Security Carl Diablo, Chief Sergeant-at-
18 arm Rafael Perez, Sergeant-at-Arms John Biando, Dane
19 Hope, Mahamed Arshad, Jessica Pallegreno, Hannah
20 Doatonich (sp?), McKenzie Joseph, Zakim Bradley,
21 Edwin Lopez, Xavier Olda—Oldaheran (sp?). I also
22 would like to thank the team at NWNYC Media who—who
23 allow those at home and at work to follow along with
24 these hearings, John Degoah, Issac Saraponga (sp?),
25 Brian France, Amir Shukalik (sp?), Agron Secca,

2 Elliott Stern, Ivan Pena and Tony Austin. Thank you
3 all for your dedication and work. The City adopted
4 the Fiscal 2018 Budget at a time of great uncertainty
5 about the future of critical programs and services
6 that help many of our most vulnerable populations.
7 President Trump's released his-his proposed budget on
8 Tuesday. This devastating plan cut billions from
9 vital programs including SNAP that earned income-the
10 Earned Income and Child Tax Credits, Medicaid and
11 Housing assistance. Millions of New Yorkers
12 including seniors, children and people with
13 disability will be impacted. In light of this, I
14 remain concerned that too many city agencies have
15 failed to develop contingencies if these drastic cuts
16 are imposed. The Council will stand the
17 administration as it continues to fight against these
18 proposals, but we must also be confident that there-
19 that we are beginning to plan carefully for what may
20 come. Before we start I want to provide a brief
21 overview of the Executive Budget process to date. On
22 April 26, Mayor de Blasio released the
23 administration's Fiscal 2018 Executive Budget
24 totaling approximately \$84.9 billion. The Council was
25 glad to see that this budget included several

2 proposals that we advocated for including providing
3 air conditioners in all public school classrooms,
4 enhancing support immigrant services, defunding the
5 proposed jail facility as Rikers Island while funding
6 borough based jails and reducing excessive capital
7 appropriations. However, it failed to include key
8 Council priorities such as additional summer and
9 year-round youth jobs, universal school lunch,
10 enhanced funding for social services, and increased
11 support for the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

12 On May 4th, the Council began fulfilling our charter
13 mandated responsibility of holding public hearings on
14 the Executive Budget with testimony from OMB. Over
15 the following three weeks, 27 Council committees
16 heard approximately 100 hours of testimony from over
17 30 agencies. The Council extensively questioned
18 agency heads on operations and priorities for their
19 respective agencies and the extent to which they are
20 addressed in the Executive Plan. This administration
21 has worked well with the Council for the past three
22 budgets. Together we have accomplished many
23 important victories for the people of New York City.
24 It is our hope that this year's Adopted Budget
25 continues this progress reflecting the values and

2 priorities of both the Council and the Mayor.

3 However, this requires the budgetary transparency

4 essential to ensure that the council can be an equal

5 partner in the budget process. This morning we

6 conclude where we began with testimony from OMB

7 Director. We return to OMB for a second time because

8 the Council believes that the city's budget as it

9 currently stands does not appropriately reflect the

10 vision of both the Council and the Mayor. This

11 hearing will begin—will give us an opportunity to

12 discuss our outstanding concerns and to restate our

13 core priorities in light of the testimony we have

14 heard during these hearings. I would like to

15 highlight a few areas in particular. The Council has

16 made reform for this city's capital process a top

17 priority. We have long advocated for changes to how

18 the city plans its long-term capital agenda, and we

19 have agencies to develop methods to perform capital

20 work more efficiently and economically. This year we

21 recommended that the administration align the Capital

22 Plan with the city's ability to executed projects and

23 establish a task force to speed the completion of

24 projects. We were encouraged by the administration

25 acting on the request of the Council and reducing 3.2

2 billion excess capital appropriations in the
3 Executive Budget. However, between the Prelim and
4 the Executive Budgets, the administration increased
5 both the Capital Commitment Plan for Fiscal 2017 to
6 2021 and the Ten-year Capital Strategy by
7 approximately 7%. This increase was done without
8 corresponding strategy for completing capital
9 projects in a more efficient manner. We have asked
10 agency after agency how they actually plan to
11 accommodate the increase in capital funds included in
12 their budget for Fiscal 2018, and nearly all of them
13 were unable to give a specific answer. The practice
14 of continually front loading capital budgets and
15 rolling massive amounts of unspent capital into the
16 following fiscal year must end, and give way to a
17 more transparent and realistic capital plan. Both
18 myself as the Finance Chair and the Council as a
19 whole look forward to working with the administration
20 towards this end. Furthermore, there has been a lack
21 of transparency on a number of significant
22 administration initiatives and plans. This makes it
23 difficult for the Council to assess them properly.
24 Significant among them was the proposed partial
25 citywide hiring freeze of administrative and

2 managerial staff. Because the issuance of guidance
3 on this plan went well into the budget hearings,
4 agencies were unable to provide us any detail about
5 how it would affect them. I would like to receive
6 more information about this plan including the scale,
7 affected agencies and the possibility of permanent
8 savings at today's hearing. Additionally, we heard
9 from agencies such as ACS and DFTA that they were in
10 discussions with OMB about additional funding for new
11 needs, but heard nothing about the substance of
12 feasibility of these requests. Given that the
13 Council's Budget response specifically included
14 request for these agencies, it is concerning that we
15 were about to receive more details at these hearings.
16 In addition affect agencies expressed uncertainty
17 about how compliance with the recently adopted Raise
18 the Age Law, the planned closing of closing Rikers
19 and the implementation of the Mayor's Homeless Plan
20 will impact our budgets. This lack of information on
21 such critical matters at this stage in the budget
22 process is unacceptable. Finally, I would continue
23 to urge the administration to increase the city's
24 reserves. As I mentioned during the first OMB
25 hearing while total reserves were brought to \$9.3

2 billion in the Executive Plan, the ratio of reserves
3 to adjust—adjust the total spending is only 10.7%.
4 This is below the recommended ratio of between 12 and
5 18%. With the continued risk posed by the federal
6 government and the slowing of the city's economy, the
7 reserves must be adequate to ensure the continued
8 stability of vital city programs and services. I
9 look forward to hearing from about these issues and
10 many more from Director Fuleihan. Before we begin,
11 I'd like to remind my colleagues that each member
12 will have five minutes for their first round of
13 questions. After you're sworn in, you may begin your
14 testimony, and we will hear from Director Fuleihan,
15 and we've been joined by Council Member Lander.

16 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the
17 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in
18 your testimony before the committee today, and to
19 respond honestly to Council Member questions?

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: I do.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: great.

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: Thank you, Finance Chair
23 Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, members of the Finance
24 Committee and Members of the City Council. Thank you
25 for this additional opportunity to testify on the

2 Mayor's Fiscal Year 2018 Executive Budget. Again, I
3 join your thanks to Latonia McKinney and the entire
4 Council Finance staff who have been partners with us
5 for the—for the past 3-1/2 years, and I know that
6 partnership will continue as we move to adoption.
7 I'm joined at the table by OMB First Deputy Directory
8 Larian Angelo and dedicated and hardworking OMB staff
9 is also here to assist me in answering your
10 questions. At the hearing on May 4th, I outlined in
11 detail the elements of the Executive Budget. To
12 quickly get to your questions, I'm going to provide a
13 very broad overview of that testimony and of our
14 Executive Budget. Our Fiscal Year 2018 Executive
15 Budget is \$84.86 billion. In both Fiscal Year 2017
16 Budget and the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget are balanced
17 under generally accepted accounting principles. We
18 reduce our revenue estimates in the Executive Budget
19 by \$567 million for the upcoming Fiscal Year
20 recognizing moderate revenue growth. We made new
21 strategic investments and continues our citywide
22 savings program. We maintain our manageable out year
23 gaps when compared to prior years, and together we
24 achieved the highest level of reserves of any city
25 administration. In our \$95.85 Billion Ten-Year

2 Capital Strategy keeps infrastructure in a state of
3 good repair, promotes health and safety and expands
4 access to education and opportunity. I also
5 discussed, and you did as well at both the first
6 hearing and today the risks and uncertainties we face
7 at the federal level including cuts to critical
8 services. On Tuesday, the President released the
9 Federal Fiscal 2018 Budget that confirmed the federal
10 administration's intention to cut funding for
11 critical programs including public safety and the
12 programs that protect the most vulnerable members of
13 our community. It would force cities and state to
14 absorb over \$610 billion in additional cuts to
15 Medicaid. Over three million New Yorkers currently
16 receive Medicaid and 1.4 million are enrolled through
17 the Affordable Care Act Exchange. It would cut \$6
18 billion from the Children's Health Insurance program
19 threatening healthcare for 125,000 New York children.
20 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program would be
21 reduced by \$193 billion over ten years. 1.7 million
22 New Yorkers receive SNAP. Temporary Assistance for
23 Needy Families would be reduced by \$21.7 billion over
24 ten years. 140,000 New Yorkers rely on TANF. The
25 budget would eliminate--the proposed federal budget

would eliminate the Community Development Block Grant funds that benefit low and middle-income New Yorkers and help revitalize deteriorating neighborhoods throughout the country. It cuts \$72.5 billion in funding to Social Security Disability Insurance, and supplement Social Security income, and the city could lose up to \$190 million in Homeland Security grants we receive annually, harming our ability to protect critical assets and preparing for emergencies. In addition, the House of Representatives' repeal of the Affordable Care Act would cut \$800 billion in funding to Medicaid. By rolling back ACA Medicaid expansion and capping Medicaid funding to states, changing the very nature of the 50-year history of Medicaid as an entitlement. At the same time, this bill would also eliminate individual employer mandates, and the tax credits and subsidies that help make health insurance affordable for individuals. The Trump tax plan would be equally harmful to New Yorkers and could cost city residents \$7.7 billion in lost state and local tax deductions. We are actively engaged with our federal delegation, business and labor, partners across the country and challenging these destructive policies. The Mayor has been clear: We will fight all attempts

1 by the federal government to cut services that touch
2 every New Yorker particularly the most vulnerable,
3 and we've already seen some success last month. The
4 Federal Budget passed earlier this month, the one
5 that concluded the current Federal Fiscal Year
6 contained no meaningful cuts to programs New Yorkers
7 depend on, and—and it provided reimbursements for our
8 security at Trump Towers, and that is irrespective of
9 the \$17 billion nationally that the President had
10 proposed for the continuation of the current Fiscal
11 Year. With these uncertainties, and challenges in
12 mind, we have taken a balanced approach to the
13 Executive Budget. We now have an historic level of
14 general reserves, \$1 billion for each year of our
15 Four-Year Financial Plan compared to the traditional
16 level of \$300 million. The Mayor and the Council
17 established the first ever Capital Stabilization
18 Reserve now at \$250 million every year over the Four-
19 Year Financial Plan. This is in addition to the
20 Retiree Health Benefit Trust Fund, which is at an
21 unprecedented \$4 billion, \$3.3 billion the result of
22 actions take by this administration and this Council.
23 Our total reserves for Fiscal Year 2018 are now \$5.25
24 billion. At the Mayor's request, we have continued
25

2 to find new savings. We will use space more
3 efficiently and procure good services more
4 effectively. We too \$1 billion in savings in
5 November, another \$1.1 billion in January and \$700
6 million in the Executive Budgets across Fiscal Year
7 2017 and 2081. In addition, the Mayor directed us to
8 implement a partial hiring freeze on city funded
9 managerial, administrative and support positions, and
10 our healthcare agreement with the Municipal Labor
11 Committee will result in an addition \$1.3 billion in
12 savings in Fiscal Year 2018 while providing better
13 care for our employees. Mindful of this financial
14 and political backdrop in the Executive Budget we
15 built in prior investments by expanding successful
16 programs making targeted investments and deepening
17 commitments we have made to New Yorkers. For
18 example, this fall we will roll out high quality
19 Universal 3-K for all programs in two school
20 districts, and by 2021 with assistance from our state
21 and federal governments, all New York families will
22 have access to this signature program. Additionally,
23 we will install air conditioning in every New York
24 City classroom by Fiscal Year 2022. The Mayor has
25 been making—has been making New York City affordable

2 for all. Just last week, the Mayor announced the
3 largest one-year decline in New York City near
4 poverty rates since 2005. This is the first
5 statistically significant one-year drop since the
6 Great Recession. The Executive Budget makes strides
7 to protect and create affordable housing for New
8 Yorkers. We are providing \$350 million in additional
9 funds for repairs to NYCHA, building on our \$1
10 billion investment made in the Preliminary Budget.
11 We are also committing an additional \$1.9 billion to
12 create or preserve 10,000 apartments for New York
13 households earning less than \$40,000 a year. Five
14 thousand of these units reserved for seniors and 500
15 for veterans. This raises the city's contribution to
16 Housing New York to \$10.1 billion, and we are working
17 to keep New Yorkers in their homes by providing anti-
18 eviction legal services for tenants in Housing Court.
19 At the same time, our work to help keep New York more
20 affordable for seniors continues. Our efforts to
21 expand the senior and disable homeowner property tax
22 exemption are working. The legislation passed
23 through the State Senate last week. This expansion
24 will give 32,000 New York City homeowners an average
25 property tax break of \$1,750, and we are committed to

2 working with you to address other senior issues that
3 can—other serious issues that confront our seniors.

4 The Executive Budget adds investments in public

5 safety made New York City the safest big city in

6 America. For example it expands ShotSpotter

7 technology into nine square miles of neighborhoods in

8 the Bronx, Staten Island and Manhattan. We must also

9 protect vulnerable populations. In the Executive

10 Budget we fund legal representation for immigrant New

11 Yorkers facing deportation and other immigrant

12 challenges, and it tackles some of the most urgent

13 problems facing New York including the opioid crisis,

14 and domestic violence. This budget addresses other

15 quality of life issues that affect New Yorkers on a

16 daily basis. To ease commutes for Staten Islanders,

17 in September we were bringing lower level boarding to

18 ferries at White Hall and St. George Terminals, and

19 we will invest \$100 million to close the gap in the

20 Manhattan Waterfront Greenway. We are also expanding

21 organics program, expanding the curbside E Waste

22 program to Brooklyn, the Bronx and Queens providing

23 more New Yorkers with a safe way to dispose of

24 unwanted electronics. These efforts build on our

25 past quality of life investments, which have included

2 strengthening and expanding paid sick leave, funding
3 Thrive New York to help New Yorkers who face mental
4 illness, making major improvements to parks as part
5 of the Anchor Parks and Community Park Initiatives,
6 providing IDNYC cards to nearly one million New
7 Yorkers. In conclusion, we have responded to the
8 uncertainties and challenges we face by maintaining
9 historic reserves, expanding our saving program while
10 continuing to make investments that strengthen New
11 York's future, and as we move towards adoption we
12 look forward to continuing our work with the Council
13 to address our challenges and meet the needs of New
14 Yorkers. Thank you again for this opportunity and I
15 look forward to your questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
17 you, Director. Thank you for your testimony. So,
18 I'm just going to jump right into Capital and then go
19 from topic to topic before we hear from Majority
20 Leader Van Bramer followed by Council Member Lander.
21 While we understand that agencies like Parks, DDC,
22 DOT, EDC or SCA operate differently serving different
23 functions, the Parks Department and the Department of
24 Design and Construction continue to lag behind other
25 agencies when it comes to efficiently completing

2 capital projects and, you know, I recognize that at
3 DDC, it's not all capital projects, it's just certain
4 capital projects that lag. What are some of the
5 constraints that OMB is aware of that an agency like
6 Parks or DDC operate under that the other agencies do
7 not that we will be able to eliminate or create a
8 more efficient process because as I've asked every
9 commission that's come to testify about this
10 question, it seems that it's not even in the agency--
11 the agency isn't the issue. It's really somewhere in
12 the procurement process where they've seen most of
13 the lag, but I'm not sure if that's what you see on
14 your end as one of the challenges within the capital
15 projects.

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, both agencies are
17 making improvements. I know it's--it's not as much as
18 we would like to see, and as much as they would like
19 to see, but both agencies have made improvements.
20 They have--they have shortened the time line. We have
21 invested in this budget in--in appropriate--we have put
22 forward activities that should help in the early
23 stages of both design for design to give them
24 additional funds and resources to allow them to do
25 more pre-scoping and more early design work, which

2 allows them then to have a better understanding of
3 the actual costs and the estimates. [background
4 comments] A front-end planning unit at DDC. Thank
5 you, and—and the same effort is happening at parks.
6 So there are attempts. We recognize this, and we're
7 working with the Commissioners to see if we can
8 address it. They do have unique problems, right.
9 There are many more small projects that these
10 agencies particularly at Parks that—that create—I
11 think create and add complexity to it. It doesn't
12 mean that we shouldn't be working with you, and I—I'm
13 quite sure it's going to come up several times at
14 this hearing. It did at the first hearing that we—
15 we—you've articulated very thoughtful concerns. We
16 share those concerns. We should be working with you
17 on additional ways to address those concerns, and
18 we're more than open to doing that, and we want to do
19 that with you, and—and we're committed to doing that
20 with you to—we've already reduced the time periods.
21 We need to do that more, and we need to make sure
22 that our estimate is more accurate upfront so that
23 projects that you care about and we care about can—
24 are—are more, that we're more consistent about the

2 accuracy of those estimates and then the timeline
3 would be better.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right and
5 it seems like the number one reason why the estimates
6 get blown out of proportion is because of the time
7 because the longer a project takes the Commissioner
8 testified that it's just getting more expensive to
9 actually build in New York City.

10 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, time-time is clearly
11 a-a cost factor and it adds to it. Once again,
12 having the right-the right pre-the right information
13 as we enter a project so that both the Council and
14 the Administration knows exactly what a project costs
15 so we put the right funding in. We don't have to
16 come back, that we minimize change orders. Change
17 orders add time. They add cost. So that-that's a
18 shared goal. So, we share this with you. We have an
19 ambitious Capital Plan, as you pointed out, and we
20 think it's the right size Capital Plan. We accept
21 that-that the spacing and the timing of that Capital
22 Plan needs to be redistributed. We need to work with
23 you on that. We did eliminate a lot of unnecessary
24 appropriations at your request. There are many more
25 things that we need to in that process. I've said

2 this before. This really is not as much a Parks
3 issue although Parks occasionally will have major
4 serious-serious construction, but on the very big
5 construction projects for example the BQE and other
6 Department of Transportation not having the same
7 benefit that the State of New York on Design-Build,
8 which clearly adds on major construction projects
9 years to do a project. It is really unacceptable
10 that in-- So, there are statutory changes, and are
11 all help that we need from Albany that will assist us
12 on the bigger projects.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, just
14 so that we can get this on the record, if we would
15 have-if-if we would have been approved for Design-
16 Build, what would-how much time would that have
17 potentially eliminated from our projects?

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we had identified
19 during the State Budget process about ten projects,
20 and we believe that it would save on those ten major
21 capital projects about \$450 million off those
22 projects, certainly serious amounts of-of financial
23 savings, and that in may cases it would have taken
24 years off the project.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
3 you. Yes, we're going to be continuing to talk about
4 this, and especially as we shape the taskforce.

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: And the Design-Build we
6 had—the bill has been introduced in—in—I know in the
7 Assembly.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Do we
9 have a sponsor in the Senate or--?

10 DEAN FULEIHAN: [background comments,
11 pause]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I hear Senator
13 Felder is looking for things to do.

14 DEAN FULEIHAN: We'll come back on this.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay,
16 thank you. Wanted to focus a little bit on agency
17 transparency. While applaud the administration's
18 commitment to fund vital services such as legal and
19 homeless services, transparency issues remain on how
20 the current budget structure reflects the agency's
21 spending especially for HRA, DHS, the Law Department,
22 DOITT and the Office and—of Gun Violence. Can we get
23 a commitment from you to increase budgetary
24 transparency for these agencies in particular
25 personnel service spending for HRA's Legal Services

2 Program area, and how the Mayor's new homeless plan
3 is funded in HRA and DHS expense and Capital Budget.
4 So, while we were going through thee hearings some of
5 this long--and even in line that descriptively aren't
6 necessarily doing or--or are not funding what we think
7 they're funding. So, can we walk through this
8 process before our adoption to clearly identify where
9 we need more transparency with these new projects?

10 DEAN FULEIHAN: Sure. We're happy to
11 walk through that process. As you know, the--a year
12 ago in the--in the reconfiguration of DHS and HRA part
13 of that actually was to provide more transparency and
14 to have a more consistent separation. So, anything
15 that adds to that we're happy to do with you. We
16 should sit down with the Commissioner and walk you
17 through that.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Yeah,
19 and--so we'll have the--the recommendations for all of
20 these agencies where we need to get the descriptions
21 for clear and, you know, a perfect example when
22 you've done it right because we also have to
23 acknowledge when you've done it right, is you have a
24 unit of appropriation for 3-K. So, we can find 3-K.
25 There's a unit. It was done right. It just seems

2 that with these other programs, we have a lot of lump
3 sums, and it takes an incredible amount of time and
4 communication between both of our teams to figure out
5 where this money is.

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: We're—we should be
7 sitting down with you and explaining that we're—that
8 the goal was to give you that information, and so if
9 that's not happening, then we're—we should be sitting
10 down with you to make that happen--

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: --and we're happy to do
13 that with the Commissioner.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.
15 Hiring freeze. So, I know the letter came out kind
16 of towards the end of our—of our budget hearings.
17 So, every commissioner that I asked basically said
18 the same thing, we're waiting for the notice, we're
19 waiting for the notice. So, that's why I'm asking to
20 you today. What guidance have the agencies been
21 given in terms of determining which hiring should be
22 delayed, and has the administration established a
23 criteria by which agency should evaluate this current
24 vacancies position?

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, two different
3 questions, right. The—the first is that we gave the
4 agencies, the First Deputy Mayor and I sent—sent
5 guidance to the agencies of how we were going to
6 implement the partial hiring freeze on—on managers,
7 administrative and support staff. It was to give
8 them a sense of what was going to happen. It did
9 not—it does not change. So, we should start with
10 this. It does not change the personnel service
11 process that occurs at OMB right now, which are new
12 hires in city agencies, come through OMB for
13 approval. That's going to continue and that process
14 continues. On top of that, and—and then what we told
15 the agencies, there are a group of positions that
16 will only go through that OMB process, but then other
17 that don't meet a certain criteria will go to a
18 different level of review. So, what are those things
19 that are just going to stay in the OMB review,
20 maintaining an improving, maintaining health and
21 safety, direct—direct caregiving, uniform positions
22 necessary to implement critical initiatives, new
23 programs that we've all put out and said we want
24 positions for. 3-K is a good example obviously.
25 That has to go forward. Legally mandated by federal,

1 state, local or court ordered, positions that—that we
2 have put forward both at the Council's request and
3 the administration to create revenue that offset
4 savings that are a part of the insourcing. We do
5 those often. Those obviously will not go to another
6 level. There are some civil service requirements
7 that deal with provisional employees being replaced,
8 and that's mandated by state civil service, and we're
9 obviously complying with that, and if we did as—as we
10 are doing with Early Learn where there is a
11 functional interagency transfer from ACS to the
12 Department of Education that's obviously an approved
13 function that's part of the budget, and that would
14 continue. We then said that those positions that are
15 not part of that, will then be reviewed by—by a
16 working group made up by the First Deputy Mayor's
17 Office, the Commissioner to—two commissioners, DCAS
18 and OLR and OMB, and there will be another review to
19 see if those positions should move forward. So, this
20 is as the Mayor indicated a partial hiring freeze.
21 We did say we would come back at adoption, and talk
22 about what type of savings we believe we can—we can
23 reach with—with this process.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

3 So, I'm going through this. Who's left, right? Who--
4 who are we going to free? It just seems like--

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] There--there
6 are still many. Trust me. There are many--there are
7 many personnel actions that are--that come through.
8 There are thousands of personnel actions that come
9 through.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay. so--

11 DEAN FULEIHAN: This was not a--the Mayor
12 didn't at any point--at no point did the Mayor say
13 this was a complete freeze on hiring. He--

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: --articulated direct tier
16 service and--and those things were not going to--were
17 not going to be in it.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, is it
19 still the management and administrative positions
20 that we understood them to be?

21 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Is that
23 still with young--

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] Yes, yes,
25 yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

3 DEAN FULEIHAN: But this was articulated
4 for the agencies. Here are the kinds of positions
5 that will only-that will continue through the
6 traditional and ongoing OMB review process.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

8 So, did this process add a layer of review?

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: It does.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So--

11 DEAN FULEIHAN: It does. On those-on
12 those positions that-that don't meet-for example if a
13 position doesn't meet one of these criteria then it
14 would have an additional level of review.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay, and
16 it's-

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: Which is consistent I
18 believe with what the Council has been asking to do,
19 and that gets to your second question to some degree,
20 which is the vacancy question.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: Which you have asked us
23 to review vacancies. So, part of this will-will-
24 while-while it's not directly related, they are
25 interrelated, and the vacancies will clearly, the

2 position—the-in-in certain agencies with a large
3 number of vacancies will obviously be part of this
4 process.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And is it
6 the management and administrative positions within
7 those vacancies, or is it vacancies as a total?

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: It would be any position-
9 -

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
11 [interposing] That's vacant?

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: That's vacant. It would
13 still go through—all positions are going to continue
14 to go through the OMB process.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: The Department of
17 Education is the Chancellor and stating her own
18 process to mirror this, which is also the Council has
19 asked, and all vacancies will be going through the
20 OMB process. The ones that don't meet these criteria
21 will then go through this added level of review.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.
23 So, is there a target savings goal or--

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] No.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --a
3 targeted number?

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: No, we're--once again, the
5 Mayor said that we would come back at adoption and
6 talk about what we believe we can achieve with this.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.
8 So, I want to talk about some things that came up
9 during the hearing. Several commissioners alluded to
10 or actually stated that they were in conversations
11 with you over particular ACS, DFTA and DOE and they
12 wanted to ensure that we are aware of any additional
13 revenue because they're still engaging in new needs.
14 It seems that the conversation they're still
15 identifying new needs with OMB.

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, on both of those
17 agencies, the Council has in the first--my first
18 hearing, and I assume with the agency Chair, with
19 agency commissioners the Council raised additional
20 questions about whether needs were needed like
21 seniors. There--there were--there was a fairly
22 extensive exchange, and we agreed to work with you--

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: right.

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: --on seniors and
25 additional--additional needs of the senior community.

2 I said it in my testimony this morning. So, we're in
3 that process with you. I wanted to see at adoption
4 what--what other resources we can provide to that
5 community. On--on ACS--on ACS as you know, we--we have
6 a new Commissioner. The Commissioner has been also
7 in another area where there have been concerns in--in
8 prevention, and in child protection services. So, we
9 are, as they are with you, we are in a conversation
10 with them. Is there anything that needs to be done
11 quickly at adoption that would help us in these two
12 areas, and that's the conversation we're in.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, I'm
14 going to circle back with you.

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: And remember we did add
16 things. I should add we added significant programs--
17 programs to ACS in the Executive Budget

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
19 [interposing] Right.

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: --for those very
21 purposes.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right,
23 and--and that's why I wanted to clarify because we
24 have add--added programs. ACS in particular is going
25 through several levels of monitors and evaluations--

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: Right.

3 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --on what
4 works and what doesn't work.

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: That's right.

6 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Family
7 Court So, just—I wanted to understand because, you
8 know, when you presented the Executive Budget and
9 while we are negotiating through adoption on things
10 that we would like to see added, it just seemed that
11 DFTA was still engaging in conversations for funding,
12 and we just wanted to clear--

13 DEAN FULEIHAN: Sure.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --there
15 isn't revenue that is going to come out of left
16 field.

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: No, no, the—the—we're all
18 watching the same revenue, the same tax, the same tax
19 numbers, though you may have a different—your staff
20 may have a different view of the—of how--

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
22 [interposing] Slightly.

23 DEAN FULEIHAN: --obviously our—our—our
24 forecast is extremely cautious, and you know both on
25 revenues, on debt service. We think that's the right

2 ting to do. This is a little aside, but clearly if
3 we look around to other states, we're seeing reports
4 of huge cash flow problems, all around us. As a
5 matter of fact across the country. We're not—we
6 really did not have that problem here because of
7 cautious revenue forecasting. So, you may—you may
8 have disagreements that we'll have to work out on the
9 revenue side. On—the spending side, again on
10 DFTA, I—really it is part of the—it really comes out
11 of the questions the Council has been asking, and are
12 there additional things we should we provide—be
13 providing? On ACS on an ongoing basis I think it's
14 the responsible thing for us to constantly say. Are
15 there additional things we should be doing for child
16 protective services and for preventive measures to
17 provide additional protection, and—and there are many
18 reviews going on, and if those reviews—if those
19 reviews point to either of us that we should be
20 adding more resources then we're taking that
21 seriously.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I know
23 that you mentioned this in your testimony, and thank
24 you for being so detailed actually on the impacts
25 that the proposed—the President's Proposed Budget

2 would have, and the Republican Congress seems pretty
3 clear that they are also all over the place right.
4 So, that's what we have. We have total confusion in
5 the federal government but, you know, I would like to
6 know, if we can at least agree that we probably
7 should begin to start not—we're going to fight this
8 together to the end. We are your partner in this,
9 and we're going to do that, but at what point do you
10 turn to your commissioners and say we may—we should
11 start looking at some contingencies. Not that you
12 would share, but that, you know, this process of
13 worst case scenario they're preparing for because
14 commissioner after commissioner testified that
15 they're just going to fight it. That there really
16 isn't it and maybe there was one or two I think the
17 NYCHA commissioner said that, you know, obviously
18 that they're looking at contingency in care, the
19 worst cases scenario. But I think everyone else
20 pretty much is saying we're just going to fight this.
21 So, at what point do you feel is the right time for
22 us to start thinking of contingencies?

23 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, hot to repeat myself,
24 but and—and--

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

3 [interposing] But you're going to repeat it, though.

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: --what you just said.

5 Look, the-the-these-the cuts in that proposal Tuesday
6 were devastating. You said it. I said it. The
7 Mayor has said it, and they are almost all consuming,
8 right? I mean they have a huge impact not just on
9 the city of New York and-and our residents, but they
10 have a huge impact on the State of New York-not only
11 are these-if-if it is true that the-that the federal
12 budget and the ACS Repeal, and by the way, there's
13 still confusion. You're absolutely right, but if
14 those two Medicaid cuts are-are additive as they
15 suggested, then that's 35% cut to Medicaid or more.
16 I mean that's quite incredible, and-and then-and then
17 on top that to say in the-in the ACA repeal that New
18 York State will be directed on how it funds its
19 portion of Medicaid. It's quite incredible action,
20 and it's going to have profound repercussions on us,
21 and our-we-so the first line of this is to say no
22 it's not acceptable, and that we're going to do
23 everything we can to fight that, and it turns out
24 that in-and this certainly doesn't end, but it's
25 going to be a very difficult battle. But,-but it

turns out that in the continuing—in the—in what we call a continuing resolution, but is actually the end of the—was a federal omnibus bill. But there's \$17 billion of cuts. There were 417 billion proposed by the President for the last five months of this current federal fiscal year, and none of that happened. And in addition, we received, which there were many doubts about, there was funding for \$61 million to reimburse New York City and other communities fir security for the President. Beyond that, and—and I'm going to keep saying this, too, beyond that, the savings that we're putting forward, the first time this administration has done in November, January, and April in each update, in each part of our budget, more and more savings, the partial—the partial freeze cautious, but nevertheless, a partial attempt to start another level of review on hiring, look with you at the vacancies, and then putting a level of reserves that by any measure however we try to measure that whether it's on city revenue spending or anything, these are the highest level of reserves that we've achieved together or any city administration. Those are

2 protected measures. Those are ways to say that we
3 are being careful about the uncertainty we face.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, I'm
5 not going to repeat everything because we're just
6 going to be repeating back and forth to each other.
7 We're not on the—on the same page when it comes those
8 numbers, and we will continue to negotiate after the
9 hearing before adoption on this. I wanted to just
10 pivot to the human services contracts. As you are
11 aware, the value of many of the city's Human Services
12 contract is not sufficient to support the actual cost
13 to deliver services. Nearly 20% of the city's non-
14 profit providers are insolvent and 40% have less than
15 two months worth of funding to cover services readily
16 available. DHS is the only human service agency
17 whose Executive Budget includes additional funding to
18 right size shelter provider contracts. The remaining
19 agencies that fall under Human Services have yet to
20 address budgetary shortfalls for contracted services.
21 As you are well aware, the Council in its Preliminary
22 Budget response called for a right sizing of the
23 Human services contract. Is OMB currently working
24 with the city's other Human Services to right size
25 their contract, and fully fund personnel services and

2 other than personnel services costs based on the
3 services that non-profit organizations are contracted
4 to provide?

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we—we inherited a
6 situation where as with our workforce and employees
7 there were no contracts when we started this
8 administration, and there were complete contracts of
9 what—basically all of our unions. Wit the Human
10 Services providers, they had seen dramatic cuts
11 including at the agencies that we were just
12 discussion, DFTA, ACS had dramatic cuts in—in the end
13 of the prior administration. Those were being
14 reflected in what was happening to Human Services
15 providers. We have over the course of these 3-1/2
16 years been addressing their problems. We did
17 together a 2-1/2% wage adjustment two years ago. We
18 accelerated the minimum before the state law had come
19 into effect. We funded the first, the \$11.50 and the
20 \$15.00 minimum wage. We have now proposed a year ago
21 or not—maybe six months, a half a year ago we made an
22 agreement with the daycare workers, and the daycare
23 providers that gave them a pattern conforming
24 increase and in the Preliminary Budget we put forward
25 for all these Human Services providers for their

2 workers 2% for Fiscal 18 a wage increase, 2% in '19
3 and another 2% in 2020. That alone is \$200 million
4 when fully annualized. That is not ignoring this
5 sector. That is recognizing how important this
6 sector is. We have—we have done—it's not true that
7 we have only done base adjustments for DHS. We
8 actually and—and you know this well, we made a major
9 adjustment in Beacons for example, which was the
10 first adjustment since the creation of the program.
11 They had gone over 20 years with no increase in rates
12 until last year when we together gave them a
13 significant rate increase to recognize—to recognize
14 the needs of the Beacon program. We did the same,
15 and we had done many adjustments over the past two
16 years for the Early Learn program. Going forward
17 what we said last year, and we have done now in the
18 Executive Budget was we looked at an area that was
19 very important to all of us, and that was DHS and our
20 shelter providers, and to right size to one get their
21 contracts in order, which is happening, and I know
22 Commissioner Banks had testified to that, that he'll—
23 he'll have most of the contracts in place by the end
24 of this Fiscal Year. So, having the contracts in
25 place, having the wage adjustments in place, and then

2 moving forward with the model budgeting. Not a
3 minor--not a minor amount of money. When fully
4 implemented well over \$100 million in adjustments
5 being made to the DHS social service providers. We
6 are talking to that community. We recognize how
7 important they are to the delivery of our services,
8 and we're talking to the community, and we're talking
9 to commissioners about how we proceed. The DHS
10 adjustment actually took a year. We had contracts
11 that over the years different rates were being
12 provided. Some things were being reimbursed. Some
13 things were not being reimbursed. They were really
14 all over the place. That's what we inherited.
15 That's what we're fixing, and that's what we're in
16 the process of doing, and we've committed that we
17 will be talking to them about other areas in the not-
18 for-profit community about how to reflect their
19 costs. Obviously, it's part of the whole balance
20 that-that we do together on addressing the needs of-
21 of the entire Human Service sector.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, I
23 just think that at this point currently and-and we
24 understand the proposed 2%, the non-profit sector is
25 saying we are struggling, and in many ways there are

2 our partners. Government can't do this along. We're
3 talking about doing a lot of support work for family.
4 The Mayor often talks about vulnerable communities.
5 These are the organizations that are providing the
6 services in our neighborhoods, and if they're coming
7 to us and saying we can't sustain ourselves, this 2%
8 I don't think anyone is going to say we don't
9 appreciate the 2%, but it clearly isn't enough. So,
10 I would hope that we will continue to engage in these
11 conversations to get to a point—at least to get to a
12 better plan as we plan these—the growth in the coming
13 years that we can increase percentages and, you know,
14 talk about percentages that may be more adequate to
15 help shore up our non-profits because I believe that
16 we're in crisis, and they've been very clear about
17 expressing that.

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we agree they are
19 very important, and I think that the administration
20 has show how important they are. Unlike the prior
21 administration, we actually made them part of a wage
22 pattern consistent with what city employees were
23 getting. So, we did. It's—it's over a six percent
24 increase over those three years on top of what we
25 did. I'm actually being corrected. It's—it's almost

2 hear \$250 million of wage adjustments when fully
3 implemented. That's—that clearly shows our
4 commitment. Do we need to do more? Well, obviously
5 we're saying we need to do more, and we're committed
6 to doing more, and the money we're putting in in DHS
7 for the model budgeting, and what we did for the
8 Beacons last year and what we did for the Early Learn
9 programs for the prior two years, and the agreement
10 was 1707 and the daycare—and daycare providers last
11 year all reflect our desire and our recognition of
12 how important they are to the programs that we
13 jointly care about.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, can
15 you walk me through what we've learned from the model
16 budgeting?

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: On DHS?

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Yeah.

19 DEAN FULEIHAN: I'm happy to give you—I
20 want to make sure I do this properly. We're happy to
21 follow up and give you details, and once again, if
22 we're meeting with Commissioner Banks we can do that
23 together. I mean he went through that process for
24 whole year on how they rationalize—how they
25 rationalize the rates, and—and how they assumed

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

48

2 costs. So, we're happy to sit down and do that. I
3 would recommend we do that with-with the
4 Commissioner.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay. So
6 we'll follow. Hopefully we can get this in before
7 the adoption.

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: We can do that. We can
9 do that immediately.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay
11 great. I just—my last question for this round there
12 was during the Health and Hospitals Executive Budget
13 hearing, the Council raised concerns about the
14 Transformation Plan, specifically the \$100 million
15 placeholder in Fiscal 2020 and 2021 for development
16 opportunities. It just seems that this development
17 opportunity was just going to keep raising this \$100
18 million, but there wasn't—I didn't get a clear plan.
19 Can you outline the process that led to the city's
20 adding \$200 million total in projected revenue from
21 development opportunities in this plan?

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, the—you hear from
23 the—the acting head of Health and Hospitals, who's
24 done a very successful job in this year. We believe
25 the Transformation Plan for the current year, which

2 was stepped back for a minute. The Transformation
3 Plan for the current year is on track actually in
4 some respects exceeding that, and that's a very
5 positive sign that many thought would not happen. At
6 this point in time we don't believe additional
7 resources are needed. In the original Transformation
8 Plan of—of well over a year ago now, the
9 Transformation Plan did say there maybe development
10 opportunities at the sites of Health and Hospitals
11 including there are some sites that they're not using
12 at this point and that they're maybe development
13 opportunities. It was actually a modest amount to
14 say that in the—in the end of this financial plan
15 that there may be \$200 million of available resources
16 from the development opportunities using—using land
17 more wisely and seeing if there are other
18 opportunities there. That's all that reflected.

19 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay. I
20 just--

21 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] Which does
22 not reflect the specific. We don't have at this
23 point to tell you that here is a specific project--

24 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
25 [interposing] Okay, that's what we wanted hear.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: --for a specific piece of
3 land. It is an assumption based on--

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
5 [interposing] The potential of the empty space--

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] Correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --that
8 you have?

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: Correct.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.
11 Okay, that's what we wanted clarity on, and also we
12 had asked the commissioner, but perhaps you can help
13 us. As Council Members there might be developments.
14 These hospitals are in our districts--

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: Of course.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --and
17 many of us are looking to build new schools, we're
18 looking to build a lot of these things. So we have
19 an opportunity to identify locations that we may not
20 normally have within the portfolio of access. I
21 think we would like as the Council we would like to
22 work with both OMC, and H&H that before it goes to a
23 developer necessarily that we have the opportunity to
24 look at what we can do with--with the potential of
25 bringing sites up.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we agree completely
3 and we'll make sure that happens.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay,
5 great so in my round 2 I wanted to follow up on MOIA
6 the General Corporation Tax, Healing NYC, a question
7 on DFTA, but I'll com back in my second round. We
8 will—we've been joined by Council Member Rosenthal
9 and Rodriguez. We will now hear from Majority Leader
10 Van Bramber followed by Council Member Lander.

11 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
12 very much, Madam Chair and to the Director it is no
13 secret that it is raining an awful lot this month and
14 certainly today, but I want to use that as an
15 opportunity to highlight that somewhere in the city
16 of New York, in fact, I'm relatively certain that in
17 just about every borough there are libraries that are
18 leaking right now. This is a serious situation, and
19 I know I always talk about libraries, and culture
20 because I'm the Chair of the committee, but I also
21 represent a lot of people, a lot of people who need
22 those libraries, and we desperately need our
23 libraries to be in good operating order. There is
24 \$150 million request for capital in this budget on
25 behalf of the libraries that would address these

2 critical maintenance issue. So that on a rainy day
3 like today and a rainy month like this month, our
4 libraries can open. They can be safe. They can be
5 secure and they don't have to have buckets in
6 children's rooms and in meeting rooms. So, I want to
7 ask you, Dean, is that \$150 million request something
8 that you think is worthwhile, and is the
9 administration seriously discussing this, and will we
10 have a meaningful discussion about including that in
11 this budget.

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: I have to step back for a
13 moment and remind that—you that successfully together
14 we actually have done significant amounts of
15 investments in libraries, and the first multi-year
16 commitment that the libraries have had on capital.
17 Instead of doing it on an annual basis, two years ago
18 we made a significant commitment. We have expanded
19 to six-day service libraries and done significant
20 operations. We had met major capital needs at the
21 libraries. There are always significant needs out
22 there. I'm not minimizing that. This is part of our
23 conversation with you about what those needs are.
24 Another place where the commitment level needs work
25 and needs improvement because there are capital

2 projects that the libraries have where they're having
3 a hard time moving forward on those capital projects.
4 S o, it's another area to go back to the very first
5 question capital where—where I think we all need to
6 see some improvement in addition to talking about
7 what additional resources may be available, we need
8 to make sure that the resources we put forward are
9 actually being used.

10 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: No one wants
11 to see library capital projects move faster than me
12 including at Hunter's Point, but let me just get from
13 you on the record that this \$150 million critical
14 capital maintenance request is on the bale, and it's
15 something that the administration is seriously
16 considering.

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: But we are in discussions
18 with you, and we understanding that one of the
19 Council priorities is additional capital. I'm
20 pointing out that we have successfully with you in
21 the past made—made really significant commitments,
22 but we also need to be concerns that that we're not
23 simply—really it goes right back to the first
24 questions not putting additional resources, and then
25 nothing happens.

2 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: That's
3 right, which I think also gets to the point of-of OMB
4 working with us, and the library systems to allow for
5 more pass-through projects so the libraries can
6 manage those projects themselves, which I think would
7 bring them the ability bring those projects in under
8 budget and on time.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we're--

10 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: --in a much
11 more frequent manner.

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we're happy to--that's
13 a conversation we have been having, but we should
14 make sure that that's the actual result of those, and
15 that libraries can actually handle the additional--the
16 additional effort, and resources it takes to those,
17 There are lot of very small projects that--that are
18 handled and it may be--it may be more difficult than
19 it appears on its face.

20 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: We should
21 definitely purse that. I just want to say also the
22 investments that we have made baselining \$343 million
23 for six-day library service, and the several hundred
24 million in capital are great achievements that we've
25 done together this administration and this Council.

2 I'm very proud of that. But we need to go and keep
3 making progress on this very critical issue. I want
4 to quickly address culture and the arts because you
5 mentioned all of the devastating cuts at the hands of
6 the Trump Budget, but didn't mention that, in fact,
7 President Trump followed through with his threat to
8 essentially abolish the NEA, the NEH, the IMLS and
9 the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Your
10 Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, our commissioner of
11 Cultural Affairs has already said that that
12 elimination would cost [bell] New York City cultural
13 organizations well over \$50 million in direct
14 support, which would devastate many organizations
15 including our smaller outer borough non-profit
16 cultural organizations. As you know, there is a \$40
17 million request for increase to the culture and the
18 arts. There was \$10 million increase by-in the
19 budget last year that has not been restored or
20 baselined. We need that funding. Can you address
21 that, and how seriously this administration takes
22 Culture and the arts and Donald Trump's assault on
23 culture and the arts in the city of New York.

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, let-let me start with
25 your first point about the-the list I gave. I gave

2 one page of devastating cuts. We could spend hours
3 going through other devastating cuts. So, by no
4 means if I left something out I can--there are coming.
5 Section 8, huge amounts of cuts. Not on my list.
6 Actually I didn't realize it in the beginning, but
7 there were huge cuts to Section 8. We are learning
8 every day more and more cuts that are in this budget.
9 I--the intent was to give you examples of huge and
10 significant--significant examples of what would happen
11 if this budget were to go through. So, by means was
12 that intended to be a full list of every single thing
13 the President is proposing to do, none of which
14 should be happening including obviously what's
15 happening on the cultural side. Again, we worked
16 with you very closely last year and said, okay there
17 should be an additional allotment for cultures. We
18 do care about cultural institutions and we reflected
19 that in last year's budget, and, you know, again it's
20 part of conversation we're having with you.

21 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: It's
22 critically important that particularly as Donald
23 Trump assaults culture and the arts and --and thinking
24 people that we--the City of New York come back and
25 support the arts--

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: Right.

3 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: --in an even
4 more meaningful way.

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: Again, back to the--the
6 answer I had with the Chair before, any place where
7 we see these devastating cuts, though, we should be
8 fighting those devastating cuts--

9 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER:
10 [interposing] Absolutely.

11 DEAN FULEIHAN: --and not ending up in a
12 position of simply backfilling and trying to backfill
13 what's something that should not happen at its very
14 basis.

15 MAJORITY LEADER VAN BRAMER: Resist.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you.
17 Thank you, Majority Leader. [laughter] We will hear
18 from Council Member Lander followed by Council Member
19 Rosenthal followed by Council Member Rodriguez.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you madam
21 Chair and Budget Director and I appreciate your one-
22 page summary of the low lights of the--of the budget,
23 which I've already gotten some feedback on--on
24 Twitter. One--one thing I guess I want to ask about
25 that--that I have missed in the budget amongst all

2 those devastating cuts, one thing that he said he was
3 going to do a lot of was to help pay for
4 infrastructure for our crumbling bridges and road.
5 Did I miss the infrastructure part of the Trump
6 Budget?

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: We-we both—we both misses
8 it. We're still looking--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: [interposing]
10 It's alright.

11 DEAN FULEIHAN: --but I don't believe
12 it's in there.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: No, I don't think
14 so either. So, for all that talk, you know, not one
15 penny in—in the infrastructure plan for a city that
16 has very significant infrastructure needs. I
17 appreciate that we are—are putting significant
18 dollars to infrastructure and I think, you now, the
19 chair and I while we, I'm indeed going to keep
20 pushing on the capital projects management reform. I
21 wholeheartedly agree that this is an important time
22 for New York City to have the capital program that we
23 have to invest our infrastructure and I appreciate
24 you guys stepping up to do it. I do want to say a
25 little more about the need for capital projects

2 management reform. We're putting out a little issue
3 brief today that just takes a look at your capital
4 projects dashboards, the city's projects over \$25
5 million, and I'm not going to ask you to guess these
6 numbers but—

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: Thank you.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: --of them--of
9 those projects and these are all just city data, 44%
10 of the projects are severely late, and 42% of the
11 projects are severely over budget. Over the 44
12 projects that are both severely late and severely and
13 severely over budget, 43 are managed by DDC, and on
14 median \$30 million over budget and 700 days late, and
15 that's on top of the Slow Build Report that Center
16 for an Urban Future put out earlier that showed that
17 for the library and cultural projects 930 bucks a
18 square foot, about twice what commercial construction
19 costs in New York City. So, while we did indeed--look
20 I know you want to improve this. I know your
21 commissioners want to improve it. I know lots of
22 people are taking lots of steps, but it doesn't feel
23 to me like we are taking the more fundamental look at
24 what's not working in this system. The DDC facts
25 suggest actually that maybe we should look at whether

2 the state granted super powers that EDC and the
3 School Construction Authority have or something more
4 agencies should have. Obviously, we support Design-
5 Build, but the steps we are taking are not yet close
6 to the level of reform that we need in this system.
7 So, we have some ideas that we're proposing in-in
8 legislation, but the truth is a real top-to-bottom
9 look, which is not organized by can we shave a few
10 more days here or there, but which is organized by
11 this system is not delivering what we want it to
12 deliver. How do we re-engineer it to get there? So,
13 we're--that's the work that we are eager to start
14 doing with you.

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: Okay, so this is not new.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: It is not new.

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: New York City's capital--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: No, no and I've
19 been saying it through the prior administration, and
20 this is not the fault of the de Blasio administration
21 but we had a shared responsibility to do more to fix
22 it.

23 DEAN FULEIHAN: Well, agreed. So I
24 agree. I said that at the first hearing. I look
25 forward to your recommendations. We need to work

2 together to figure out how this is. I-I do think
3 we're-we need to be careful. We need to be
4 thoughtful about this.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Of course.

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: And what improvements can
7 be made at DDC? What improvements can be made at
8 park? There may be many different answers to how to
9 address this. Once again, many of these are small--
10 are small programs. We are making incremental
11 improvements. Thank you for that. That's true. Our
12 approach to the capital budgeting is much more
13 encompassing and inclusive this year including City
14 Planning as the Charter it envisioned really for the
15 first time. So, we're trying to address that and
16 have a better sense of this, but can we--should we be
17 doing improvements? Do we need to be doing
18 improvements? Yeah, we-we do agree.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And I'll just
20 note while small projects are no doubt a problem, the
21 stats I gave are from the projects, \$25 million and--
22 -

23 DEAN FULEIHAN: Okay, I got you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: --and above

25 DEAN FULEIHAN: That's right.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: The other
3 question I'll just ask in my remaining time is about
4 the city's Commission on Human Rights. I was very
5 encouraged the other day to see them launch this
6 wonderful new campaign. You do have rights. It's
7 very inspiring. I love that at this moment when we
8 can't count on the federal government to protect
9 people's civil and human rights, we are stepping up
10 to do it. I expressed concern in the preliminary
11 round that we weren't doing enough because people's
12 human rights complaints have grown substantially to
13 over a year, but then I was dismayed to see in the
14 Executive Budget I think it actually got worse at
15 least as I read it we cut their communications
16 budget. So, things exactly like this You Do Have
17 Rights campaign wouldn't be possible next year. Can
18 you address what we're doing to make sure I guess
19 both that we are able to communicate and project what
20 we—our values here, but also that people have the
21 ability to get their claims processed. So that we
22 aren't letting discrimination linger for over a year.
23 [bell]

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we have—look, we've—
25 we've done this together. We once again inherited

2 the budget that had been decimated. We have done
3 over 100, well over 100% increase in that agency's
4 budget. Certainly knowing that--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: [interposing]
6 They just cut it so low that 100% wasn't even that
7 much. [laughs]

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: It was significant. It
9 was significant. New-new space new headcount. I
10 mean we are trying to address their needs. Once
11 again, if we-if we think we're not hesitant if we
12 believe at some point and during any one of budget
13 modifications including adoption that we need more
14 resources for that. We do think thin it's a big
15 priority. We agree on that.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you. Thank
17 you, Madam Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
19 Thank you. Council Member Rosenthal.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so
21 much Chair and Director Fuleihan it's great to see
22 you and your team always on top it.

23 DEAN FULEIHAN: Thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So I appreciate
25 that. I'd like to follow up on two things starting

2 with Council Member Lander's point about historic
3 cost overruns. So, a couple of years ago, as you
4 know, a watch dog group Class Size Matters identified
5 a contract that, you now, smelled funny, and City
6 Hall did something historic. You—you negated the
7 contract, and had them rebid it, and it ended up
8 saving the city hundreds of millions of dollars.
9 What I'm wondering is, is there anything else since
10 that time because we talked about quite extensively,
11 that you've unearthed that OMB has unearthed that is—
12 have you identified anything similar to that since
13 that time?

14 DEAN FULEIHAN: I don't believe anything
15 that's similar to that. That does not mean that
16 through our normal process and the staff, and I'd
17 actually have to go back on this, but we don't
18 question agencies about contracts and development,
19 and whether there's a better way to do it. We've
20 certainly been doing that where we insourced, and DOE
21 and the Executive Budget does significant insourcing.
22 That was actually part of a process that included
23 would you need that contractor or there better ways
24 to do that? So, there—I—I—so I don't. I'm a little
25 concerned about using that simply as—as the model.

2 What happened a couple of years ago, but do we
3 question? Of course, we question and does that lead
4 to—to better government and efficiencies? Of course
5 it does?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, you
7 know, I am regularly getting suggestions from that
8 whistleblower about specious contracts, and I would
9 like to know that OMB is doing a regular audit of
10 their contracts. I understand the unusual—the
11 relationship DOE has with the city. It's, you know,
12 quasi state. By the same token, you know, even city
13 funds pay for many contracts that are suspect.
14 Recently I was made aware of a \$600,000 contract to a
15 group that identifies internships for you CPE
16 schools.

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: Uh-huh.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: One of the CPE
19 school reached out to me and says I don't understand
20 why the city pays for anyone to do that. We do that
21 for free at our school. It's part of our mission.

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, look, I, think we are
23 happy to look--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]
25 I mean so I would want to know that DOE is regularly

2 being investigated, and here's—here's my point. That
3 if we were to do that, I mean Council Member Lander
4 is talking about hundreds of millions of dollars on
5 the capital side. I think if we were to do that more
6 systemically, that we would have available to us
7 money to spend on the things that we so desperately
8 mean. Let's look at the Human Services contracts.
9 There is no question in my mind that his
10 administration has done more than any other
11 administration before it. Well, let's put it a
12 different way. Previous administrations caused the
13 problem by underfunding, systemically underfunding
14 our Human Service contracts both the workers and the
15 funding they need for maintenance. This is
16 administration has done two things. One, begun to
17 address the PS issues by increasing salaries. Also,
18 you've done remarkable in right sizing on the
19 homeless service contracts and the Beacons that you
20 mentioned. What I'd like to hear today is that there
21 would be an understanding that you would put in the
22 budget an OTPS equivalent to the PS funding. In
23 other words follow the same pattern 2% and 2% and so
24 on, and that a commitment to right size as we go
25 forward with the DFTA contracts for our senior

2 centers with, you know, all of our work that we do
3 with mental health facilities. That's the commitment
4 that I'm looking for, and that frankly 80,000 workers
5 in this sector are looking for as well.

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: So a few answers. On the
7 Department of Education, we're—we should talk to the
8 Department of Education on that particular program
9 and any concern you have, and we should address it
10 [bell]. I'm not going to assume that because one
11 provider disagrees with the results of a procurement
12 or a process that something is inappropriate. It
13 doesn't mean, of course, that we shouldn't ask the
14 question. So, I'm happy to follow with you with the
15 Department on that issue. Where we can find savings
16 we should always be funded too. On the question of
17 the not-for-profit community and the Human Service
18 providers, I'm not going to repeat everything I did
19 before because I did a fairly extensive litany.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And I heard it
21 and the public heard it.

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: And you heard it and it's
23 there, and are we committed to working with them? We
24 are very committed to working with them. We're in
25 conversations as you well know. You and I have been

2 talking about this. We're going to continue to talk
3 about this, and we'll try to address these very
4 complicate issues once again in a balanced manner
5 with what resources we have available, how we can
6 move forward with them. The goal--[coughs] excuse
7 me--the goal clearly was to move forward with them. We
8 would not have done, is the only one I'll re-
9 emphasize--we would have not done basically a pattern
10 conforming wage adjustment over three years if we
11 didn't believe that their long-term security was
12 important to us.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And I mean
14 with permission, Chair, I'm not address that at all.
15 I-I believe your commitment. What they're asking for
16 now is a similar commitment for the increased costs
17 of maintenance of technology and of rent for example,
18 and cleaning supplies, things that have in-costs that
19 have increased of the past 20 years that we are now
20 asking private philanthropists to pay for. Can you--
21 what a waste of money. The private philanthropists
22 should be paying for new and innovative ideas. That's
23 what philanthropy is for. Can you imagine us saying
24 to a construction contractor here we're going to give
25 you 80 cents on the dollar and you should just cross-

2 subsidize with your other bridge jobs or-or luxury
3 high-rise jobs in order to pay for any costs-costs
4 that are not covered by our contract. We would never
5 do that. Just the opposite. A bridge contractor
6 tell us the cost is X, we pay them X. When there's
7 an overage, and it's a million dollars more, we pay
8 them a million dollars more. I know you're working
9 hard to right size. What I'm asking for in this
10 budget now is a commitment to find the increased
11 costs in maintenance that is unfairly burdening our
12 providers. It would be like saying to the DFTA we're
13 only going to—we're not going to fund you for the
14 increased cost in supplies and IT. We're going to
15 stop giving you money for IT and supplies. Good luck
16 with that. That's what we're doing to our OTPS for—
17 in terms of OTPS for our Human Service providers,
18 and—but I want to end by saying I do thank you for
19 what's been done. No other administration has done
20 that. They dug a hole. You're getting us out of it,
21 but we need a little more to go.

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, again, we're in
23 conversations with them, as you know, to try to
24 figure out a way that we can do a balanced approach
25 to address those needs. We have now made hundreds of

2 millions of dollars investment. The wage piece had-
3 it will end up being \$250 million, and we've made
4 other investments that total by the trend of this
5 four-year financial plan, almost \$400 million. That
6 is a serious commitment to this community. I'm not
7 suggesting and I never did that there weren't other
8 needs, and are there ways for us to talk about that,
9 and address that? Yes, but at the same time we have
10 to recognize how much we've done in this community.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: That's right,
12 you're digging us out of a really big hole.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
14 [interposing] Thank you, Council Member. We'll put
15 you on the second round. Council Member Rodriguez
16 and we've been joined by Council Member Cumbo.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
18 Chair. First, two recommendations. One is when it
19 comes to the Fair Fare. As you know, like the
20 community costs raised—the poverty is raised by two
21 points—two percentage points with a greater impact of
22 pushing people into poverty based on the study that
23 had been released. We're working with the Mayor,
24 with the effort to take 800,000 New Yorkers out of
25 poverty by 2025, but also we know that the cost of

2 transportation is so high for the working class New
3 Yorkers. I encourage the administration even though
4 we know that Mayor has said that he understand the
5 importance of the Fair Fare Campaign when it come to
6 merits. We get it. It should be the MTA, but the
7 MTA is not doing it, and just think that we as a city
8 we have to jump—we had to jump in because we say we
9 need to do it because we cannot wait for Albany. So,
10 encourage the city to continue these conversations
11 especially in the negotiating things from the Council
12 and try to do phase 1 of this plan to put some money,
13 so in the amount of about a million dollars to the
14 phase 1 of the Fair Fare Campaign. My second
15 recommendation is when it comes to Vision Zero the \$3
16 million is not there for the education or awareness
17 campaign of Vision Zero, and—and I think that, you
18 know, not because this is an important initiative
19 that the Mayor embraced when he was elected, but in
20 order for us to reduce by 2024 the number of
21 pedestrians being killed, we will do it not only with
22 new law enforcing the law, but also changing the
23 cultural and the educational awareness. A balance is
24 so important to continued advertising on the radio
25 and TV and the newspapers. So, yes recommendation

2 for us to also be sure that we work together to put
3 those \$3 million that they are not there right for
4 the 2018 Budget. Question one related to DOT to
5 Transportation. You know, the governor made the
6 announcement two days ago that Amtrak is a mess, MTA
7 is a mess. We take the train. The 2-Train is
8 running delayed, the 3-Train and most of the trains
9 the signal system is not working. That's the MTA.
10 The city doesn't, you know, the major power.
11 However, when it comes to our buses, we can have an
12 impact in our buses, and I think that I'm calling—I
13 would like to know, you know, what is our plan to
14 turn the buses that we have today in our streets as
15 an above the ground train system? Because it's
16 about—this is not only the MTA upgrading the
17 technology but it's also about the bus lane. On that
18 we are not doing enough enforcement with it—with it
19 when it comes to the bus lanes. So, what is our
20 plan? What is the part that we are doing as the
21 city's responsibility to upgrade the infrastructure
22 of the bus lane that we say we are planning to run
23 our buses, so that people didn't have, it doesn't
24 take more time for someone to take a bus than to walk
25 when they go to work.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we have been working
3 on bus lanes, and Select bus routes and--and
4 increasing signal timing. So, we have been trying to
5 make improvements in the bus. Let's remember,
6 though, the bus--it is part of the MTA and the city--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
8 Well, that's development.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: I--I just--just to step
10 back for a moment though the--the--we did make an
11 historic commitment to the MTA Plan. I just want to
12 put that out there, a \$2.5 billion commitment in the--
13 in the current MTA Capital Plan. I just want to say.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
15 But, yeah, you know, but my thing is that it is--I
16 understand there's some parts are related to MTA.
17 Enforcing is our part. You know, that time when the
18 buses they have to be--they have to be only dedicated
19 to buses is our part, and we need to increase--

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] So, let's
21 talk about this. I'm happy to have a talk.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]
23 And we already have the Fifth Avenue as the only area
24 in the city where we are also--we're already using the
25 technology that give priority to the bus drivers.

2 So, we need to learn from the already in technology
3 on the Fifth Avenue. My last question--

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] So we
5 should have that--we--we should get together and have
6 that conversation--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: --and what your thoughts
9 are.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay, and my
11 last question is about three years ago you came here
12 and you say an average of 50% of New Yorkers live on
13 the poverty lines. This is what we inherit [bell].
14 Three years after what are the numbers from the three
15 years ago and today?

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: Well, we know the--the
17 Mayor now I think two weeks ago put out the--the new
18 poverty statistics and for the first time since the
19 Great Recession there was a reduction in near
20 poverty. I will get you the exact numbers. I'll get
21 you the numbers. I'll have to get the number of the
22 at or near poverty from three years ago, and the
23 numbers now. There have been improvements.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I'll [off mic]
25 Ate they higher?

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: They are lower.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Higher.

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: No, they're lower. The
5 at or near poverty numbers the Mayor announced are
6 lower. We'll—I'll you—I'll get you the comparison.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]

8 Thank you.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Madam Chair, I
10 think you should fill the Budget Director in on our
11 hearing with the MTA, that highly enlightening budget
12 hearing we had.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Well
14 there was nothing to say. I can't say anything
15 because they didn't say anything to us. So, there
16 was no information with MTA. We will now hear from
17 Council Member Cumbo

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you. I know
19 that it was brought up earlier and also brought up at
20 the last hearing with Commissioner Finkelppearl in
21 regards to the \$10 million not being baselined in
22 this budget, also recognizing the fact that the
23 original ask was not for \$10 million, it was actually
24 for \$40 million, and wanting to know the status of
25 that particular allocation. Will it be baselined?

2 Also, in the future we also want to know what is
3 going to be the future of that because we also have
4 the Creative Cultural Plan that has been launched in
5 and out. So, the basic question is the \$10 million
6 with it be baselined, and will we see that very
7 critical increase of \$40 million that the cultural
8 community has been very anxious and patient, but it's
9 getting to that breaking point where many
10 institutions are questioning laying off staff, laying
11 off key organizations that they partner with. So,
12 it's really a big challenge at this time.

13 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we are in discussions
14 with you on what—what should happen with the cultural
15 piece. We did do—we did, at adoption last year put
16 the \$10 million forward. That was fairly
17 significant. It may have been everything they
18 wanted, and obviously we're talking to cultural
19 institutions. At the same time we're talking to
20 other—to the not-for-profit world and about what
21 their needs are, and what they're confronting, and
22 we're looking at that with you at this process. So,
23 it is part of the process, and the discussion we're
24 having with you on what should be accomplished at
25 adoption.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Would you say that
3 the Department of Cultural Affairs in terms of their
4 increases over the last four years, in terms of the
5 larger agencies, of course. Would you say that
6 Department of Cultural Affairs has received the least
7 amount of increase over the last four years?

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: Actually, I will have to
9 get back to you on where they fit in and the amount
10 of resources at Cultural Affairs. I do think
11 Cultural Affairs is--has--the agency certainly has been
12 treated well, and I do believe the--we made a
13 significant commitment last year on the \$10 million.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Moving right along
15 to the MWBE commitment. So, as you know, the Mayor
16 had initially put in \$10 million and then and
17 additional \$10 million to match that in terms of
18 loans and bonding that sort of things. Where does
19 that \$20 million--has there been an understanding of
20 how that money has been allocated. Is there an
21 understanding if it will be regenerated and also put
22 forward in the Budget so that that program can
23 continue? We recognize the program to be a pilot
24 program initially--

25 DEAN FULEIHAN: Correct

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: --with the
3 understanding that there would be an increase over
4 time.

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes, we--on both programs
6 the--the money has been in the Executive Budget. It
7 was moved forward to the current year, as my
8 understanding, and I can have the Deputy Mayor
9 Richard Buery who is heading this up for the Mayor.
10 He'll give you more detail, but my understanding is
11 these programs, which are not getting started and are
12 actually putting forward commitments. So, why don't
13 we give you--I'll make sure that we give you an update
14 on the exactly where those program are.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Because we--

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] We know
17 they are moving forward and I know we're clearly
18 committed to this, and we're putting whatever
19 resources are necessary. We continue those--that
20 funding into the upcoming Fiscal Year, and we'll keep
21 monitoring it with.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And the other
23 question that I have is in regards to Early Learn as
24 it pertains to the its--that the Universal Pre-K
25 program. A lot of our organizations are very

2 concerned because the RFP as it pertains to Early
3 Learn has not been issued yet, and there's a great
4 deal of concern, fear and anxiety about what will be
5 the future of our Early Learn programs. When the RFP
6 be issued? Will there have to be extensions in the
7 contracts for the current Early Learn providers
8 because the RFP has not been issued at this time?

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, several things on
10 Early Learn over the past two years, we—it's one of
11 the examples I gave earlier on the not-for-profit-on
12 the non-profit community and the Human Service
13 providers. Early Learn was under great stress at the
14 beginning of this administration, and we made several
15 accommodations on reimbursement levels including
16 going back into the prior administration to make sure
17 that they were being properly reimbursed. So the
18 administration has made a very commitment to—to early
19 learn. Last year about six months ago we made an
20 agreement. We were part of an agreement with the
21 day—with daycare with both the union and the daycare
22 providers to provide a wage adjustment for their
23 workers. In this Executive Budget, we are [bell]
24 recommending that the—we are moving the Early Learn
25 program from ACS over the next year to the Department

2 of Education. So, that and to consolidate it under
3 what now is the very successful UPK program. As part
4 of that, we're also expanding, as the Mayor
5 announced, the 3-K--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Uh-huh.

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: --with two districts this
8 fall. So, part of when the next RFP comes out is
9 actually part of the evaluating and it will be worked
10 on with both ACS and DOE as we move forward. When is
11 the appropriate time to put out that new RFP, and--and
12 I--so I don't have an immediate answer for you, but as
13 we make this transition, we'll keep you posted on
14 what we think is the appropriate time to issue that
15 new RFP.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Just want
17 reiterate what my concern is there. My concern is
18 with this transition that many of the culturally
19 specific organization that have been doing day are
20 provider work particularly in the African-American,
21 Latino and Asian communities that have been doing
22 culturally specific daycare work. In these
23 transitions and in these RFP processes they often
24 rejected from the RFP process on the back end side,
25 and currently the major concern about that is that in

2 order for you to be able to qualify for an RFP, you
3 need to have a negotiated lease with the city of New
4 York even to qualify, and currently many of our
5 daycare providers have month-to-month leases that
6 will not qualify them to participate in the RFP
7 process and that's a big challenge that they're
8 facing.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: Okay, we'll—we should
10 continue this conversation. The goal is—has never
11 been of this administration to harm and to--small
12 community providers. Our goal has been to try to
13 encourage that. So, if that's—if that's the concern
14 as we're working through this transition we should
15 be in touch with you and those providers on how we
16 can help them, and I'm happy to do that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And just one more
18 thing. Chair, just give me one more moment. Just
19 want to ask you as chair of the Women's Issues
20 Committee want to talk about the fact that 41% of
21 single mother families with children live in poverty
22 according to U.S. Census figures. That's a
23 staggeringly high number, more than twice the poverty
24 rate. One in three working age women in poverty in
25 New York City say they struggle to afford bus and

2 subway fares. I know this issue has been discussed,
3 but wanted to know in our budget what are we planning
4 to do, if any, at this point to address Fair Fares
5 and phasing-in Fair Fares for those who simply can't
6 afford the expansions that we're seeing in MTA.

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: The-the-look the-the
8 Mayor you know and you heard him on this. He is more
9 than sympathetic towards this but he believes the
10 appropriate place this should be funded is by the
11 MTA. The MTA has programs. This is the MTA's sets
12 the rates, they set the fare rates. This is where it
13 should be addressed. That doesn't mean that there
14 aren't many issues that we have worked on together to
15 address affordability. That why I raised the anti-
16 poverty numbers that were put out a week ago, which
17 said for the first the poverty numbers. That said
18 for the first time those at or near poverty had
19 actually declined since the Great Recession. We've
20 done significant work to try to address that all
21 through the programs that we support in the Human
22 Service sector, in-in education. It's one program
23 after another has been direct at-at dealing with
24 problem. I also want to just come back one minute on
25 the-on the small community providers and Early Learn.

2 So, our goal one of the things that we changed over
3 the past two years was to address all Early Learn
4 costs so if for some reason a providers, you're
5 hearing from providers that we're not doing that,
6 then you should let us know because that was not the
7 intent. The intent was to address those costs. This
8 was one of the areas in the not-for-profit community
9 that we believe we addressed. So, I—we are not
10 hearing those complaints to the extent that you're
11 hearing those complaints. We should know about them.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I will certainly
13 arrange to have a meeting with the providers in my
14 district that are experiencing that anxiety about the
15 future of their 40+ organizations are going to be.

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: So we should see how we
17 can help them.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: That would very
19 appreciated. Thank you on that, and just we need to
20 continue to find ways for particularly our single
21 families to be able to afford to ride the MTA to and
22 front work, and it's great that we feel the sympathy,
23 but when they get there to that token booth, they
24 can't bring that sympathy with them. So, we need to
25 do more to work on that issues. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
3 you, Council Member. Council Member Miller.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Madam
5 Chair. Good morning. It's still more right. So,
6 I'm going to put the labor hat on and talk about the—
7 where we are and upcoming collective bargaining, and
8 contracting and—and what that looks like where we are
9 in terms of have we set aside, do we have the
10 necessary savings to continue the patterns that have
11 been established or are we looking to do something
12 different and, of course, in doing so, I-I think we
13 need to talk about healthcare, the healthcare gap
14 around not just active employees but retirees as
15 well, and I think in the Preliminary Budget we talked
16 about the state of healthcare and those saving that
17 we were hoping to achieve now what that would look
18 but. But as we move forward a potential RFP and what
19 savings would look like in terms of providing the
20 future of healthcare for city employees? [background
21 comments, pause]

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we are getting—it's
23 hard to imagine but we're actually getting near the
24 next round of collective bargaining.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Uh-huh.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: That's what happens when
3 you inherit a situation, which had for in some cases
4 seven years of no-of no labor contracts. As we
5 approach that, we will continue to do it with the
6 same respect we approached it in the very first day
7 of the administration. We have set aside funds in
8 1%. As contracts end we have set aside a labor
9 reserve in our out year, in our out year financial
10 plans. So, we have provided resources for that. The
11 only-the only thing we have said, as we did last time
12 is that we need to keep improving both the quality of
13 care of the healthcare that we provide for our
14 employee and we believe that we have made significant
15 improvements, and that no one had actually focused on
16 this for two decades, that we're making significant
17 improvements in the quality of healthcare, and we're
18 making significant savings. In the upcoming Fiscal
19 Year in the 18 Fiscal Year we will achieve with the-
20 with the Municipal Labor Committee \$1.3 billion of
21 savings. So, that is something that together with
22 them we should want to continue as we move towards
23 the next round of labor negotiations.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So, two things.
25 First, and-and-and I generally-we're generally on the

2 same page, but I absolutely disagree with the quality
3 of healthcare that is now being dispensed by our
4 current provider. I—I don't think it's the quality
5 of healthcare that our—our workers our employees,
6 retirees deserve. I think that all within the
7 industry and all those outside of the industry are
8 well aware that they're kind of on a last leg in the
9 services being provided, are indicative of that. But
10 as we move forward—which is—which is basically the
11 reason why we interjected the possibility of there
12 being an RFP as we move forward.

13 DEAN FULEIHAN: Right. I—I apologize. I
14 didn't mean to—to in anyway imply that an RFP and a—a
15 and a—looking at other providers should not be
16 something to be considered. Obviously, as you know,
17 we need to do that with our partners in labor and the
18 Municipal Labor Committee. Once again, did—we
19 believe there can be more improvement in the quality
20 of care that we're providing. We think we've made
21 strides in that. We believe we've also saved funds
22 in that. We believe we can do both of those things
23 as we continue forward. I—I in no way meant to
24 indicate that we were sent---

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing] so,
3 we—we are—we are on target for the final year of
4 2018?

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: We are.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And—and that is
7 the final year right?

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: It is the final year.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [interposing] So,
10 you begin to talk about what healthcare--

11 DEAN FULEIHAN: Correct.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --look like
13 beyond 2018--

14 DEAN FULEIHAN: That's correct.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --which I think
16 considering that we have these agreements that are
17 now beginning to be like a really opportune time to
18 have serious conversations about that as well. Could
19 you talk about some -some of the—the—Council Member
20 Cumbo before me talked about some of the MWBE
21 contracting. I know when we were in a budget
22 briefing we—I think you got charged with kind of
23 investigating leveraging some of the resources that
24 are being—the—the—the contracting resources that are
25 going out throughout the city. Has there been in the

2 last month and a half any update of response to that?

3 I know again we have approximately almost \$2 billion

4 in infrastructure investment going on in Southeast

5 Queens, but under the vendors law the workforce

6 reflect the--

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] So, let--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --the community.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: --as I responded, let me--

10 let me get--let me talk to the Deputy Mayor and let's

11 get [bell] a specific update. I know he's been

12 working on this, but I'll touch base with him and

13 we'll come back to you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, thank you

15 very much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you

17 very much, Council--we're going to begin the second

18 round so this is a shorter round. I want to talk

19 about the collections of the General Corporate --

20 Corporation Tax--

21 DEAN FULEIHAN: Sure.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --have

23 been disappointing throughout the fiscal year. In

24 fact, in the Executive Budget you're reducing your

25 forecast of collections for \$43 million compare to

2 the Preliminary Budget. Can you talk about the
3 expected refund for the GCT going forward and how
4 it's influencing your forecast? [background
5 comments, pause]

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, so they're-look,
7 we're now two years from-we're two years from-from
8 what we should all be proud of, which was a major
9 modernization of the City Corporate tax that had been
10 called upon by the business community and finance
11 community for over a decade. We achieved that. We
12 also achieved when we did that, we reduce corporate
13 tax rates for small business, and we-we reduced even
14 beyond that the corporate tax rates for
15 manufacturers. So, this was a very successful change
16 that we made two years ago together. It's-so several
17 things are happening the corporate tax at the same
18 time. So, we-we along with the state now have a new-
19 a new tax system, and the implementation of that tax
20 system has clearly is causing some difficulty in our
21 understanding on what part of the corporate tax
22 shortfall is due to changes in filing, understanding
23 the tax versus corporate profits and what's happened
24 over the past two years. So, we're in the process of
25 trying to understand that. We're being very cautious

2 about our corporate estimates. We recognize that
3 scenario that given current-current revenue
4 collections are declining and, you know, we're just
5 going to keep working to try to understand what the
6 ramifications of that are because there are many
7 things happening. It's not simply corporate profits
8 and what's happening there. It's also we did a very
9 dramatic change, the state did and then we followed
10 with a very dramatic change in our corporate tax
11 structure and the interplay between those we need to
12 try to isolate so we understand if we need to make
13 any more adjustments going forward.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, can
15 you just walk me through, and I guess this is an
16 example of that of the city set-aside of \$185 million
17 overpayments for 2015 when the tax reform first took
18 place. And can you walk us through the purpose and
19 how much of this has already utilized?

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: It was, once again, when
21 we did corporate tax reform, it's a perfect example.
22 We thought there had been overpayment and we booked
23 that at the time. We are now taking that. So, we-in
24 our forecast on the corporate tax it's included. So
25 that 185 is now being recognized.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Is it?
3 Okay, and how much of this do we have we utilized so
4 far?

5 DEAN FULEIHAN: We-we-it's all
6 incorporated.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: It's all
8 utilized?

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: Completely yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So do you
11 think that we may need additional as we move forward?

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: I-once again, the
13 corporate-even with that, the corporate is-year-to-
14 date is declining and we should be concerned and
15 monitor that. We should be watching it.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes, the corporate tax
18 and the banking tax, right.

19 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: Combining those.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right,
22 right. So, is there another number that you think
23 kind of to help make up the-the difference of
24 possible I guess reimbursements.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: At this time I—I don't
3 have anything. At this time we're not prepared to
4 say here are changes we need to make in the corporate
5 tax structure. We're not—we—they're—I think we need
6 to—to get—it was very confusing. This was a
7 confusing year. Some filers—some people were filing
8 in March.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Dean, if
10 you're saying it's confusing, can you imagine what it
11 means over here on this side.

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yeah, so some people were
13 filing in March, some people were filing in April.
14 There were different filing requirements. I think
15 we're going to have to play this out for another
16 year, and then come back and assess what's the
17 situation.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, would
19 we have to see an additional 80-180--\$185 million
20 again in a year or--?

21 DEAN FULEIHAN: No, I don't believe so.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay, so
23 we'll see less of it or--?

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: You won't see that
25 modification ever again--

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

3 DEAN FULEIHAN: --but the question, the
4 more fundamental question as we look at corporate tax
5 reform were the--it was a revenue neutral change is
6 that revenue neutral change coming through as we had
7 planned--

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: --or different or
10 additional--

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

12 [interposing] That was my next question.

13 DEAN FULEIHAN: or are additional
14 modifications necessary. At this point I don't think
15 your staff or our staff can answer that.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.
17 Personnel services and cost savings. Over the last
18 several years the city has recognized hundreds of
19 millions of dollars in PS accruals each year from
20 agencies operating under budget headcount. As the
21 most recent headcount report the city was operating
22 under a budgeted headcount by nearly 6,000 city
23 funded full-time positions. Although we did see
24 significant headcount savings in the Executive Plan.

2 Can we expect to see more in the Adopted Plan, and if
3 so, by how much.

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: I-I don't believe—So I'm
5 not sure of the exact number. Obviously, every time
6 we do a budget we're making adjustments and we're
7 looking, we're looking at the headcount. So, we'll
8 continue to do that. I know on more longer term
9 basis, you're asking us to look at the vacancies, and
10 we're obviously going to do that with you, and that's
11 going to take a more extensive period of time.

12 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Do you
13 say you're proposing an additional citywide savings
14 program before we adopt the budget?

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: There—there will not be
16 what we had done in November and January and April.
17 Obviously, once again the Mayor did identify the
18 partial hiring freeze on managers and administration
19 and support staff, and we will come back and say
20 here's what we hope that that will achieve. There
21 will obviously be other savings for the current year
22 that I'm quite sure we'll see reflected at adoption.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay,
24 wanted to talk about DFTA and contracting. It has
25 come to the—to our attention that the commissioner

2 sends out a letter to all contracted providers that
3 the agency plans to improve its contracting and
4 procurement process, and that the agency has done an
5 adequate—has done an adequate and processing and
6 registering contract, and—and amendments on a timely
7 basis. Yet, the Council still receives feedback that
8 the contracted providers are still waiting for DFTA
9 to approve submitted budgets on time. I'm hearing
10 from DFTA after a Council designation has cleared
11 MOCS. How is hiring four additional staff going to
12 address this issue, and is there a need for deeper
13 analysis of DFTA's contracting services?

14 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we—we actually
15 believe and so I concur with what the commissioner
16 said about the—the process improving dramatically as
17 we move to the summer. They're working with the
18 Mayor's Office of Contract Services, and I think you
19 will see much less complaints and a much faster
20 process. So, we do actually believe that they are
21 moving to that.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I just
23 think that the timing of the letter was a bit
24 confusing for some of these providers that still
25 don't have contracts. So, you know, to get a letter

2 that says we're doing really a lot better, and you
3 still haven't gotten your contracts. Like proved
4 that you've processed actually 100% of your contracts
5 and then send a letter out, Commissioner.

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: Understood.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
8 you. Healing NYC. Will the Administration create a
9 multi-agency program—well—not will—when you created
10 the Healing NYC and we understand that it's in
11 response to the millions of dollars the city is
12 funding towards initiatives such as Thrive, Healing
13 NYC, New York City Safe and Behavior Health
14 Taskforce. Over the last two fiscal years the
15 Council has requested a breakout of funding headcount
16 and spending by agency and by initiative. While the
17 council understand the complexity of multiagency
18 programs, we remain concerned as the distinction
19 between initiatives and their funding has not been
20 clarified to the public. For example, funding to
21 Nalox—Nalox—God, I can never pronounce it. For the
22 Naloxone kits can be found in both Thrive NYC and
23 Healing NYC. The city would maintain hundreds of
24 contracts with substance abuse organizations. Why
25 does the administration a multi-agency program as

2 Healing NYC rather than combine the work with Thrive
3 NYC.

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: So the focus is—is—is not
5 exactly the same, right. I mean so one is providing
6 clearly mental health. It doesn't mean there aren't
7 times where these two things overlap, and the other
8 is deal with opioid crisis and—and to focus our
9 attention and direction to both of those issues and
10 to concentrate across agencies on how best to deal
11 with mental health, and then how best to deal with
12 the opioid crisis. So that was our goal. It remains
13 our goal. We do think it's best way to achieve that—
14 the—both goals. In terms of giving you information
15 about what is happening at the NYPD versus what is
16 happening at DOHMH, we'll provide that.

17 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay, so--

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: And that we certainly can
19 do to say, but they really do have to be multiagency
20 and they have to be well coordinated, and they have
21 once again while they have overlap, they do have
22 different goals.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right,
24 and—and I understand that. It just seems that
25 there's opportunity within Thrive NYC for the same

2 population that we're trying to serve, because we
3 understand that you need, or we're trying to
4 understand that there's a lot of headcount that NYPD
5 for detectives and so on and so forth-

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --for the
8 investigative process, and then there was single
9 digit staffing additions. At DOHMH single digit. So,
10 it just seems that there's opportunities if-if we're
11 trying to not make this about just the users but
12 really have a balanced approach on having the Opioid
13 epidemic addressed from the criminal aspect, right
14 but no criminalizing users--

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: Agreed.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --when we
17 only have single digit headcount in these positions,
18 it doesn't seem to correlate.

19 DEAN FULEIHAN: So-so we're happy to go
20 over the program with you, and our focus in both
21 areas, and-and-and discuss if-if there additional
22 programs or additional efforts we should thought we
23 addressed in an interagency way, and addressed both
24 of those issues.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: We need
3 to kind of break to the--

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: We're happy to talk, but
5 we should--we should more.

6 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: Because obviously we all
8 care about this deeply. We know there's a crisis
9 we're confronting. This was our attempt to address
10 that--that crisis. We think it was a great step to do
11 it. It's our second time to try to put effort in
12 this, but if there are other ways and additional
13 things we should be looking at, we should be talking
14 about them.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And again
16 I--I just wanted to like public--to publicly
17 acknowledge because I--we just read this this morning,
18 but the hold in the Bronx has been cleared and it
19 shows enforcement clean up, yes that's important we
20 got to believe that those addicts just because
21 they're not in the hold they might be in other
22 places in New York City. So, we have to figure out
23 how we get the support to them to them also. I think
24 it's a step in the right direction for the people of
25 the Bronx, for the people of New York City for the

2 young people that are trying to go to school that
3 they can now walk in this area and be safe. So I
4 commend the Mayor for that. However, you know, it's
5 just supporting the other agencies now. Where are
6 these—these people are dependent on the opioids going
7 to now in our city?

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: So once again, in
9 preventative services in trying to get DOH and MH the
10 resources, but we should talk about that. We're
11 happy to do that.

12 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

13 DEAN FULEIHAN: Because we obviously have
14 spent a lot of time on this program and—and we care
15 about it deeply. The Mayor cares about it, the First
16 Lady cares about as you know.

17 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Of
18 course. The Executive Budget includes \$18.1 in
19 Fiscal 18 in the out years to support legal defense
20 for immigrants and the expansion of Action NYC.
21 During MOIA's FY18 Executive Budget hearings
22 Commissioner Agarwal was not able to clarify just two
23 points, and—and so why doesn't HRA's legal service
24 program area break down legal services spending by
25 types of contracts such as legal services for

2 immigrants or anti-eviction services. Currently it's
3 just lump up just as legal services.

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we'll make sure that
5 you get delineation of HRA's legal services and how
6 much goes for—I mean we clearly had programs—programs
7 that are delineated for immigrant legal services and—

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: --and anti-eviction legal
10 services. You've heard me--

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

12 [interposing] And I also--

13 DEAN FULEIHAN: --cite the numbers.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Yeah.

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we're happy to show
16 you exactly what that separation is, and I appreciate
17 that. I just, you know, I don't want it to just be
18 on the staff level that we get clarity. I think it's
19 the right direction. We've been partnering for years
20 now on transparency. I do believe that this should
21 be reflected very clearly. It should not be a legal
22 lump sum.

23 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we'll—you—I'm—we will
24 go back and we'll talk to the commissioner and see
25 what we can do.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay,
3 finally before we hear from Council Member Rosenthal
4 followed by Council Rodriguez, I want to talk about
5 payroll employment growth in the city, and has
6 definitely slowed down from its earlier dynamic pace
7 in 2014 and 2015 year over year employment growth.
8 It came to 131,00 and 125,000 respectively. In 2016,
9 however, job growth decelerated to 86,000 additional
10 positions in the first quarter of 2017 year over year.
11 Job growth slowed down to 69,000. Indeed, the two
12 most recent months showed small declines in job
13 numbers. The first two months in a row job declines
14 since 2010. OMB's forecast further slowing in
15 employment growth reaching boroughs with 35,000 new
16 jobs by 2019. Please discuss the factors that you
17 believe are contributing to the slowdown in
18 employment and which specific city sectors have been
19 weakening the most and why?

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, since the beginning
21 of the administration it's over 340,000 new jobs. As
22 you know, job growth in every single borough. It's
23 something we're extremely proud of. We're at over
24 4.3 million jobs. We're at an historic high on this,
25 and we're seeing again job growth in every borough

2 and not something we would have seen only a few years
3 ago. We—we are recognizing a national trend our
4 forecast and that's a slowdown in the amount of job
5 growth. We are on the positive side believe that wage
6 growth is going to—is going to accelerate and will
7 increase and that's a—that's positive for us. The
8 Mayor as we've seen this has committed to expansion
9 in the creation of additional jobs, and we're going
10 to keep doing everything we can to expand the job
11 market in the city. What you're seeing in our
12 projections are a reflection of national trend.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay. so
14 are there any sectors that are [background comments,
15 pause]

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes, it's fairly broad
17 based I mean the—the—the slowdown. Well, we can sit
18 down with your staff and see if we have it—if we—and
19 we should do that to see if we think different
20 sectors are being affected more.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right
22 because we seen certain sectors. So, we'd just like
23 to see where an agreement.

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yeah, we should be—we
25 should accept that. (sic)

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay,
3 very good. Council Member Rodriguez. Oh, I'm sorry,
4 Council Member Rosenthal and then Council Member
5 Rodriguez.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [background
7 comments] Okay, thank you so much. You know, one
8 thing that we heard from the Chancellor that I found
9 very confusing when we were talking about school
10 budgets was whether or not the amount going to
11 schools is not for, you know, the special initiatives
12 that this administration has, which is great. But
13 the amount of money for the school budgets from last
14 year to this year is flat, and one did—one of the—and
15 different things pop up, right. So, one thing that
16 popped up that I was asking her about was books for
17 dual language schools, and here answer was well,
18 every school has a budget for budget for books. But
19 what I—she couldn't answer was whether or not at a
20 dual language school whether or not there was money
21 for books languages. So, what we hear constantly
22 from our dual language schools is they have enough
23 money for in English, not enough money for books in
24 the dual—in the—in Spanish, in French, and I don't
25 understand how we could not fund those things, and I

2 don't understand how principals are supposed to get
3 by with the same budget that they had last year. We
4 lost in the State Aid funding 100 or if we were up
5 there, sure we'd be at \$175 million more. How-how
6 are we-how are our principals getting by?
7 [background comments] I think it's \$175 million in
8 state aid that is a shortfall that we were expecting
9 and didn't get.

10 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we-yes, we had made a
11 commitment and this goes back actually with Campaign
12 for Fiscal Equity, and there is a shortfall of \$1.6
13 billion under the most recent calculation we did, and
14 we had told the state that they had made improvements
15 last year, and with those improvements we gave more
16 resources through the Fair Student Funding, and under
17 this administration and under this council we've been
18 able to increase the Fair Student Funding Allocation
19 the base-the floor amount in all-in all renewal
20 schools we've gone up to 100% of the Fair Student
21 Funding. We had said if you give us a certain-if you
22 give us an additional increase in State Aid with all
23 the other obligations we have, we would be able to
24 increase that Fair Student Funding level again this
25 year. That did not happen, and that's the shortfall

2 that you're referring to. Right, that--that is the
3 shortfall in state aid.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I hear you,
5 and--and--

6 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] In terms of
7 our schools.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: --there's no
9 doubt the state is, you know, not doing its fair
10 share. That's not the question I'm asking how do
11 principals get by when--

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] So, so--I
13 know.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: --even in the
15 first instance for something as simple as books for
16 dual language school, they're simply not getting
17 enough money even in their based budget.

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, I will go back and
19 ask that very specific question.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
22 Chair, and I just want to go be straight because of
23 the timing. Dean, is investigating hit and run a
24 priority for this administration.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: I-I apologize. I didn't
3 hear the question.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So is hit and
5 run-is investigating hit and run a priority for this
6 administration. Yes or no? [background comments]

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Yes, right.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So, can we-can
11 you commit for the increasing of the number of
12 officers at the Collision Investigation Unit?

13 [background comments, pause]

14 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, so I will go-I'm
15 anticipating your question. That's why I hesitated.
16 I we'll go back to the NYPD. We will talk to them
17 and see-and see if we think that they are-they are
18 addressing this issue if there's concerns about that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay, okay.

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: --we'll have that
21 conversation with them.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: And-and we've
23 been partners. You know it's coming from know that
24 we understand, commissioner.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: [interposing] Yeah, no,
3 no agreed, agreed. That's right, that's.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So, so—in the
5 hearing that we had with DOT, we know that there is
6 40,000 hit and run last year. Most of them are
7 related to damage, but 4,000 end up with the
8 individual being sent in critical condition, and the
9 average of one person killed by irresponsible drivers
10 who leave the scene. What we have seen, what we have
11 shared with DOT Chief Chan and his daughter (sic) and
12 we have to bring to their attention that we need to
13 see—we need to see the increase of the funding for
14 the Collision Investigation Unit. So that we can
15 have more movement and empowered to investigate.

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: We'll, we'll look. We'll
17 talk to the--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Great.

19 DEAN FULEIHAN: --we'll talk to the NYPD.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So my second
21 thing is the Citi Bike. I will be getting into the--
22 getting the answer because of the timing. I hope
23 that the administration continue conversation with
24 Motivator. I hope that before we do the handshake to
25 see agreement when Motivator should be able to

2 continue running Citi Bike to expand Citi Bike. City
3 Bike should not be only popular among upper class and
4 middle-class. Citi Bike is very important to connect
5 New Yorkers who live in transportation desert areas,
6 and it's only a suggestion to see how we can see
7 program in that direction. The question was a
8 question that I asked you before about the percentage
9 of New Yorkers living on the poverty. What I was
10 searching is that 2016 the Mayor said based on your
11 own information that in '16 he say that 45.1% of
12 percentage of New Yorkers were living on the poverty—
13 the poverty line in 2014 and that number went down
14 44.1 in s 2015.

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So, we saw a
17 1% reduction

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: Correct.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --that [bell]
20 that, you know it looks as a slower number, we know
21 it's tough to change numbers.

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: Correct.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: However, in the
24 same announcement the Mayor say that—the acknowledge
25 by Mayor's Office and stated that by the end of 2017,

2 there was a-a plan or the project to see 281,000 New
3 Yorkers coming out from the poverty line by the end
4 of this year. Do you anticipate that number to
5 happen or you see that number-that [background
6 comments] or are we going to be able to get them.

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: I-I-I-we'll-we'll come
8 back with the exact numbers, but do know that we did
9 announce that we were on track to meet our goals that
10 were outlined in the One New York. So, we'll come
11 back to you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay, and my
13 suggestion in that direction, and I'm very proud to
14 be a partner with the Mayor, is to see an increase of
15 the millions or dollars that we provide through EDC
16 to the private sector that creates jobs, but I think
17 it was around \$300 million. I think it is time and
18 know that the Mayor is taking those initiatives to
19 bring those dollars to the outer borough area. You
20 know, we have to increase the incentive for members
21 of the private sector, but are creating jobs in those
22 areas where people have to be traveling and hour an
23 ad half to go to work. So, can we expect an increase
24 of the incentive for private sector who create jobs
25 in the outer borough areas?

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, I—we—as you know, we
3 have been focused economic activity in the outer
4 boroughs. We'll continue to do that. I'm happy to
5 have conversation. We can have conversations with
6 you with EDC specifically if there are particular
7 points you're interested in that you think we're not
8 addressing at this time.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Madam
11 Chair. So, we—we talked about the upcoming the labor
12 negotiations and obviously if—if—if I'm correct it's
13 the city's largest municipal union is contractors
14 it's buying within a few months.

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: We are within a
17 period that we have--

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: Okay, I mean it--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So, so, so we're
20 obviously not within that 120-period which is within
21 the tail law that allows it--

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: That's correct.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --to begin--begin

24 DEAN FULEIHAN: That's correct.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --to negotiate,
3 and I would hope that we have begin to have that
4 conversation, but I know in the past that we've
5 talked about it, and it as some of the side letters
6 around insourcing and we talked about some of the
7 efficiencies and savings that was achieved there.

8 DEAN FULEIHAN: Correct.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Is that something
10 that are looking to expand because of the success of
11 that program to other agencies, and if so, where are
12 with doing that outside of--and if so, outside of
13 local law. What kind of oversight because--because I
14 understand that part of that is a culture as well,
15 and agencies that they kind of do what they do. What
16 are we doing to enforce and ensure that--that we're
17 creating this opportunity and actually achieving
18 savings?

19 DEAN FULEIHAN: Right, we are achieving
20 savings. We are working with the agencies. It's one
21 of the initiatives that we think is very important.
22 It's part of citywide savings whether it's an actual
23 savings that we can quantify or it's something that
24 we say will be a--and accost avoidance into the
25 future. It's one the mayor is committed to and we're

2 committed to, and—and we will continue to work with
3 all the agencies to maximize that effort.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: That is great to
5 hear because we do have a great municipal workforce.
6 We want to make sure are using them to the best of
7 their ability. I wanted to ask—I think it was in
8 March we actually did a hearing with the—with the Law
9 Department Workers Compensations and how those
10 benefits get delivered and so forth. Last week in
11 the State Budget there was a 4.5% decrease in—in the
12 benefit, which—which is roughly about a \$15 million
13 savings for the city. There is certainly opinions on
14 both sides as to whether or not those services—the
15 benefits and services are being delivered efficiently
16 and whether or not workers are—are receiving benefits
17 and particular medical benefits in a timely fashion.
18 Will we be using some of these—these additional
19 funding to ensure that we're kind of shoring up some
20 of the areas that we were deficient and delivering
21 those services in terms of whether or not people were
22 -whether or not the benefit whether it was the—the
23 financial compensation of them being able to see a
24 healthcare practitioners in a timely fashion. Have
25 we been addressing those [bell] through—you know,

2 have we done an audit to be more efficient around
3 that area. What savings can we achieve outside of
4 that, and ensuring that I think the biggest savings
5 that we can achieve is making sure that people
6 receive benefits, they receive the proper healthcare
7 and they get back to work as soon as possible? I
8 think that one of the things that the hearing showed
9 us that people are often out inordinate amount of
10 time for very minor injuries because of the process
11 of getting people in and out of the system. How do we
12 become better and achieve savings through that aside
13 from the savings from the 4.5% from the State which I
14 think is utterly ridiculous that we--we are just
15 number 17 in the country considering the cost of
16 living here and it took us years of battling to get
17 to number 17 and to reduce it another 4.5% is an
18 absolute travesty. So, I hope the city can do
19 something to make that--that process more efficient,
20 and--and work better for the workers that through no
21 fault of their own are injured and--and now suffering.

22 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we agree with your
23 goals. We are working with the Law Department. We
24 have started the conversation then on workers' comp
25 and the cost and what things we can do, and those

2 that you articulate, those are—those are the correct
3 goals, and, you now, we're—we should be working with
4 you and get your thoughts and idea, but we have
5 stated a conversation on this very issue.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, thank you
7 so much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
9 you, Council Member. Council Member Cumbo.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you Chair
11 Ferreras-Copeland. Wanted to—Medgar Evers is in my
12 district in the 35th District and wanted to talk
13 about CUNY. CUNY has submitted a new needs request
14 of \$4 million to revamp its remedial course
15 programing Fiscal 2018, which was not funded in the
16 Executive Budget. Given that nearly 80% of students
17 entering CUNY's community colleges require at least
18 some remediation before moving forward with their
19 degrees. Not only 50% of those students are able to
20 complete their remedial coursework within one year.
21 Why wouldn't the administration improving that
22 current model?

23 DEAN FULEIHAN: I thing through. I mean
24 we have with you—the largest increase in addressing
25 community college students' needs through the ASAP

2 program, which is going to be a commitment of over
3 \$100 million that we have—that we have made together
4 to CUNY. So I think we have been addressing this
5 very issue. We care deeply about this very issues.
6 I'm happy to—I mean, you know, we'll have a
7 conversation about other ideas we can enhance the
8 program, that we have—that we have decided to
9 basically take on, which as a city program.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: But can you
11 specifically how that will, the investment, which is
12 incredible and certainly unprecedented but how will
13 that also address the remedial needs that we're
14 discussing.

15 DEAN FULEIHAN: Well, it does provide
16 academic support. So, I think we need to—I—what we—
17 what we should do is look at what we believe we are
18 providing as academic support to the student, and—and
19 if there is something that we're not providing, we
20 should talk about that, but our goal is to provide
21 this kind of academic support.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Because we want to
23 make sure that that particular allocation or—or the
24 ability to put that kind of impact and investment in

2 CUNY is also felt to shore up students before they
3 even begin the degree program.

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: Agreed.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Second question is
6 with the Summer Youth Employment Program, the Council
7 and the administration have worked together over the
8 past three years, and I'm very proud of that--to
9 double the size of the Summer Youth Employment
10 Program, but we still have not sufficiently met the
11 need and the level of need for youth jobs. What are
12 the administration's plans for expansion beyond the
13 current 65,000 jobs?

14 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, we've almost doubled
15 in a very short period of time--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Yes we have.

17 DEAN FULEIHAN: --and it's a very
18 significant increase last year. There was the
19 taskforce the joint taskforce who recently came out
20 right before the Executive Budget with proposals, and
21 I know we're all reviewing those proposals. There
22 are two things here. One is how capacity is there--
23 actually--are we actually able to do for example this
24 summer, and then how would--if we--if we agree on
25 moving forward, how do we move forward? What--what

2 should the focus be, and should there be—how do we
3 delineate [bell] how we move forward to meet the
4 highest needs of—of that age group. So, I think
5 there's still questions for us to work out.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: The goal in the
7 increase was, of course, to increase it over the
8 course of every fiscal year with goal of reaching
9 approximately 100,000 Summer Youth Employment jobs
10 because we recognize that—at current times that's
11 approximately the amount of young people are
12 applying. I believe it's actually 120,000. So the
13 goal was to double it. We've done that, and just
14 went to understand are we on track to reach that goal
15 of providing a Summer Youth Employment opportunity
16 for every child that applies throughout the city of
17 New York?

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, no. We have not, we
19 have not put in the financial plan, and certainly for
20 the upcoming year it's 65,000. So, we have not moved
21 forward on that objective. We obviously almost
22 doubled the program. We've made a commitment. There
23 was the taskforce that talked about changes that
24 should be occurring, pilot programs and other things
25 that should be happening to the program, and I know

2 we're in conversations about what does the next step
3 of expansion look like.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Just want to---
5 this is such an important particular program for the
6 city of New York for the City Council. We want to
7 make sure that we continue to be on track and that we
8 don't get stuck at the 65,000 and draw a line of
9 victory there. This was the progression that we want
10 to see every year, and as a City Council member that
11 has so many young people that are in need of Summer
12 Youth Employment, I want to make sure that we are on
13 track and progress to meeting the original goal of
14 the Summer Youth Employment Program expansion. Thank
15 you.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
17 you, Council Member and now we're going to give
18 Helen, Council Member Rosenthal 30 seconds.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Go.

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Go.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I just wanted
22 to make we ended on the right note with the Human
23 Service Contracts. Really appreciate all the work
24 the de Blasio administration is doing. I'm going to
25

2 be issuing a statement basically saying that his
3 afternoon, and I just wanted to be on record --

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: Thank.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: --that, you
6 know, you guys are bringing out of the hole, and then
7 I want to give you one second to brag because
8 everyone always says that we're this liberal, you
9 know, progressive administration, and we're such we--
10 we don't know what we're doing with the budget.
11 Could you please let the city know how we're doing
12 with the rating agencies?

13 DEAN FULEIHAN: Oh, we're doing extremely
14 well with the rating agencies. We get---we get very
15 positive reports on every time we are in the
16 marketplace. We were just in the marketplace. So,
17 we--we continue to get very positive stable ratings
18 and very positive reports, and Moody's did an actual
19 report only a few months ago, which actually is very
20 interesting, which they look at the strength of the
21 New York City economy and the New York City budget
22 process, and it was worth reading. It went into a
23 great deal of detail, and--and only--and really of the
24 rating agencies, they not only talk about their
25 strength and diversity of city, but they also talk

2 about the sound fiscal management and budget
3 management and the institutional management of this
4 city.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, liberals
6 can be fiscally responsible?

7 DEAN FULEIHAN: Definitely.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN:

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
11 you. I wanted to briefly bring EFAP as you had
12 mentioned and it has been spoken. Actually I think
13 the Mayor also brought this up, but Trump's Federal
14 Budget proposed cutting funding for SNAP by \$200
15 billion. The mayor said we have 1.7 New Yorkers who
16 rely on food stamps. About half a million of them
17 are children. So, again, this is why the President
18 Trump is going to find himself in a lot of trouble is
19 what is our mayor said. Given this proposed cut to
20 SNAP, the city's emergency food pantry system will be
21 vital more than ever in combatting hunger in our
22 city. You are well aware that the Council has been
23 pushing the administration and we have all agreed,
24 and that doesn't happen often in this body. We're
25 all urging and asking and want to continue to keep

2 this, the priority list of the EFAP food procurement
3 for baselining of this budget item at \$22 million.

4 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, the look, the Mayor
5 made this clear that we would work with you to come,
6 as we did last year to what the need was and funding
7 and we'll do that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. I know
9 that there was a little bit of a discrepancy with
10 need, so we're going to be following up.

11 DEAN FULEIHAN: Be we need—that's part,
12 we do need to come to a conclusion on what—on what is
13 that appropriate level.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So Vision Zero
15 as you know the city's expense spending for Vision
16 Zero is across multiple agencies. Can you give us
17 the breakdown of the Vision Zero expense funding and
18 head count by agency for Fiscals 2017 and 18. I know
19 you might not have that with you right now, but we
20 really want a comprehensive understanding.

21 DEAN FULEIHAN: Yes, we do that. I don't
22 have it with me, but we can do that.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay, and
24 just as a follow-up to Council Member Cumbo's
25 question when it comes to SYEP, I've asked nearly

2 every commissioner that came before us whether they
3 had Summer Youth Employment Program at their agency,
4 and I think that was a call that the Mayor asked
5 commissioners to take on young people. One of the
6 things that consistently comes up when we have
7 conversation with the Administration is that there's
8 a capacity issue. I think we had a gem of an
9 opportunity within city agencies to be able to give
10 our young people and opportunity to work. Some
11 agencies came and said they had none. Other agencies
12 didn't even know what the program was. Other
13 agencies had one or two, and I've got to admit that
14 the agency that was doing the best was the NYPD where
15 they had, you know, almost 200 young people working
16 out of local precincts. We have to not only expect
17 that young people—many young people do want to work
18 at summer camp. Every young person does not want to
19 work at a summer camp. I think it would be
20 incredible that you'd partner a young person with an
21 architect at DDC or, you know, a gardener at parks or
22 just these rehabs, these job opportunities and I
23 don't think we're taking advantage of the capacity
24 that we can build to place young people.

2 DEAN FULEIHAN: Okay, a fair—a fair
3 challenge and we'll get up to speed to on those
4 response you received and see what we can do.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Great and
6 in one of our budget response this was the second
7 pair of boots for firefighters. I brought this up
8 today.

9 DEAN FULEIHAN: I apologize. I'm sorry,

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: That's
11 but do you want to add anything or no?

12 DEAN FULEIHAN: No.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay a
14 second pair boots for firefighters. We asked the
15 commissioner. He was in agreement of the need of
16 firefighter boots. I believe it's a \$4 million
17 request and it was in budget response. Was there a
18 reason why it wasn't included? [background comments,
19 pause]

20 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, once again, what was
21 in the Executive Budget, and I've said this many
22 times there were many needs put forward. It is a
23 balance of what we thought at the time was
24 appropriate to put forward. We're—we're in
25

2 conversations with you to make sure that--that our
3 priorities are aligned.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right,
5 well, we just want to make sure that equipment is
6 something very important especially for the men and
7 women in the fire department that are saving lives
8 everyday, and I think if they're saying this is an
9 issued, then we should be able to provide equipment--
10 as needed.

11 DEAN FULEIHAN: So, as you--as you know
12 we've been and we've done this together. We had done
13 many safety equipment improvements--

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
15 [interposing] Right, so this one just makes sense.

16 DEAN FULEIHAN: --for both the NYPD and
17 the FDNY.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: This one
19 just makes sense because we've done them so often.
20 So I think this is just one that we can, you know
21 agree on. But we will continue. Adoption is a
22 couple of weeks away. So, I'm sure we'll continue to
23 engage. We have additional questions that we're
24 going to get back to you.

25 DEAN FULEIHAN: Okay, thank you/

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And then
3 we'll share with you also the list of follow-ups that
4 we have from this hearing. I want to thank you.
5 It's our fourth budget and I'm looking forward to a
6 great handshake and adoption at the end of all this,
7 and we will now call this part of the—this concludes
8 the first part of today's budget hearing. I want to
9 thank Director Fuleihan for testifying. As a
10 reminder, the public portion of today's [interposing]
11 [shushing for quiet] As a reminder, the public
12 portion of today's hearing will begin at 1:00 p.m.
13 in this room. So, please be sure to fill out your
14 witness flip with the sergeant-at-arms. Again, thank
15 you very much Mr. Fuleihan, Director Fuleihan, and we
16 will take a five-minute break before we hear from the
17 Comptroller. [gavel]

18 DEAN FULEIHAN: Thank you.

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down.

20 [recess] [gavel]

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: We will
22 now continue the final day of budget hearings with
23 testimony from New York City Comptroller Scott
24 Stringer. Welcome, Comptroller and thank you for
25 joining us today. In the interest of time, and I

2 know that we're going to have the public joining us
3 shortly, and we want to stick to—stick to the
4 schedule, I will forego an opening statement, and the
5 Comptroller can begin his testimony after my counsel
6 Swears him in.

7 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the
8 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in
9 your testimony before the committee today, and to
10 respond honestly to Council Member questions?

11 SCOTT STRINGER: [pause] Ydanis, thanks
12 for staying. Well, good afternoon, and I want to
13 thank Chair Ferreras-Copeland and Ydanis Rodriguez of
14 the Finance Committee for the opportunity to testify
15 on the Mayor's FY 2018 Executive Budget. Joining me
16 today is my Deputy Comptroller for Budget Preston
17 Niblack, and I'm happy to share that today the city's
18 economic outlook remains strong, and that's good news
19 for New York. We've hit the unemployment rate since
20 the government began recording it in 1976. Now it's
21 a 4.1% and labor force participation is up to 61.3%
22 also the highest on record. Wages are also finally
23 starting to grow, but as the national economy reaches
24 its full employment level, here in New York we should
25 prepare for growth to taper off. As of now our

2 forecast reflect that expectation as well as a
3 slowdown in job creating, but we are forecasting a
4 recession. But the situation in Washing under the
5 Trump Administration is so uncertain that the risk to
6 the U.S. economy is higher than ever. Today, my
7 officer released an analysis of President Trump's
8 Proposed Federal Budget, but found New York City
9 could lose \$850 million in critical funding for
10 social services, education and housing in our city
11 budget. New York would lose 35% of our funding for
12 the Children's Health Insurance Program, which covers
13 healthcare for 128,000 city kids, and funding for the
14 arts and humanities which impacts museums, and
15 education services in all our communities would be
16 completely eliminated. This president is trying to
17 shred our social safety net from outright elimination
18 of programs like Community Development Block Grants,
19 and the Home Energy Assistance Programs to cuts to
20 workforce training and public housing. On top of
21 that, the Trump Administration is proposing even
22 deeper cuts to Medicaid funding that will add a major
23 burden to our state and city budgets, and strain our
24 health and hospital system maybe to the breaking
25 point. Now, we have to anticipate the impact of

2 these significant cuts and we prepared with a sound
3 and responsible city budget. Altogether adjusted for
4 prepayments and reserves the FY 2018 Budget is an
5 increase of \$1.5 billion over 2017 or 1.7% more
6 spending. The surplus this year looks like it will
7 equal or exceed last year's surplus of \$4 billion,
8 which is good news, and as the Mayor has mentioned,
9 reserves are high by historical standards.

10 Nonetheless, I remain concerned that we are not
11 adequately prepared for a potentially rocky road.

12 The fact is our revenue growth is slowing. Last
13 year's \$4 billion surplus resulted from stronger than
14 projected tax revenue growth of \$1.4 billion, but
15 this year tax revenues have come in above projections
16 by just \$200 million, and non-recurring resources
17 make up 60% of this year's surplus. Agency
18 efficiencies still make up—still make up only 7% if
19 the combined FY 2017 and 2018 Citywide Savings Plan,
20 and as I've said it's just not enough. New spending
21 priorities are going to require more savings to
22 ensure success and longevity. So we have to start
23 saving sooner rather than later. Now, you've heard
24 about the Mayor's initiatives, and today I want to
25 present just a few of my priorities from improving

1 lives of everyday New Yorkers. First, I hope we can
2 support our immigrant population at the local level
3 by reducing the cost burden of citizenship
4 applications. Right now, there are 670,000 New
5 Yorkers who are eligible to apply for citizenship,
6 but many are prohibited by high costs. Since 1989
7 the application fee has grown up to 500% climbing to
8 \$725 per application. That's why I've called on the
9 city to create a citizenship fund a public/private
10 partnership that would pay for applications and help
11 more New Yorkers become citizens. By offsetting the
12 cost of applications, we believe we could ease the
13 path to citizenship for some 35,000 New Yorkers.
14 Second, we have to support our non-profit social
15 service providers. While President Trump comes
16 after—while President Trump comes after our safety
17 net, we will only become more reliant on our non-
18 profit social service providers. We must ensure they
19 receive the resources they to continue providing high
20 quality services to our most vulnerable New Yorkers.
21 Recently, we analyzed contract budgets of more than
22 75 non-profits across a range of agency programs
23 including the DYCD, Beacon after school programs,
24 DFTA Case Management, ACS Preventive Services, DHS

2 Tier II shelters, DOHMH and HRA Supportive Housing
3 Programs. What we found was an utter lack of
4 consistency in overhead rates across the contracts,
5 and over the 105 contracts we looked at, only 10 had
6 an indirect cost rate of over 10%. At the end of the
7 day much of the burden of Trump's Budget will fall on
8 non-profits, and we have to ensure that they are
9 financially strong enough to continue serving New
10 Yorkers. One way we can do this by fixing this
11 glaring contracting program. I join you in urging
12 the administration to undertake a thorough review of
13 Human Service Contracting practices and enact a
14 consistent, and let me say this again a consistent
15 fair methodology for funding that will support our
16 non-profit social service sector and its mission.
17 Lastly, I just want to talk about another glaring
18 problem that needs our attention, and I think has
19 some real consequences for the long-term fiscal
20 health of the city, and that's the procurement of the
21 Department of Education. Time and time again my
22 office finds that current departmental processes are
23 inadequate. The facts are straightforward. Whether
24 it's through an audit of DOE or a review of DOE's
25 contracts we find a lack of transparency and a lack

2 of detail that is frightening when you're talking
3 about billions of dollars earmarked for our children.
4 We found that there's inadequate oversight and
5 documentation of project and contract spending, a
6 failure to ensure that payments for goods and
7 services are appropriate and for work properly done,
8 a lack of transparency in the bidding process, use of
9 limited or non-competitive procurement practices and
10 an inability to account for unspent funds. The DOE
11 claims to have a system of checks and balances, but
12 if you dig into the details, you will find a lack of
13 independent review, a lack of accountability and a
14 whole lot of rubber stamps. It's time for a paradigm
15 shift. There is no reason that an agency
16 representing nearly 30% of the entire city budget
17 with a contract budget of \$6.7 billion should not be
18 subject to the same level of scrutiny as all other
19 city agencies. Now, don't get me wrong, nobody is
20 more for mayoral control than me. I believe we
21 should have mayoral control not every year for
22 renewal but years and years. But that passion for
23 control must be met with the highest expectations of
24 transparency and accountability. So, today I'm
25 asking for your help for the City Council to call

2 hearings to get to the bottom of this because our
3 kids serve a school system that functions at the
4 absolute highest level of performance. So, I ask you
5 for that help. I will back you up. I will come and
6 testify, but we cannot have a system where there is
7 no more transparency, and with that said, I look
8 forward to working with you Madam Chair, because you
9 have been about transparency and the work of this
10 finance committee I believe contributes to the long-
11 heard-long-term health of the city, and I'm very
12 happy to be here, and if you have any questions I'll
13 be happy to answer them.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
16 very much Comptroller for your statement, very
17 informative. I think you make incredible suggestions
18 and -and definitely will be following on the DOE's
19 budget and you're findings clearly are alarming to us-
20 -

21 SCOTT STRINGER: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --and you
23 know my passion. Specifically on transparency and
24 getting and right sizing budgets do you have any
25 recommendations as to where to we should start

2 because the budget as you said is 30% over there? Is
3 there a specific focus that you think we should take
4 first?

5 SCOTT STRINGER: Yes. So, so just in
6 [pause] just short and quick kicks on what I think
7 are the central issues. The DOE is presenting
8 contracts to the DEP retroactively. So, there's no
9 oversight. They only outline or give minimal
10 information to the PEP for review. There has been
11 total inadequate oversight and documentation of
12 spending. They don't use competitive procurement
13 methods when it should. There's a lack of evaluation
14 criteria and RFPs and awards. There's no public data
15 based on performance evaluation as in Vindex, and for
16 those who are around city government for a long time
17 remembers scandals and why we have Vindex. It
18 doesn't required a Vindex before submitting contracts
19 so they can ignore negative information. You follow?
20 So, there's no transparency. There's no way to have
21 a checks and balance. We need state legislation to
22 make DOE subject to the city's procurement rules.
23 We've been trying to work with DOI—the DOE to align
24 their procurement with the city's PPB rules, submit
25 more contracts to MOCS and the Law Department for

2 review. We're trying. I think the Council should-
3 should delve into this I hearings, and we're happy to
4 help with that effort with our experience in
5 contracting and audit. We also—and I think this is
6 an extreme measure, but I am totally clear in
7 considering proposing this. Perhaps we need an
8 independent monitor for DOE's Division of Contracts
9 and Purchasing. I don't particularly have an agenda.
10 It could be a state monitor. It could be a DOI
11 monitor, but I'm asking you. I feel so serious about
12 this. We do need an outside monitor on this—the
13 contracting. We also should amend State Education
14 Law to bring DOE under the same procurement framework
15 as mayoral agencies, and again, this is not get into
16 the weeds on education or classroom instruction.
17 This is not about that. This is about the monitoring
18 of finance in an agency that spends 30% of our tax
19 dollars.

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
21 and we'll be following up with you on this
22 suggestion.

23 SCOTT STRINGER: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And the
25 other one that—and I just wanted to have clarity my-

2 my background, my volunteer work in my community was
3 citizenship campaigns, and I remember when the
4 application was \$90 and because it was \$90 we would
5 get—and any given Saturday we would get between 150
6 to 200 people to come out and apply, and as you see
7 this, now it's even more of a challenge for families
8 when you have to decide between paying your rent or
9 having the ability to put food on the table or become
10 a citizen to help others that are in your family to
11 also get status because it's not just that status of
12 that one person, but it's the opportunity that status
13 gives you to help your family members also received
14 residence permanent residency or citizen themselves
15 through your children. So, I just wanted to
16 understand at a—and I just did this really quickly.
17 At \$725 per application and 35,000 New Yorkers that
18 we be program at about \$26.3 million. Do you think
19 that if we were able to do something where it covered
20 half of the cost or help assisted or subsidize some
21 portion of it, would—would that work as well.

22 SCOTT STRINGER: So, you and I really are
23 thinking the exact same way. So, you know, when we
24 studied we found that when there would be an
25 announcement that the application fees were going up,

2 you would see a surge in people trying to get their
3 application in, and then we saw a drop in citizen
4 applications. So, there is a correlation between
5 rising costs and people stepping forward for
6 applications, and also you know, it's not just
7 sometimes the application cost. There maybe English
8 classes involved. You may have some legal issues to
9 talk about multiple family. So this is critical when
10 you think about the pool of 670,000 who could avail
11 themselves of this. But in answer to your budget
12 question, we did the same, you know, analysis that
13 you did. It took us much longer. You did it in five
14 minutes. [laughter] That's why you're the finance
15 chair. But we also looked at \$20 million, but here's
16 where I think we would have success. I think a small
17 down payment maybe working with the Mayor's office
18 creating a fourth, you know, a not-for-profit entity.
19 I think to raise, the potential ability to raise
20 money to defer costs would actually require a \$20
21 million spend. I think this could be seated an
22 appropriate level. I leave that to our discretion
23 and the Mayor's Office, but in light of what's going
24 on nationally, given the fact that we have ready-
25 ready to go citizens, all they need is just some help

2 and that help in the form of deferring this cost. I
3 think we can help tens of thousands and people, and
4 actually even though we put out the \$20 million, I
5 personally believe based on my conversations with
6 people who feel so passionately about that, the
7 advocates the corporations that we could perhaps, you
8 making sure everything is legal and above board and
9 transparent, I think we could actually make this a
10 national model for citizenship because everyone
11 struggles in all-in all the cities.

12 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And when
13 you say national model, as you know, I'm the board.
14 I'm the Vice President of the National Association

15 SCOTT STRINGER: That's right.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And a lot
17 of the work that we do there is also citizenship
18 campaign, but there are other cities, and there's
19 other cities but other non-profits that have actually
20 done like a loan program a low interest to no-
21 interest loan program. So it actually others as
22 opposed to just doing, you know, having to fund this
23 every year, there's also the potential of a loan
24 program. What is your opinion on that?

2 SCOTT STRINGER: I just wonder. I just
3 wonder that with the group that we're trying to
4 target is 150 [background comments] 150 to 300% of
5 federal poverty. So we're looking at a cap of 61,000
6 and when you do the different calculations: Rent,
7 food, family and that would be for a family it's
8 probably hard to pay back the loan, right. I mean
9 I'm not saying it couldn't be done.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right

11 SCOTT STRINGER: But a direct subsidy I
12 actually think there's--there's enough support for
13 that given the climate and also I think when you do
14 the--the numbers, we'll end up getting this back ten
15 times over--

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

17 SCOTT STRINGER: --as a city. So
18 obvious, you know, you have a broader national
19 breadth for what's going on and --and you know what
20 other cities are doing. I do think that people are
21 looking to New York City to head on this issue, and
22 if we can come up with a program that you and I have
23 been a lot of rallies and lot of meetings on
24 immigration and sanctuary city, but I think something
25 tangible that says look let's--let's--it's all about a

2 path to citizenship. Here's the mechanism to do it.
3 I could be very-very interested.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Yeah, and
5 I could see this even-even within the citizenship,
6 which is an established--

7 SCOTT STRINGER: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --a
9 suitable entity that we've been working for years.

10 SCOTT STRINGER: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay, I
12 want to talk about debt service. A great transition
13 right. As you note in your analysis in the Executive
14 Budget, the Financial plan projects that the
15 percentage of local tax revenues consumed by debt
16 service will grow from 11.5% in FY17 to 13.1% by
17 FY2021. This is a result of the city's debt service
18 growing at a faster rate than the tax revenues. Why
19 are the costs rising and how concerned are you about
20 rising debt costs in the city's budget?

21 [background comments, pause]

22 SCOTT STRINGER: We-I think there's-
23 there's-we're probably very conservative on the high
24 debt costs. We don't think it will end there, but we
25 would certainly monitor it for you as well.

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

141

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay. Do
3 you consider the rate of growth in debt service costs
4 sustainable and at what point should we starting
5 worrying. I know you are going monitoring it--
6 monitoring it but at what point should we say okay
7 this is a flag now, do you think? [background
8 comments, pause]

9 SCOTT STRINGER: If you--if we thought we
10 were getting to 14%

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
12 [interposing] 14?

13 SCOTT STRINGER: --then that would be the
14 red flag that we would use.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay. I
16 think we're in agreement with you on this side.

17 SCOTT STRINGER: We usually are.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [laughs]
19 Wanted to talk about Trump. Your officer conducted
20 an analysis of the tax reform package proposed by the
21 Trump Administration and the impact it would have on
22 New York City taxpayers. You said that your office
23 is committed to continuing to run numbers on
24 President Trump's proposals and follow them closely.
25 We know it is early, but what can you tell us about

2 the budget proposal released by the administration
3 this week, and how does it tie into the tax reform
4 proposals you analyzed in April?

5 SCOTT STRINGER: So, we're not trying to
6 be—we're—we're not trying to be alarmists, and a lot
7 of the potential cuts, the \$850 million is exactly
8 what it is, a potential cut, and the reason we're
9 crunching these numbers is because let's face it, in
10 the years that we've been doing this work, we have—
11 we've really thought about the federal budget sort of
12 as—as an asterisk or an afterthought, right? We—
13 we're more—much more focused on what the state would
14 do, how that would inform the city budget, and we
15 believe very strongly that if just some of what's
16 coming from—from Washington hits us in the wrong way
17 on health, on public housing, we think that this
18 could be very—this could be a real potential budget
19 issue for the city. The state local tax
20 deductibility is a big concern. Makes it even hard
21 for New York to pick up the federal cuts. So, you
22 put it all together, again, we're not being
23 alarmists. I'm not here today to say we're in
24 doomsday, but look, part of why we've been successful
25 as a city is we navigate what comes our way, and

2 we're forward thinking about it. That's why we talk
3 a lot about reserves. That's why we talk a lot
4 about, you know, a strategic plan to deal with
5 Washington and the state, but we also know that
6 sometimes we get hit very hard both by the state and
7 the federal government.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

9 SCOTT STRINGER: This is our moment to be
10 very strategic and cautious on these issues. So,
11 what I'm going to do, and I've asked, you know,
12 Preston and—and folks in my office. We are taking a
13 very hard look at the—the proposed budget, what could
14 be a budget. We're monitoring what's happening in
15 Congress because I want to give you as much
16 information I can as the city's cheapest watch dog to
17 make sure that you have all the information you need
18 to act accordingly, and if you have questions or
19 council members want to sit with us, we can share the
20 information that we have. We're not proprietary
21 about it. We want people to understand it, and we
22 want to work with you to figure out where we have to
23 save, where we have to invest, and what kind of
24 strategy we have going to Washington.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And one
3 of my questions you actually answered in your opening
4 statement and that was independent of what's
5 happening in the federal government, what are other-
6 what are areas that we should be watching. Not
7 necessarily for risk, but for potential input, let's
8 say improvements, and an example of that was the DOE.
9 Do you see any other examples that the Council should
10 be--

11 SCOTT STRINGER: You, we—we have, you
12 know, in a way we have a similar role, right. We
13 are—we are, you know, we manage the Pension Fund, but
14 we also do audits. You pass legislation, but you
15 also do oversight hearings, and I think the more that
16 we do the kind of oversight work, that's how we
17 create balance and transparency, and I think whether
18 it's capital budget transparency or the things that
19 we're working on, we will share with you because I
20 think we get a better, you know, I think we get
21 better performance when we're looking. I am
22 concerned. I don't want to beat a dead horse, but I
23 am concerned about DOE. I'm prepared to go in and
24 take a deep diver there, but, you know, I also am
25 mindful about how much power we—we really have, and

2 that's why I come to you today to just work with us
3 to maybe change it a little bit.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay, and
5 I just wanted to say every commissioner that has come
6 before me and the OMB Director, we've been
7 questioning about--

8 SCOTT STRINGER: [interposing] Yeah.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --capital
10 spending. We've been questioning about the
11 procurement process. All of this has come up. So, I
12 just wan to ask if we can engage in a conversation on
13 this process because you are a part of the--I'm going
14 to say some of the challenges that comes up with some
15 non-profits where, you know, it's a the Comptroller's
16 Office, it's at MOCS Office. It hasn't left the
17 Council. It's going to the mayor. It's going to
18 back to the agency, and it would be great to hear way
19 (1) that we can improve things or how things need to
20 get to you so that they can come out of your office
21 expeditiously, and--and ways that we can do that
22 better.

23 SCOTT STRINGER: I am--you--you tell me
24 when and where, I'm there.

25 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Great.

2 SCOTT STRINGER: I'll bring my Deputy
3 Comptroller for Contracts, Lisa Flores. I can tell
4 you that I am very proud of the way in which we are
5 registering our contracts. They are held up at the
6 agencies. There's no secret about that, but again,
7 this is not, you know, he said, she said, or, you
8 know, he said, he said, she said, she said. This is
9 about us resolving problems, and I'm happy to come
10 and do this because the stakes are very high.

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
12 you. We will hear from Council Member Rodriguez
13 followed by Council Member Matteo.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
15 Chair. Comptroller, thank you for your service to
16 the city.

17 SCOTT STRINGER: Thank you for listening
18 to my presentation.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I-I have my
20 first question, two questions. The first one is on
21 October 15, 2015, when the five New York City
22 Retirement System (sic) announced that they will
23 invest \$150 million in pensions and the AFLCIO has
24 the investment trust, you say "that-that
25 economically-as I say you as a-in the role that you

2 have as a trustee as an investor ambassador, you
3 stated how crucially important it was to use those
4 tools investing in housing and economic developments.
5 We know that as a city we say that—that the 32,3000
6 jobs that the private sector added in the city during
7 quarter of 2107 half of them they were going to be
8 low-wage industry jobs. So when you look at the
9 investment that those five pension retirement are
10 doing at the local level, what are—what industry do
11 you see as good candidates to create large numbers of
12 good paying jobs that will employ city residents.

13 SCOTT STRINGER: So, I'm not sure of the
14 question. Is it--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: First of all,
16 you did the investments, there are five--

17 SCOTT STRINGER: [interposing] But we've--
18 we've always invested in the very successful Housing
19 Trust Fund, which is union built affordable housing,
20 and we continue to add. I think we're up to \$850
21 million in total investments. Maybe we're
22 approaching close to billion. We get a good rate or
23 return, and it's been very successful.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: so, let me
25 break the question into one on the housing and the

2 other one with the economic piece. When it comes to
3 the housing like us this was like a very specific
4 sector that the \$150 million was invested in October
5 2015. Which are the other sectors that the five
6 pension retirement system that you also advised, are
7 prioritizing as the group that they are investing on
8 building affordable housing in our city.

9 SCOTT STRINGER: Well, we—that is our—
10 that is where our economic point target investment
11 money goes into that fund. We have a—we have other
12 funds that we invest, but broadly putting my
13 fiduciary hat on, the way we invest is first and
14 foremost as a fiduciary to get a rate of return that
15 hits 7% that allows us to, you know, pay the
16 retirement security our retirees. So that is how the
17 Bureau of Asset Management goes to work everyday
18 thinking through that, and every year I come to this
19 Council hearing, and the Chair of the Finance
20 Committee before I leave always says how those
21 pensions are doing, what is the rate today. She
22 hasn't asked me yet, but as—if I may because you're
23 going to get there eventually. You know last year
24 we—we had a rate of 1.5%. Julissa wasn't happy with
25 that. This year so far, and remember we have a

2 different time clock than, Comptroller DiNapoli, but
3 so far year to date not knowing what's going to
4 happen in June where a return of 8.8%. So, the three
5 years I've been Comptroller we will be over the 7%
6 actuarial target.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So, can we
8 then expect to see--because I think that this
9 particular \$150 million to the AFLCIO has the
10 investment trust was part of their initiative to
11 invest more than a billion dollars to build
12 affordable housing--

13 SCOTT STRINGER: Yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --for the
15 laborers, right? And one of the challenges that we
16 face as a city, sometimes that when we build
17 affordable or when we build housing and we're going
18 to say through rezoning, unless there's some programs
19 that also come to incentivize a funding for
20 affordable housing, then we will--we will be limiting
21 on how--how can we go on affordable. So, can we--can
22 we expect to see more investments such as the \$150
23 million that those five pension retirement already
24 did in 2015?

2 SCOTT STRINGER: Well, I have an idea. I
3 think you have to change the way you look at how to
4 build housing in this city. Right now the housing
5 tool that's being used is to incentivize for-profit
6 developers to build housing, and they build tall
7 buildings whether it's your district around the city,
8 and in exchange for that height and density they
9 commit to building a certain percentage of affordable
10 housing units. I've done some of the numbers on
11 those units, and very often they're not affordable
12 housing units for the people who live in the
13 community where the luxury development is going up.
14 So, that has to change if we're really going to build
15 true affordable housing, and that is what's happening
16 around the city with the Zoning Plan. You've taken
17 action in the Council to support the zoning. I don't
18 have a problem with it, but it's not enough to deal
19 with the crisis that we face. So, here's my
20 suggestion, and then I'd be happy to talk about other
21 investments with your ideas. We need to look at the
22 1,150 vacant properties I've identified in my audits,
23 city-owned property. Some of it's been vacant for up
24 to 30 years. I'm not suggesting everyone of those
25 parcels could be used for affordable housing. Some

2 could be community gardens, some could be possibly
3 daycare centers or other uses, but that land, the
4 people's land, that's the land that we should
5 identify to build affordable housing, but maybe we
6 should also ask not-for-profits and others to
7 participate in the building of that-of that housing.
8 Right now, we should be setting up a land bank, land
9 trust. There's a bill in the City Council that would
10 create a land trust. We could look at delinquent
11 property. We could look at vacant property. I've
12 been talking about this now for two years. Pass the
13 bill and get Eric Schneiderman to see the land bank,
14 and then we could actually build real housing that
15 meets the needs of people who are living in homeless
16 shelters who work, and other people who cry out for
17 affordable housing, but real low-income housing. And
18 then, I'm happy to have a conversation as a fiduciary
19 right. I had this conversation once with the
20 administration a few years ago. Obviously, we're
21 open to assisting where that would benefit the
22 retirees because it's not my money or your money.
23 It's their money.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thanks. So my
25 other question, my other-the other part of the

2 question is related to the economic development
3 piece. As you know, you moved to the west side, but
4 you are from Northern Manhattan from Inwood, and as
5 someone that knows our community, you know, the
6 Target at 225th, you know, today has—it represented
7 the second sale per say square.

8 SCOTT STRINGER: Say that again.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: The Target at
10 225th and Broadway.

11 SCOTT STRINGER: Yes. Uh-huh.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Is doing—is
13 the second sale per feet in the nation, and I'm
14 pretty sure that when investment took place not many
15 people thought about the importance of investing in
16 the outer borough areas. So, how can we also
17 incentivize investors in partner with the retirement
18 fund to say guys, we want you to look at the outer
19 borough areas because I think that a lot of investing
20 has been done in the Midtown area, now in Brooklyn,
21 now in the Long Island City, and we have this great
22 opportunity now to incentivize investments to think
23 about other areas that have been left out for decades
24 in our city. So, how can we expect to see, you know,
25 you using your interest as advisory to work with the

2 private sector for them to look at a possibility to
3 invest there?

4 SCOTT STRINGER: Well, let me—let me just
5 repeat one thing because sometimes people don't
6 realize, you know, the pension fund is not the city
7 budget, right. So, we are guided by certain
8 fiduciary—a very high fiduciary standard meaning we
9 can invest in something that we all like [bell] but
10 we have to have a rate of return, and you and others
11 are welcome to bring to-- Well, actually, you get
12 qualified people are welcome to come to the office,
13 investors and others who are not placement agents or
14 people like that, can come to our office and make
15 proposals, but we are—we're not the, you know, some—
16 sometimes people get confused, but we're not the city
17 budget. You know, we do have an economically target
18 investment program, but that also gets a rate of
19 return to grow the pension fund. That's—that 2% is
20 factored in for good projects, but I'd be happy to sit
21 down with you to talk about some of your great
22 experiences in Washington heights especially as it
23 relates to growing communities around the city, and
24 I'd be happy to work with you, Ydanis on that.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
3 you. I just want to acknowledge Council Member, you
4 got like ten minutes on that question. So, that
5 clock wasn't on.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Anyway, I say
7 it.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
9 [laughter] I know, you didn't say—you didn't say a
10 word.

11 SCOTT STRINGER: It's the old
12 neighborhood draw.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Minority
14 Leader Matteo.

15 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: Thank you, Madam
16 Chair. Comptroller Stringer, I want to follow up on
17 an issue I brought to your office's attention last
18 month about the city street and side and sidewalk
19 program. I don't know if you're aware that the
20 contractor, the Staten Island portion of the program
21 was defaulted and I'm working with Parks on a bigger
22 issue of the contract, but when it comes to someone
23 who is into Tree and Sidewalk program received rating
24 from the Parks Department usually over 72 that they
25 will get repaired. Now, with the delay and with the

2 contract, the point is we're trying to get homeowners
3 to do themselves because they went to be responsible-
4 -

5 SCOTT STRINGER: Right.

6 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: -and fix the
7 sidewalk to make the sidewalk safe, and the question
8 that I pose to you is your office willing to
9 reimburse for the city portion of the sidewalk that's
10 damaged from the tree if you're doing that already?
11 And if not, are you willing to do so, so more
12 homeowners can start repairing these sidewalks
13 themselves getting them off the list, saving the city
14 time and money, and getting through the program so
15 that when the—we get this contract back, you know,
16 there could be, you know, maybe a handful or even
17 more homeowners who are willing to do it themselves
18 and ask for the reimbursement, and I'm just trying to
19 get a clear--

20 SCOTT STRINGER: As opposed to doing it
21 which way?

22 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: That the city
23 comes and repairs it themselves.

24 SCOTT STRINGER: So that the homeowner
25 would do it and submit the bill.

2 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: And then Parks
3 would approve that the homeowner--

4 SCOTT STRINGER: The department actually
5 did it.

6 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: Actually did it
7 and the city, you know, sometimes it's not the whole
8 sidewalk. It's just a few of the flags. Parks would
9 sign off and say they have repaired it. We don't
10 have to come and do it, and then we would ask for the
11 reimbursement from your office.

12 SCOTT STRINGER: Well, let-let me-let me
13 talk to you-let me talk to you about it. It sounds
14 like a very interesting idea. Let me talk to our
15 General Counsel's Office, and the-the people who do
16 our settlements, and let me see where we're at with
17 that.

18 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: I appreciate
19 that--

20 SCOTT STRINGER: Okay.

21 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: --because I think
22 if we can-

23 SCOTT STRINGER: [interposing] No, and
24 you have the--

2 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: [interposing] We
3 can move this program along we can really make a
4 difference in getting some of these sidewalks
5 repaired in a much--

6 SCOTT STRINGER: No, and I want to thank
7 you. You did contact our office. We are taking a
8 look at it. I thought it was an interesting idea.

9 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: Right.

10 SCOTT STRINGER: Let me see what we can
11 do.

12 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: Thank you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Yes, and--

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: You have
15 one--30 second.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Fair Fare what
17 is your assessment on how Fair Fare will have a
18 positive impact for the economy or especially working
19 class New Yorkers and, therefore, impact to the
20 whole--to the whole city?

21 SCOTT STRINGER: Look, I-I want to--I want
22 to commend your leadership on this issue. As
23 Transportation Chair, you and the Riders Alliance and
24 Commuter Service Society have done a great job in
25 raising the issue of--of, you know, a half fare for

2 working people who are struggling to make it so that
3 they can get to school, get to a job. Again, this is
4 something I support. I know you're negotiating the
5 budget. You know, I don't think the whole proposal
6 has to be implemented today, but it would be nice if
7 we could have a step forward in it, but I-I support
8 it.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
10 you, Council Member and now we are coming to an end.
11 There are some questions that we're going to get to
12 you if you can respond to this expeditiously so that
13 we're able to use them for-before the adoption of the
14 budget. We just want to take this opportunity. I
15 know there's a lot of people here from the public and
16 when the Comptroller alludes to my constant question
17 about pensions, I think it is also important to
18 publicly acknowledge that that increase is important
19 to all of us, to our city for its sustainability, but
20 also to those who benefit from our pension fund, and
21 the fact that that has happened under you leadership.
22 I don't only ask the tough question, I also give
23 credit where credit is due. [laughter]

24 SCOTT STRINGER: Well, you have been-you
25 have been very much asking those-those tough

2 questions and, you know, it just—it makes us work
3 harder and that's, you know, we get checks and
4 balance from you so I appreciate the question.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Well,
6 thank you very much. This concludes this portion of
7 today's budget hearing. I want to thank Comptroller
8 Stringer for testifying. As a reminder, the portion
9 of today's hearing for the public will begin shortly
10 after the IBO's presentation, who is the next group
11 to present. Please be sure to fill out your witness
12 slip with the sergeant-at-arms. The public panels
13 will be arranged by topics. So, please indicate the
14 topic on your testimony, on your witness slip. We
15 understand that many seniors and people with
16 disabilities wish to testify and must leave by a
17 certain time. So, we will try to accommodate the
18 need by putting in some earlier witness panels. If
19 you require accommodation, please let the—please
20 write it down on your witness slip. Again,
21 Comptroller, thank you very much for coming to
22 testify today. We will transition. As soon as IBO
23 can get to this table we can start. [pause]

24 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Please. We're going
25 to continue. If you all would please have a seat and

2 put your phones on vibrate at this this time. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: We will
5 now continue the final day of budget hearings with
6 the New York City Independent Budget Office. The
7 committee will hear testimony from IBO Director
8 Ronnie Lowenstein. [background comments] [shushing
9 for quiet] Public testimony will begin following IBO.
10 We're going to take a small break so that we can
11 transition. In the interest of time, I will forego
12 an opening statement. Director Lowenstein you can
13 begin your testimony after my counsel swears you in.
14 [background comments]

15 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the
16 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in
17 your testimony before the committee today, and to
18 respond honestly to Council Member questions?

19 RONNIE LOWENSTEIN: Yes, and I'm
20 accompanied by George Sweeting, IBO's Deputy
21 Director. Okay, first of all thank you very much for
22 the opportunity to testify and the effort to get you
23 as quickly as we can given how many people are
24 waiting to testify. I'm just going to give a few
25 highlights from our testimony, and as always, we're

2 available for more depth and more discussions as the
3 budget season goes on. In March, when we testified
4 before you last, our forecast for revenues for this
5 year and for next year were very similar to those of
6 OMB. Since then, our forecast for this current year,
7 and especially for next year has increased while at
8 the same time OMB's tax forecasts for this year and
9 next year have declined. What that means is the
10 difference between the two forecasts had widened in a
11 fairly short period of time. We now expect for 2017
12 tax revenues to be just slightly more than OMB
13 projects, and when we couple that with our
14 expectation of slightly lower levels of spending, we
15 project that this year will end with a surplus of
16 about \$4 billion, which is a little over \$300 million
17 more than OMB is expecting. The differences are
18 bigger for 2018. For 2018, our tax forecast exceeds
19 OMB's tax forecast more than—well, by \$1.1 billion.
20 These additional revenues are partly offset by our
21 expectation of somewhat higher spending levels, but
22 taken together we project that rather than having
23 2018 exactly in balance as is always the case for the
24 next year in OMB's budget, rather we're expecting a
25 surplus for next year of \$940 million under the

2 Mayor's Executive Budget Proposal. Finally, if we
3 assume that that \$940 million is carried into the
4 following year, 2019, and used to bring that into
5 balance, the remaining budget gap for 2019 would be
6 \$1.9 billion. To put that into context, it's just
7 under 3% of city funded spending. Not an easy thing
8 to address, but certainly an order of magnitude that
9 the city has routinely dealt with in the past, and
10 it's that \$1.9 billion is about half the size of the
11 gap that's being forecast by OMB. Also looking back
12 to our testimony last time, we noted that this year
13 looked different to us. In a typical year, the city
14 is very cautious in its tax forecast. Over the
15 course of the year it builds up revenues. Taxes are—
16 taxes coming greater than expected, and they city
17 typically uses those greater than anticipated
18 receipts to bring the following year's budget into
19 balance, but not this year. As we pointed out last
20 time the city was going to be relying most heavily on
21 the Savings Program to achieve balance for '18, and
22 that's, in fact, what's occurred. As, ad the
23 Comptroller noted, when the budget was adopted last
24 spring, the forecast for total revenues turned out to
25 be eerily correct. Right now it looks like we have

2 only \$200 million more in tax collections than we
3 anticipated this time last year. So, that's very
4 different. Okay, so the Savings Plan. We've got a
5 savings plan for the course of the Financial Plan,
6 but for this year and next year it totals roughly
7 \$2.8 billion, and we're using a lot of it both to
8 bring next year into balance to fund some new
9 initiatives. The savings plans have received some
10 criticism of late mostly because the preponderance of
11 savings isn't actually increases in efficiency or
12 productivity and, in fact, for this year and next
13 year it's only about one-tenth of the savings or-or
14 such. What I want to say is that that's actually
15 pretty typical of past peg in savings programs. The
16 important thing is that we're doing the savings
17 program. Certainly, when we've been in parts of the
18 business cycle where the city has had to cut
19 dramatically, the city has done so, but more
20 typically the PEG Programs have a lot of re-estimates
21 and a lot of funding swaps, and a lot of picking of
22 low-hanging fruit like illuminating vacant positions.
23 So, kudos the Council and the Administration for
24 having a savings program. This one is not such an
25 outlier. I think there's-looking at what's going on

2 in spending, certainly for the current year the
3 administration has focused on sustaining existing
4 programs making sure they're funded, making sure
5 they're growing, but the focus shifts somewhat for
6 2018. I don't think that's a coincidence given that
7 2018 is a mayoral election year, but I just want to
8 note there are three big ticket initiatives that—that
9 the administration is proposing. Interestingly
10 enough, interestingly enough, we really don't have
11 much of a short-term impact on the city's budget.
12 Two of the initiatives are capital spending, those
13 don't normally do much to the Executive Budget for
14 several years. The biggest is \$1.9 billion to deepen
15 subsidies for affordable housing. Another \$1.1
16 billion to close Rikers, and start moving those jail
17 facilities elsewhere in the city. Much of the
18 funding for the Rikers Island Closure is actually
19 coming from funds that were previous—capital funds
20 that were previously budgeted for construction on
21 Rikers itself. And the third big new initiative, the
22 plan to provide Pre-K for 3-year-olds starts small,
23 but grows over time. So, initially, it would apply
24 only to two school districts and by 2018 it would be
25 up to eight. Finally, I just wanted to say something

2 to conclude about reserves. This administration has
3 consistently increased reserves from the time they
4 started up. I don't believe that there's any level
5 of reserves that we could have that would be
6 sufficient to see us—see the city of New York through
7 even a modest downturn of this in the local economy.
8 So, the question is how much is enough, and the
9 answer to that question depends upon how you view the
10 role of the reserves, and we see the reserves as
11 providing enough of a cushion to allow the city to
12 make the really difficult choices about cutting
13 spending or raising taxes once a recession hits. So,
14 you need money to tide you over in order to make
15 changes, and if that's how you see the role of
16 reserves, then the four plus billion we've got in the
17 reserves now, it's more than that, provide a basis
18 for doing that. So, having said all of that, I guess
19 one more thing I wanted to say is one problem with
20 reserves is where they're very visible, they're very
21 visible targets, and it was just last year we saw
22 Albany attempting to effectively grab some of them by
23 having the city up its contributions for CUNY and the
24 MTA. So, we just have to be aware of that as we go
25 ahead. So, having said all of that, again thank you

2 so much for the opportunity to testify, and we're
3 available for your questions.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
5 very much, and thank you for your perspective on the
6 reserves. As you know, that's--this is something very
7 important to this Council, and I do believe that it's
8 because we still have members in this body that lived
9 through the recessions, and the many rounds of PEGs.
10 Some lived through the property tax increase, and no
11 one wants to be in that position. So, it is just
12 innately a part of--of how we want to provide proper
13 oversight to our city making sure that we have as
14 much reserves necessary so we're not back there, and
15 I--and I think that your point, and really it's about
16 how you see it and what the reserves roles are. It
17 hopes me understand why Dean says we're doing great,
18 and I also understand why we're saying we need more.
19 And so, I just thank you for putting that additional
20 filter in how we talk about our reserves as a city.
21 I wanted to talk about the strong revenue forecast,
22 and I know that you spoke--you just spoke about it,
23 but if you can just walk me through specifically
24 addressing the property tax, the personal tax and the
25 two transaction taxes because, you know, that is what

2 makes the—I guess a great difference. So, what is it
3 that you see that is happening that really sets off
4 this huge difference between the OMB projection and
5 yours?

6 RONNIE LOWENSTEIN: Okay, and George will
7 be answering that.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
9 you.

10 GEORGE SWEETING: Let me start with the
11 property tax. I think one of the things that it's
12 important to—to note there is yes we're definitely
13 higher than them, but it's not really all about the
14 forecast for market values in the city or billable
15 assessable—billable assessment value. We're higher
16 on the levy forecast than OMB, but that's only—that's
17 less than half of the difference between our forecast
18 and their forecast. Particularly in the first two
19 years of the Financial Plan much of the difference
20 comes in the forecast for the reserve, and
21 particularly refunds, cancellations and I forgot
22 what's the other one. Delinquencies. Excuse me, and
23 we've—you know, we've—we've put a lot, we've always
24 put a lot of effort into forecasting the—the reserve.
25 I think our forecasts have tended to be better than

2 OMB's. They're not perfect, but I think we're close
3 than OMB gets, and, you know, I think there's just—
4 there's always—there's a pattern of OMB being
5 extremely cautious on those forecasts. So, in the—in
6 2018, 75% of the difference between our overall
7 property tax revenue forecast and theirs is due to
8 these—to the reserve items. It trails of as—as you
9 get out to 2021, but it's still almost a third of the
10 difference. The remaining differences just are, you
11 know, somewhat more optimistic outlook on market
12 values, and also again this is sort of a technical
13 issue, but I think we do—we have a—a pretty good
14 handle on the pipeline of assessment increase that
15 are waiting to be phased in. [background comments]
16 You know, OMB is also trying to forecast that. I
17 assume your—your staff is, too, but I think that's,
18 you know, that's—that's one of the things that drives
19 our overall forecast of a levy is the provision for—
20 for the pipeline. In terms of the—the personal
21 income tax, I'd say first of all, you know, yes there
22 are differences there, but they're—they're not huge
23 in percentage terms. I think fundamentally it has to
24 do with our somewhat more optimistic forecast for
25 employment growth and personal income, and at least

2 in the first year or so of-of average wages. The-on
3 the transfer tax--

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

5 [interposing] So, is that--because we've identified
6 that there is actually a slowdown in employment. So,
7 is it that you're--you're basing this on wage
8 increase?

9 GEORGE SWEETING: We--we also have a
10 slowdown in employment. We just don't have as big a
11 slowdown as OMB does. So, it's--absolutely there's a
12 slowdown. It's not, but it's also it's not a
13 decline. It's not a loss of jobs. It's a slowdown
14 in the--in the growth in the number of jobs. In terms
15 of the transfer taxes, I--I think you--you have to look
16 at it. The--the really big difference in the forecast
17 stems from the outlook for 2017. After that, the--
18 sort of the pattern of the growth rates are pretty
19 similar. They're not exact, but they're--they're
20 fairly similar. We have a--you know, we--we think that
21 2017 based on current collections through March and
22 April just looks stronger than--than what OMB has, and
23 OMB, you know, aggressively cut their forecast there,
24 you know, our reading of the current collections and
25 the current market conditions is a little more--It's

2 yes, we—we also have a decline. We just don't have
3 nearly as big a decline as they do, and then because
4 we—we start out from a higher point in 2017, the
5 thing grows on from there, but the—the growth rates
6 aren't that dissimilar in the subsequent years.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And I
8 asked this of Dean-of Director Fuleihan. The—in the
9 State Comptroller's—in his report on the Preliminary
10 Budget State of the City set aside \$185 million for
11 overpayments in 2015 when the tax reforms took place
12 and that's the GCT, and we wanted to know, you know,
13 what are your thoughts on this. Can you talk about
14 the expected refunds to GCT going forward, and how is
15 it influencing your forecast?

16 GEORGE SWEETING: You know, we—we—we
17 noted that, too, and we're still trying to track that
18 down. We know that there have been some changes in
19 the city more aggressively refunding money when
20 taxpayers build up balances on account, and this is
21 actually a problem that—that goes back decades in the
22 city that there are these taxpayers who seemingly
23 want to lend the money—lend the city money, and they
24 leave it sitting there. For some reason, you know,
25 it—it may be that for the tax department in a big

2 corporation that worrying about whether, you know,
3 you've got \$50 million over or \$50 million less
4 doesn't matter as much for New York City as it does,
5 you know, for--for their liability with the whole
6 country or with the U.S. tax--tax burden. But, so
7 the--the city has stepped once again their efforts to
8 get to avoid the problem of companies building up
9 these large balances on account, and so it's my
10 understanding that some of it is, you know, sort of
11 procedural and technical that they've been pushing
12 that money out faster. To be frank, our forecast I
13 mean has--you know, we--we have that large refund
14 amount in 2017, and then we actually keep it fairly
15 large, and I think it's larger than OMB, and it may
16 be larger than--than the Council's forecast, too.
17 It's basically sort of--we're sort of assuming
18 whatever has happened is going to continue, and that
19 it's not a one-time thing, but we're not, you know--

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

21 [interposing] This is exactly what Dean Fuleihan said
22 would not be. He said it's a one-time thing, and--and
23 I guess the other question for us is, is this--will it
24 be--is it revenue neutral, right? Because that was

2 the whole point of a lot of the engagements for the
3 reform on business taxes.

4 GEORGE SWEETING: Well, that's a broader
5 question. I mean I think the story is still open on
6 whether the—whether it's revenue neutral and also I
7 think you have to pay attention—or what period of
8 time are you talking about revenue neutrality over? I
9 don't think there was ever the expectation that every
10 single year it would have, you know, it would be
11 neutral. There would be some years where it's up and
12 some years where it's down as different—different
13 pieces of the tax reform—of the tax reform program
14 come into play. So, I think you—you have to let it
15 run over probably three, four or five more years
16 before we can really say was it revenue neutral or
17 not. But I don't think the expectation was that it
18 would be revenue neutral last year or this year or
19 next year. You know, every single year.

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.
21 [pause] Great. Well, thank you very much. Thank you
22 for coming to testify. This concludes this portion
23 of today's budget hearings. I want to thank Director
24 Lowenstein for testifying. We will now take a 15-
25 minute break before begin with the public. Please be

2 sure to fill out your slips, and include your topic
3 so that we can put you together by topic and then I
4 promise to get you guys out of here as soon as
5 possible, okay? So, we're going to go grab a bite to
6 eat right there. I promise. So, see you in 15
7 minutes. [background comments] [recess]

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: We will
9 now conclude the final day of budget hearings with
10 the public portion of Fiscal 2018's Executive Budget
11 Hearings. As a reminder to all members of the public
12 who wish to testify, please be sure to fill out a
13 witness slip with the sergeant-at-arms. The public
14 witness panel will be arranged by topic. So please
15 indicate the topic of your testimony on your witness
16 slip. We understand that many senior or people with
17 disabilities who wish to testify must leave by a
18 certain time. So, we will try to accommodate the
19 need by putting you or some of the—on some of the
20 earlier witness panels. If you require the
21 accommodation, please make a note on your witness
22 slip. In addition, in the interest of time and
23 fairness to all of those who wish to testify, members
24 of the public will have—I'd like to summarize your
25 testimony in two minutes. We have over 70 people

2 here to testify today, and while I love all of you,
3 I'd like to get out of here at some point, but we are
4 very eager that you're here. We want to hear
5 everyone's story and narrative. What we will see is
6 that there will be multiple people advocating for the
7 same thing. So, that is why in the interest we want
8 to keep it as concise and focused on what the
9 differences are. So, in other words, let's try not
10 to repeat the same thing. Tell me what's different,
11 what's your experience, and that would be a great way
12 for us to be able to push our agenda forward. If you
13 require any additional support, we will have—we do
14 have Spanish translation available. [Speaking
15 Spanish] In addition in the interest of time, we ask
16 that you please be respectful of the clock. For any
17 member of the public who wishes to submit written
18 testimony, if you can't stay if it's getting late,
19 you can also submit your testimony. You can still
20 submit your testimony either here today or on our
21 website and the website is [council.nyc.gov/budget/
22 testimony](http://council.nyc.gov/budget/testimony), and the staff will make it a part of the
23 official record. Testimony will be accepted until
24 Monday, May 29th via the Internet. I will now call
25 up the first panel, and then we'll be able to begin.

2 The clock is over—just behind or beside this door
3 here so that you can measure your—and—and wrap up.
4 Okay, and I'd like to acknowledge that Minority
5 Leader Matteo is here with us. So, thank you and I
6 know that—I believe Council Member Miller will also
7 be joining us at some point today.

8 So, our first panel is John Hislop, the
9 President of Local 1321, DC37; Donald Nesbitt, Vice
10 President of Local 372, DC37; Judith Arroyo,
11 President of Local 436, DC37; Belinda I think it's
12 Medina? Medina? Local 420, DC37; and Fran Schloss,
13 President of Local—President of Local 1757, DC37.
14 [background comments] And I'll just let the next
15 panel--so you can start making yourselves-- Okay,
16 UF-UFOA, you'll be the next panel. So, just make
17 yourselves start getting in that direction. You may
18 begin in the order that you'd like. [pause]

19 JOHN HISLOP: Okay. Thank you,
20 Chairwoman Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, and the rest of
21 your City Council colleagues for giving me the
22 opportunity to testify at—at this year's Finance
23 Committee's hearing on the bud-on this year's budget.
24 I am honored to be here. My name is John Hislop, and
25 as President of Local 1321, Queens Library Guild,

2 District Council 37 ASME AFLCIO, I represent the men
3 and women who create and provide the excellent
4 library services that make our library system an
5 essential asset in every Queens neighborhood. Every
6 day thousands of customers come through our doors to
7 go to our online—or go to our online presence for
8 information, education, entertainment, social
9 interaction, civic engagement and so much more
10 whether it be story time in every branch, ESOL for
11 home health aids at Seaside Library, Family Toy Time
12 at East Elmhurst Library, Teen Time at Rosedale
13 Library, Homework Help at Woodside Library, Movie
14 Night at South Elmhurst Library, online book renewal
15 over the world, Queens library staff meets the needs
16 of our customers. This—this successful nurturing and
17 open environment has fostered exceptional growth.
18 However, the system is straining under the weight of
19 our success, and our resources are overwhelmed.
20 Custodians are cleaning more because our people are
21 coming to the branches—because more people are coming
22 to the branches. Maintainers are doing more to keep
23 the libraries functioning and safe. IT workers are
24 doing more projects because more people require 21st
25 Century technology and 24/7 access. Children's

2 librarians are doing more programs for children all-
3 of all ages. Adult learner teachers are providing
4 more classes for adults. Our branches are bursting
5 and every seat is filled. Our children's rooms are
6 overflowing, our staff have trouble—and our staff
7 have trouble scheduling programs because we lack
8 meeting space. This—this City Council and the Mayor
9 have done so much for our libraries. Two years ago
10 you recognized that our shared public libraries
11 values of democracy and equality are a community
12 necessity. Last year you baselined our funding.
13 Thanks to you, we are in stable position, but stable
14 is not good enough for anyone. Our customers are
15 demanding more, and we cannot meet that demand. Help
16 us help our customers, your constituents get to—get
17 the 21st Century services they need. Thank you .

18 JUDITH ARROYO: Good afternoon, Council
19 Member and Chair Ferreras-Copeland and distinguished
20 members of the Finance Committee. I am Judith
21 Arroyo, President of Local 436, District Council 37.
22 This is the local, which represents the Public Health
23 Nurses, Public Health Epidemiologists who work to
24 keep all New Yorkers healthy. In 2004, the City
25 Council passed Local Law 57, which requires the

2 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to make
3 nurses available to public and private primary and
4 intermediate schools. However, in recent years the
5 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has had
6 difficulty in recruiting and retaining sufficient
7 nurses to not only comply with the law, but to
8 provide nurses for the Universal Pre-K program,
9 expansion of Thrive New York and other school health
10 initiatives. And also, please note it is the same
11 public health nurses the city deploys in response to
12 emergencies such as staffing shelters' point of the
13 distribution centers, and responding to disease
14 outbreaks. The salary and benefits for the public
15 health nurses in the schools in the schools are now
16 no longer competitive when compared to the school
17 nurses employed by the Department of Education.
18 There is almost a difference of 10 to 15% higher for
19 DOE nurses as compared to DOH nurses. The Department
20 of Health keeps telling us they don't have enough
21 money so we're here to tell you that for them to be
22 competitive and be able to recruit and retain future
23 hires, they need to spend close to \$15,000 per nurse
24 for a total of \$13.5 million. When the City Council
25 passed Law 2457, you affirmed that the right to

2 affordable accessible healthcare includes supportive
3 healthcare services in the schools. I am asking you
4 to continue to support those services by supporting
5 the nurses we provide them. Thank you for allowing
6 me to testify this afternoon. I will be happy to
7 answer and any questions you may have.

8 BELINDA MEDINA: Good afternoon
9 Ferreras-Copeland, Chairperson Johnson and the member
10 of the Committees. On behalf of President Carmen
11 Charles and the more than 8,500 members of New York
12 city public hospital workers represented by Local
13 420, I want to thank you for the opportunity to be
14 heard here today. My name is Belinda Medina and I'm
15 currently the Second Vice President of Local 420,
16 DCY37 ASME. Our members perform a wide range of
17 hand-on support, technical and other services within
18 the health and hospital system. I do not—I do not
19 need to tell you our members are working within our
20 overburdened system. Yet, even as more and more of
21 our city poor and working poor comes through our
22 doors, our headcount continues to fall. As we in
23 Local 420 watch and wonders as our numbers for Health
24 and Hospitals continues their ever-expanding effort
25 to create a show workforce. It is a workforce built

1 with outside contractors. Contracts with private
2 contractors are nothing new. Companies like Tadesco
3 and Prather have had an arrangement with Health and
4 Hospitals and other city agencies for years. As each
5 contract is renewed and expands, work and
6 opportunities are lost to our members. We have
7 spoken out about the harm done to our members and our
8 union. The harm is not ours alone. The many unions
9 who are hired by these contractor agency workers are
10 like our members placed on the Health and Hospitals
11 payroll. Unlike our members, however, they are denied
12 union benefits and have no union protection. Over
13 the course of the past several years, our members—our
14 union has through doing this procedure has been able
15 to secure union membership and protections to some of
16 the long-term temporary hires. We will not give up
17 in our effort on this issue. Local 420 is also not
18 blind to the radical changes within the city and our
19 national healthcare system. As we already heard here
20 today, as our last hope for the poor and uninsured,
21 the Health and Hospitals system is already
22 overburdened. Base on the recent action of Congress—

23 --
24
25

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

3 [interposing] I hate to interrupt you, but if you can
4 wrap up.

5 BELINDA MEDINA: Sure.

6 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
7 you.

8 BELINDA MEDINA: I'm sorry. The local—the
9 members of Local 420 have served the city well for
10 decades, and we are prepared to continue to serve.
11 We understand that we need—nee training and
12 educational programs to make the system work. We
13 must insist that all of these legislators within the
14 state and city as well as Health and Hospitals
15 remember the work our members have performed in the
16 past and future training and educational are funded
17 as to protect our future. Thank you.

18 FRAN SCHLOSS: Good afternoon, members of
19 the City Council. My name is Fran Schloss and I am
20 President of DC37 Local 1757. Local 1757 represents
21 assessors. Once again, I'm going to speak with
22 regard to the critical need for the hiring of more
23 assessors and assistant assessors. As part of the of
24 Finance's Budget for the coming fiscal year, the
25 hiring of 80 [coughs] additional assessors would not

2 merely backfill vacant districts, but would also to
3 serve to create smaller more manageable districts.
4 It is projected that taking into account a new
5 employee's learning curve and the cost of salaries
6 and benefits, and additional \$100 million of property
7 tax revenue would be generated the first year, and it
8 would be sustainable. This is where the money should
9 be spent, and not on pieces of equipment that
10 currently lie dormant in a desk drawer. In addition
11 to what I have just started, Local 1757 is urging
12 stringent review of real property tax exemptions.
13 The granting of exemptions as it exists today
14 diminishes the tax base. The tax rate, therefore,
15 must be increased to fund the required revenue. In
16 conclusion, the hiring of additional assessors and
17 the re-examination and possible reform of the
18 granting of property tax exemptions are two aspects
19 pertaining to the city's budget that warrant
20 consideration for the coming Fiscal Year's Budget and
21 further the city budgets. Local 1757 thanks you for
22 your consideration, and I'll be happy to answer any
23 question.

24 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
25 very much and thank you for all of you who came to

2 testify. I think, you know, it shows the diversity
3 of issues that we have to make sure this budget
4 responds to, and the diversity of constituents that
5 we serve because in one way or another all of our
6 constituents are touched by every one of your
7 working—you know, by your municipal labor force. So,
8 first, I want to thank you for providing that labor
9 force, and for staying focused and we appreciate you
10 coming to testify and we'll continue to take you and
11 your issues with as we adopt the budget. So, thank
12 you for coming today.

13 BELINDA MEDINA: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And the
15 next panel.

16 LEGAL COUNSEL: The next panel will be
17 George Feranache and Vincent Speciale. [pause]

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And we've
19 been joined by Council Miller—Council Member Miller.

20 LEGAL COUNSEL: And then the following
21 panel will NYLAG, NYIFUP, New York City Coalition for
22 Adult Literacy, Agadah Israel and Legal Aid. [pause]

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, what
24 we'll do is we're make this first row here available
25 for the next panel. So, if we call you as the next

2 panel, just make yourself comfortable right here in
3 this first row, and that will be good. We're going
4 to be real efficient today. [pause]

5 LEGAL COUNSEL: So the following panel
6 would be Helen Drook from NYLAG, Sarah Gillman, Kevin
7 Douglas, Yakima Silver. [pause]

8 GEORGE FERRANACHI: Hello. I'm George
9 Ferranachi representing the UFOA, Fire Officers
10 Association. To my right is Vincent Speciale,
11 representing the Firefighters. We just want to make
12 a brief statement regarding your request for a budget
13 item to outfit us with a second of boots. Fire
14 Officers and Firefighters are asking that the City
15 Council support budget line in the Mayor's Executive
16 Budget for a second set of boots used for fires and
17 emergencies. The second set of boots will be used
18 when the first pair becomes soaked or contaminated.
19 The second set of boots facilitates more efficient
20 responses to fires and emergencies in New York City.
21 Wet, soaked boots can take up to two weeks to dry.
22 As a result, they lead to a number of negative
23 impacts on our performance, health and safety. Wet
24 boots may cause delays in responding and delays in
25 arriving at locations for fires and emergencies.

2 Through the increased efforts required to climb
3 stairs with the added weight, as much as four pounds
4 for a pair to boots and increased fatigue, and
5 difficulty in putting the boots on and off when
6 they're wet. On May 16th we had several companies
7 out of service for hours due to gross contamination
8 of the gear, and the coats and pants were able to be
9 replaced immediately. However, the boots they had to
10 wait on for someone to supply to them, and it took
11 hours that they were out of service and they couldn't
12 provide to their communities. Having a second set of
13 boots for firefighters would allow them to do a
14 better job both faster and safer. A second set of
15 boots would extend the life of the first pair through
16 rotation and minimize premature wear that occurs when
17 boots are continued to be used while they're still
18 wet. Firefighters are issued two coats, two pants
19 that are swapped out when they get soaked or
20 contaminated but only one pair of boots. The UFOA
21 and UFA are asking the City Council members to please
22 support the long overdue budget line for a second set
23 of boots for all fire officers and firefighters.
24 Help us help you and the communities you serve.
25 Thank you very much.

2 VINCENT SPECIALE: Thank you guys.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Could I--could I
4 step in. I'm sorry. Okay. Good afternoon and thank
5 you so much for coming. Obviously thank you for your
6 service. I'm the Chair of Civil Service and Labor.
7 I know that you guys have an expiring CDA, right and--
8 and part of--do have a uniform allowance and is this a
9 part of your allowance.

10 GEORGE FERRANACHI: We had a uniform
11 allowance that negotiated in trade with the city for
12 what we call a quartermaster system and a
13 quartermaster system provides the gear to us now,
14 and--and we no longer receive that uniform allowance.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, alright.
16 So, do you have the--is there a cost associated with
17 this.

18 GEORGE FERRANACHI: The number we have is
19 \$4 million--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay.

21 GEORGE FERRANACHI: --to outfit everybody
22 with that second set of boots.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, thank you
24 so much.

25 GEORGE FERRANACHI: Thank you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you for
3 coming.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
5 you. Thank you for coming to testify. The next
6 panel to come on up, and then the panel after that.

7 LEGAL COUNSEL: And then the panel after
8 this one Michelle Jackson, Christopher Hanway, Paul
9 Firstein (sic) and Justin Nardilla. [pause]

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay, I
11 think there's confusion. The panel that should be up
12 here. Go ahead, you belong there. Let's get some
13 clarity. I knew it was too small.

14 LEGAL COUNSEL: Helen Drook, Sarah
15 Gillman, Kevin Douglas. Yakima Silver and Sarah
16 Gillman. [pause]

17 SARAH GILLMAN: Good afternoon, Council-
18 Council Members and thank you for the opportunity to
19 testify today. My name Sarah Gillman. I'm a
20 Supervising Attorney with the Legal Aid Society. I
21 supervise the NYIFUP program, which is the first
22 public defender system in the United States that
23 provides representation for immigrants who are
24 detained and facing removal from the United States.
25 NYIFUP was actually was actually created by the-

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
3 Can you bring your mic a little closer?

4 SARAH GILLMAN: Yes. NYIFUP was through
5 the visionary leadership of this City Council. It
6 has been in existence since 2013 and we asking that
7 NYIFUP continue for the future in nature that it
8 currently exists, which it provides universal
9 representation to all individuals who are facing
10 removal from the United States and they're detained
11 and have their cases pending before the Barrett (sic)
12 Street Courthouse, which is a short distance from
13 where you sit today. The wonderful thing about
14 NYIFUP is the universal nature of the program. It
15 doesn't have any type of restrictions attached to who
16 we represent. It's based upon financial eligibility.
17 We try to represent everybody who we interact with
18 who is facing removal and detained by the government.
19 Any restriction imposed by-on this program would
20 really take away the universal nature of the program,
21 and would also be an affront to due process, which is
22 embedded in the idea that everybody deserves an
23 attorney to fight against the government who has an
24 attorney fighting for the government. Some of the
25 proposals that have been announced by the Mayor's

2 Office include restrictions involving criminal
3 convictions. It would still be an affront to due
4 process. Again, the visionary leadership of the City
5 Council enabled universal representation for
6 everybody and we believe that's imperative to
7 continue to ensure NYIFUP's continued existence, and
8 the success of the program. As this Council already
9 knows, NYIFUP has been a tremendous success, and it's
10 been recognized nationwide [bell] for the past three
11 to four years. We also ask that the program be
12 continued for all individuals who are detained by the
13 government and facing removal before the Barrett
14 Street Courthouse. The idea that there would be any
15 type of restriction placed on the program in terms of
16 people's residency is not acceptable and should not
17 imposed. Residency in the context of immigration
18 detention is a notion that has to be understood in
19 the sense that when someone is detained and taken
20 from their home-

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

22 [interposing] I'm going to need you to wrap up.

23 SARAH GILLMAN: Alright.

24 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Sorry.

25 Thank you.

2 SARAH GILLMAN: In summary, we'd like
3 that the NYIFUP program continue in the way that it
4 was envisioned by this Council, which is a universal
5 program that allows for the representation for every
6 individual who is detained and facing removal without
7 any restrictions imposed on the program.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
9 you.

10 JUDITH GOLDNER: I'll just introduce
11 myself. I'm Judith Goldner from the Legal Aid
12 Society, and I have prepared testimony. If there are
13 any questions about the Legal Aid Society, I'd be
14 happy to answer them.

15 HELEN DROOK: Yes, good afternoon. Thank
16 you Chair, Council Members, staff for having me here.
17 My name is Helen Drook and I'm a Senior Staff
18 Attorney with NYLAG, New York Legal Assistance Group.
19 We represent immigrants, disabled, elderly, victims
20 of domestic violence, victims of trafficking, victims
21 of crime, the most vulnerable New Yorkers. I will
22 just go over quickly. There is a lot of information
23 in the testimony that I submitted. I just want to
24 focus on New York City immigrants, victims of
25 domestic violence and members LGBT community. It is

2 imperative that the City Council and the Mayor's
3 Office support this expansion of community education
4 and legal services programs to protect New York
5 immigrants. Specifically the Immigrants Opportunity
6 Initiative, the IOI funding should be increased to
7 allow the current legal service providers who already
8 have the infrastructure to provide free legal
9 services to immigrants to serve more low-income
10 clients. NYLAG received hundreds literally of Know
11 Your Right presentation requests from churches and
12 schools in the community. The fear is huge. You
13 know, as—as many of you see a problem know, you know,
14 people are afraid to get picked up by ICE. So, with
15 increased funding for immigrant services would allow
16 NYLAG to grow life skill community clinics, which is
17 we're working with the City Council to do the city
18 events, which allow us to identify people who may be
19 eligible for relief. Let me just quickly wrap up
20 since I see I'm running out of time. So, an
21 increased in the case rate actually across the board
22 will give agencies like ours the opportunity to serve
23 those clients who are most in need in those [bell] in
24 this changing immigration client—climate rather.
25 Increased IOI funding will allow us to handle complex

2 cases, and represent those most vulnerable. Thanks
3 again for the opportunity.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
5 you. You may begin.

6 KEVIN DOUGLAS Good afternoon, Chair
7 Ferreras-Copeland, Minority Leader Matteo, and
8 Council Member Miller. Thank you for the opportunity
9 to present this afternoon. My name is Kevin Douglas
10 and I'm the Co-Director of Policy and Advocacy with
11 United Neighborhood Houses of New York, and to today
12 I'm here to testify on behalf of the New York City
13 Coalition for Adult Literacy, which is a collation of
14 over 40 providers, community based organization,
15 libraries and the CUNY system who believe that every
16 New Yorkers who needs English skills should have the
17 ability to have ability to enroll in an Adult
18 Literacy class. I want to thank you, Chair and
19 members of the Council for your leadership last year
20 in securing \$12 million for Adult Literacy programs.
21 We're very concerned that the Mayor's Executive
22 Budget did not renew that funding. As it stands
23 right now, if that funding is not included in the
24 final budget, over 5,700 New Yorkers will lose the
25 ability to learn English or earn their high school

2 diploma. We believe that it is a very good thing
3 that the City Council and the Mayor are striving to
4 make this a sanctuary city, and a safe place for all
5 immigrants. Our contention is that we need to go
6 beyond sanctuary and create a place of opportunity.
7 So, we don't just want immigrants to have the ability
8 to stay here, but to earn family sustaining wages, go
9 to college and really create opportunity, and they
10 can't do that without English proficiency. So, we're
11 really looking for this Council to work with the
12 Mayor to renew this funding, and very importantly
13 baseline. We can't expect someone that has
14 immigrated here with very basic English skills to
15 learn to be proficient within six months or a year.
16 This requires an ongoing renewed investment and we
17 also need a new procurement. Currently, the
18 reimbursement rates for providers are way too low for
19 the cost of services and so with a baselined
20 investment we're hoping that DYCD will craft a new
21 RFP that will allow for an adequate reimbursement
22 rate. So, I will leave it there. Thank you for all
23 of your support, and hope that we can see successful
24 conclusion on the budget.

2 YAKIMA SILVER: Good afternoon. Thank
3 you, Madam Chair, and members of the City Council.
4 My name is Yakima Silver (sic). I serve as e
5 Director of New York Government Relations for
6 Grouthier (sic) of America. We're a national advocacy
7 organization. We're focusing now on the social
8 services, and we provide comprehensive community-
9 based services serving all populations. Our services
10 include employment and training divisions, patient
11 advocacy, labor stabilization, comprehensive housing
12 services, including maintain and developing
13 affordable housing and immigrant services. What I
14 really want today is what my colleague mention Adult
15 Literacy Program. This program providers literacy
16 education, supportive counseling, job skill
17 development and job placement. Services target high
18 need population citywide, Latina-America, Mexica,
19 Caribbean, Asian, African and European immigrants.
20 Most of them newly arrived existing at the very low
21 income levels. The majority are unemployed or under-
22 employed. Almost all have extremely limited English
23 proficiency and lack high school diplomas or the
24 equivalent. Students receive group instruction,
25 tutoring, college and career counseling, job

2 development and financial (sic) assistance. Job
3 training benefits, counsel and other social services
4 are provided via interagency, and linkage of
5 referrals. In the current fiscal year over 500
6 students participated in both our Manhattan and
7 Brooklyn locations. The current success of this
8 program was due to the \$12 million that the Council
9 and the Mayor put on last year's budget providing
10 this is a vital service. However, as it was
11 mentioned much to our dismay, the \$12 million was not
12 part of the upcoming Mayor's Executive Budget.
13 Especially now with proposed cuts to immigrant
14 services on a federal level this funding is more
15 vital than ever. Grouthier (sic) is a proud member
16 of the New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy and
17 we're proud to join other members in advocating for
18 this funding. We're fully aware that members of the
19 City Council have been extremely supportive of this
20 funding in the past and we implore to baseline us in
21 city budget. Continuous one-year funding makes it
22 difficult to operate programs, retain instructors and
23 could have a major impact on student gain. We ask
24 you to restore this funding and make it permanent.
25 Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
3 for coming to testify and for making sure that your
4 issues are on the record. Greatly appreciated.
5 We'll have the next panel come up.

6 LEGAL COUNSEL: And then the panel after
7 this one is Art Tellivan, Carmen Collado and Yolanda
8 McBride. [background comments]

9 MICHELLE JACKSON: Good afternoon. Thank
10 you so much for allowing me this opportunity to
11 testify. My name is Michelle Jackson. I'm the
12 Deputy Director for the Human Services Council.
13 You're familiar with our organizations. So, I'll
14 save a couple seconds on that. [laughs] I want to
15 thank you for providing me with the opportunity to
16 testify and also for the Council's generous support
17 of the human services sector particularly of Sustain
18 Our Sanctuary Campaign. We really appreciate how far
19 the Council has come in advocating for the human
20 services sector overall this year. We greatly value
21 our partnership with the Mayor and the City Council,
22 but decades of under investment, lack of increase and
23 stagnant rates on contracts have really left the
24 sector on the brink of collapse. Back in December
25 HSC and 218 human service agencies in New York shared

2 a letter with the Mayor asking for a 12% increase on
3 our contracts. You'll hear from providers today
4 about the impacts of this chronic underfunding on
5 this sector and I'll begin by saying here that this
6 underfunding has really reached an apex, and the
7 sector cannot continue to serve New Yorkers as the
8 system goes unchanged. As the administration has
9 started earlier in their testimony, investments have
10 been made in the human services sector in programs in
11 our workforce, which we're very grateful for because
12 our workforce is definitely underpaid and it doesn't
13 have parity with city workers. However, the problems
14 that this sector faces are structural, and that's
15 what we're sounding the alarm on. The problem their-
16 the additional funding that's added to programs
17 without addressing these structural issues has really
18 left the sector on the brink, and it's a little like
19 putting new tires on a car when the engine is on
20 fire. We have to stop and make these structural
21 investments in this sector. There re providers that
22 the city relies on to build strong communities and
23 there are programs that the City Council supports
24 around domestic violence, ending homelessness,
25 reducing hunger, mental health and the organizations

2 it relies on for those programs are really saying
3 they can't continue to stay in business. Just today,
4 there was an article in Queens an op-ed pinned by
5 Carlos Menchaca, Council Member Menchaca about
6 Turning Point Brooklyn, an organization that serves
7 people in Brooklyn that's having to close a lot of
8 really valuable program in order to stay afloat.
9 Eighteen of non-profits in New York City are
10 insolvent. Think about what this means. If 18% of
11 providers were to go out of business in New York City
12 it means 32,000 jobs will be lost [bell] and 450,000
13 will be without services. We don't want other
14 council members to write op-eds like the one that was
15 in Queens today about services and providers going
16 out of business. I'll end by saying that what we're
17 asking for is for the Council to work with on rate-
18 rate rationalization, which the administration has
19 offered to do, but it will take time and we need the
20 Council's support to make sure it's done right. And,
21 we're also asking to go along with the COLA that's
22 been proposed, a 2% OTPS [bell] in crease on our
23 contracts so that organizations can float and-and
24 stay active while we do this larger rate
25 rationalization piece. Thank you.

2 JUSTIN NARDILLA: Good afternoon,
3 Chairperson Ferreras-Copeland and good afternoon to
4 the members of the New York City Council Finance
5 Committee. My name is Justin Nardilla and I'm the
6 Chief Financial Officer of CAMBA. New York City non-
7 profit human service sector has long been sounding
8 the alarm about the impact of chronic underfunding of
9 government contracts, and we've reached a breaking
10 point. We are calling for an immediate investment in
11 human service contracts to stop the closure of
12 essential services that make New York safe, diverse
13 and an inclusive sanctuary for all. Without this
14 crucial investment, CAMBA will not be able to provide
15 the same quality service to the same number of
16 clients. We ask that the City Council supports
17 Sustain our Sanctuary campaign by urging the
18 administration for a commitment to 10% investment in
19 human service sectors over the next three years.
20 CAMBA is one of New York's largest and most trusted
21 community-based organizations. We operate over 160
22 programs across the five boroughs that together serve
23 45,000 New Yorkers. We provide integrated services
24 in six program areas: Economic development,
25 education and youth development, family support,

2 health, housing and legal services. We currently
3 have over 120 city contracts to support roughly 75%
4 of our annual operating budget. Due to the gaps in
5 funding and the lack of cost escalators in city
6 contracts, we have had to take the following types of
7 actions: Not making repairs to our facilities,
8 delaying or not hiring replacement staff, and not
9 maintaining our IT infrastructure. Sky High (sic)
10 housing programs in particular rent increases have
11 devoured our budgets leaving us to rely on accruals
12 that fund basic expenses like replacing client
13 furniture, repairing and maintaining apartments, and
14 paying utility bills. Elsewhere in our city contract
15 portfolio we are facing expensive new service
16 mandates without any correspond increase in our
17 budgets. The administration's commitment to rate
18 ration-rate rationalization across human services is
19 a good step and has the potential to finally right
20 size contracts that have been underfunded for
21 decades. This investment is crucial now more than
22 ever. CAMBA has begun to look at our contracts that
23 provide insufficient rates, and will have to make
24 difficult decisions about what contracts are viable

2 and those we must turn away. Thank you again for
3 providing us this opportunity to testify. [bell]

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off
5 mic][laughter] Or that number.

6 MARY JANE DESSABLES: Hello. My name is
7 Mary Jane Dessables and I am here represent the
8 Council of Family and Childcaring Agencies. COFCCA
9 represents 50 child welfare agencies across New York
10 City. I'm also here representing our CEO Jim Purcell
11 who wrote all sorts of wonderful that I am not going
12 to read to you, but if he asks, please tell him that
13 I did. We've shared the same agenda a HSC and our
14 fellow provider agencies and representative agencies
15 that the non-profit service sector has been
16 underfunded and it's a structural issue, and we need
17 to see some improvement along that line. We want to
18 specially mention preventive services which are
19 providing a crucial part of the child welfare
20 spectrum at this time Van Corporation just came out
21 with report this week that says that child abuse
22 prevention and family preservation are some of the
23 most cost-effective and best outcome producing
24 programs that a city can invest in, and we'd like to
25 see investment happen for our preventive services.

2 ACS has provided us with some supports and it's in
3 the Executive Budget, and we appreciate it, but it is
4 insufficient for what they want to-want to have
5 happen over the next year. Currently, as there-as
6 ACS is experiencing a spike in investigations they
7 are-they have an increased demand for preventive
8 services, but the preventive service providers can't
9 take on additional slots that are going to dig their
10 deficits that much deeper. So, I'll just conclude by
11 saying that we support HSC's agenda and we hope that
12 we can see can some relief for preventive providers
13 and other child welfare providers in the coming
14 budget.

15 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: My name is Paul
16 Feuerstein. I'm the CEO of Barrier Free Living.

17 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

18 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Okay. Can you hear me
19 now?

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

21 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Okay. My name is Paul
22 Feuerstein and I'm the CEO of Barrier Free Living.
23 We're an agency that works with people with
24 disabilities in the areas of homelessness,
25 Examination and Verification and mental health. We

2 opened the first not-for-profit single shelter in the
3 city system in November of 1990. When we met with
4 Commissioner Taylor in 2014, we did an analysis of
5 our budget and found that our budget was a \$1,000
6 less than it was in Fiscal '91. We were able to get
7 some things put into our budget in this—with the de
8 Blasio Administration particularly getting additional
9 security, which we've been asking for since Fiscal
10 '92 and to get a Director of Social Services, but our
11 OTPS remained the same. When we started, we could
12 afford to have a registered nurse, we could afford to
13 have a certified dietician, we could afford to
14 provide people with disabilities with a diabetic
15 diet, a low salt diet, a dialysis diet, and a regular
16 diet. We have \$35,000 in our present budget for food
17 for the year. It is with the help of our friends
18 from City Harvest and the Food Bank that we're able
19 to put three meals a day on the table, and we feed
20 people whatever we can get. So, when the state comes
21 from OTDA and says why do you serve hot dogs so much,
22 we say well, that's what we can get from the people
23 who donate. We are in a situation now where we're
24 getting squeezed on OTPS. We have not been able to
25 move on that, and we are looking forward to having a

2 rational conversation on rates that allows to provide
3 people with the healthy food that they desperately
4 need.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
6 [laughter] [on mic] Thank you all very much for
7 coming to testify. You clearly know where I stand on
8 this. We will continue to push. Thank you.

9 MARY JANE DESSABLES: Thank you.

10 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: The next
12 panel can make themselves—their way up. If you want
13 to call them to come up.

14 LEGAL COUNSEL: The panel after that will
15 Jesse Laymon, Carla Rabinowitz, Robin Howell and
16 Ashley Solaras. [[background comments, pause] And
17 then after this panel will Mary Haviland and Robin
18 Vitale. [pause]

19 YOLANDA MCBRIDE: [off mic] Thank you
20 Chair Julissa Ferreras-Copeland.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
22 Turn on your mic.

23 YOLANDA MCBRIDE: [on mic] Thank you,
24 Chair Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, and members of the
25 Finance Committee for the opportunity to testify. My

2 name is Yolanda McBride. I am the Director of Public
3 Policy of the Children's Aid Society, and for more
4 than 160 years Children's Aid has helped children,
5 youth and families living in poverty to succeed and
6 thrive. Children's Aid—at Children's Aid we are also
7 a member of the Sustain Our Sanctuary Campaign, and
8 my testimony will be about our concerns. At
9 Children's Aid we currently have 115 government
10 contracts and 73 or 63% of those are from the city.
11 Our city—our city contracts totals \$60 million,
12 currently half of our \$125 million annual budget.
13 But it's getting harder and harder for us to balance
14 our budget. We have leveraged state and federal
15 funding as well as philanthropic support. We have
16 shaved programs and services of the years, and we can
17 no longer shave. So, I just want to give you a
18 couple examples some of the challenges that we're
19 experiencing. Because there is a cap on our rate for
20 family foster care, we have 673,000 unfunded mandated
21 costs for services like childcare, transportation and
22 supports for birth parents. Our daily rate is \$35.44
23 for family foster care, but our true costs are really
24 about \$50 a day. Just over the last seven years our
25 rent, occupancy costs in healthcare—health insurance

2 costs have increased by \$6.1 million without an
3 increase in our contracts. If our contracts actually
4 paid what it actually costs to run our programs, we
5 would be able to retain and support our staff through
6 adequate—adequate compensation and professional
7 development. We would also be able to provide
8 supports that we know are necessary for high quality
9 programs and for which we have to raise private funds
10 to do—or do without. We have laid off staff, reduced
11 program hours, postponed necessary repairs to
12 buildings and we are just at a breaking point. And
13 so, we just really need the investment and thank you
14 for your [bell] your support.

15 Hi, good afternoon, Chairperson Ferreras-
16 Copeland. [coughs] Excuse me. Good afternoon
17 members of the New York City Finance Committee. My
18 name is Robin Tolliver and I represent the Children's
19 Village, Harlem Endowment and Inwood House, three
20 organizations found in Manhattan in the early 1800s.
21 Together annually we serve over 15,000 of New York
22 City's teens and families. Today we provide one of
23 the most—I'm sorry, the broadest continuums of care
24 in New York from preventive services and allowing
25 children to remain in the care of their families, to

2 adoption and foster care and Juvenile Justice
3 Programming that includes evidence based diversion
4 programs to keep teens and schools safe in their
5 families. Our long history and recent experience
6 confirm what research has shown: Well funded and
7 manage programs are critical to engaging children and
8 family and they are non-negotiable when we look at
9 long-term personal success. I have served [coughs]
10 our sector on New York City's frontlines for nearly
11 20 years. I have spent the last 17 years working
12 with teens in Independence Program, working with
13 teens who have spent often a decade in foster care is
14 not easy, but I am proud to report that over 80% of
15 those teens we work with obtain a GED or graduate
16 high school with more than 60% attending college and
17 over 75% are being employed. However, in the past
18 decade, achieving success in time has become very
19 difficult and challenging. I am here today seeking
20 your leadership to address the disparity, a lack of
21 appreciation for those like me who serve in the front
22 line. I am not only keeping safe and helping them
23 achieve success, but everyday I and thousands like me
24 make our city great with the war in our city that we
25 live in. We currently serve over 18 neighborhoods in

2 New York City. These are demanding services aimed at
3 keeping children safe and most often families
4 together. Until now, those donors and philanthropy
5 have made up for the city's persistent underfunding.
6 However, they can no longer continue subsidize New
7 York City at the levels needed. Without a more
8 responsive approach from the administration,
9 dedicated staff will continue to make the difficult
10 decision to leave the sector due to insufficient
11 salary structures and our organizations that have
12 serve the city since the early 1800s [bell] will be
13 forced to reduce critical frontline supports in our
14 most stressed communities. In closing, we appreciate
15 the Mayor's support in the previous COLA, wage floor
16 and investment plans for a 6% COLA spread over the
17 past three years. However, we must ask for
18 consideration for not just our workforce who need and
19 deserve these investments, but for all contracts as
20 well. Our current contracts last upwards of ten
21 years and do not account for increasing costs in our
22 beautiful rights as a city. Thank you, City Council.

23 CARLA RABINOWITZ: [off mic] Is it on-it
24 is on or off?

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Is the light on now.
3 Make sure the light is on.

4 CARLA RABINOWITZ: Good afternoon. My
5 name is Carla Rabinowitz and I'm the Advocacy
6 Coordinator for Community Access, an old 43-year-old
7 mostly mental health, housing agency in New York
8 City. We offer 1,300 units mostly permanent housing
9 throughout the city, and like the others here we're
10 from the Sustain Our Sanctuary Campaign, and asking
11 for a 12% across the board increase on our contracts.
12 We just had layoffs. Our prod of fundraising has to
13 raise over \$1.5 million a year and even that just
14 puts up to zero level. I just want to say how a lack
15 of funding affects the tenants. We have right now a
16 21% staff vacancy rate. Staff are leaving in large
17 numbers because the rate is better at Starbucks. So
18 consider a tenant Phyllis. She's had over nine
19 service coordinators in her ten-year stay at
20 Community Access. She lives in our scatter site
21 housing and she counts on the support services to
22 find ways to cope with her severe PTSD, encourage
23 here to get out in the world, and giver her someone
24 talk to 24/7. She suffers the great symptoms of—
25 suffers great symptoms from PTSD, and her life story

2 is not easy to share. Each time a new coordinator
3 comes on board she has to share everything and every
4 little bit of her story over and over again. She's
5 had been fortunate that the last service coordinator
6 has been here for two years, and during that time
7 Phyllis has been able to join the Tenant Advisory
8 Committee and really find her voice. So, we're
9 asking you not to take that away from Phyllis and the
10 other tenants. These service coordinators they need
11 consistency as the service coordinators and they're
12 vastly underpaid. Also, the infrastructure in our
13 buildings we don't get enough funding for that.
14 Recently we had a fire in another building another
15 apartment. We know the tenant doesn't have
16 insurance. Our insurance costs don't cover all that
17 needs to be done for that. We have a constant lack
18 of maintenance men in the building. So, they're
19 living in these permanent buildings that are
20 beautifully built [bell] but they don't have people
21 to take out the garbage. So, please we ask you to
22 convince the Mayor to provide the 12% across the
23 board increase.

24 ASHLEY FLORES: Hello, good afternoon.

25 My name is Ashley Flores. I'm a Harm Reduction

2 Specialist at Community Access. I work at our Cedar
3 (sic) and Vice Avenue locations in the Bronx. In my
4 experience working for Community Access I found that
5 there are certain aspects of my life that I've had to
6 put on hold due to a lack of sufficient income. For
7 example, I can't afford mental health services.
8 While some can argue that this is an insurance issue
9 and not the fault of the low salary, the reality is
10 that I have a serious mental illness that is going
11 untreated because affording co-pays for things like
12 therapy and medication are unrealistic with all my
13 other bills and necessities. If I need surgery or
14 suffer an injury, I do not know how I would ever
15 afford these medical bills even with insurance.
16 There is also the matter of life goals such as paying
17 off my student loans, starting a family and moving
18 into a more stable home. These are all out of the
19 question for me at this time. These may not be life
20 saving necessities, but is it fair to expect me to
21 choose between my life on hold for a low paying, but
22 very fulfilling career where I can help the most
23 vulnerable members of our community or abandon my
24 values for another job in the private sector where
25 I'm only benefitting myself. I do feel that I'm

2 fortunate. After all, many of my colleagues in lower
3 paid positions are working two or more jobs to
4 provide for themselves and their families, but I hope
5 my voice can bolters their and that we can come
6 together and see some change. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
8 very much for coming to testify in particular your
9 story. I appreciate you sharing your personal
10 stories and your anecdotes. Thank you. As I said,
11 we keep pushing. We're on the same page. So, I
12 don't have any questions. We will call up the next
13 pane. I know you know who you are and the panel
14 following that.

15 LEGAL COUNSEL: The following panel will
16 be Enrique Havera, Hunter Citrin, Suzanne Robinson
17 Dierre, Anthony Feliciano, Clara Rondano, and Maria
18 Lozardo. [background comments, pause]

19 MARY HAVILAND: Good afternoon. Thank
20 you to Council Member Ferreras-Copeland to Council
21 Member Matteo. My name is Mary Haviland. I'm the
22 Executive Director of the New Yorkers Alliance
23 Against Sexual Assault, and I'm here today on behalf
24 of the Sexual Assault Initiative, an initiative that
25 has been supported by the New York City Council for

1 almost ten years. We're respectfully requesting the
2 City Council to increase the level of funding from
3 \$600,000 to \$700,000 for the four service providers
4 that are included in this initiative. They are Kings
5 Bridge Heights Community Center, Mount Sinai Savvy,
6 The Alliance and Mount Sinai St. Lukes Crime Victims
7 Treatment Center. We are requesting these funds to
8 allow us to engage in a more proactive way the
9 undocumented and foreign born survivors of sexual
10 assault in New York. The New York City Council
11 funding supports the New York City Alliance—
12 Alliances' Training program. It's a forensic
13 examiner training institute. It's the largest of its
14 kind in the state. We trained in Fiscal Year 2017,
15 we trained over 900 health and human services
16 professionals thanks to the City Council funding.
17 The Sexual Assault Initiative in total served almost
18 4,000 victims of sexual assault in the city and
19 conducted 11,000 counseling and training and training
20 sessions—counseling and training sessions. CBTC is
21 providing the only free service for male survivors in
22 New York City. Twenty percent of their clients were
23 male or transgendered and they provided almost 6,000
24 counseling sessions. Kings Bridge Heights is the
25

2 only free full service facility serving victims of
3 child sexual abuse, and in Fiscal Year 2017 they saw
4 2,000 clients in their Bronx offices. The fourth
5 partner Mount Sinai Savvy provides services to
6 trafficking victims. [bell] Whoo, I'm sorry. So,
7 these programs provide services to all five boroughs,
8 and we're extremely thankful for the Council's
9 support, and we ask for ongoing support in this
10 year's budget. Thank you.

11 ROBIN VITALE: Good afternoon, Chair and
12 Council Member Matteo. My name is Robin Vitale. I
13 serve as the Vice President of Health Strategies for
14 the American Heart Association and the American
15 Stroke Association here in New York City. I'll
16 synopsizing my testimony as much as possible. We are
17 certainly very supportive of many of the initiatives
18 that have been proposed in the Executive Budget that
19 focus on health and wellness promotion for the city.
20 One of our first initiatives we wanted to highlight
21 is the Mayor's intention about helping to close one
22 of the gaps around the Manhattan Greenway, a \$100
23 million investment to close the gap between 63rd and
24 61st Street. It's a good first step. We're equally
25 concerned about the gaps that exist up at 125th and

135th Street as well as 145th and 162nd Street.

Looking at the health outcomes in neighborhoods

across New York City those neighborhoods truly

deserve access to physical activity. So, we'd love

to see in the ensuing years having those gaps closed

as well, but essentially, we love the idea. We just

want more of it. Moving onto another concern for us

around physical education. This is a preeminent

concern at the heart association as it helps to

inspire physical activity in our youngest New

Yorkers. We applaud the city and City Council for

the investments that have been made over the last

several years. The Executive Budget last year

codified funding to help hire PE teachers as part of

the PE Works Program. We're making wonderful

progress on that, and we certainly applaud it. We are

concerned that obviously once that funding ceases in

FY2020 what is going to happen to those teachers. We

would love to make sure that that funding is

consistent and sustained, and so we would encourage

the consideration of baselining those dollars in the

years ahead so that those teachers can stay in place

and continue the good work that has begun. And as we

know from Local Law 102, teachers are not the only

2 gap that exists around the quality of PE programs. I
3 know that there has been some discussion around
4 capital construction costs, and helping to improve
5 the space for physical education in our schools. We
6 encourage the Council to continue looking at that as
7 well. And lastly, we have some proposals related to
8 healthy food access. We would love to make sure that
9 the city is investing [bell] dollars into the
10 programs that our neighborhoods desperately need, to
11 help to improve food and healthy food access for all
12 New Yorkers. Thank you.

13 JESSIE LAYMON: Good afternoon,
14 Chairwoman Ferreras-Copeland and Council Member
15 Matteo. My name is Jessie Laymon. I am the Director
16 of Policy for the Employment and Training Coalition.
17 We represent 180 member organizations in New York
18 City that provide job training and job placement
19 services for New Yorkers. It's a range of community
20 based organizations, community colleges and labor
21 organizations that help roughly 800,000 New Yorkers
22 every year get some element of crucial skills or job
23 development to help lift themselves and their
24 families out of poverty, and we're testifying today
25 because there areas of this year's Executive Budget

2 that fall short in terms of helping those New Yorkers
3 lift themselves out of poverty, and get better jobs.
4 I want to address just a few of them, and run them
5 off quickly. First, I want to stand with my allies
6 and colleagues in the Coalition for Adult Literacy,
7 and point out that in our city if we're going to be a
8 sanctuary for immigrants from around the world we
9 need to help to provide a pathway for those
10 immigrants into our workforce, and that means that we
11 need to have real quality adult literacy programming
12 for them. We need the \$12 million back that were in
13 last year's budget in this year's budget. Frankly,
14 \$12 million isn't even enough, but it's what we need
15 right now to help create that pathway and give basic
16 adult education to hundreds of thousands or at least
17 in that case several thousands slots of New Yorkers
18 who need it. Moving beyond the basic adult literacy
19 we're also very disappointed that this year's budget
20 does not have a substantial increase in funding for
21 bridge programming, which was identified by the
22 Mayor's Career Pathways Plan as a crucial need to
23 help New Yorkers who lack either a critical element
24 of education or credentials take that next step and
25 get over that—that barrier towards a good job. There

2 are successful bridge programs already in existence
3 like CUNY Prep. We think they could be expanded, and
4 new ones could be launched. There was an immigrant
5 bridge program that was successfully piloted a few
6 years ago. We want to see that restarted. We also
7 support the Fair Fares Campaign because we know that
8 the price of getting to a job interview or the job
9 training should not stand in the way of anybody
10 getting a good job [bell] and cutting across all of
11 this the last one is that we cannot provide quality
12 job training and placement services to these hundreds
13 of thousand of New Yorkers as long as the contracts
14 for human services, which include job training and
15 placement are chronically underfunded. We needed
16 really the 12% increase for human services contracts.
17 We know that that's not going to happen in this
18 year's budget, but we believe that 10% over the next
19 three years would start to get the human services
20 sector on the pathway to where it needs to be, and we
21 hope that you will fight for that in this year's
22 budget and in the coming years. It's important to us
23 as it is to the entire human services sector. Thank
24 you.

2 LEGAL COUNSEL: And then after that, the
3 individuals testifying from Picture the Homeless.
4 [background comments, pause]

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Minority
6 Leader Matteo, I think everyone is making you Latino
7 today by calling you Matteo. His name is Matteo.
8 It's Council Member Matteo but, you know, Latino for
9 a couple of minutes isn't bad. You may begin your
10 testimony.

11 ANTHONY FELICIANO: Good afternoon. My
12 name is Anthony Feliciano. I'm the Executive
13 Director of the Commission on Public Health System.
14 I'm actually here with several of our fellow
15 community partners ensuring that our initiative
16 called Access Health NYC remains as part of the City
17 Council's priority, but also gets enhanced in terms
18 of more funding. So, Access Health NYC was something
19 that we thank the Council for stepping up where the
20 state didn't step up when it came to outreach to
21 communities particularly low-income communities,
22 immigrant communities around their rights to access
23 to care, but also the issues around coverage. And
24 so, we worked closely with 13 awardees that they'll
25 discuss where there have been at least as of May over

2 100 trainings and workshops that are done by our
3 partners: New York Immigration Coalition, Welfare
4 agencies, Coalition for Asian-American trainings,
5 Families and Community Service Society. There have
6 been over 5,000 people reached with these workshops
7 and trainings, and over 300 through Access Media.
8 And so we think it's an important and a critical time
9 by now with this federal climate that people need to
10 know their rights about accessing care, and around
11 coverage issues, particularly as we start seeing
12 perhaps cuts to Medicaid and several other areas.
13 So, we think it's even more critical to have this.
14 But also in terms of equity to ensure that more
15 community based organizations have the opportunity to
16 sustain the work they already do as places of—that
17 are sanctuaries out in the base organizations. The
18 other piece I would like to speak of is the public
19 hospital system. It is something that as commission
20 for us that we were created around when they want—in
21 the '90s when they wanted to privatize the public
22 hospitals and unfortunately we're back at that same
23 place where the financial crisis of the public
24 hospitals is causing them to make decisions around
25 perhaps closing of services, changing of services,

2 but also it could be closing of hospital. And I know
3 the Mayor initiative has stepped up in providing more
4 funding but there has not been clarity about what's
5 going on with their plan financial how to deal with
6 public hospitals, and it can't cannot be done in
7 silo. And so, we want to make sure that our public
8 hospitals are supported, and that there's—the City
9 Council to step over to our organization to look at
10 those issues in a more comprehensive way. Thank you.

11 HUNTER CITRIN: Good afternoon. My name
12 is Hunter Citrin. I'm the Advocacy and Communications
13 Coordinator for BOOM Health, an innovative community
14 based non-profit organization that delivers a
15 continuum of prevent-prevention and harm reduction
16 services to over 14,000 New York City's most
17 vulnerable individuals. And I am here along with my
18 other colleagues today on behalf of my organization
19 to urge the New York City Council to include \$5,000
20 for Access Health NYC in the FY18 Budget. The thing
21 as Access Health NYC, BOOM Health has been able to
22 give the Bronx this faith-based community the tools
23 to utilize healthcare system with greater comfort and
24 confidence, and what I believe is to be the most
25 important factor. We've been able to dispel much of

2 the fear in the community—confusion and
3 misinformation that has spread due to the dangerous
4 rhetoric posed by federal Administration. In just
5 two years of operation our Bronx Health Access
6 program has engaged over 13,000 individuals through
7 social media campaigns, community health Education
8 workshops, special events and enrollment assistance
9 space, and operating primarily based—in the faith-
10 based community. We have opened up a platform to
11 discuss very controversial issues such as HIV-AID,
12 Viral Hepatitis, substance use and LGBT related
13 health issues, which previously have been forbidden
14 to be discussed especially in these drastically
15 isolated communities. So, just to sum up, in FY16
16 and 17 the City Council allocated \$1 million in
17 funding to support this fantastic Access Health
18 Initiative. An increase in this commitment to \$5
19 million would allow community leaders of all five
20 boroughs to continue highlighting new needs for those
21 that they serve while giving resources to us sitting
22 here, and also to expand our efforts to reach more
23 difficult to reach communities. So, I yield the rest
24 of my time. Thank you very much.

2 Hi, good afternoon. Thank you so much
3 for this opportunity to testify.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
5 Sit closer to the mic. There you go. (sic)

6 SUZANNE ROBINSON DAVIS: Okay.

7 [laughter] Yes. Thank you so much. My name is
8 Suzanne Robison Davis and I am from Bedford-
9 Stuyvesant Family Health Center. A federally
10 qualified health center in Brooklyn, and I am here to
11 support the Access Health Initiative to request an
12 increase in funding from \$1 million to \$5 million for
13 Access Health NYC in FY-2018 Budget. At our center
14 we have been working to connect underserved
15 populations to healthcare services. We found that
16 over 16,000 new patients served by our center in
17 2016, 2,100 were without insurance. In my cases,
18 people often do not access services because of
19 inability to pay and they're unaware of the options
20 available. Access Health has enabled us to reach
21 some of these people. However, we want to do more.
22 We want to increase our partnership with community
23 organizations like Mobile Testing Units, health
24 promotion workers to be-to begin reaching people in
25 nontraditional settings, after work, clubs, LGBT

2 centers, party goers. We are working to connect
3 people to care for Hepatitis C, for HIV, for
4 insurance and for quality healthcare in general.
5 However, we want to do more the Access Health
6 Initiative makes a significant difference. It
7 changes the landscape. It provides hope in the midst
8 of fear and uncertainty. It is a pathway for
9 everyone who calls New York City home. In 2016 and
10 2017, the City Council generously provided \$1 million
11 in funding to support organizations to do this
12 essential work in communities like Bed-Stuy. We call
13 on you to re-fund the Access Health Initiative, and
14 to re-fund it at higher financial rate as \$5 million
15 is the ask, and in doing so, we build on the city's
16 investment [bell] and broaden the programs to reach-
17 the program's reach so that all of New York City's
18 communities can benefit. Thank you so much.

19 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

20 CLARA RONDANO: [laughter] Hello, I am
21 Clara Rondano. I am from the Health Plan Access
22 Health Center. (sic) We are really friendly with
23 Julissa, and I am here to ask the Council to help us
24 with \$5 million for the next budget. What is
25 supporting an opportunity in Access Health New York

2 City is that we need to respond quickly and provide
3 critical information to communities that are deeply
4 affected by fear and the stability to organization
5 that they trust. And, it's clear this is a clear way
6 to made real this positive commitment to Access for
7 New York. All by his plan we are for the Bronx for
8 East Harlem and now Corona, Queens, and our mission
9 is to continually improve the health of communities
10 and the quality of life of the people we serve by
11 providing affordable, comprehensive and quality care
12 for them. We provide care to anyone who enters
13 through our doors regardless of insurance, income or
14 immigration status, and with the funding that we
15 receive, we increase their wellness and access to
16 healthcare services to health education and
17 screenings, increase of the community collaboration
18 and partnership and we are giving to all of our
19 patients and all the population the most resources
20 that we can, and we are utilization reason enrollment
21 assistance to educate the screens and enroll
22 individuals and families into health insurance
23 programs. We want to continue with this, and we want
24 to continue with the New York City to provide better
25 access to the health, to our New Yorkers.

2 MARIA LIZARDO: Good afternoon. Hello.

3 I am Maria Lizardo. I'm the Executive Director of

4 the Settlement House called Northern Manhattan

5 Improvement Corporation, and we're located in

6 Northern Manhattan we serve the residents of

7 Manhattan as well as the Bronx. I'm here with

8 colleagues today to ask for the Council to increase

9 Access Health NYC from \$1 million to \$5 million. We

10 are new to this coalition, and we started our work in

11 December, and since then we've been able to reach

12 over 2,700 community residents. We've also

13 participated in over 60 events, and we were able to

14 do this by hiring an outreach coordinator who is

15 really out in the community focusing on the hard to

16 reach immigrants in our community, those that are

17 undocumented and those who have language barriers.

18 And so, we're also the lead in coordination Hike the

19 Heights, which for the past 13 years has taken place

20 in Highbridge Park, and it is—it's happening on June

21 3rd where we bring over 1,000 community residents,

22 and it's really about promoting a beautiful park in

23 Northern Manhattan as well as healthy living and

24 healthy activities. So, Access Health really gives us

25 that opportunity and so moving forward if we're able

2 to do this for another year, and as our communities
3 are under attack with healthcare this, this would
4 really afford us the opportunity to reach even more
5 New Yorkers and cut across all five boroughs. Thank
6 you so much.

7 ENRIQUE: Hello, everyone. My name is
8 Enrique. Thank you for your time, Council Member
9 Ferreras. I am the Program Director of Hancock
10 Health Access. I am here to testify that the work
11 that my colleagues do, and also the case workers. To
12 submit an ISIL request I would say that Health Access
13 provides all the services that hear before today. We
14 work with domestic violence group, and also people
15 that were incarcerated before, and they are coming to
16 the community. We bill with Medicaid and all the
17 complicated healthcare system that we have here in
18 the Unites States and also New York, and also we
19 advocate for the immigrants that we help for the
20 Latinos, for the Europeans, for the Asiatte(sp?) and
21 different language barriers. We have spent every day
22 of time to provide this service to the New Yorkers.
23 We need the funding because our sources are limited.
24 All the staff are part time. We do advocate, we do
25 outreach, assist in the transportation in New York is

2 a little bit complicated, and it's time consuming to
3 go to different places, hospitals, work with social
4 workers and that's why we are here to request to
5 increase this funding and also to provide these
6 services to New Yorkers. Thank you for your times.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
8 you.

9 LEGAL COUNSEL: The panel after that will
10 Janet Oppendieck, Rachel Sabella and Jennifer Ratner.
11 [background comments, pause]

12 JENNY ECHEN: Thanks. My name is Jenny
13 Echen. I'm reading on behalf of Lima Berkley. My
14 name is Lima Berkley and I'm a resident of the Caxton
15 Street Shelter through DHS. I'm also a member
16 Picture the Homeless and a supporter of work of the
17 CASA and Banana Kelly to mobilize and fund tenant
18 associations, and other efforts to stem the
19 displacement of New Yorkers. What I'm asking for
20 here and now is not new or novel. Simply put we need
21 an independent review board or panel to monitor DHS,
22 monitor the monies that are funneled to DHS, how,
23 when, where and on whom DHS spends it money. The
24 need of a review board is not to put the spotlight on
25 one site or one set of staff, but to shed light on

2 the full shelter division from the bottom rung of DHS
3 to its top echelon. The definitive question that no
4 one has uttered yet let address this: If we don't do
5 it now, when? Here is one of the issues that the
6 board could shed a little bit of light on. First,
7 housing specialists. Are they trained? Do they
8 aggressively bypass and cut through rhetoric and red
9 tape. How much money is allotted for their training?
10 Is there an incentive or merit paid to offset their
11 jobs or other responsibilities? Should a separate
12 division exist dedicated only to securing housing for
13 people so that move out rates can be better tracked
14 and monitored. Security: How secure is security
15 really? What is the response time and the reporting
16 time to DHS? What is the training for security and
17 non-security officers, and most importantly perhaps
18 is transfers. Why every three, six—three to six
19 months is there shuffling of shelter residents from
20 one site to another to serve different populations
21 and constantly convert at great cost, and how are DHS
22 providers perhaps potentially profiting from the
23 processing of paperwork and overtime needed to absorb
24 an influx of shelter residents. These transfers take
25 a significant toll on residents and often leave those

2 requiring medical attention ill-equipped for the
3 above testimony and other areas that don't allow I
4 say a review panel is needed is now more than ever to
5 determine where the resources in DHS' massive and
6 expanding budget are going, and ensure that they are
7 being used properly.

8 SCOTT ANDREW HUTCHINS: My name is Scott
9 Andrew Hutchins and I am an activist with Picture the
10 Homeless, a five-year resident of the shelter system
11 and have a masters degree from CUNY College Staten
12 Island with \$66,000 in student loan debt. I was
13 recently laid off from my job and made \$17,000 last
14 year. I am imploring the City Council to fund more
15 housing for people making under \$20,000 using funds
16 currently budgeted for shelters. Thousands of New
17 Yorkers are working and cannot afford housing and
18 landlords often use pricing strategies to avoid
19 taking vouchers. Mara Gay noted in the April 10,
20 2017 Wall Street Journal article that thousands of
21 working New Yorker are living in shelters because
22 they lack the income needed to pay their rents in the
23 city. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,
24 260,000 college graduates are working for the federal
25 minimum wage not accounting for higher local minimum

wages. A 2016 study by Zero Hedge showed that 52% of new jobs created are minimum wage jobs and 23% of those working men have at least a bachelor's degree. Poverty is less a result of steel level of than of available jobs. Most of the working poor in Shelters are not people who qualify for supportive senior housing, nor are job developers in the shelters equipped to help people into jobs that pay a living wage. According to documentation from HRA, they pay my shelter \$2,325.66 per month to house me, more than double the \$1,018.75 for rent to the apartment I lost in 2012. HRA also pays nearly \$274 a month to store the property I once had in that one-bedroom apartment. My current shelter has me in a larger door room with 22 strangers, some threatening with only a painful cot and a small locker to myself. The food portions are very small, the cleaning is inadequate, and the staff is not useful to me. This, \$2,599.66 per month would be better spent on a one-bedroom apartment, but the LINC voucher limits the cost of the apartment \$1,213.00 of which I have to pay \$500.50, which is unreasonable on unemployment. According Gay's article, the city has only 2,662 apartments [bell] for the 865,000 households that

2 make under \$25,000 in New York City. The Mayor's
3 pseudo affordable housing plan does not address any
4 of these households where the need is most dire. If
5 conservative Utah can provide housing for such
6 people, why can't progressive New York. For these
7 reasons, the City Council should oppose the building
8 of new shelters and instead use that funding to
9 create permanent housing for people who make under
10 \$20,000 a year.

11 SHANELL LUCAS: Good afternoon. [coughs]
12 My name is Shanell Lucas and I'm a member of Picture
13 the Homeless. I've been in the shelter system since
14 2013 when my partner and I were displaced by
15 Hurricane Sandy. My question to the Council is why
16 is the city opening up 90 more shelters? Why instead
17 we cannot create 90 new buildings to house people,
18 which would release some pressure off the city of the
19 shelter system. The city is presently spending
20 \$4,200 per month for my partner and myself to stay at
21 a hotel. Our case managers are not trained to work
22 with families. We are receiving little to no support
23 on site. My shelter is still training a person to be
24 a housing specialist although we've been place there
25 for nearly two months. The staff has no idea how

2 much money is being spent on us to stay in the
3 shelter. They were shocked to hear the dollar
4 amount. Why is the city spending over \$4,200 for a
5 family to be in shelter when that money could house
6 at least two families in a one-bedroom apartment? I
7 am also concerned that the capital budget for DHS was
8 increased by \$300 million most of which will upgrade
9 and expanding shelters instead of those funds being
10 increased \$300 million? Why we can't fund—why can't
11 those funds go towards housing? What I would like to
12 see is for these funds to be used for extremely low-
13 income housing that really—that's really the issue,
14 and those are really the people who need the housing
15 the most. The city is saying that it needs 90 new
16 shelters in order to close down hotels and cluster
17 shelters, but why you just housing instead of more
18 shelters, and how can you keep people in shelters up
19 to ten years? HPD keeps building condominiums and
20 rental housing throughout the city that the most
21 vulnerable people cannot afford. We are watching the
22 homeless population increase everyday. Why are you
23 not building extreme low-income housing? [bell] Why
24 we are not holding landlords accountable for

2 warehousing vacant buildings and vacant lots for
3 stabilized apartments? Thank you.

4 CECILIA GRANT: Good afternoon. My name
5 is Cecilia Grant, and I represent Picture the
6 Homeless. I've been homeless since February of 2014
7 when I returned to New York from Florida. I entered
8 the shelter system for the first time, and I was
9 unaware of the system that I believed initially was
10 supposed to help me find housing. Instead it's an
11 agency that doesn't help people, but instead it
12 causes more problems. It's unsafe, it's unhealthy
13 and I've had numerous traumatic experiences with my
14 life being danger with staff members that are really
15 there for 9:00 to 5:00, and their main concern is
16 that you sign the ILP so they can get paid. After
17 being jumped in the spring of 2016, I decided that I
18 would be safer on the street. That's really funny,
19 and then after coming across Picture the Homeless, I
20 began to research the numbers regarding people, and
21 the money and the shelter system. For example, when I
22 was in the shelter, the city and agencies paid \$3,000
23 a month for a bed that I could not sleep in because
24 if I burped or fart, I was in danger getting beat up.
25 I was issued a voucher that no broker or landlord

2 would not want, and I've had one experience with a
3 housing specialist, and which she told I was not sick
4 enough for her to assist me in finding housing.
5 After I learned about the waste of money that does
6 nothing to enrich the quality of life that I am
7 accustomed to, before becoming homeless it's a crime.
8 I walk the streets and see vacant lots that have been
9 counted by Picture the Homeless. There are so many
10 vacant lands and lots that you can house the ever-
11 growing 88 plus thousand homeless people. In
12 addition, it could prevent displacement of possibly
13 40,000 that are not homeless, but they are close to
14 losing their housing due to rising rents,
15 overcrowding, lack of stable employment and
16 harassment in the public housing. If we did this,
17 there would be no homeless problem, and it could be
18 done economically. Right now, there's only \$1.9
19 billion going into the Capital Budget for housing
20 this year. Meanwhile, there's over \$1.6 billion,
21 nearly \$600,000 difference going towards operating
22 DHS. Roughly, half of that funding comes from city
23 tax levy, meaning that could be committed to other
24 uses. Additionally, the Executive Budget adds \$300
25 million to DHS Capital Budget. We don't know how

2 that money is being used, by the way, but they say
3 for upgrading our shelters and to create 90 new
4 shelters proposed by Mayor de Blasio. This is not in
5 the best interest of human beings in need of security
6 and safety for the sake of their children, elders and
7 all New Yorkers. That money could go much further
8 towards ensuring a community of security bringing
9 families back together in a safe, healthy community
10 where people can put their lives back together. I
11 urge the Council to look at ways to create quality of
12 life for all, and not selling the city. These funds
13 should be diverted from the decrepit DHS system that
14 you human beings--

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I need
16 you wrap up your testimony, please.

17 CECILIA GRANT: --human beings and
18 psychological despair. That money should go into
19 permanent low-income housing for all those who need
20 it regardless of your income. Stop putting more and
21 more money into a system that does not work. It's a
22 disgrace and a crime. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: You may
24 begin your testimony.

2 JOSE RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon. My name
3 is Jose Rodriguez. I'm a proud member of Picture the
4 Homeless, and I'm also a proud member of the-of
5 Banana Kelly Residents Council. While the city's
6 homeless population continues to rise, there's a
7 visible rise in new buildings being built throughout
8 the city. The city's poorest of poor have no access
9 to these apartments. The city spends money on new
10 shelters, and not spending enough money on making
11 housing more affordable to extremely low-income
12 households. Experts say that it costs an extra 40 to
13 \$45,000 of additionally money to reduce the area
14 median income from 10% or to get housing at the
15 affordability we all need. This is the same amount
16 that it costs the city to house a homeless family in
17 the-with children for one year. Picture the Homeless
18 would prefer that DHS and HPD utilize monies
19 accumulated by the city taxpayers to invest in truly
20 low-income affordable housing instead of warehousing
21 human beings for years in demoralizing conditions.
22 People in shelters are unable to achieve their dreams
23 and desires that most of us take for granted due to
24 the inhumanity of the system. When I was in the
25 shelter, at times I felt debilitated. There's a real

2 feeling of being humiliated due to being stigmatized
3 or even criminalized in the shelter system. Having
4 housing makes you feel confident, and allows one to
5 pursue the things in life that make all New Yorkers
6 unique. Not only does providing housing and not
7 shelters cost less, it's the right thing to do
8 morally. PTH is asking the Council to use the [bell]
9 powers to help the tens of thousands of extremely
10 low-income New Yorkers living in shelters, on the
11 street, in their cars, on someone's sofa, on the
12 verge of losing their homes and community ties. New
13 Yorkers have the highest rate homelessness in the
14 country. I'm always hearing New York is a sanctuary
15 city. If this is the case, PTH is asking for
16 assistance to provide sanctuary to the thousands of
17 extremely low-income and minimum wage earning New
18 Yorkers in the form of extremely low-income housing.
19 Thank you .

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
21 for testifying and for putting your story on the
22 record. It does help us to continue to advocate on
23 your behalf. Thank you.

24 JOSE RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: The next
3 panel.

4 LEGAL COUNSEL: The panel after this one
5 will be Ron Cope, Randy Levine, Maggie Moroff, Jackie
6 Oken Bernie, Pamela Stewart and Ruth Rangerin.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, that
8 panel that was just called if you can make your way
9 up to this front row so that we can get everybody
10 shifting. [background comments] Oh, can you repeat
11 the names again?

12 LEGAL COUNSEL: Ruth Rangerin, Pamela
13 Stewart, Jackie Oken Bernie, Maggie Moroff, Randy
14 Levine, and Ron Cope. [background comments, pause]

15 JENNIFER RATNER: I was thrilled to hear
16 Ferreras-Copeland at--in her very first question--

17 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I'm
18 sorry. I want to make sure that you're heard. I'm
19 going to ask everyone to please if you have
20 conversations to take them outside. I need to be
21 able to hear the testifying panel. You may begin.

22 JENNIFER RATNER: I was thrilled to hear
23 Chair Ferreras-Copeland in her very first question to
24 OMB this morning address the inefficiencies in New
25 York City Parks completion of capital projects, and

2 the bureaucratic inefficiencies of the procurement
3 process. This is really at the core of what I'm
4 going to address. I think the system itself really
5 needs help. I'm Jennifer Ratner. I'm the Board
6 Chair of Friends of the East River Esplanade, 60th to
7 120th Streets, the conservancy for the waterfront
8 that stretches from East Harlem down to Yorkville and
9 the Upper East Side. The only contiguous area of
10 waterfront in that area where community members who
11 love and use the waterfront, runners, bikers,
12 walkers, fishermen, our organization is dedicated to
13 the restoration and reinvention of this beautiful and
14 precious waterfront. Unfortunately, the Esplanade is
15 literally falling in. Many of you may be familiar
16 with the approximately 50-foot section of the
17 Esplanade seawall that fell into the East River just
18 behind Gracie Mansion a few weeks ago, dragging
19 fencing and part of the walkway with it, and luckily
20 no people. There are other areas where you can see
21 the East River water lapping just beneath spots that
22 have been there for not days or months but for years.
23 Some of the necessary funds for repair have been
24 allocated in past budgets, but we are urging full
25 funding for these repairs so they can be done in an

2 expedient manner, and the city doesn't have to
3 emergently do a patch job. One of our main focus
4 points has been the pier at 107th Street. It, too,
5 is falling in. At present, the City intends to
6 simply repair this valuable resource with a patch job
7 that involves cutting 40 feet off the end, placing a
8 chainlink fence there, a repair that is last—a costly
9 repair intended to last just five years. Why not
10 build a resilient state-of-the art pier right now.
11 The plans are there. This is what the fishermen,
12 children, surrounding communities deserve and want.
13 It could be a model of reinvented waterfront in the
14 intercity for all of New York and indeed nationally.
15 There's approximately \$3 million of state funding
16 already in the State Budget for this. While we 1000%
17 support the \$100 million in the Budget for a new
18 esplanade just south of 60th Street, because truly
19 who is not in favor of an extended greenway, but at
20 the same time we urge you to fund the expeditious
21 repair of the waterfront that already exists. And
22 the resilient and state-of-the-art pier that East
23 Harlem and the East side deserve.

24 RACHEL SABELLA: Good afternoon. My name
25 is Rachel Sabella. I'm the Director of Government

2 Relations at Food Bank for New York City. You have
3 my formal written testimony. I'm going to be very
4 short right now because I know there's a lot of
5 people that want to speak. First, I want to say
6 thank you. This Council--Chair, you said it best
7 this morning--is very rarely united, and you have
8 presented a united front with every single member of
9 this Council supporting \$22 million to support food
10 pantries and soup kitchens, and saying that no New
11 Yorker should go hungry. So, we want to thank the
12 Council for continuing to prioritize that. I also
13 wanted to personally thank the Council staff as well
14 especially the Finance Division. Everyone here
15 worked so hard to make this happen, and I want to
16 sure I say thank you, too. The state of hunger is
17 uncertainty. Even before this week and the White
18 House proposal, the state of hunger was uncertainty.
19 What we heard this week is there are proposed cuts
20 both to the SNAP program that helps with food
21 insecurity and to food commodities programs. Now,
22 more than ever before we need our city to be united
23 to support New Yorkers struggling with hunger. We
24 need to be proactive and support programs that do
25 that. One is Universal School Meals. We want to see

2 free lunch for every student in New York City, and
3 two, we want to see those increased dollars for food
4 pantries and soup kitchens, and no more of this one-
5 year add-ons. We want to see baselined dollars. We
6 want to see the commitment from the Administration
7 that they said to support pantries. The most
8 important thing in my testimony today is a letter
9 signed by more than 200 food pantries and soup
10 kitchens throughout the five boroughs who are saying
11 they need more food, they need more help. So, I want
12 to make sure you hear their words. That letter will
13 be going in the mail to the Speaker and the Mayor as
14 well. I'm going to stay under time, and I want to
15 say thank you again for your support, and we look
16 forward to continue to working with the Council on
17 this. Thank you.

18 JAN POPPENDIECK: Good job. I'm Jan
19 Poppendieck and I'm testifying on behalf of the CUNY
20 Urban Food Policy Institute, which is located at the
21 CUNY School of Public Health and Health Policy. At
22 the School of Public Health, we recognize that
23 nutritious food is essential health and the school
24 food programs can and do play a vital role in shaping
25 the health of our children and youth. For those who

2 participate, they provide balanced meals and displace
3 the consumption of less healthy alternatives. For
4 those who failed to participate, they provide nothing
5 at all. I am here speaking on behalf of Universal
6 Free School Meals because I'm primarily concerned
7 about three groups of students in our schools. One
8 group or are students who are not eligible under the
9 Federal Guidelines for free meals and, therefore, if
10 they want the school meal need to—to find \$1.75 a day
11 [coughs] for lunch, and we know that there are many
12 families in our city who are above the cut-off, which
13 is \$39,000 a year for a family of three, but still
14 struggling to make ends meet who need that
15 assistance, and sometimes the families are scraping
16 together the money for school meals at the expense of
17 other needs, and sometimes they're not providing it
18 and kids are picking up a bag of chips at the corner
19 store making do. We want to include these students
20 in school lunch. The second group that I'm
21 particularly concerned about are our immigrant
22 children, children in immigrant families. Many of
23 them are, in fact, income eligible, but for many
24 reasons in this context of anxiety and in some cases
25 terror that the new administration in Washington has

2 unleashed in the immigrant communities, parents wary
3 of filling out forms that give information to the
4 government. And so, many immigrant children who are
5 income eligible for free meals are not receiving
6 them. That's another group who would be drawn in and
7 enormously helped by Universal free school meals
8 [bell]. And the third group are students who are
9 failing to participate even though they are income
10 eligible because of the stigma that has become
11 attached to school food. You have the rest of my
12 argument in my testimony, and I hope you'll take a
13 look at it. But I just want to say the Council has
14 been supportive of this year after year, but some how
15 or other at the point of the budget negotiating
16 process it didn't stick, and this is the year you got
17 to make it stick.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Well, I
19 hope you see as we've been sitting through the
20 testimony why some of the things don't—because it's a
21 lot of priorities that we're trying to get through
22 here, but thank you very much for your testimony. It
23 was in our Budget Response. We're still very much
24 interested in making this happen. I know that you

2 have your—your testimony today before we call up the
3 next panel. You may begin.

4 PAM STEWART MARTINEZ: Hi. My name is Pam
5 Stewart Martinez. I'm a mom of seven first and
6 foremost. I'm on the Citywide Council for Special
7 Education. I'm also on the ECC, and I am parent
8 Member of Lunch for Learning, and the reason I'm here
9 today is first and foremost I want to thank you,
10 Chair, and all the other Council Members for your
11 continued support in prioritizing Universal School
12 Meals. I appreciate your effort in trying to push
13 that through. I believe that you've heard me speak
14 before. I'm a product of the New York City Public
15 Schools from grade—I would say first grade all the
16 way to nine, and I have children who attend public
17 schools in New York City. So, to me this is very
18 important to the people that I represent on the
19 Citywide Council for Special Education and just the
20 parents in general that I come in contact with. It's
21 very important that we hopefully make this a priority
22 this year and make it happen for a multitude of
23 reasons that were just expressed just now. In my
24 neighborhood there's a variety of families there from
25 different backgrounds, and a lot of them are afraid

2 and have approached me about it being afraid to fill
3 out forms, forms they told—they're being told it safe
4 for them to fill out, but they don't want to take
5 that chance. Also, there are families like myself.
6 We are well above the income level, but because I
7 have added expenses that aren't taken into account.
8 Prime example, my daughter just graduated from
9 Spellman. I am \$160,000 in debt for college.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

11 So, am I. (sic)

12 PAM STEWART MARTINEZ: [laughs]

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I

14 understand.

15 PAM STEWART MARTINEZ: And then I have
16 another son who has two more years of college and the
17 debt is adding up there, and then I have—I told you I
18 have seven children. So, I have more who are going
19 to college. I'm not sure how I'm going to pay that
20 off, but even though I don't qualify [bell] for it
21 because I don't meet the guidelines, there are a lot
22 of families that are in the same boat as me trying to
23 figure out how to make it work. So, I hope we can
24 work something out this year, and thank you.

25

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
3 very much for your testimony. I know you got here
4 are at 10 o'clock in the morning. So, I appreciate
5 you sticking around and—and adding your contribution
6 to this for the record. You know how—where I am with
7 the food pantry. I think you should have free
8 feminine hygiene products, but that's a whole other
9 campaign. [laughter] And when it comes to middle-
10 school lunches, as I said, this is something that's
11 been important to this Council and in reality just
12 for—for an update we asked this of Chairwoman Farina
13 or Chancellor Ferina and, you know, she said that she
14 didn't really see an increase or a difference in
15 young people getting more lunch. So, you know, I beg
16 to differ and that's what we were here for. So, I
17 just want you to know that sometimes you can think
18 they'll make on the budget. It isn't because we're
19 not pushing. It's the pushback that we're getting.
20 So we've got to just keep pushing and—and I think
21 we're going to get there. So, thank you. I don't
22 know if the members have anything to add. You can
23 call up the next panel. Thank you so much.

24 PAM STEWART MARTINEZ: Thank you.

25 [background comments] And the panel after this will

2 be Jessica Andrellas (sp?) from Make the Road, Carlos
3 Pula, Make the Road, Carlos Puga, and oh, Sian-
4 Sianay, Sienna. Come on up Sienna. What's your last
5 name?

6 SIENNA FONTAINE: Fontaine.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Fontaine.
8 Sienna Fontaine. So, just sit on this first row so
9 that you're ready when this--when this panel is done.
10 [background comments. pause]

11 FEMALE SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you so
12 much for the opportunity to advocate for the city to
13 have more inclusive--inclusive opportunities for kids
14 with disabilities in our school system. With the new
15 in our--all this year with the new education advocates
16 and repeat the number of successful schools for kids
17 with difficult disabilities in the--in the city's
18 school system. We all agree that all students
19 deserve equal opportunities to get their education,
20 and to this end we know that DOE has implemented a
21 school choice structure for all students, and all
22 over there are choices and opportunities. But these
23 choices are not offered to all students. Kids with
24 physical disabilities do not have an equal
25 opportunity to their schools. We know the City

2 Council is asking a lot of questions on the issue
3 recently over the budget routine and we applaud—
4 applaud the efforts, but we are here to testify and
5 to implore you for these students for the increase—
6 the accessibility of schools in the city. You know,
7 there's so few fully capable schools in New York City
8 and then there are partially and possibly accessible
9 schools where they are just not up to par for the
10 kids who need fully accessible schools. There's no
11 ramps, the doors, their bathrooms kids in wheelchairs
12 cannot access these schools. So, again, I'm here
13 really for the students to implore you to increase
14 the funding given to the DOE. I know that DOE is
15 doing a lot more on the issue, and we will fund that
16 with the—and then giving them the money to do—to make
17 the organizations, and to build the schools, and they
18 need your help to give them that money. Thank you
19 very much.

20 MAGGIE MOROFF: Good afternoon. I'm
21 Maggie Moroff and I'm here today to speak on behalf
22 of the Arise Coalition, a coalition of parents,
23 advocates, educators and academics that push for
24 systemic reform. I'm going to pick up where Jackie
25 left off, and talk a little bit more about

2 accessibility in New York City public schools. New
3 York City lacks a sufficient number of accessible
4 schools at every level. There are six—six of the
5 city's community school districts have no full—fully
6 accessible elementary schools. Seven have no fully
7 accessible middle schools, and nine have no fully
8 accessible high schools. So, given the dearth of
9 fully accessible schools, the DOE relies instead on
10 something called partially accessible schools, and
11 those are schools that offer students access to some
12 but not all of the building. That doesn't work for
13 many children. Some of those schools have limited
14 elevator access. Others have cafeterias, science
15 labs, auditoriums, libraries, nurses' offices, and
16 other key school spaces that aren't designed to
17 accommodate students who use wheelchairs. Arise
18 members have been working with the city for about a
19 year now to discuss increasing accessible options,
20 and ensuring that families have more information in
21 this process, and we've seen movement. I want to
22 acknowledge that, but it is slow, and it is
23 insufficiently funded. The 2015 to '19 Capital Plan
24 allocates \$100 million for improving school
25 accessibility. That translates to major improvements

2 in about 17 school buildings over the course of five
3 years, and that money has already been spent.
4 Spending for school accessibility represents less
5 than 1% of the Capital Plan. It's really a very
6 small amount, and the city quite simply needs to
7 invest more to improve school accessibility on a
8 shorter timeline. So, at a minimum what we're
9 recommending is that the city double its funding to
10 making schools accessible. That money could be used
11 for major--major capital improvements to another 15
12 to 17 buildings as well as for [bell] smaller
13 renovations--I'm almost done, I promise--to improve
14 accessibility at other schools identified by those
15 families in the system. While I have your attention
16 I just wanted to thank the City Council for
17 recommending additional funding for improving the
18 accessibility in its response to the Mayor's
19 Preliminary Budget, and we look forward to continuing
20 to work together. Thank you.

21 RANDY LEVINE: Thank you for the
22 opportunity to speak with you today. My name is
23 Randy Levine, and I'm Policy Director at Advocates
24 for Children of New York. AFC works to ensure a high
25 quality education for New York students who face

2 barriers to academic success focusing on students
3 from low-income backgrounds. We're pleased that
4 Executive Budget includes increased funding for
5 several important education initiatives. I'm going
6 to use my limited time today to focus on a few issues
7 that were not adequately addressed in the Executive
8 Budget and that we urge you to prioritize. First,
9 Department of Education supports for students living
10 in shelters. We were relieved that the
11 administration restored \$10.3 million for Department
12 of Education supports for students living in shelters
13 in the Executive Budget, and we're grateful for the
14 Council's support in that effort. Among other
15 supports, this funding will provide after school
16 literacy programs at shelters and will allow 43 DOE
17 social workers to work in elementary schools with
18 high populations of students living in shelters.
19 Unfortunately, this funding is one-year funding that
20 is not baselined. Furthermore, given that more than
21 150 schools serve a population in which 10% or more
22 of the students live in shelters, funding for 43
23 social workers is insufficient. We ask you to
24 negotiate a final budget that baselines the \$10.3
25 million to ensure continuity of the support, and add

2 \$6.2 million to bring the total number of DOE social
3 workers for students living in shelters to 100.
4 Second, school climate. We're grateful to the City
5 Council for funding the Restorative Justices-Justice
6 Practices Pilot program in the FY-2016 and 2017
7 Budgets. This has shown impressive results, and
8 we're asking that you continue this program and
9 expand it. We're requesting \$5 million in FY-2018
10 for this initiative, which would allow us to continue
11 restorative practices in the first 25 schools funded
12 by the Council and add [bell] an additional 25
13 schools. Finally, I want to echo my colleagues in
14 thanking the Council for including school
15 accessibility in your response to the Preliminary
16 Budget and urge you to work on getting increased
17 funding for school accessibility in the final budget.
18 We have additional recommendations in our written
19 testimony. Thank you.

20 RUTH WAGNER: Well, hi. Thank you for-
21 thank you for this hearing. My name is Ruth Wagner,
22 and I'm an Assistant-Adjunct Assistant Professor of
23 Anthropology and Lehman. I just gave my last-my last
24 final this morning. I know that our union, the
25 Professional Staff Congress talks with the City

2 Council. I know the Chancellor and the Vice
3 Chancellor talk with the City Council. I'd like to
4 talk from a different point of view, which is the
5 students and the underpaid faculty, which are
6 absolutely essential, which are going—all of this
7 activity is going on all the time, and nobody seems
8 to be paying attention to a really serious problem at
9 City University, and that is that for years now, and
10 the plan seems to be to keep doing it, is their
11 staffing the classrooms on the cheap. You would
12 never staff a firehouse with half temps, and yet
13 there seems to be the assumption that you can just
14 reach out into the talent pool that is New York City
15 and bring a teacher at the last minute, and they're
16 going to be just fine. They get to learn the ropes.
17 They've—they get on in-service training. It's an
18 insecure position, and it's highly underpaid. I have
19 a PhD, lots of years of experience. I'm supposedly
20 good. I'm on the Faculty Senate, and the University
21 Faculty Senate. I'm active in the union. How much
22 do you think I made last year? I taught at two-
23 thirds full-time level if you compare me with a
24 doctoral lecturer with my experience or a three-
25 fourths of a full-time load compared with an

2 assistant professor of my experience. What do you
3 think I made? I'll tell you. \$27,038.94. That's
4 less than half. Council Member Rosenthal in our—in a
5 committee meeting talked to Vice Chancellor Sapienza
6 [bell] about comparing administrative with faculty
7 salaries. Is it two to one? Is it four to one?
8 Well, how about if we put the—that bigger half of the
9 faculty into those equations. What are we talking
10 about? Ten to 1, four to one, six to one. It's—
11 people know we're underpaid. We want \$7,000 and we
12 want it now. This can't keep going on like this.
13 You have given us a cent from the 2018 dollar, and
14 I'm just listening to all these things, and I'm
15 thinking , oh, you know, [laughs] I made \$27,000 and
16 I have a little Social Security. Give the food to
17 the children. On the other hand, something has got
18 to be done about this because to hold this university
19 together like this with duct tape is ridiculous.
20 Something has got to be done, and maybe you can make
21 a law or something if you can't find the money.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay.

23 Well, thank you very much for testifying and, you
24 know, we have to feed the children. We have to do
25 all these things, but the children end up being

2 adults, and they need to go to college with
3 wonderfully qualified professors So, we--

4 RUTH WAGNER: And supported.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I-and
6 supported, of course. So, we thank you for your
7 testimony, and it's equally as important as everyone
8 else, and everyone else that still has to testify. So
9 thank you.

10 RUTH WAGNER: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So, don't
12 guilt trip each other to think that you have to
13 [laughter] think that you have to, you know,
14 everyone can ask. This is the time to ask. The next
15 panel after this one. Come on up Make the Road.
16 [Speaking Spanish] Okay, you're translating okay
17 great.

18 LEGAL COUNSEL: The panel after this one
19 will be Nancy Rankin, Carlin Cowan, Stephanie
20 Gendell, Faith Beholm (sp?), Gregory Brader and
21 Christopher Hanway. [background comments]

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I saw
23 someone cheering like they won the Lotto when they
24 heard their name. Come on up. [laughter] Come on
25 down. [pause]

2 JESSICA ENGRADE: Good afternoon. I'm
3 Jessica Engrade (sic) and I work as an Adult
4 Education Program Administrator at Make the Road New
5 York. With other 20,000 members, Make the Road New
6 York is the largest grassroots immigrant organization
7 within New York City working to build the power of
8 Latino and working class communities to achieve
9 dignity and justice. Based on the experience of
10 people in the communities we serve, we ask the
11 Council to baseline \$12 million in Fiscal Year 2018
12 so that thousands of immigrants can continue to learn
13 English and access economic opportunities. Literacy
14 and basic skills are 100% necessary because it is
15 connected to everything, employment and economic
16 mobility and school promotes health information and
17 community safety. The Council will want to stay
18 strong and promote adult literacy as a Council
19 Priority because Mayor de Blasio did not include the
20 \$12 million in funding in his last Executive Budget
21 released. On behalf of our students, I urge you to
22 defend and protect adult literacy in your
23 negotiations with the Mayor's Office. I studied
24 English myself when I came here for Ecuador, and I
25 know how challenging learning English is, and how

2 important. I went onto college and got a job at Make
3 the Road. One would think that would have been
4 impossible to without English. I now do intake
5 testing and for our administration of English and
6 citizenship preparation classes at Make the Road New
7 York. I get to know the students and their hopes and
8 dreams and place-place them in classes, and help them
9 to connect to other services. Over the last two
10 weeks, I was very inspired to see over 1,000
11 immigrant students coming together in Brooklyn,
12 Queens and this Monday in the Bronx for press
13 conference highlighting the tremendous need for adult
14 literacy services in our communities. The energy at
15 these events has been incredible. The students know
16 that they are fighting for their futures. We are
17 counting on the City Council and the Major to put
18 education for New Yorkers of all ages and backgrounds
19 first. In this Fiscal Year 2018 Budget we need you
20 to baseline \$12 million in funding to community based
21 organizations like ours who provide community adult
22 literacy services. Thank you for your support.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

24 Thank you.

25 CARLOS PULA: [Speaking Spanish] [bell]

2 TRANSLATOR: Hi. I'm going to translate.
3 Good afternoon. My name is Carlos Pula, and I'm a
4 member of Make the Road New York. I am Ecuadorian
5 and I have lived in the area of Brooklyn for over 15
6 years. I have never had access to health insurance.
7 About two years ago I became sick, lost my job and
8 have been unable to work since then. It has been a
9 great struggle these past two years, and I have been
10 overwhelmed by large medical debt. In my community
11 many of us are scared to seek medical care or go to
12 the emergency room for treatment because of high
13 medical bills and our inability to pay. As a result,
14 many of us suffer in silence. However, we do—we
15 deserve access to affordable health services and the
16 right to a healthy life. I was approached by someone
17 from Make the Road New York who informed me about
18 services at the organizations, which I could benefit
19 from. The next day I met with a navigator who helped
20 me enroll into emergency Medicaid, which was able to
21 cover some of my recent medical bills. I was then
22 referred to a health advocate, and Make the Road, who
23 helped me with the rest of my medical bills, and
24 helps me obtain health services on a sliding scale.
25 I was also informed about the food pantry in order to

2 access food, and was able to pick up produce and
3 canned goods from the pantry right away to help me
4 through these tough financial times. Later on I
5 became a volunteer at the food pantry because it was
6 a way for me to give thanks and support the
7 community. I am thankful for all the assistance,
8 help and guidance that Make the Road was able to
9 offer in such tough times, and it was because of the
10 City Council Initiatives like Access Health NYC, the
11 Immigrant Health Initiative and EFAP funding for food
12 pantries that allow Make the Road New York to reach
13 community members, and provide these essential
14 services. Thank you.

15 SIENNA FONTAINE: Good afternoon. My
16 name is Sienna Fontaine. I'm the Deputy Legal
17 Director at Make the Road New York. Thanks to
18 Committee Chair Ferreras-Copeland and the Committee
19 for allowing Make the Road to testify today. The
20 Council has demonstrated impressive leadership in
21 building safe and inclusive communities for immigrant
22 New Yorkers, but there's more to be done. We urge
23 support for these key initiatives in the Fiscal Year
24 18 Budget. You have an—and extensive list of
25 recommendations in front of you including critical

2 asks for adult literacy funding, restorative justice
3 in schools, and access to legal representation in
4 housing to prevent displacement. Key things that
5 support immigrant communities and communities of
6 color. I want to highlight a few other things. As
7 you heard earlier, New York City should baseline and
8 expand funding for the New York Immigrant Family
9 Unity Project or NYIFUP to \$12 million for the coming
10 year. NYIFUP has provided critical legal services to
11 indigent immigrants facing deportation. We urge the
12 City to fund this program at \$12 million and without
13 any limitations based on criminal history. Second,
14 the city should expand resources to the Immigrant
15 Opportunity Initiatives or IOI. These initiatives
16 fund legal services for immigrants, and more critical
17 now under this current federal administration's
18 heightened enforcement regime. We urge the city to
19 continue funding for this program. The city should
20 baseline the I Care Initiative at \$3.8 million to
21 ensure the representation of unaccompanied minors
22 fleeing violence in their home countries. There is a
23 deep moral urgency to ensure that these young people
24 have access to legal representation. And as part of
25 the earlier discussion in the earlier session, New

2 York City should create a fund to support legal
3 permanent residents' efforts to naturalize with an
4 initial level of \$20.7 million. Many LPRs are ready
5 to obtain citizenship, but the \$725 fee is simply too
6 costly for them. Lastly, we request your support for
7 \$1 million in City Council funding for the Rapid
8 Response Raids Initiative. The proposed initiative
9 would involve a citywide network of six to ten
10 volunteer coordinators who would use a Make the Road
11 developed protocol to respond to ICE raids in real
12 time, confirming activity, coordinating with city
13 government and working directly with affected
14 families. As panic has grown in our immigrant
15 communities since January 20th, we hope the Council
16 will provide this kind of crucial support in this
17 important moment, and that's it. I just want to say
18 that New York City has led the way, and should
19 continue to lead the way with the most forward
20 thinking and strongest pro-immigrant policies. So,
21 thank you very much.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

23 LEGAL COUNSEL: The panel after this one
24 will be Brad Graham, Scott Daly, Lisa Caswell,

2 Rebecca Dalin and Patrick Connell. [background
3 comments, pause]

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And we've
5 been joined by Council Members Chin, Rodriguez and
6 Gibson. [pause]

7 NANCY RANKIN: Thank you for the
8 opportunity to testify today. My name is Nancy
9 Rankin. I'm Vice President for Policy, Research and
10 Advocacy for the Community Service Society of New
11 York, a non-profit organization that works to advance
12 upward mobility for low-income New Yorkers. First, I
13 would like to thank the Council for its leadership on
14 Fair Fares and in particular Council Member Rodriguez
15 for your extraordinary leadership. Council Members
16 Chin and Gibson, we appreciate your support. By
17 including \$50 million in the Council's response to
18 Mayor de Blasio's Proposed Executive Budget the
19 Council stepped up on behalf of the lowest income New
20 Yorkers who struggle daily to afford subway and
21 buses. That \$50 million could be used in Fiscal 18
22 to phase in half price Metro Cards starting with city
23 residents in deep poverty and greatest need. We urge
24 you to make funding for Fair Fares a priority as
25 negotiation proceed on the Final Budget Agreement.

2 Fair Fares has widespread support. Forty of the 51
3 Council Members, four of the five borough presidents,
4 the Public Advocate, Comptroller Stringer, editorial
5 support from the Times, Daily News, El Diario, City
6 and State, the Amsterdam News. Mayor de Blasio
7 stands virtually along in his opposition. He's
8 called the proposal for half fare discounts a noble
9 idea, but said paying for it should be the state's
10 responsibility since the Governor controls the MTA.
11 Here is why we disagree. First, Fair Fares is a
12 subsidy for the poor of New York City, not for the
13 MTA. Second, according to the Mayor's own Poverty
14 Report put out just last week, commuting costs more
15 so even than payroll taxes and childcare expenses
16 [bell] are pushing workers into poverty. Third,
17 affordability. Third, affordable fares combined with
18 fare evasion policing to criminalize poverty.
19 Fourth, Fair Fares is a women's issue. Forty-one
20 percent of single mothers with children live in
21 poverty in our city. Fair Fares is one o the few
22 things we can actually achieve locally. The power—
23 the Mayor has the power to do it, and immediately to
24 address income inequality in a real tangible way.
25 Thank you very much.

2 STEPHANIE GENDELL: Good afternoon. My
3 name is Stephanie Gendell. I'm the Associate
4 Executive Director at Citizens' Committee for
5 Children. Our full testimony includes the areas of
6 the Executive Budget we support, and a longer list of
7 things we'd like to see in the Adopted Budget. I
8 just want to highlight some of our largest concerns.
9 One is that we feel like the budget needs to go
10 further to help homeless children and families in
11 shelters, particularly those in hotels who currently
12 don't have access to many of the things that would
13 make for an appropriate placement like laundry, food,
14 places for recreation and socialization, et cetera.
15 We're also concerned that these—that families in
16 shelter be staff that help these families with issues
17 related to school, don't currently work in the
18 evenings or in the summertime and we need to ensure
19 families have access to assistance year round, and we
20 also support the ask for more social workers in
21 schools. We were really disappointed to see that
22 there is \$16 million of elementary afterschool
23 programs, 6,600 children with one-year funding that's
24 not continued in the upcoming year. We actually need
25 to see these programs extended—expanded. We were—

2 while we were happy to see that the Mayor included
3 funding so that we didn't stand on the City Hall
4 steps in an election year to bring back summer
5 programs for children, we need to see that money
6 baselined so that we're not back next year. We also
7 need to see universal lunch for all children. We
8 just released report in the past few weeks that show
9 there are about 110,000 children who are low-income,
10 but not eligible under the federal guidelines. These
11 families struggle to pay for lunch. The Chancellor's
12 response that the children can walk—the elementary
13 school 7-year-old children can walk up to the counter
14 and say they can't afford the lunches is not an
15 acceptable way to resolve this issue. Finally, we
16 support the 2020—the \$22 million ask for emergency
17 food and our colleagues in all of the human services
18 agencies who are in desperate need of a 12% rate
19 [bell] increase. We support that. My organization
20 does not accept government money. So, it's really
21 for our colleagues. Thank you and thank you for
22 being such great partners.

23 CHRIS HANWAY: Good afternoon,
24 Chairperson Ferreras-Copeland, Council Member Gibson,
25 Council Member Chin, and Council Member Rodriguez and

2 the other members and staff of the New York City
3 Council Finance Committee Thank you for the
4 opportunity to speak to you again today. My name is
5 Chris Hanway and I represent Jacob A. Riis
6 Neighborhood Settlement, a 127-year-old community-
7 based organization serving the children, youth,
8 seniors and families of Western Queens, many of whom
9 are low-income and/or immigrants and the majority of
10 whom are residents of public housing. I'm here today
11 to join my colleagues by asking that the City Council
12 support the Sustain Our Sanctuary Campaign by urging
13 the administration to make a commitment to a 10%
14 investment in the human services sector over the next
15 three years. A baselined investment of 2% in Fiscal
16 Year 2018 at a cost of \$20 million and a 4% in each
17 of the next two fiscal years for a total of \$100
18 million by 2020 will go a long way toward relieving
19 the chronic underfunding of non-profits through
20 insufficient contracts that put our long-term
21 solvency and sustainability in jeopardy. This year
22 in the Executive Budget the administrative—the
23 administration included a 6% cost of living
24 adjustment over the next three years. While we are
25 greatly appreciative of this movement in the right

2 direction, it's not nearly enough to stabilize the
3 sector. Many of these programs that serve our
4 communities are chronically underfunded, and the
5 effects are becoming more and more evident. At Riis
6 Settlement this situation has had significant
7 consequences on the individuals and families we
8 serve. We provide after school summer camps,
9 violence prevention, job and college readiness to
10 children and youth. We allow older adults to age in
11 place and we work with immigrants from around the
12 world through over 20 city contracts from five
13 different agencies, but as I explained back in March,
14 the chronic gaps in funding and the lack of cost
15 escalators in these contracts have forced us to take
16 numerous actions including holding back on hiring,
17 holding back on vital infrastructure support and
18 offering fewer English language classes.

19 Additionally, we are now in the place where we are
20 really carefully looking at all contracts that offer
21 insufficient rates, and really deciding on whether we
22 can even take these contracts or turn them back, and
23 basically that means we're serving fewer folks in the
24 communities that need us. The residents of public
25 housing need us. If we were to close our doors or

2 cut back, there would be hundreds if not thousands of
3 individuals without services. I thank you for your
4 time today.

5 FAITH BAM: Good afternoon. My name is
6 Faith Bam (sic). I am an Advocacy and Policy Advisor
7 in the Government and External Relations Department
8 at UJA-Federation of New York. On behalf of UJA, our
9 network of non-profit partners and those we serve,
10 thank you for the opportunity to testify on the
11 Fiscal Year 18 Executive Budget. First and foremost,
12 I'm going to echo our colleagues in the human
13 services sector and ask that the City Council urge
14 the administration to commit to a 10% investment in
15 the human services sector over the next three years.
16 We acknowledge the Council's call this year for a
17 comprehensive review of human service contract prices
18 and an overhaul of the structure of human service
19 contracts. This review must be accompanied by a
20 flexible increase to all human service contracts in
21 order to make the system truly fair and sustainable.
22 We support proposals to fund security training or
23 improvements at vulnerable institutions. The recent
24 labor bomb threats targeting our JCCs and community
25 providers are a source of deep concern for their

clients, their staff and our community more broadly. UJA Community program partners and JCCs are committed to providing safe, welcoming and high quality services to their communities. Identifying and addressing additional security needs is critical to delivering on this promise. With additional funding to enhance security, our non-profit partners will be more effectively able to provide these critical services to all New Yorkers. Lastly, we ask the Council continue their support of the Holocaust Survivor Initiative by investing \$2.5 million Fiscal Year 18. Many of our non-profit partners receive initiative grants to provide specialized programming and comprehensive services for Holocaust survivors. These serve—these services include food delivery when individuals run out of SNAP benefits, information and referral services, social programming and thousands of congregate meals. Many of the individuals served with this funding are frail, isolated and living in poverty and without these services would have even less [bell] connections to the communities they live in. As our non-profit partners continue to care for this generation of survivors, we urge the Council to

2 maintain its support for this important initiative.
3 Thank you.

4 MALE SPEAKER: Good afternoon and thank
5 you so much for the opportunity to testify, and Chair
6 Ferreras-Copeland, Council Member Gibson, Council
7 Member Rodrigues, Council Member Chin, thank you so
8 much for staying and listening to all of us. We
9 really appreciate it. I'm from the United
10 Neighborhood Houses, and are New York City's
11 Federation of Settlement Houses. You've already
12 heard from a couple of our member agencies including
13 from Chris Hanway at Jacob Resettlement as well as
14 some folks at the Northern Manhattan Improvement
15 Corporation and CAMBA who all testified today. We're
16 really grateful for the Council's partnership over
17 many years in working to preserve and expand core
18 services for our communities. This year we really
19 need to work on two things, both doing that expanding
20 and preserving our core services, but also making
21 sure we stabilize the very non-profits, the
22 organizations that are responsible for providing
23 these services. Therefore, we join with many others
24 you've heard today in support of the campaign to get
25 a 10% investment in the human service sector over the

2 next three years. This includes a baseline invest of
3 2% in city Fiscal Year at a cost of \$20 million and a
4 4% increase in the following two fiscal years for a
5 total of \$100 million by Fiscal Year 2020. This is
6 something that will help right size contracts and
7 ultimately strengthen the capacity of the human
8 service sector to improve the lives of all New
9 Yorkers. We've already seen some of the impacts of
10 not having the sector fully funded. I mean DFTA
11 funded Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities who
12 are struggling to meet the requirements of providing
13 a nurse for the services three days per week,
14 providers of home delivered meals for older adults
15 who are struggling to find the number of staff
16 necessary to deliver the required numbers of meals in
17 their service areas. Adult literacy programs have
18 not been able to have to full-time teachers and are
19 relying instead on a patchwork of part-time staff,
20 which prevents the programs from retaining the
21 experienced educators. After school programs have
22 assigned a single education director to cover
23 programs at five or more sites all through the outer
24 borough. All of these sorts of things [bell]-Oh, did
25 I already run out of time? So, [laughs] to wrap up,

2 we have a long list of programs that also the Council
3 has supported over many years where we both need the
4 investment in human service providers themselves but
5 also the restorations of core services for things
6 like older adults adult literacy programs, after
7 school programs where really the core of these
8 programs often depends, as it shouldn't but does, on
9 the work of the City Council and thank you so much.

10 CARLYN COWEN: Good afternoon. My name
11 is Carlyn Cowen, and I'm the Policy Analyst at FPWA.
12 I'd like to thank Chair Ferreras-Copeland and the
13 other members of the Council Finance Committee for
14 the opportunity to testify today. FPWA strives to
15 build a city of equal opportunity, and in order to
16 fulfill these goals, we encourage the City Council to
17 fund several initiatives that support upward mobility
18 for New Yorkers. First, FPWA envisions New York City
19 as a place where we can all safely remain in our
20 homes and continue to contribute to our communities
21 as we age. It's critical for the city to plan for
22 and invest in building up safety net services as the
23 number of people age 65 and older rises. Instead,
24 funding for DFTA remains just 2% of the city's
25 spending on human services. We ask that the city

2 commit fully funding services for older adults with
3 \$15.7 million to baseline discretionary funding for
4 core services and \$44.9 million to fill in the gaps
5 in current programs. Second, as New York City
6 declares itself a sanctuary in response to a climate
7 of xenophobia from the federal government, it must
8 ensure that the city of immigrants remains a safe
9 haven for all of our residents. Sanctuary should
10 mean safety, not just at home, but also in the
11 workplace. This means that while the city increases
12 its investment in legal services for immigrant
13 communities, it should also make proportional
14 investments in programs that connect all immigrants
15 to services that allow them to achieve economic
16 advancements. There are two programs that we urge
17 the Council to fund: Enhancing the Worker
18 Cooperative Business Development Initiative to \$3.2
19 million in FY18 and enhancing the Day Labor Workforce
20 Initiative to \$1.8 million in FY18. Third, in order
21 to be able to save equal opportunity, we must reduce
22 health disparities by ensuring that all New Yorkers
23 have healthcare access and coverage, and that
24 targeted programs and policies are in place to
25 address health crises that have disproportionately

2 impacted low-income and disenfranchised communities.
3 For this reason we recommend that the City Council
4 provide and enhance to the Access Health NY
5 Initiative to \$5 million in the FY18 Budget. Lastly,
6 we ask the Council and the Mayor to commit to shoring
7 up human services, and I echo the ask that the rest
8 of my colleagues have made. [bell] Thank you for the
9 consideration, and the opportunity to testify.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: That was
11 right on time. Yeah. Well, you know, our lack of
12 questioning is not because we don't believe in what
13 you're doing, it's because we're your advocates, and
14 we agree. So, thank you so much, but we need to get
15 these things on the record. So, we appreciate you
16 coming today. Thank you. Come on board and my
17 counsel will read the next panel.

18 LEGAL COUNSEL: The panel after this one
19 will be Emily Skydel, Charise Carruther, Heather
20 Woodfield, Carl Goodman, Veronica Conan and Brian
21 Rogers. [pause]

22 BRAD GRIM: [coughs] Good evening. My
23 name is Brad Grim and on behalf of the Board and
24 staff of the Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation, I
25 would like to thank the Council for its steadfast

2 support of our mission and to urge your support of
3 our Fiscal Year 18 citywide funding request of
4 \$1,325,000. With the Council's support we have
5 become the largest provider of free school based
6 after school and summer programming in New York City
7 serving over 20,000 young people, 12,000 with Council
8 funds a year operating in almost every Council
9 District in the city. SASF programs offer a wide
10 variety of educational enrichment activities,
11 counseling services for children and families, parent
12 engagement, college and career readiness, STEM
13 activities and a wide array of sports and arts
14 activities. In Fiscal Year 17, SASF received \$1
15 million under the Council's After School Enrichment
16 Initiative. With this funding SASF has successfully
17 launched 110 summer camps in 2016 serving over 8,000
18 students in 41 Council Districts. Fiscal Year 17
19 funding also supported our Weekend Sports and
20 Wellness in Sports Leagues serving over 4,000
21 students in 72 elementary and middle schools.
22 Strongly driven by issues of social justice for the
23 children of our great city, the mission of SASF is to
24 help bridge the academic performance and opportunity
25 gap among under achieving students the overwhelming

2 majority of whom are Black and Hispanic Youth from
3 the highest poverty neighborhoods in the city. SASF
4 Council—SASF's Council funded programs operate in
5 almost every Council District. With the Council as
6 its partner, SASF has programs that are successfully
7 addressing this gap, and the huge inequalities of
8 educational opportunities by providing New York City
9 Youth with all racial, ethnic and socio-economic
10 backgrounds as after school and summer sports, arts
11 and educational programming. This year, children in
12 immigrant families are especially fearful. Threats
13 of deportation have created levels of worry and
14 anxiety in young people not seen before. SASF's City
15 Council summer camps and its after school are and
16 always have been safe havens. Now, more than ever
17 it's necessary. In conclusion, in order for SASF's
18 free programs to operate this summer and next school
19 year, we need to enable SASF to keep up with rising
20 fees as well as rising personnel and equipment costs,
21 (2) Allow SASF to meet the requirements of our
22 \$325,000 Challenge Grant from the Charles Hayden
23 Foundation, and (3) allow more youth to receive
24 summer programming through the creation of ten
25 additional ASAF summer camps. So, in conclusion on

2 behalf of the over 12,000 students and 9,000 families
3 who received free after school and summer programs as
4 a direct result of your funding, I thank you for the
5 Council's longstanding support of SASF and our
6 mission. Thank you very much.

7 SCOTT DALY: [off mic] Good afternoon,
8 Chair Ferreras-Copeland. The mic. How's that? Is
9 that better?

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
11 Is the mic on?

12 SCOTT DALY: No. There we go. Now, how
13 is that? Is that better? There you go. Good
14 afternoon Chairperson, Council Members and staff of
15 the Finance Committee. My name is Scott Daly, and I
16 am the Director of the New York Junior Tennis and
17 Learning also known as New York Junior Tennis League,
18 NYJTL free tennis programs throughout the city of New
19 York. We meet the needs of the kids of the city of
20 New York. I'm not going to be reading from my
21 testimony. Everybody has it up there. I just want
22 to highlight certain areas that I feel are vital to
23 what we do. We're almost 50 years old. We change
24 lives on a lot of kids throughout the city of New
25 York in neighborhoods where they would never be

2 exposed to this sport. We give them a safe haven.
3 This could not be done without the continued support
4 of the City Council. We are in all five boroughs.
5 We are in all 51 Council Districts. Last year we
6 served 88 separate programs on the free community
7 tennis. In addition to that, we bring our tennis
8 programs into the school system. We teach the gym
9 teachers how to expose these kids to that. Over 250
10 teachers have partaken in this during the past year.
11 Everybody is accepted. Nobody is rejected. We take
12 special populations and during summer all District 75
13 schools are invited to come to one of our locations.
14 Character, self-esteem, the value of sports, safe
15 havens. These are all catch words, but they are
16 real. You see it out there. About ten years ago our
17 funding was cut. We are grateful for what we
18 received, but we have maintained that somehow with
19 smoke and mirrors. We have asked the Council this
20 year to increase us back to the levels of 2008 to
21 \$1.2 million. We employ many people through the city
22 of New York. We have basically an auxiliary summer
23 youth employment program. We hire the kids that play
24 with us and come up through our system. In closing,
25 I just want to say tennis is the hook, but there is

2 so much we do for them. On behalf of all of the
3 kids, the teams and the parents of the city of New
4 York I want to thank the Council for its longstanding
5 support of NYJTL. Thank you.

6 LISA CASWELL: Hi. My name is Lisa
7 Caswell. I'm the Senior Policy Analyst for the
8 Daycare Council. I want to just thank the members of
9 the City Council for your steadfast support of our
10 membership in the last few years in particular. We
11 have 60-year history going back to World War II. We
12 do labor and mediation. We have a Professional
13 Training Institute, policy and advocacy. We have an
14 employment initiative, we have over 100 members
15 providing Early Childhood education programs in 200
16 centers across the city. I just want to state right
17 off the bat, our serious support for the Sustain our
18 Sanctuaries Campaign, many of our members are couched
19 in non-profits that are heavily impacted by this. I
20 want to just talk about two things in particular. To
21 be clear and put ourselves on the record, we strongly
22 support the Mayor's effort to expand UPK to 3-year-
23 olds, but we are stating our support based on a
24 conditional evidence of his ability to actually
25 address the problems that are continuing with the

2 non-profit sector. So, I'm just going to read
3 basically from two paragraphs related to that because
4 we have some serious problems in terms of maintaining
5 staff and we have some facilities problems. We
6 represent our membership in collective bargaining
7 with two units, the Council of Supervisors and
8 Administrators and District-District Council 1707.
9 Although we spent a year negotiating with the city
10 administration for salary parity for our member
11 certified teachers, we were not awarded increases
12 that matched the Department of Education's starting
13 salaries or longevity steps. We were able to make
14 changes that led to more affordable healthcare
15 benefits and receive funding for a career ladder,
16 scholarship fund. Unfortunately, the Mayor has
17 recently announced 3-K for all initiative will make
18 it harder for non-profits to hold onto their state
19 certified teachers. Difficulties in hiring or
20 retaining certified teachers also impacts our
21 members' ability to maintain operations at full
22 capacity. I'm sure you're aware of the difficulty in
23 maintaining funding for [bell] for childcare. Right
24 now, every seat is costing us a lot of energy. If
25 you can't roll out a classroom because you don't have

2 staff, you have a real problem in terms of
3 sustainability. Right now, the whole system is at
4 88% capacity, and it would be a tragedy to continue
5 with this problem if it's related to maintaining
6 staff. From the standpoint of facilities, many of
7 our programs are in NYCHA buildings. You're aware of
8 the federal cuts. They are fined regularly by the
9 Department of Health. We want to state our strong
10 support for consideration with regards to facilities
11 particularly looking at what was proposed by the
12 Comptroller in terms of city-owned facilities. Where
13 could we build buildings that had childcare on the
14 ground floor?

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

16 LISA CASWELL: What is it that is
17 contributing to the fact that--

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:

19 [interposing] Can you--

20 LISA CASWELL: --many of our--

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: --please
22 wrap up?

23 LISA CASWELL: Yeah, many of our programs
24 are operating with year-to-year leases right.

25 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Yes.

2 LISA CASWELL: 28 out of 72, which is not
3 a sustainable solution.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Yeah.

5 LISA CASWELL: So, and then lastly just
6 we--all these programs need to run a full day--

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
8 you.

9 LISA CASWELL: --and they need to run all
10 year, and--

11 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND:
12 [interposing] Thank you.

13 LISA CASWELL: --that is an issue that
14 needs to be addressed.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I really
16 appreciate it. No, we understand and than you for
17 getting it on the record.

18 LISA CASWELL: Yep.

19 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I just
20 wanted to say when I was a Beacon Director there was
21 no better call than when you got a call from your
22 agency to say we're going to provide you with sports
23 equipment. So, you not only just help providing the
24 after school programs, but the organization you
25 partner with us and so important and the same for the

2 New York Junior Tennis League. Even though the U.S.
3 is in my district, the young people really learn from
4 the New York Junior Tennis League. So thank you very
5 much for your testimony, and it is greatly
6 appreciated. While the next panel makes its way up, I
7 just wanted to publicly say-

8 SCOTT DALY: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: That my
10 mother just told me to spit out my gum. She saw me
11 chewing gum. [laughter] So, mom, I've done it. I
12 know you're watching somewhere. It's in the garbage.
13 So, if you think we're not real or that we don't have
14 mothers that—we do. Thank you so much, and which is
15 the next panel?

16 LEGAL COUNSEL: The panel after this,
17 which will be our last panel, will be Jim Qui (sp?)
18 Shamshar Sandu (sp?), Johnny Zhang, Evan Phillips,
19 Daniel Kim, Kasinia Novacova (sp?), Liz Aquis (sp?)
20 And Judy Wong. [background comments, pause]

21 EMILY SKYDEL. Hi, thank you for holding
22 this meeting. My name is Emily and I'm a campaign
23 organizer from NYPIRG, the student directed, largest
24 student directed non-partisan organization in the
25 state of New York representing student from across

2 campuses, across the city. New York City's Budget
3 provides a really important opportunity for the City
4 Council to make critical investments in programs that
5 support economic and social justice and enhanced
6 skills to boost civic understanding. Higher
7 education and mass transportation systems are—are key
8 equalizers. A college educated workforce nurtures
9 the growth of New York's economy and helps stimulate
10 civic participation both of which boost individuals'
11 prosperity to start CUNY's Opportunity Program, have
12 a steady track record of success and increasing
13 graduation rates among at-risk students. College
14 Discovery, the Center for Puerto Rican Studies,
15 creative art teams, Art teams, Dominican Studies
16 Institute, Murphy Institute Center for Worker
17 Education, ASAP and many other programs help city
18 students overcome the financial and academic
19 obstacles of completing a college education. More
20 than just tuition coverage many of these programs
21 take a comprehensive approach to college access and
22 affordability by building in academic counseling,
23 mentoring and coverage of related costs such as free
24 metro cards, textbooks and childcare. This approach
25 works, and increases graduation rates. We urge the

2 City Council to increase to funding for opportunity
3 programs, which are really a great answer for our
4 question around free college in New York state, and
5 CUNY's Citizenship Now Program provides much needed
6 immigration, legal services. We urge the Council to
7 support CUNY's request of \$4 million, \$2 million to
8 keep this service going strong and an additional \$2
9 million to meet the growing demand for communities
10 facing new threats throughout New York City. With
11 private daycare centers as well charging upwards of
12 \$200,000 a year the university's campus childcare
13 services provide New York City parents with the
14 opportunities to pursue and college degree. It's
15 essential—it's essential that the City Council
16 includes CUNY's request for an additional \$5,000 for
17 childcare services in its final budget. Lastly, I
18 just want to mention the important of the Fair Fares
19 Campaign for college students across CUNY. It is
20 really critical that college students are not
21 choosing between a Metro Card and paying for a meal.
22 So, please we thank you for providing this
23 opportunity or us to share our thoughts on higher
24 education and mass transportation in New York on
25 behalf of New York's college students. Thank you.

2 CHARISE CARRUTHER: Okay, good afternoon.
3 Good afternoon, Chair Ferreras-Copeland and other
4 members of the City Council. My name is Charise
5 Carruther (sic) I'm the Strategic Partnership
6 Specialist at the Center for Court Innovation. Thank
7 you for the opportunity to speak today. The Center
8 for Court Innovation was grateful for the Council's
9 recommendation to baseline CCI at \$500,000 for City
10 Fiscal Year 2018. As the Council is aware, the
11 Center for Court Innovation is seeking a total of
12 \$700,000, which includes an enhancement of \$200,000.
13 This funding will support ongoing costs, core
14 operations and communities around the city and expand
15 alternatives to incarceration for vulnerable New
16 Yorkers in several key neighborhoods. The Center has
17 created 28 community and court-based project
18 expanding all five boroughs serving nearly 60,000 New
19 Yorkers annually including immigrants, the poor,
20 young people, women, the LGB—the LGBTQ community and
21 communities of color. With more funding the Center
22 would be able to grow its programs and benefit even
23 more New Yorkers. The Center provides young people
24 across New York City with opportunities to avoid
25 Rikers Island and in many cases a trip to court.

2 Through its adolescent and young adult diversion
3 courts across the city, the Center provides judges
4 and prosecutors and police with meaningful
5 alternatives to business as usual. These—this
6 includes linking individuals to counseling, tutoring
7 and community benefit projects. We currently serve
8 thousands of young people each year through programs
9 such as these. With Council support, we can serve
10 hundreds. In addition to helping divert New Yorkers
11 out of the Justice System, we are working to help
12 people transition back into the community after
13 spending time behind bars. One such project is the
14 Harlem Community Justice Center in Manhattan, which
15 provides hundreds of individuals who are released
16 from prison each year. Council support will allow us
17 to increase the number of individuals served by 30%.
18 Lastly, I just want to say that the City Council
19 support has been invaluable to the success of the
20 center, and we look forward to continuing to work
21 with you particularly as you push forward legislation
22 regarding Raise the Age and the Criminal Justice
23 Reform Act and Bail Reform, and thank you for the
24 opportunity to speak today.

2 VERONICA CONAN: I'm Veronica Conan, and
3 a retired librarian and a member of the committee to
4 Save the New York Public Libraries, and past
5 president of the West 54th Street Book Association
6 speaking in my own name. I strongly support budget
7 increase for all three library systems. I agree
8 libraries today are more important than ever before.
9 I have a couple of concerns about the New York Public
10 Library—relating to the New York Public Library.
11 Particularly about the research libraries. Why is
12 the New York Public Library outsourcing both its
13 unique research collection and library jobs moving
14 millions of research items to an offsite storage
15 facility shared with Princeton and Columbia and being
16 kept in Princeton, New Jersey, 50 miles from New York
17 City. As of July 16, there were 5.2 million research
18 items there, and the problem is that now this
19 consortium has arranged—they want to make the
20 arrangement permanent and not return the millions of
21 research items the city monitored in 2013 from the
22 42nd Street book stacks. Access to the off-site
23 collection has been taking too long since 2013, and
24 it's poorly organized and it is causing research and
25 researchers to give problems. The stacks are empty,

2 and would \$6 to \$47 million one-time expense to
3 upgrade the existing HVAC and sprinkler system. That
4 is all it would need, and then it could—they could be
5 returned. Now, due to the outsourcing, since 2000
6 about 800 research library jobs have been lost until
7 the end of 2015 as a result of this new. Most of
8 42nd Street Library and the land on which stands are
9 owned by the city. So, it is the city's obligation
10 to maintain the building. I highly recommend upgrade
11 of the book stacks [bell] and return of the research
12 collection as first priority, and only what cannot be
13 kept on location belongs outside. Now, the second
14 concern I have relates to the sale of public
15 libraries during these very troubling days. As
16 libraries—NYPLs were sold or there is a donor a long
17 time ago, and replace it with something much
18 inferior, but the currently wants to sell the
19 Science, Industry and Business Library, which is the
20 best [bell] library in the entire system, and it is
21 loved, spacious, easily accessible with a large
22 collection—research collection and the site (sic)
23 source of the officials (sic) have already been sold,
24 but now they are planning to sell the rest of the
25 library for \$93 million. Why not keep this in the—

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Can you
3 please bring your comments to an end?

4 VERONICA CONAN: I'm sorry?

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Your time
6 is up so just finish up.

7 VERONICA CONAN: Yes, I just want to
8 finish it. Why not keep it and fill it again with
9 computers and library news and allow it to continue
10 with the important functions. Libraries are free
11 space, and used, they're need more than ever before.
12 They must be protected and cherished not sold. Now,
13 the Inwood Library--

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Ma'am,
15 I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up.

16 VERONICA CONAN: Yes, I-I have a couple-
17 just very short notes. We mustn't allow the power of
18 real estate developers be greater than the power of
19 knowledge. I have to say this sometime.

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Okay,
21 thank you.

22 VERONICA CONAN: So, transparency,
23 accountability and oversight of the entire New York
24 Public Library is much needed. Thank you.

2 FEMALE SPEAKER: I want to thank the
3 Council for the opportunity to testify on behalf of
4 New Yorkers for Culture and Arts, an Advocacy
5 organization, which is the culmination of a merger
6 between the New York City Arts Coalition and One
7 Percent for Culture who collectively represent over
8 600 organization partners. We commend the Council,
9 the Administration, the Department of Cultural
10 Affairs for their continued commitment to supporting
11 culture and the arts. With ongoing threats of
12 federal cuts to arts, humanities and science, it is
13 critical that the city continue and grow its support
14 for culture. We are, therefore, asking for a funding
15 increase of \$40 million to the Department of Cultural
16 Affairs to be divided equally between the Cultural
17 Institutions Group and the Cultural Development Fund.
18 With a \$40 million increase, the DCLA budget would
19 still be less than .3% of the overall city budget, a
20 very small contribution in light of the vast social
21 and economic benefits culture brings to the city. An
22 additional \$40 million would provide DCLA with the
23 fiscal capacity to increase funding for currently
24 funded institutions and organizations, the five
25 borough Arts Councils, which administer re-grants

2 programs that serve individual artists and local
3 organizations, and a wider and more diverse array of
4 new grantees. With an additional \$40 million in
5 funding, cultural organizations could expand lifelong
6 learning opportunities for all New Yorkers, access to
7 culture and arts for city residents, collaborations
8 with city agencies, and workforce development
9 opportunities including artist support. Also, while
10 we do not know yet what the recommendation of the
11 city's first cultural plan will be, we anticipate
12 that cultural organizations will need additional
13 funding in the upcoming Fiscal Year to achieve the
14 plan's short-term goals. We urge you to increase
15 funding for DCLA by \$40 million to be divided evenly
16 between the CIG and the CDF. Thank you for your
17 time, and for your consistent support of the cultural
18 community. We look forward to continuing
19 collaborations between city government, cultural
20 organizations and artists, which benefit all New
21 Yorkers.

22 CARL GOODMAN: Ain't it great we're
23 working together. My name is name is Carl Goodman
24 and I'm the Executive Director of the Museum of the
25 Moving Image, and also Chair of the Cultural

2 Institutions Group, a coalition of 33 institutions
3 occupying city-owned land and city-owned buildings
4 and we're proud to be their custodians. We're also
5 proud to be part of the Coalition in New York for
6 Culture and the Arts, and to work with them on
7 advocating for, as you heard, a \$40 million increase
8 in the DCLA Budget to be split evenly between the
9 CIGs and the CDF. This does get us back to around the
10 levels of 2008, which you've heard before from
11 others. It sounds like a lot of money, but there are
12 3 to 4,000 of us in the city. So, actually—and it
13 represents again a very small percentage of the city
14 budget and also of the Department of Cultural Affairs
15 Budget. The threat of losing federal money is very
16 real. We invest that federal money, millions of
17 dollars as a group in specific programs that lift up
18 through the skill building and knowledge enhancing,
19 empowering, life affirming and life changing power of
20 the arts sciences and humanities the lives of all New
21 Yorkers especially its most marginalized and
22 underrepresented voices and especially those who are
23 now under siege by dangerous ideologies. We have a
24 footprint in every neighborhood, every district
25 through programs in the homes in which over—our over

2 10,000 employees live, and through millions of the
3 New York residents who participate in our programs
4 either on location or in their neighborhoods. Of
5 particular importance is the work we're doing with
6 immigrant public populations, public housing
7 residents, the incarcerated, seniors, people with
8 disabilities and the city's over one million school
9 children who log 2.5 million visits to our
10 institutions per year. These activities make it
11 clear that you're on—our ongoing commitment to social
12 justice, workforce development and cultural equity
13 and access. Where I work, I'm going to tell you that
14 if we have increased funding we're going to open on
15 Tuesdays. We're going to expand our work with public
16 housing residents outside of Western Queens, provide
17 more free hours, further our programs with youth on
18 the Autism spectrum. My colleagues will do the very
19 same things. So, listen, the—the—we have been trying
20 to meet with every single one of you over the last
21 [bell] three or four months I think we have to tell
22 our stories, and how those stories affect our
23 districts. We are under threat. Our facilities need
24 more upkeep. This is a race against time. I just

2 lost it. Please do not let this happen to arts and
3 culture in New York city. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: That was
5 a good one, but you got it all in, and we got you.
6 We heard your voices. Thank you very much for your
7 testimony today, and to all my colleagues, this is
8 the last panel and it is 4:39. I think this is
9 historic that we've been able to kind of get all of
10 our wonderful New Yorkers voices. Please, the next
11 panel if you can come up. [background comments,
12 pause]

13 LIZ ACCLES: Chair Ferreras-Copeland
14 Thank you for the opportunity to testify and members
15 of the committee. My name is Liz Accles the
16 Executive Director of Community Food Advocates, and
17 we are spearheading the Lunch for Learning Campaign
18 for Universal Free School Lunch, and I want to say
19 most of all. Thank you, thank you, thank you for
20 leading this fight for Universal Free School Lunch
21 for really universal Free School Lunch for every New
22 York city public school student. I'm not going to
23 read my testimony. I'm just going to point to some
24 charts in there that I hope you will look at in
25 response to what you said the Chancellor's pushback

2 around participation. So, in the first two pages
3 there are charts. We did analysis that was those
4 complete similarity in DOE analysis. There are 582
5 schools with Universal Free School Lunch. Almost all
6 middle schools, some high schools, some elementary
7 schools. There is a dramatic difference in
8 participation in schools with Universal and those
9 without in all grade levels. So, I hope to share
10 that with you so you can take that to the
11 negotiations. In middle schools, middle school
12 students with Universal Free School Lunch have over
13 65% participation, 60% participation. Those without
14 it 40%, a 20% difference in participation. For high
15 school students where the numbers dropped the lowest,
16 there's 30% participation for students without
17 Universal Free School Lunch, and that's most high
18 school students don't have it. For high school
19 students with Universal Free School Lunch the
20 participation rate is above 45%. It's a 15%
21 difference in participation in the same school year.
22 Even elementary schools where we anticipate seeing
23 the least bump up because elementary school students
24 eat the most, there's a 10%--each school lunch the
25 most--there's a 10% difference. 80% of New York City

2 public school elementary school students with
3 Universal Free School Lunch [bell] eat school—Wow,
4 that was fast. Okay, eat verse 70%. That—I just
5 want to say that to you. There’s a chart in there,
6 and there’s been very little effort in the middle-
7 school situation to do—to do any publicity. If
8 you’re going to do a new initiative and be excited
9 about it, you need to tell people about it. UPK is
10 an example of that. I will say one last thing.
11 There’s \$11.25 million baselined for middle school
12 Universal. Our estimate is that it costs \$2.5
13 million last year. That’s the—that was the total
14 cost, and I share that with your staff and so I just
15 want to put—yep, thank you.

16 JUDY LIU: Thank you, Chairwoman
17 Ferreras-Copeland and all the council members here
18 today. My name is Judy Liu. I’m a parent at East-
19 West School of International Study in Flushing,
20 Queens. Because the school has a middle-school
21 that’s attached to a high school, we don’t qualify
22 for free lunch, but I’m not here today just for East-
23 West School. I’m here today to advocate free lunch
24 for all students in New York City whether they are in
25 elementary school, middle school or high school. I

2 was born in Saigon, Vietnam. So, on April 30, 1975,
3 when the Communists took over literally—literally
4 overnight my parents, my family we lost everything.
5 Food became scarce. The new government want to send
6 my father to Cambodia to fight the Pol Pot Regime.
7 We had no choice but to escape and we did. We became
8 known as the refugees, boat people. We made it, and
9 we got sponsored to the U.S., but we came to the U.S.
10 with nothing. My father work at many odd jobs, low
11 paying, but eventually he got a job as a mailman, but
12 even with a mailman's salary for a family of seven we
13 were struggling financially and we were living from
14 paycheck to paycheck for many years. We heavily rely
15 on the free school lunch and we ate a lot instant
16 noodles. Even today, there are good folks who have
17 honest jobs such as school aid, office assistant.
18 They make 30 or 40,000 but they don't qualify for
19 free lunch, but they are struggling financially.
20 They may not have enough money to afford to pay for
21 their kids school lunch. So, the kids either go
22 hungry or they eat poor nutritious food. The only
23 solution to this is to have Universal Free Lunch for
24 all students in New York City. I know the Council
25 supports this, and I truly appreciate it, but please

2 make Universal Free School Lunch the highest priority
3 and to make it happen. Thank you.

4 CLINICIA REVOKA: Hello Education and
5 Finance Committees of the City Council. My name is
6 Clinicia Rekova (sp?) and I'm the student at New
7 Utrecht High School in Brooklyn, New York. On behalf
8 of the students testifying, we would like to thank
9 Chair Ferreras-Copeland and all—and members of the
10 committees for giving us the opportunity to testify
11 here today about why implementing Universal Free
12 School Lunch is so important. As a student at a
13 school where 75% of the students are economically
14 disadvantages, I know first hand that the current
15 school lunch program has so many negative results.
16 One major problem is the tedious and intrusive school
17 lunch forms that are often not filled out. Lunch
18 forms tend to be something we often ignore, but when
19 many immigrants come to America they often flee
20 terror regimes and horrible circumstances in their
21 home countries. Therefore, when filling out this
22 information on their financial situation, they often
23 feel paranoid that this will somehow hurt them. My
24 mother was born in the Soviet Union. She fled a
25 horrific regime where she had little to no freedoms.

2 Eventually, she came to America and had to become
3 accustomed to life here. However, that mindset and
4 feeling that she was being watched and the government
5 knew everything about her has never left her. These
6 forms may not seem intrusive to some people, but to
7 my family and many others they are. As a low-income
8 student that does stay in school until up to 5:00
9 sometimes for extracurricular activities, free school
10 lunch is a necessity. However, when my mother is
11 paranoid and fighting to fill out this form because
12 of her past experience it is difficult to receive
13 free school lunch. My mother's terrible experience
14 in an oppressive regime should not impact me eating
15 school lunch, but yet it does. There are so many
16 negative effects that come from not having Universal
17 Free School Lunch. We must implement Universal Free
18 School Lunch in New York City public schools to stop
19 all of this from continuing. Thank you all for
20 giving me the chance to speak here today on an issues
21 that is so incredibly important to me and many other
22 students. [bell] Thank you for supporting this
23 issue, and I hope that you will continue to support
24 us in enacting Universal Free School Lunch.

2 JOHNNY BANK, JR: Good evening. My name
3 John Bank, Junior at Brooklyn Tech. To give a little
4 back story, my dad is a truck driver and doesn't make
5 a lot of money. This month I was eligible for free
6 school lunch. That is, of course, if I fill out the
7 lunch form at the beginning of the year. Well,
8 during my sophomore year at Tech, I had to for the
9 first time fill out a lunch form by myself, which I
10 kept putting off until it was to be late. But to be
11 fair, the lunch form was daunting and intimidating.
12 However, because of this, I lost my eligibility, and
13 that was a nightmare. Waking up at 5:00 in the
14 morning to get to school on time, I don't have time
15 for breakfast. Usually, that was fine since I could
16 have made it up at lunch. But wait, I didn't
17 actually fill out form, but there was other ways for
18 food, right? Nope. I had to starve. This caused a
19 lot of problems for me especially harming my energy
20 in school. I kept nodding off in my classes even my
21 favorite class that year Visual Electronics. This
22 may sound like a joke but during basketball, I
23 couldn't even throw the ball halfway up to the hoop.
24 I have my 7-year-old cousin who could have thrown
25 higher than me, and all this happened since I forgot

2 to fill out the lunch form. You may fault me for
3 this, but I had to fault myself all the time.
4 However, ladies and gentlemen, can you really fault
5 the parents who are intimidated by the lunch form or
6 the students that forget to fill out something that
7 doesn't seem important at the time. Can you blame
8 parents who worked hard to give their sons a better
9 future, and making just over cusp to be eligible for
10 free lunch just so their kids don't have to drive
11 trucks around everyday. The answer to these
12 questions is no. However, this I exactly what our
13 current lunch system is doing, punishing students and
14 families unfairly. Council, I come here tonight to
15 urge you to please continue supporting for the fight
16 for Universal Free School Lunch so that we could
17 finally implement and see better lives in not just
18 that experience but everyone also in the future as
19 the students are our future. Again, thank you very
20 much for your time. [bell]

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
22 Better fill out that form next time. [laughs]
23 Bring-bring the form and that's what we're going to
24 do. (sic)

2 DANIEL KIM: Okay. So, hello. My name is
3 Daniel Kim and I'm student at Brooklyn Technical High
4 School is all. So, would like to thank the Council
5 for your continuous support for the expansion of
6 Universal-Universal Free School Lunch, but we still
7 do need Universal Free School Lunch, and this isn't
8 just a moral decision, but it is-it is also a logical
9 and economic decision. Many students who are barely
10 above the income eligible-eligibility gap or in the
11 eyes of the school able to afford school lunch daily,
12 but in reality they cannot, and this is problem is
13 seen so common and is daily at my school. A lot of
14 kids starve at a time where they should be
15 socializing-socializing with friends and relieving
16 themselves instead of stress. Instead, these kids
17 are gathering more of this stress and worrying about
18 how they can pass their tests on empty stomach. How
19 they wish they could go home, but instead they are
20 starving in a time of supposed nourishment. And a
21 meal together with friends should be the best
22 socializer, but this is blocked by a system where
23 students are forced to pay for lunches that they just
24 can't afford. Many of my own friends also complain
25 when they eat lunch late everyday due to their

2 schedule, but if these individuals complain about
3 eating food late—food late, think about how the
4 students who can't afford to eat school lunch
5 everyday react and feel. And in the eyes of the—in
6 the eyes of the current lunch system, students above
7 the income eligibility gap should have no problems
8 getting—getting lunch, but this is not the case in
9 reality, and as a result I feel like the current
10 lunch system should address the problem of a wage gap
11 by providing Universal Free School Lunch. And once
12 again thank you for—thank to the Council for
13 supporting us on this issue.

14 JINQUE: Good afternoon. My name is
15 Jinque (sp?) and I'm a junior Brooklyn Technical High
16 school. I'm here today to represent a student
17 advocacy group, Teenergetic. Our mission is to
18 launch Universal Free School Lunch, and enhance the
19 overall learning experience in New York City schools.
20 Teenergetic was initially formed by high school
21 student from Francis Lewis High School in Fresh
22 Meadows, Queens who graduated last year. I restarted
23 Teenergetic at Brooklyn Tech because access to school
24 lunch is a critical issue in my school as well. I
25 first started Teenergetic at Tech when I realized

2 many of my friends aren't eating school lunch. It
3 appalled me when I discovered that for most of them
4 it's a financial issues. Some of my friends are at
5 the family income threshold where they don't qualify
6 for free or reduced lunch, but in reality that \$1.75
7 each day is still a difficult expense for them and
8 their families. As a result, many don't eat lunch
9 and have to constantly battle hunger throughout the
10 school year as they struggle to concentrate in class.
11 This is especially true in the competitive school
12 environment such as Brooklyn Tech where students take
13 rigorous AP classes from all grades. Furthermore for
14 many students who have club and team commitments,
15 this means that they won't be eating anything after
16 breakfast until 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. when they get home
17 in time for dinner. That's as long as 12 hours
18 without food for their body five days a week. For
19 outsider Brooklyn Tech is often thought of as a
20 school composed of talent and smart students, the
21 high achievers who will become our future leaders,
22 but most people don't realize the issues that these
23 students face, many of whom come from immigrant and
24 low-income backgrounds. Most students don't realize,
25 most people don't realize that students including

2 Brooklyn Technical students are dependent on our
3 lunch system as you need lunch in order to have the
4 energy to perform to the best of their ability. For
5 those who don't or can't eat school lunch, it is
6 inevitable that their learning experience and their
7 ability to grow and succeed will be adversely
8 affected. As a representative of Teenergetic and on
9 behalf of the high school students who aren't
10 supported by the school lunch system we need
11 Universal Free School Lunch. I thank you for
12 supporting the expansion of Universal Free Lunch, and
13 continuing to fight for us. [bell]

14 EVAN ZUMARA PHELPS: Hello, my name is
15 Evan Zumara Phelps and I attend Millennium high
16 School. I'm a junior. As a public school student who
17 doesn't receive free lunch, I know that I'm in a
18 fortunate position. Our lunch system divides
19 students up so much, it is hard to ignore the effect
20 it has on relationships between students. Often,
21 I've noted that students segregate and separate
22 themselves based on who receives free school lunch,
23 and those who don't. Not offering free school lunch
24 to all students creates a lunchroom where students
25 are divided, a lunch room where students cannot only

2 loudly but also silently judge others who get lunch
3 for free. Students sometimes without noticing it
4 judge other students because they are different from
5 them. As a younger student, I was one of those who
6 judged. I did not judge loudly by calling other
7 students names, but I did judge silently by
8 gravitating towards students like me. This silent
9 judgment is just as harmful as the name calling and
10 verbal insults you can hear. Like many students, I
11 approached and chose to interact with students who
12 had similar traits as me, and one of these traits
13 that stands out in the lunchroom is who eats school
14 lunch versus those who do not. As children we know
15 no better than to group with people who are like us.
16 If someone got free school lunch for-if someone got
17 lunch for free, then he or she was too different for
18 me to interact with and we couldn't be friends. At
19 the time, I did not understand that these perceived
20 differences have less to do with us as students and
21 more to do with the system that creates this unequal
22 status in the school cafeteria. Our school should be
23 a place where all students are equal, and where
24 students are encouraged to bond regardless of our
25 differences and whether someone can afford to bring

2 lunch from home or not. Universal Free School Lunch
3 is one important step toward providing equality
4 within our schools. Thank you for your ongoing
5 support as we fight for a lunchroom where all
6 students receive school lunch for free, and all
7 students are treated equally without regard to their
8 family income. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
10 very much. Do any of my colleagues have comments?
11 Well, we just want to say how proud we are of all of
12 our young people and parents. I think this is the
13 best way to actually end our public hearing session
14 with the voice of young of the young, and you know,
15 we really believe in exactly what you're advocating
16 for, and from the bottom of my heart, I hope we can
17 give you this victory this year. You know we've been
18 fighting every year for this, and we hope that this
19 is the year that we can-that you can all claim that
20 you came and testified and because of you this
21 happened. So, take the full credit for that. Thank
22 you for coming to testify. Don't move yet. Let me
23 just read this quick statement. Whoops. Give me
24 just a second. Oh, that's better. This concludes
25 the Executive Budget hearings for Fiscal 2018. Thank

2 you again to all of those who attended and testified.
3 Your testimony is vital in helping to shape our
4 city's budget. For any member of the public who
5 still wishes to testify with written testimony, you
6 can still submit your testimony to the Finance
7 Division on the Council's website at [council.nyc.gov/
8 budget/testimony](http://council.nyc.gov/budget/testimony), and the staff will make it a part
9 of the official record. The Council will be
10 accepting submissions until Monday, May 29th. I want
11 to thank my colleagues Council Members Miller,
12 Gibson, Rodriguez who are -Rodriguez and Chin who
13 held it out all the way to the end. So, again, thank
14 you very much, and we look forward to seeing you and
15 hearing from you in the successful adoption that will
16 include a lot of your priorities. Thank you and I
17 call this season of budget hearings to an end.

18 [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 June 29, 2017