

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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May 26, 2015
Start: 12:17 p.m.
Recess: 12:50 p.m.

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

B E F O R E:
COREY D. JOHNSON
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Rosie Mendez
Mathieu Eugene
Peter A. Koo
James G. Van Bramer
Inez D. Barron
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON JOHNSON: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Council Member Corey Johnson; I am Chair of the Council's Committee on Health.

Today we're voting on proposed Int. No. 440-A, a bill that I introduced that we originally heard on March 3rd as part of our joint hearing on Health Care Services in Jails with the Committee on Finance and Criminal Justice Services.

The people coming into the City's jails are overwhelmingly poor and overwhelmingly sick and are desperately in need of quality health care services. I am concerned that the contractor providing health services in many of our city's jails, Corizon Health, is not doing an adequate job. The allegations that have mounted over the years suggest that Corizon is failing to provide comprehensive and safe services to people under their care. These reports suggest that treatment provided to inmates may have been a factor in at least 15 deaths over the past five years and that these deaths may have been preventable.

A recent report by the New York State Commission on Corrections investigating the death of

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2 Bradley Ballard, an inmate at Rikers, called the
3 mental and medical care he received "so incompetent
4 and inadequate as to shock the experience." We can't
5 lose sight of the fact that many people in these
6 facilities haven't been found guilty of anything. It
7 mocks our justice system's principle of innocent
8 until proven guilty if somewhere along the line you
9 might die because you didn't get your medication in
10 time or a follow-up exam or if the guard didn't take
11 your pleas for help seriously.

12 The first step in addressing these
13 problems is getting a better picture of the adequacy
14 of services being provided. Int. 440 would improve
15 transparency by ensuring that the Council and public
16 have access to the performance indicators that
17 Corizon prepares quarterly for the Department of
18 Health and Mental Hygiene. It will apply also to any
19 future provider of services at a city jail; we need
20 to hold the providers and agencies that oversee them
21 responsible for performance in keys areas like wait
22 times, sick calls, access to medication, follow-up
23 visits, and preventable hospitalizations.

24 I wanna thank my Legislative Director,
25 Louis Cholden-Brown, Health Committee Counsel, David

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2 Seitzer, Policy Analyst for the Health Committee,
3 Crystal Pond and Crilhien Francisco, the Finance
4 Analyst for the Health Committee. I ask my
5 colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation, and
6 with that I ask the clerk to please call the roll.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
8 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Health,
9 Int. 440-A. Chair Johnson.

10 CHAIRPERSON JOHNSON: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I vote aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK: Barron.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: May I explain my
15 vote?

16 CHAIRPERSON JOHNSON: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I just wanna say
18 I think this is very important; yes, we have those
19 who have been incarcerated, but they are certainly
20 entitled to the services of addressing their needs,
21 medical needs; mental needs, and I think that
22 Corizon, when they were here, showed very low if any
23 regard for the population that they serve. I think
24 this is very important legislation and I vote aye.

25 COMMITTEE CLERK: Cornegy.

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Espinal.

COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: I proudly vote
aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the
affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
item has been adopted.

CHAIRPERSON JOHNSON: Thank you all.
We're gonna keep the vote open for an additional 15
minutes. Thank you all very much.

[pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Mendez.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote now stands at 6 in
the affirmative.

[pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: Committee on Health,
Int. 440-A. Council Member Eugene.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote now stands at 7.

[background comments]

[pause]

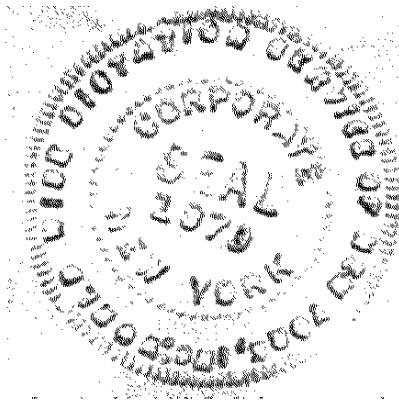
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COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote Committee on Health, Int. 440-A is now 7 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

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 May 28, 2015