



Testimony  
of  
Gene Russianoff  
Senior Attorney  
New York Public Interest Research Group  
before the  
New York City Council  
Rules, Elections and Privileges Committee  
Hearing on  
COUNCIL RULES REFORM  
City Hall  
May 7, 2014

Good morning. My name is Gene Russianoff. I am with the New York Public Interest Research Group, a college-student directed statewide advocacy organization.

One of our key missions is to help make government transparent, responsive, and efficient. NYPIRG has been lobbying the New York Council for 40 years. I have been a registered lobbyist since 1984.

**The Council has come a long way over the years, from leadership domination to participatory budgeting today and from a body unrepresentative of the city it served to an institution that gives a voice to many diverse communities.**

The Council's growth will makes it a more effective check and balance on City agencies. That strength is clearly reflected in this package of Council reform of its rules, which NYPIRG strongly supports. Key improvements include:

1. **Allocating discretionary funding for Council Districts by a fair and objective formula that is publically disclosed.** In NYPIRG's view, constituents should not be punished by cutting "discretionary spending" – budget appropriations controlled by Members – because of disagreements between the Speaker and individual Members.
2. **Establishing a dedicated legislative drafting unit for the Council.** The current arrangement has not always responsive to Members.
3. **Making the legislative process clearer to the public.** Bills should be easily accessible online with information such as testimony, transcripts, videos, memoranda and plain-language summaries.

4. **Providing that bills with wide support – those having 34 co-sponsors or more – be seriously considered for a hearing.** If a bill has at least two-thirds of the Members as sponsors, the committee to which it is assigned must vote on whether or not to hold a hearing on the bill.
5. **Helping Members communicate better with the public online.** There should be Member-oriented websites, with interactive communication tools (e.g. sign-up lists, petitions, events, case tracking, community information.)
6. **Encouraging collaboration by supporting multi-Member initiatives.** Central staff should provide support for collective efforts, such as issue-based task forces, participatory budgeting, and caucuses.

NYPIRG continues to urge that this reform package include a requirement that the Rules Committee conduct a hearing and review of these rules six months prior to the start of a new Council. Such timely reviews have worked well for other independent City bodies, including the New York City Lobbying Commission (periodically) and the New York City Campaign Finance Board (issues a comprehensive report nine months after the last municipal election).



## CITIZENS UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

### Testimony to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections of the New York City Council On Reform of the Council's Rules

May 7, 2014

---

Good morning, Chair Lander, and members of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections. My name is Alex Camarda and I am the Director of Public Policy and Advocacy at Citizens Union. Citizens Union is a nonpartisan good government group dedicated to making democracy work for all New Yorkers. Citizens Union serves as a civic watchdog, combating corruption and fighting for political reform. We work to ensure fair and open elections, honest and efficient government, and a civically-engaged public.

**Citizens Union commends Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and the City Council for improving its rules as seen in the draft rules before the committee today and announced last week. We also applaud the Speaker and Chair Lander for the collaborative process to reform the rules that continues with this hearing, and the change in Council culture the Speaker has signaled—which will ultimately allow for these rules to be meaningfully implemented.**

**The spirit and letter of these draft rules will make the Council a more effective branch of government that should enable members to better represent the districts they serve. They will also give rank-and-file members a more meaningful role in the Council's legislative process and ensure needed and greater equity in the allocation of discretionary funding.**

In our testimony today, Citizens Union would like to express our support for the proposed measures, as well as suggest a few improvements. Below are the proposed measures we support.

- 1. Distributing discretionary funding more equitably by dividing allocations to members equally among members or according to a needs-based formula.** Based on previous funding discretionary funding levels, the speaker is giving up her authority over about 39 percent of discretionary funds, up from 2 percent for previous speakers. This will remove the politics of reward and punishment that individual members believed too often characterized the previous Council, and enable individual members to speak their minds freely, and best represent their constituents.

2. **Requiring organizations receiving discretionary funding to explain how they use the funds.** This will build upon reforms in recent years that hold accountable organizations receiving the funds to ensure taxpayer funding is spent wisely and services for which the money was allocated are actually delivered.
3. **Creating a more autonomous and transparent bill drafting process** with dedicated drafters and a database accessible to members enabling members to check the status of the bills they requested be written. Devoting more staff to bill drafting will enable members to address concerns of their constituents legislatively more quickly than has been the case in the past.
4. **Enabling committee chairs to be more clearly involved in the selection of their staff.** By approving their chair from a pool provided by the speaker, members will ensure the rapport and trust needed for effective oversight which will give them a more meaningful role in raising issues of concern to the city.
5. **Supporting the needed formation of a Quadrennial Commission** to address Council compensation including stipends (lulus). We appreciate the Council's recognition that this is an issue that needs to be addressed. We call on Mayor de Blasio to call the Commission, which is long overdue.
6. **Making funding and legislative information more transparent** through providing more detailed information about the Council's own budget and creating a Public Technology Plan to improve the legislative database.

**We believe, however, additional changes can be made to strengthen the proposed rules even further, and have done a line-by-line edit of draft rules which is attached. Below are suggested changes we would like to highlight from our line-by-line edit of the draft rules.**

If there are opportunities to improve the rules, we make the following eight recommendations, with the first three our top priorities:

1. **Require for expense and capital discretionary funding, the Council make transparent on its website 72 hours before the vote for such funding:**
  - a. **the total amounts of major pots of funds encompassing expense and capital discretionary funding;**
  - b. **which Councilmember (including the speaker) has authority over each major pot of funds;**
  - c. **any formulas used for distributing funds to Councilmembers allocating the funds or the organization in receipt of the funds (as provided by council initiatives or other means where there is not an individual sponsor listed); and**

- d. **An itemized listing of all allocations and their sponsors, if applicable (Schedule C currently lists expense funding, and capital funding should also be itemized in advance).**
2. **Create greater transparency in relation to the legislative drafting tracking database. The language in the rules should go beyond specifying a member can find out who their bill drafter is and the status of their request. It should also:**
  - a. **Include the date the request was made;**
  - b. **Whether the drafting has taken longer than 60 days as required by current Council rules; and**
  - c. **Indicate much like at a deli counter, the number of the request in the queue and the number of requests by other members made before it.**
3. **Eliminate the provision in the supermajority bill sponsorship provision which undercuts its value by removing the need for a committee vote on a hearing on the bill if the number of members falls below 34 at any time during the 60-day period prior to a committee meeting. The rule as drafted is administratively unwieldy and creates the perception that members were forced to reconsider their support. Requiring a vote on any bill that at any time reaches 34 members in support is a clearer trigger which will ensure members consider carefully any co-sponsorship.**
4. **The Speaker should propose no more than half of the total capital funds, as is in the draft rules for expense funding. We have not been able to discern in past years the total amount of capital funding the speaker allocates to capital projects and organizations because of the use of joint initiatives, which list several sponsors; the proportion given by each sponsor is not known.**
5. **Clarify that requests in writing to co-sponsor a bill include email requests.**
6. **Require that a committee chairperson can't be removed except by a 2/3 uncoupled vote of the current Councilmembers, rather than by "the members" which could be interpreted narrowly as those attending the stated meeting or broadly as all elected members.**
7. **Require the Speaker identify in writing the committee of appropriate jurisdiction if the Speaker exercises the draft rule to deny in writing a committee chair's request for a hearing because the committee chair's committee lacks jurisdiction. Rejecting a hearing because a committee lacks jurisdiction is appropriate but the Speaker should also strive to educate the members as to what each committee's jurisdiction is. The Speaker should therefore include her reasoning in her written response denying the hearing and specifying the committee better suited for holding the hearing.**

8. **Post machine readable documents on the Council's website to engage the public in Council proceedings.** While the rules strive to do this in many instances and establish the creation of a Public Technology Plan to examine these issues further, there are additional provisions of the rules that should be enhanced before the rules are passed. This includes codifying in the rules that discretionary funding and materials related to bills and hearings will be posted online in a machine-readable format, organizational summaries on how discretionary funding is used will be placed in the Open Data portal, and webcasting of proceedings will be made available on the Council's website. Provisions doing away with notice requirements related to the Council calendar and agendas for committees should be limited to in-person and written notices but maintain online notifications in the rules.

Thank you again for holding this hearing and allowing Citizens Union to present its view. We welcome any questions you may have.



## CITIZENS UNION

### Suggested Edits to Draft Council Rules Amendments

Res. No.

Resolution to Amend the Rules of the Council in relation to improving the responsiveness, transparency, fairness, and inclusiveness of the City Council.

By The Speaker (Council Member Mark-Viverito)

2.15. Attendance Policy - The Speaker shall formulate an attendance policy for committee, stated, charter, and special meetings.

2.40. Personnel and Fiscal Reports - The Speaker shall provide to each member an annual report, which may be included as part of the annual accounting of the Council's actual expenditures required by this rule, detailing the names of all individuals receiving compensation for work performed for the Council, its members or any of its committees, the amount of such compensation for Central staff only, and a title and job description (including identification of the function or division of the Council to which the individual is assigned). The Council shall further make available to the Department of Citywide Administrative Services for the purposes of its Green Book, and on its website, a listing of senior staff for each function or division of the Council and their contact information. Each report to the members shall also set forth the amount of allowance in lieu of expenses received by each Committee chairperson. The Speaker shall publish on its website [quarterly] an annual accounting[s] of the Council's actual [and planned] expenditures in a machine readable format by September 30 of each year, which covers the previous fiscal year, and which is sufficiently detailed to indicate the positions and purposes which have been funded as well as the activities and categories of materials and supplies purchased. Such accountings shall be accompanied by a summary description specifying, at a minimum, the amounts devoted to the following functions and divisions of the Council: [the finance division; the land use division; the infrastructure division; the human services division; the investigations and oversight division; the legal division;] the divisions responsible for the budget and fiscal analysis, the Council's role in the land use process, legislative drafting, and legal services; the Council press office; each committee; the Sergeant at Arms and other security functions; each member's office; [and] the Speaker's staff, including all amounts paid to all consultants as well as the functions of such consultants; and any changes in each of these amounts, other than changes in compensation of members of Central staff, from the Council budget adopted for the fiscal year covered by such accounting.

2.50. Proposed Council Budget - The Speaker shall provide to members copies of the proposed budget of the Council for the following year as soon as practicable. Such proposed

budget shall include, at minimum, the amounts devoted to the following functions and divisions of the Council: the divisions responsible for the budget and fiscal analysis, the Council's role in the land use process, legislative drafting, and legal services; the Council press office; each committee; the Sergeant at Arms and other security functions; each member's office; and the Speaker's staff, including all amounts paid to all consultants as well as the functions of such consultants.

2.55. Discretionary Funding - a. The Speaker shall establish a policy to ensure the integrity and transparency of the Council discretionary funding process. Such policy shall require that all organizations that wish to be considered for discretionary funding from the expense budget or for discretionary funding from the capital budget for a "non-City capital project" shall file an application with the Council or relevant City offices and/or agencies. For the purposes of this rule, a "non-City capital project" is a project for which the applicant organization is required to submit a Capital Funding Request Form for Not-for-Profit Organizations. Applications for discretionary funding from the expense budget or for discretionary funding from the capital budget for a non-City capital project shall be reviewed by the Council and/or relevant City offices and/or agencies to ensure that they are legally eligible to receive the City funds, are capable of providing the services for which they seek funding, are seeking funding for a public purpose, and are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. All expense applications received by the Council shall be made available to the public in a searchable on-line database in summary form. All allocations for discretionary funding from the expense budget or for discretionary funding from the capital budget [for a non-City capital project] shall be made available to the public in a searchable on-line database and in a downloadable, machine-readable format. All organizations that receive discretionary funding from the expense or capital budgets shall be required to complete a brief summary on a standardized form created by the Council of how they have utilized such awarded funds, which shall be posted on the searchable on-line database.

In addition, such policy shall require completion of conflicts of interest disclosure/certification forms as specified by the Speaker from i) all organizations seeking discretionary funding from the expense budget or discretionary funding from the capital budget for a non-City capital project, ii) all Council Members sponsoring discretionary funding allocations and iii) all Council Members prior to voting to designate discretionary funds. Such disclosure/certification forms shall contain either disclosure of any relationship between an organization and applicable City officials and associated persons or firms so that a determination may be made as to whether funding such organization is consistent with the City's Conflicts of Interest Laws and if so whether disclosure is necessary, or a certification that no such relationships exist.

b. Allocation of discretionary funds from the expense budget or discretionary funds from the capital budget for a ~~non-City~~ capital project, designation of recipients of discretionary funds from the expense budget or discretionary funds from the capital budget for a ~~non-City~~ capital project, and delineation of the uses of such funds shall be made solely through the budget adoption or modification process or through a discretionary funding transparency resolution. All designations of expense and capital discretionary funding shall be itemized by sponsor, if applicable, and provided to the public at least 72 hours in advance of any vote by the Council. All such funds shall be distributed between and among sponsoring Council Members for allocation pursuant to a publicly disclosed formula publicly disclosed on the Council's website



that allocates funds either equally among members, or based upon publicly available data about differences between districts, or some combination thereof. The Speaker shall be responsible for proposing no more than one half of all dollars allocated by the Council discretionary expense and capital funding processes. The Council shall provide publicly on its website 72 hours in advance of any vote by the Council the aggregate amounts of all major discretionary funding sources and initiatives that make up capital and expense funding including but not limited to Council initiatives, member items, and citywide funding distributed by the speaker. For each source of funding, the Council shall indicate which member or members, including the speaker, control the allocation of such funding. The Council shall further disclose the formulas for allocation of funding to the member and to organizations receiving such funds.

5.00. Minutes - The Legislative Document Unit shall prepare and [cause to be printed] make available on the Council's website minutes containing the proceedings of each meeting and accurate records of the members actually in attendance. machine readable format in the legislative database pursuant to section 5.110 of the Council Rules. All papers submitted shall constitute a part of the proceedings of each meeting.

5.10. Public Access - The Office of the Speaker shall keep accurate records of the meetings of the committees of the Council, including the members present, committee reports, a description of each matter considered, the memorandum of support and fiscal impact statement accompanying each proposed local law or resolution, the names of witnesses appearing before the committee and copies of their written testimony, when submitted~~submitted~~, and the transcripts of such committee meetings. Such materials shall be open to public inspection free of charge and copying at reasonable fees at such times as is practicable provided in the legislative database pursuant to section 5.110 of the Council Rules. Proceedings and records of the Committee on Standards and Ethics shall be privileged and confidential. ~~Any person requesting copies of such materials shall set forth in writing a specific description of the material sought which shall be submitted to the Office of the Speaker. A complete transcript of each committee meeting shall be available for public inspection at the Office of the City Clerk, Clerk of the Council, free of charge within sixty days of such meeting. [Copies of transcripts requested shall be provided to the public by the Clerk of the Council at a reasonable fee to cover the cost of copying and, if necessary, mailing.]~~ The Speaker shall develop a Public Technology Plan for improving public access to Council materials and meetings, and shall periodically update such Plan as necessary. Such Public Technology Plan shall consider improvements to the legislative database pursuant to section 5.110 of the Council Rules, as well as means to implement Chapter 5 of Title 23 of the Administrative Code and Section 1063(d) of the New York City Charter.

{5.20. Calendars; Contents - The Legislative Document Unit shall prepare and cause to be printed online for the first stated meeting of each month a cumulative list of all proposed local laws, resolutions and other matters submitted for consideration to the Council and referred to a committee, which shall be known as the Calendar. The Calendar shall also include a list of all proposed local laws and resolutions sponsored by each Council Member, with a notation indicating whether such member is a prime sponsor of each such item. The Calendar shall be indexed by subject area and shall indicate the date of introduction and any committee action taken on proposed local laws and resolutions. The Calendar shall also include all local laws and

**Comment [RF1]:**  
This could include the following for the legislative database:  
  
-Allowing the public to comment on bills - NYS Senate does this  
-Providing for subscriptions/RSS feeds for calendars of committees and the council

**Comment [RF2]:** Webcasting and Open Data Laws

resolutions passed by the Council during the current session. The Calendar shall be made available to the public-as-practicable.]

5.30. Certification - The certificate of the Clerk of the Council shall be attached to every proposed local law or resolution to the effect that the same has been duly passed by a vote, as required by the provisions of the New York City Charter [of the City of New York]. The Legislative Document Unit shall transmit the proposed local law or resolution to the Mayor.

[5.40. Records - The Legislative Document Unit shall keep index records convenient for reference of all local laws, resolutions, communications, petitions and other matters introduced in or presented by the Council, together with a complete chronological record of all action taken thereon by the Council or any of its committees. Such records shall be made available to the public during regular business hours.]

5.50. Rules and Charter - The Legislative Document Unit shall provide on the Council website and furnish to each member a copy of the Rules of the Council as prepared and printed under the direction and supervision of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections and shall make available to each member a copy of "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised"[.] and the City Charter.

5.80. Sergeants-at-Arms; Duties - The Sergeants-at-Arms shall be in constant attendance at all sessions of the Council, and, under the direction of the presiding officer, shall aid in enforcing order on the floor, in the gallery, in the lobbies and in the rooms adjoining the Chamber, and also see that no person remains on the floor, unless entitled to the privileges of the same. They shall also place on the desks of the Acting President Pro-Tempore and other members, before each meeting, the journals containing the Proceedings of the Council, the calendars and agendas provided for in these Rules, papers and the proposed local laws and resolutions.

5.110. Legislative Tracking - The Office of the Speaker shall make available on the internet for use by the public a legislative tracking database containing the number, text, sponsorship and status of all proposed local laws and resolutions, committee reports, agendas, hearing testimony, transcripts, videos, committee assignments, [and] voting records of members and other associated materials in the public record that can practicably be made available. All proposed local laws and resolutions in the public record as well as any information associated with each proposed local law or resolution available through the database will be provided to the general public in a computer-machine readable format, if practicable in html or xml, at no cost and without restriction as soon as practicable, in order to facilitate public engagement with the Council through the use of third-party software.

6.00. Preparation and Presentation of Papers - The word paper when used herein shall include all local laws, resolutions, petitions, communications from City, county and borough offices and reports which may be proposed to the Council for action. All papers other than committee reports shall be presented in writing and in quadruplicate, endorsed with the name of the introducer or originator, and with the exception of committee reports, must be deposited with

the Office of the Speaker before 1 p.m., at least three business days, excluding municipal holidays [Sundays,] preceding the meeting day.

The style of local laws shall be "Be it enacted by the Council as follows." Every local law shall embrace only one subject. The title shall briefly refer to the subject matter.

Every other paper shall be endorsed with a short statement of its subject matter. All proposed local laws and resolutions are to be assigned a chronological introduction or resolution number and shall appear on the agenda in alphabetical order according to the name of the first-named prime sponsor, except that the Speaker's name shall appear first. If amended, the number of the proposed local law or resolution shall be followed by a designation beginning with the letter A, and continuing sequentially through the alphabet with each amended version.

6.20. Sponsors - a. The first-named sponsors on all proposed local laws and resolutions shall be deemed to be the prime sponsors. In the event the Speaker of the Council is not a prime sponsor, the name of such member shall appear in the sequence in which such member requested to be added as a sponsor.

b. The first-named prime sponsor's approval shall not be necessary before the names of any co-prime sponsors may be added to proposed local laws or resolutions. However, approval shall be necessary where the first-named prime sponsor has so indicated. In either event, a member may add his or her name as a sponsor [within 48 hours] after the introduction of a proposed local law or resolution by making such request in writing to the Legislative Document Unit. Writing shall be inclusive of email requests.

c. Certain legislative matters, as designated by the Speaker, may be introduced under the sponsor name, "by the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections Committee". Legislative matters sponsored under such process shall continue to be assigned to the appropriate committee for its consideration.

6.30. Papers Referred to Committee; Change of Reference - Every proposed local law or resolution introduced shall, upon its introduction, be referred by the Speaker to a committee to consider and report thereon. The Speaker may also refer proposed local laws or resolutions to two committees for their joint consideration. When a matter is jointly referred, each committee shall vote separately on the matter and an affirmative vote of both committees shall be required in order to report such matter to the full Council. At any time prior to the first meeting of such committee to consider such proposed local law or resolution, such reference may be changed by the Speaker. The first-named prime sponsor may, at any time prior to the first meeting of such committee to consider such proposed local law or resolution, petition the Speaker to change the committee to which the matter has been referred.

6.40. Type of Enactment - a. All enactments shall be by local law or resolution.

b. The introduction of all proposed local laws shall be accompanied by a [memorandum in support] plain language summary of the bill which shall be posted on the Council's legislative tracking database and updated when the applicable bill is amended[include a brief explanation of the intent of the proposed local law].

6.55 Preliminary Fiscal Estimate - A first named prime sponsor of any proposed local law that has been introduced may request the preparation of a preliminary fiscal estimate for such proposed local law at any time, which shall be produced within 60 days of such a request to the

extent practicable. Such estimate shall be provided on the Council's legislative tracking database pursuant to section 5.110 of the Council Rules.

6.60. Legislative Drafting Services – a. The Speaker shall ensure that the Council central staff provides legislative drafting services to all members on an equitable and confidential basis. Confidentiality precludes Council central staff from refusing to provide legislative drafting services to any member on the basis that similar legislation is currently being drafted for another member.

b. Some or all of such drafting services shall be provided by a dedicated drafting unit within Council central staff, the primary function of which is the drafting of legislation.

c. Members shall have access to a tracking database that identifies the staff member to whom each of their requests has been assigned, the date the member made the request, and which provides the status of each such request, including whether drafting has taken longer than 60 days pursuant to section 6.60(e) of the Council Rules, and the number of requests submitted before the member's request that are not yet drafted.

d. Members shall submit all proposed local laws and resolutions and proposals for laws and resolutions to [such unit] the legislative division prior to introduction; provided that any proposed local law or resolution submitted by any member to the Speaker's office in conformance with the rules of this chapter shall be deemed to have been approved by the legislative [drafting unit] division.

e. Central staff, to the extent practicable, shall respond to requests for legislation in the order in which they were received, providing a draft of the proposal to the requesting Member within sixty days of the date of [making] such request.

f. Upon request, a member may view any legal memorandum drafted by staff of the legislative division regarding a request such member has made for legislation. All members may view any legal memorandum drafted by present or previous staff of the legislative division regarding introduced legislation or requests made by former members.

g. Members may request amendments to legislation for which they are the first-named prime sponsor at any time, and such amended legislation shall be posted to the Council's website.

7.00. Appointment a. Prior to the establishment of the membership of any other committee, and after the selection of the Speaker, the Council shall elect the membership of the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections. All other committees and appointments thereto shall be recommended by the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections, approved by the Council and published in the Calendar. All standing committee chairpersons shall be elected by the Council as a whole. Once elected, a standing committee or subcommittee chairperson may be removed prior to the end of the session without their consent only by the uncoupled vote of 2/3 of all current members. The standing committees of the Council shall bear the following titles and possess the following substantive matter jurisdictions:

**CONTRACTS** - Procurement Policy Board, review of City procurement policies and procedures, oversight over government contracts, Mayor's Office of Contract[s] Services and collection agency contracts.

**CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS** - Department of Cultural Affairs, [Libraries] libraries, [Museums] museums, Art Commission, New York City Commission for the United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol [International Business], Mayor's Office of Special Projects and Community Events, and to encourage harmony among the citizens of New York City, to promote the image of New York City and enhance the relationship of its citizens with the international community.

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION** - Department of Environmental Protection and Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability.

**JUVENILE JUSTICE** – [Department of Juvenile Justice] Division of Youth and Family Justice within the Administration for Children's Services.

**MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY, ALCOHOLISM, [DRUG] SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DISABILITY SERVICES** - Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (issues of mental health, developmental disability and alcoholism services) and Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities.

**RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY** – Office of Recovery and Resiliency, [Issues] issues relating to recovery in Hurricane Sandy-affected communities, including the Build It Back Program, and the Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability as it relates to efforts to make New York City more resilient in the face of climate change, and preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies.

**YOUTH SERVICES** - Youth Board, Department of Youth and Community Development, Interagency Coordinating Council on Youth, and youth related programs.

7.10. Ex-Officio Members - The Public Advocate, Speaker, Majority Leader, Minority Leader, and the Deputy Leader for Policy shall be ex-officio members of all committees. Ex-Officio members of committees may ask questions and make statements, but shall not have the right to vote on matters before any committee to which they are an Ex-Officio member.

7.40. Staff - Each standing committee shall have at least one full-time ~~staff person~~ senior counsel assigned to it from Council central staff, as practicable. The senior [staff person] counsel assigned to each committee shall be subject to the ongoing approval of [designated by] the chairperson of such committee.

7.50. Meetings - a. All committee meetings shall be held at the call of the chairperson of the committee. The Speaker may not prevent a committee meeting called by the chairperson of a committee from taking place except by a written finding that the topic is outside the jurisdiction of the committee, the rationale as to why the topic is outside the jurisdiction of the committee, and which indicates for the topic the appropriate committee of jurisdiction, no room is available for such meeting at the time called, or there are insufficient staff resources for such meeting and such committee has already met or planned to meet once in that month. The majority of any committee may petition, in writing, the chairperson of said committee to call a meeting to consider the subject matter of such petition. If the chairperson of said committee fails to call such

meeting within ten days from the receipt of said petition, said majority may petition, in writing, the Speaker, who shall issue such call.

b. No committee meeting shall be convened on the day of a stated or special meeting of the Council unless the item to be considered by such committee, will, out of necessity, be proposed as a General Order for that day or such committee meeting is called with the consent of two-thirds of the members of such committee.

c. Each standing committee, except for the Committees on State Legislation, Standards and Ethics, Oversight and Investigations, and Rules, Privileges and Elections, beginning in the month subsequent to the first appointment of members to committees, at the beginning of the Council term, shall meet no less than once [a month] every two months; except that the Committee on Land Use shall meet no less than once a month; and except that no committees are required to meet during the months of July and August. Subcommittees or special committees shall meet as needed to complete their work.

d. Committees shall provide reasonable advance notice at least seventy-two hours where practical of committee meetings to the public. Such notice shall be given to the news media and shall be posted in a public location at City Hall and the web site.

e. ~~{Written agendas for committee meetings shall be prepared and distributed posted on the Council's website, electronically delivered to each Council Member, as complete as practicable, to all members of the committee at least five days prior to the call of such meeting.}~~ The chairperson of each committee shall ensure that representatives of City governmental entities affirm prior to testifying at a committee meeting that their testimony is truthful to the best of their knowledge, information and belief.

[7.80. Reports of the Council Committees - Each committee shall report, in writing, on all matters that receive a hearing before it, with a brief statement of facts and its opinion in relation thereto, proposing the necessary action by the Council, except that a report of the Committee on Standards and Ethics on a disciplinary matter regarding a particular person shall also contain the findings of fact reached after conducting a review or hearing and upon which the Committee bases its recommendations. The report itself shall not be subject to amendment. Every report shall state the time when the subject matter of such report was referred to the committee by the Council, and the action, if any, taken by the committee pursuant to any instructions of the Council.

When a majority of a committee has reported to the Council its recommendation concerning a proposed local law, resolution or other matter, any member or members who have voted in the minority may present a minority report. All such majority and minority reports shall be in writing and signed by the members of the committee voting either in favor of or against the report as the case may be. The minority report shall not be deemed to reflect the legislative intention of the committee or the Council.]

7.110. [Rights of Ex-Officio Members - Ex- Officio members of committees may ask questions and make statements, but shall not have the right to vote.] Supermajority Bill Sponsorship - If a proposed local law or resolution is sponsored by, at any time, at least 34 members, a meeting of the committee to which such proposed local law or resolution has been referred shall be scheduled within 60 days of such threshold being reached for the purpose of determining future action. Such meeting shall not be required if (i) the number of sponsors of such proposed local law or resolution drops below 34 members at any point prior to the end of

such 60 day time period, or prior to such meeting, whichever is earlier; or (ii) at any time, the first-named prime sponsor of such proposed local law or resolution writes to the chair of the committee to which such legislation has been referred requesting a deferral of such meeting. The first-named prime sponsor may retract a deferral request by writing to the chair of the relevant committee, after which such hearing-meeting shall be scheduled within 60 days. At a meeting held pursuant to this rule, the committee must vote on whether or not to schedule a hearing on the proposed local law or resolution.

7.180. Formation of a Task Force on Committees. The Rules Committee shall appoint a task force following the final report issued by a quadrennial commission on compensation to review the report to the Council with respect to changes regarding potential committee consolidations and changes in committee stipends to improve the functioning of the City Council.

8.20. Admission to Floor of Council Chamber - No person, including but not limited to registered lobbyists, shall be admitted to the floor of the Council Chamber during the stated and special meetings except for the following individuals, who shall be permitted on the floor in those areas as the Speaker may designate:

a. The Mayor, Deputy Mayors or employees of the Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

b. The employees of the Council and the Clerk of the Council and his or her employees as are required by the Council to assist in the performance of its functions, including the Counsel to the Minority Leader when required by the Minority Leader to assist in the performance of his or her duties at such meeting.

c. Heads of City departments and agencies, when their presence is requested or required by the Council.

d. Members of the press in the sections of the Chamber assigned for their use. Such other persons as may be granted the courtesy of admission to the floor.

e. Former Council Members[, including but not limited to those former Council Members who are registered lobbyists,] in the area of the Council Chambers designated for VIPs.

9.160. Two Minute Rule – [a.] A member desiring to be excused from voting, or to explain a vote at a stated meeting may, when his or her name is called, make a statement for no more than two minutes, of the reasons for making such request, or for voting in such a manner, provided that if such member has engaged in debate under the ten (10) minute rule, he or she may not explain his or her vote.

[b. Only one sponsor of a matter, at the time of introduction, shall have the privilege to speak thereon but he or she shall not speak for more than two minutes.]

9.220. General Discussion - Any member, when recognized by the presiding officer, may speak on any issue, including any matter being introduced, during the period of general discussion. Such member may enter written materials or prepared statements of no more than five (5) pages into the official record [of] or may speak for no more than a total of two (2) minutes unless permission to extend the time is granted by a majority of the members of the Council present.

10.25. Rule Advisory Opinions - Any member may request an advisory opinion from the counsel to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections with respect to questions about any Council rule or rules, including any questions relating to compliance therewith.

10.40. [Television] Video Coverage - The Council and its committees shall make their public meetings and hearings available for cablecasting and broadcasting, shall be recorded and posted on the City Council website and by webcast where practicable pursuant to section 1063(d) of the New York City Charter.

11.10. Subcommittees - a. The Land Use Committee shall have the following subcommittees: (i) Zoning and Franchises; (ii) Planning Dispositions and Concessions; (iii) Landmarks, Public Sitings and Maritime Uses; and (iv) such others as shall be determined by the Speaker. The Speaker shall determine the jurisdiction of the subcommittees and shall promulgate a list, which the Speaker may amend from time to time, of those matters within the jurisdiction of each subcommittee.

b. [The Speaker shall appoint the chairs of the subcommittees.] The chair of the committee or a subcommittee may appoint a member of the committee or subcommittee as the case may be, to act as a temporary chair to conduct a meeting in the chair's absence.

c. The chair of the Land Use Committee shall be an ex-officio member of all the subcommittees. As an ex-officio member, the chair may vote on matters before a subcommittee only if the chair's vote is required to break a tie.

d. The hearings and meetings of each subcommittee shall be held at the call of the chair of the subcommittee pursuant to the notice and other requirements of section 11.30 and other applicable provisions of these rules.

e. Each subcommittee shall consider all matters referred to the subcommittee at a meeting and shall report on any action it takes to the Land Use Committee pursuant to a schedule that will enable both the Land Use Committee and the Council to act within any time limits for Council action prescribed by law. The chair of the Land Use Committee may call-up to the committee any matter referred to a subcommittee if a call-up is necessary to enable the committee and the Council to act on a matter within any time limit for Council action prescribed by law. The Land Use Committee may close the record of the public hearing on any such matter, if the record has not already been closed by the subcommittee.

11.30. Calendar and Public Notice - a. The chairs of the Land Use Committee and the subcommittees shall cause to be prepared a regular calendar of the meetings of the Land Use Committee and each of its subcommittees. The calendar shall be posted on the Council's website, electronically delivered to each Council Member, shall be made available to the public free of charge at City Hall, and shall be [mailed] electronically delivered to each borough president, each community board and a designated staff member at a main branch of the public library in each borough. Each calendar shall include all matters referred to the committee and subcommittees and shall indicate the meetings of the committee and the subcommittees at which each matter is scheduled for public hearing or consideration. The failure to include a matter in the calendar shall bar the committee and its subcommittees from voting with respect to the matter unless the matter is added to the agenda as far in advance of the meeting at which the vote is to occur as is practicable and not less than two thirds of the members of the committee vote to add the matter to the agenda. The failure to include a matter in the calendar shall bar the



committee and its subcommittees from holding a public hearing on the matter unless (i) the matter is added to the agenda as far in advance of the hearing as is practicable, (ii) any notice requirements in the City Charter are satisfied, and (iii) not less than two thirds of the members of the committee or subcommittee vote to add the matter to the agenda. The chair of the Land Use Committee may call meetings of the Land Use Committee in addition to those meetings on the calendar, and the chair of a subcommittee may call meetings of the subcommittee in addition to those meetings on the calendar, pursuant to the notice and other requirements of this section and the other applicable provisions of these rules.

b. Public notice of the time and place of each Land Use Committee and subcommittee meeting scheduled at least one week prior thereto shall be given to the news media and shall be posted on the Council's website [in a public location at City Hall at least seventy-two hours before such meeting]. Public notice of the time and place of every other meeting shall be given, to the extent practicable, to the news media and shall be posted on the Council's website [in a public location at City Hall at a reasonable time prior thereto]. In addition, public notice of all public hearings of the Council, the Land Use Committee and its subcommittees required pursuant to section 197-d of the City Charter shall be published in the City Record not less than five days prior to such hearing.

CITIZENS UNION  
SUMMARY OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDING TOTALS  
AND PROPOSED RULES REFORM CHANGES  
APRIL 2014

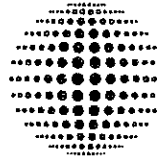
The proposed rules reforms provide for a significant diminution of the speaker's authority to direct member items to individual members. Based on FY 2014 funding levels, Speaker Quinn had discretion over all but about \$17 million in discretionary funds (from the base amount for expense) out of a total of \$721 million in total expense and capital funds – only 2 percent of this total was distributed to members due to the base amount they would receive for expense funds. Based on previous funding levels, the City Council is proposing changing its rules so that approximately \$285 million (about \$35 million in expense and \$250 in capital) could potentially be distributed to members based on equality or a formula out of the \$721 million in total expense and capital funding – about 39 percent of the total amount.

EXPENSE FUNDS	FY 2014	FY 2013	Previous Process	FY 2015 Process
Speaker's List	\$15,045,000	\$15,724,500	Discretion of speaker	Discretion of speaker; limited to 50% of member item allocation
Member Items	\$34,173,872	\$33,517,393	\$340,464 base for members; rest at discretion of speaker	\$660,000 base comprised of: ~\$400,000 base for local initiatives and \$260,000 for youth and aging grants; additional poverty amount of up to 25% of local, for as much as ~\$760,000 total
Delegation Funds	\$451,537	\$459,999	Discretion of speaker	Discretion of speaker
Citywide Initiatives	\$124,009,089	\$155,135,070	City Council collectively with Speaker	City Council collectively with Speaker
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE FUNDS</b>	<b>\$173,679,498</b>	<b>\$204,836,962</b>	Determined through negotiations with executive	Determined through negotiations with executive

CAPITAL FUNDS	FY 2014	FY 2013	Previous Process	FY 2015 Process
Citywide Projects (Speaker's List)	\$143,186,000	\$102,249,000	Discretion of speaker	Discretion of speaker
Individually Sponsored Member Items	\$253,048,000	\$223,223,000	Discretion of speaker	Distributed equally across members
Joint and Delegation Projects	\$151,556,000	\$163,840,000	Discretion of speaker	Discretion of speaker
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$547,790,000</b>	<b>\$489,312,000</b>	Determined through negotiations with executive	Determined through negotiations with executive

## Other Ways the Speaker is Giving Up Authority in Proposed Council Rules

- enables committees to issue subpoenas rather than with approval of the entire Council
- clarifies when the speaker can stop committees chairs from holding hearings; an improvement in practice
- requires 2/3 stand-alone vote to replace committee chair rather than speaker doing so unilaterally
- gives members access to database to see status of bill drafting requests to ensure compliance with 60-day drafting rule
- gives members access to legal memos upon request if, for example, a bill is considered to be preempted by state law or ruled unconstitutional
- requires a committee vote on a hearing on a bill 60 days after 34 members sponsor the legislation provided no sponsor retracts their sponsorship or the prime sponsor does not request a deferral of the vote



**PARTNERSHIP**  
for New York City

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND  
ELECTIONS OF THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL**

**HEARING ON RESO. 184-2014**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2014**

**JESSICA WALKER  
VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

The Partnership for New York City represents the city's business leadership and its largest private sector employers. We commend the Council for its inclusive approach to rules reform and want to offer an idea that would provide Council members with an in-depth assessment of how each bill might affect job creation and retention, unemployment, and business startups and growth.

Last year the Partnership released the *NYC Jobs Blueprint*, which identifies that the city must maintain at least a 3% rate of growth in annual economic output in order to maintain a consistent rate of job creation, a broad and robust tax base, and funding to deliver the municipal services that people need and want. We proposed policies and programs that could help achieve this objective. One of our recommendations is to conduct an analysis of the economic impact of proposed legislation, with input from industry. The city economy seems strong today, but there are real vulnerabilities that must be considered when new laws are written or existing laws and regulations are amended.

In a national survey by the Kauffman Foundation, entrepreneurs ranked New York City as the least friendly place to start a business, largely due to high costs of living and doing business and a difficult regulatory and legal environment. New York faces increasing competition from other cities and countries that are seeking to attract our jobs, businesses and talent. The city has already lost over 100,000 mid-level jobs in the past decade and we predict that this trend will accelerate unless New York makes a serious effort to address the issues that are contributing to job relocation.

New York City does not currently have a formal process for analysis of the jobs and economic impact of proposed legislation. The Council's Finance Division conducts reviews of the fiscal implications of some proposals, but generally not their economic impact. By contrast, San Francisco has an Office of Economic Analysis that identifies and reports on all legislation introduced at the Board of Supervisors that might have a material economic impact on that city. The Office analyzes the likely impacts of legislation on business attraction and retention, job creation, tax and fee revenues to the City, and other matters relating to the overall economic health of the City. The Office is part of the Controller's Budget and Analysis Division and is staffed with three economists. The Office submits its analysis to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days of receiving the subject legislation from the Clerk of the Board, unless the Board grants an extension for legislation of unusual scope or complexity. The Office's analysis is submitted to the Board of Supervisors prior to the legislation being heard in committee.

We urge the Council to include a commitment for economic impact analysis of relevant legislative proposals and a plan to develop the capacity for economic analysis of legislation that might have consequences for jobs and the economy. This function could be developed with support from the Independent Budget Office, the Comptroller's Office as well as academic and private sector experts. The Partnership would be pleased to be a resource to assist in this effort. Thank you for your consideration. We remain committed to working together to encourage job growth in New York.

Contact:

*Jessica Walker*  
*VP, Government Affairs*  
*(212) 493-7474*  
*[jwalker@pfnyc.org](mailto:jwalker@pfnyc.org)*

## Testimony to the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections

Amending the Rules of the Council in relation to improving responsiveness,  
transparency, fairness, and inclusiveness of the Council

Good Afternoon, and thank you Chairman Lander and other members of the Rules Committee for holding this timely hearing. My name is Dominic Mauro, and I am testifying today on behalf of Reinvent Albany, where I am the Staff Attorney. Reinvent Albany also co-chairs the New York City Transparency Working Group.

Our focus within the NYC Transparency Working Group is on using technology to increase transparency and public participation. This said, we strongly support the recommendations made by NYPIRG and Citizens Union, and urge council to adopt them in order to create a fairer and more transparent legislative process.

We particularly support the proposed changes in the rules that call for the council's spending to be more transparent. Regarding spending and budget transparency, we recommend that the following expense and budget data be put online on the council site in a detailed, machine readable, CSV format that can be downloaded by the public, and on the city's open data portal where it can be accessed via an API.

### Spending Transparency via Downloadable Machine-Readable Files

1. Council internal operational budget.
2. Council discretionary capital grants
3. New York City's operating and capital budget, broken down by agency and project per the current non-machine readable PDF budget documents.

### Create a More Publicly Accessible Council Website

We applaud the council's intent to publish a Public Technology Plan, which we should be updated annually. Overall, we hope to see a more interactive council website, which allows for more public comments and feedback, and provides more useful constituent service features for council members.

## Provide Better Legislative Data and a Mobile Open API Standard

Information about council bills should be accessible using smart phone and mobile devices – which is how most New Yorkers access the Internet. Doing this requires council to make bill data available to apps developers via an Application Program Interface that essentially “streams” data from the council website. We would also suggest publishing calendars for hearings and meetings, which members of the public could subscribe to on their phones and mobile devices.

Thank you again for holding this hearing, and for the opportunity to to testify.



**Date:** Wednesday, 6 May 2014

**From:** Noel Hidalgo, Executive Director of BetaNYC

**To:** NY City Council's Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections.

**Subject:** Amend the Rules of the Council in relation to improving the responsiveness, transparency, fairness, and inclusiveness of the City Council.

Dear Speaker, Chairperson, and Council Members,

Due to a family emergency, I am unable to join you. David Moore will read this testimony into the record.

It is a great honor to come before you and represent New York City's technology community. Particularly, a rather active group of technologists - the civic hacker.

BetaNYC<sup>1</sup> is pleased to see most of these proposed rules. First, we ask the Council to ensure that the legislative tracking system is deployed with a public application protocol interface (API). Additionally, we are excited for the Speaker to create a Public Technology Plan.

BetaNYC works to create a New York City government for the people, by the people, for the 21 century. Every day, we ask "*how can we build tools to make a difference in people's lives and increase opportunities of engagement for all New Yorkers?*"

To truly ensure that this plan is as public as possible, we ask the Council to consider three things:

#### **Host Civic Technology Townhalls and Listening Sessions**

We ask that the Council hold its own series of civic technology townhalls and listening sessions. These townhalls should be in all five boroughs and ensure the diversity of New York is represented. At these sessions, we ask you to ask us "*how can we deploy tools to make a difference in people's lives and increase opportunities of engagement for all New Yorkers?*"

Within these townhalls, we ask the Council to take a leading role and help connect the city's technology community to the communities that are traditionally under represented. Together, let us find technology tools and engagement strategies that bring us together and create ONE New York.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://betaNYC.us>



### **Consider Open Technology First**

Just as you ask for public comments on pending legislation, open technology extends that ideology to technology. The same openness and participatory environment that governs this city should govern our online and technological engagement tools.

When the Council considers adopting new technologies, we ask the Council first consider open and adaptable tools. Across the planet, these open source tools have proven themselves to be secure, flexible, and builds public trust.<sup>2</sup>

Also, we want to help. Adopting open source technology ensures the city's technology community can help you build a connected city for the 21st century. By adopting open source technology, the Council can stand on the shoulders of giants and ensure all New Yorkers have the ability to grow this democracy.

### **Create a City Council Chief Information or Technology Officer**

Lastly, we reiterate our initial ask for a Council Chief Information or Technology Officer.<sup>3</sup>

The Council needs its own technology representative. The Council needs an internal technology advocate who can best represent opportunities to Council members and the city's technology community. Most importantly, the Council needs someone who can ensure a cost effective implementation of the Council's Public Technology Plan.

We thank you for your time and leadership,

Noel Hidalgo

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/egov/digital-government/digital-government.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://blog.betanyc.org/post/77734554241/betanycs-testimony-in-support-of-nycouncil-rules>

To: NYC Council - Committee on Rules

From: David Moore, Participatory Politics Foundation

Re: **Rules Reform Testimony on Open Data to Legislation**

May 7th, 2014



To the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of open data for municipal government. I'm the Executive Director of the [Participatory Politics Foundation](#), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with a mission to increase civic engagement. Our flagship website, [OpenCongress.org](#), was the leading non-profit website for tracking the U.S. Congress from its launch in 2007 to last year, when the site was acquired by the Sunlight Foundation. OpenCongress had 27 million visits, 69 million pageviews, and billions of automated requests for our open data.

Our organization has been active in civic technology and [open-government communities](#) since 2006, especially here in New York where we're based. We've followed as more NYC municipal data was liberated by Local Law 11 of 2012 and the council's webcasting initiative. Meanwhile, the NY Senate has led the country in opening up its legislative data on open-source web platforms. Here on February 24th, 2014, I delivered [testimony](#) calling for open-data, and specifically an open API<sup>1</sup> for municipal legislative info, as a necessary step for transparency, public accountability, and civic engagement with the NYC Council.

In Feb., I described the significant public demand for open-data around city government, the possibility of new applications (both commercial and non-profit) built on top of open-data, and importantly, the ability to make the business of city council more accessible to more communities across the city (including language translations). I offered the assistance of the open-data community in working with Granicus, vendors of the [Legistar](#) software that displays NYC legislation publicly, to write and support an open API. I'll focus my testimony on access to official council legislation for public input, as opposed to open-data more widely.

For open-government goals, the draft rules reform document section 5.110, Legislative Tracking, is a good step forward, but is still short of meeting the potential of an open API for city council legislation. It would be a very good outcome for local laws, as stated in rules reform, to be made available to the public in machine-readable formats, free of charge and libre. Local bill info being "available through the database" (pending specific implementation) will indeed enable new & useful transparency and engagement resources to be built - for example, a website connecting you to your city council member's votes and committee memberships, or an email alert service for new zoning regulations. Similar free web resources in cities such as Chicago and Boston receive thousands of visits every month. I strongly recommend that bulk data access be interoperable with the open data conventions of the [Open Civic Data](#) API and "OCD-ID's", for re-use. But depending on implementation, this is a good step for public feedback on NYC legislation.

But while bulk data access is a good first step, it remains short of an open API to [Legistar](#), which could be more widely and precisely integrated with other websites. (To be clear, an open API would serve as an adjunct, not a replacement, to enhanced bulk data access to Legistar and other data sets.) As currently articulated in rules reform, a civic developer would be required to regularly download data in bulk, determine what's changed since last download, and pick out the information he or she wishes to use or display. One primary benefit of an open API to Legistar is timeliness, with the latest official information being pushed automatically to outside websites. A second is that it's

---

<sup>1</sup> API stands for Application Programming Interface - I often describe it as an automated, documented, precise and timely method of transferring data between websites.

more useful for web developers, who will be the practitioners making council information more widely-disseminated on outside websites.

It's the difference between being able to positively target the info you need (via API) versus searching a haystack (bulk data):

- **An open API is far more timely, to enable useful alert services and tracking the most-recent legislative actions by committees; conveying the sense of developments as-they-happen, as opposed to requiring manual refreshing of the data.**
- An open API is more focused - as the Philadelphia [open-data guide](#) details, "data listings on this site included detailed API documentation, code samples and helper libraries."
- An open API will help in citizen watchdogs, such as the [NYC Transparency Working Group](#), to develop far more user-friendly public info websites than the official Legistar site alone.

... for example, the following use cases:

- With an open API, local media websites could display a page of the latest council votes, or the latest meeting agendas & minutes, or video of events, without needing to run a manual update.
- With an open API, community board websites could display the latest status of resolutions in major issue areas they're tracking - for example, housing - in innovative, user-friendly ways.
- Local small businesses could more easily display relevant resolutions & local laws - on topics such as those mentioned on the official council [website](#): "The Council has passed landmark legislation on designated smoking areas in public places, campaign finance, anti-apartheid, solid-waste recycling and restrictions on assault weapons."
- Reduces the barrier to entry. New developers would not need to download a large data set and filter-out what they need, but rather, make a precise call for the local law information they need. This will incentivize wider dissemination & discussion & re-use & positive **experiments** with city open-data than bulk access alone.
- Want better SMS alert services & public-feedback platforms for NYC Council legislation? Bulk data is somewhat workable, but bulk data combined with an open API is state-of-the-art and best-practice.

It should be noted that the implementation details of bulk data access with Granicus are significant here - exactly how often will municipal legislative info be refreshed in the publicly-available database, and how will public feature or data requests be addressed? These issues could prove to be hurdles in practice. Again, the civic tech community would enthusiastically volunteer to help develop and support an open API for municipal legislative data.

The NYC Council has a historic opportunity to lead the way in open-data by making its legislation available via API. Currently, no other U.S. municipal government publishes its own open API of legislative activities, such as committee agendas - New York City could be the first to do so, ahead of S.F. and other city #opengov leaders. Also, the experience of developing an API for legislation could inform the work to develop more open APIs for budget and operations information. Public data on legislation should be made available to the public via open API, as a sophisticated, useful, and contemporary method of publishing data online for open-government.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this aspect of the important rules reform process. Questions and comments welcome.

David Moore - Participatory Politics Foundation - [OpenGovernment.org](#) & [AskThem.io](#)  
[drm@ppolitics.org](mailto:drm@ppolitics.org) - (917) 753-3462

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GENE RUSSZANOFF

Address: 311 112 STREET

I represent: NYPIRG

Address: 9 MURRAY ST NYC

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: David Moore

Address: 148 Lafayette St. 12th Fl.

I represent: Participatory Politics Fdn.

Address: " NY, NY 10013

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Noel Hidalgo

Address: 148 Lafayette St. 12th Fl.

I represent: Beta NYC

Address: " NY, NY 10013

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 5/7/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SUSAN LERNER

Address: 80 Broad St. Ste 2703

I represent: Common Cause NY

Address: same

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 184

in favor  in opposition

Date: 5/7/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jessica Walker

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Partnership for New York City

Address: One Battery Park Plaza, NY, NY 10004

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alex Camacho

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Citizens Union

Address: \_\_\_\_\_