

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON AGING  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SENIOR CENTERS

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March 13, 2017  
Start: 10:34 a.m.  
Recess: 12:53 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:

MARGARET S. CHIN  
Chairperson

PAUL A. VALLONE  
Co-Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

KAREN KOSLOWITZ  
DEBORAH L. ROSE  
CHAIM M. DEUTSCH  
MARK TREYGER  
ROSIE MENDEZ

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

Donna Corrado  
Justice Commissioner for NYC Department for Aging

Sasha Fishman  
Associate Commissioner for Budget and Fiscal  
Operations

Rita Karig  
Member of the Riverdale Section of the Bronx

Bobbie Sackman  
Director of Public Policy with Live on New York

Nora Moran  
Policy Analyst at United Neighborhood Houses

Jeanette Estima  
Policy Analyst at FPWA

Rachel Sherrow  
Associate Executive Director at City Meals on  
Wheels

Chris Widelo  
Associate State Director for AARP

Jackie Poling  
Representative of JASA Senior Center

Po-Ling Ng  
Open Door Senior Center

Molly Krakowski  
Director of Legislative Affairs at JASA

Sasha Kesler  
Selfhelp Community Services

Thomas Weber  
SAGE

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

Leo Palumbo  
Chatholic Charities

Sari Teichman  
Advisory Board of the Serovich Senior Center,  
Center for Balanced Living

Kayla Chen  
Manager of the Later in Life Program at Womanhood

Karen Taylor  
Program Director of Educational Alliances  
Weinberg Center for Balanced Living

Alice Fisher  
Radical Age Movement

Alexa Sone  
Radical Age Movement

Miranda Applebaum  
Assistant Director of Accessibility and Guest  
Services at Lincoln Center

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[gavel]

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Good morning.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Good morning.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you so much  
for being here seniors.

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[applause]

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: We got to do this,  
9 we cannot make a lot of noise, alright. And I thank  
10 you to all the sergeants for putting up all the  
11 chairs so that every senior is accommodated and you  
12 could be in this room. So, good morning, I am  
13 Margaret Chin, Chair of the Committee on Ageing.  
14 Welcome to the fiscal 2018 preliminary budget  
15 hearing for the aging committee held jointly with  
16 the subcommittee on Senior Center Chair by Council  
17 Member Paul Vallone. Today we will hear testimony  
18 from the Department for the Aging also referred to  
19 as DFTA on its proposed budget for fiscal 2018 and  
20 general agency operations within its proposed  
21 306.4-million-dollar budget as well as performance  
22 indicator for aging services within the fiscal 2017  
23 preliminary mayor's management report. As chair of  
24 the aging committee I haven't been shy of  
25 proclaiming that fiscal year 2018 as the year of

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2 the senior. Seniors are the fastest growing  
3 population in the city. There are 1.4 million  
4 adults age 60 and over in New York City totaling  
5 more than 17 percent of the city's residence. By  
6 2030 the number of seniors will grow by nearly 50  
7 percent and comprise of 20 percent of the city's  
8 total population, one in five. Now more than ever  
9 it's the time to increase the city's investments  
10 for senior services and ensure that no seniors are  
11 on waiting lists of vital DFTA programs such as  
12 case management and home care. The Department for  
13 the ageing fiscal 2018 preliminary budget totals  
14 approximately 306.4 million dollars a decrease of  
15 24.4 million or 8.4 percent when compared to the  
16 fiscal 2017 adopted budget. The majority of the  
17 decrease can be attributed to the absence of the  
18 onetime council funding for senior services in  
19 fiscal 2017. The council allocated 30 million  
20 dollars to DFTA in fiscal 2017 or nine percent of  
21 the agencies overall fiscal 2017 budget. The  
22 majority of these council initiatives supported  
23 core services that the agency provides and are  
24 inadequately funded such as senior centers, elder  
25 abuse, social adult day care and naturally

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occurring retirement communities. At every budget hearing for the last three years I have advocated the administration baseline council funding for core services that DFTA provides instead of relying on council funding year over year to fill the gap in the agencies budget and this year is no different. As part of my mission to make this the year of the senior I want to increase the baseline funding for core DFTA services. This fiscal year I'm also advocating that all senior center contracts be reviewed and budgets amended so that each DFTA's 234 neighborhood senior centers are adequately funded in terms of space, transportation, programming, and staffing cores for fiscal 2018 and in the out years. Before I introduce Council Member Vallone, Chair of the Subcommittee on Senior Center I want to thank the committee staff for their work in preparing for this hearing, Dohini Sompura the unit head and policy analyst to the committee, Emily Rooney and we will now Hear from Council Member Vallone and then we will follow by Justice Commissioner, Donna Corrado. Council Member Vallone?

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COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you  
Chair Chin. What a beautiful sight, thank you for  
all... for braving the cold this morning, for your  
patience for getting seats this morning, this is  
what gives us the energy and the inspiration, there  
has been many hearings during this budget period,  
this room has never looked like this so to everyone  
in the room thank you very much.

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[applause]

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COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: So as Chair  
Chin said I am the Chair of the Senior Centers for  
the Subcommittee and the core of DFTA service  
portfolio is the department city wide network of  
234 neighborhood senior centers and 16 innovative  
senior centers that offer our older New Yorkers hot  
meals and opportunities for socialization and  
recreation through a wide array of activities  
designed to improve our quality of life. My  
greatest concern this fiscal year is the fate  
executive budget proposal regarding Title 20  
funding. Title 20 is an important state funding  
stream for our city's senior centers. The Aging  
Committee does not want to see any senior center  
closing if Title 20 funding is withdrawn from the

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2 state and I want to hear more from the agency on  
3 their plans to combat this proposal and if this  
4 proposal passes and on a personal note as Chair of  
5 the Senior Centers I'll be damned if anyone screws  
6 around with our senior centers. The second issue I  
7 would like to see addressed this upcoming fiscal  
8 year is what Chair Chin has discussed in her  
9 opening statement ensuring that all DFTA senior  
10 center contracts are adequately funded. In  
11 addition, I have serious concerns about DFTA's  
12 contracting process in particular the length of  
13 time it takes providers to be reimbursed for  
14 services especially for programs and services  
15 funded by the council. Finally, in fiscal, fiscal  
16 year 2017 the administration allocated 1.2 million  
17 for six conjugant meals to be provided at senior  
18 centers though... and through city meals on wheels,  
19 this is for the sixth day on Saturday. I'm very  
20 disappointed to see that this funding was not  
21 included in DFTA's fiscal 2018 preliminary budget.  
22 Six conjugant meals are an important service to  
23 combat senior hunger and fun... and funding needs to  
24 be baselined in the agencies budget beginning in  
25 fiscal 2018. Also as the population of seniors that



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2 attend our senior centers continues to grow in  
3 diversity I want to make sure that our meals that  
4 serve the senior centers are ethnically  
5 appropriately based on the population of seniors  
6 attending any given senior center and the budget  
7 must reflect this priority. Before we turn it over  
8 to the commissioner I, I just want you to know why  
9 I have to step out, my... the... one of our top seniors  
10 in this city and our first speaker had his heart  
11 surgery moved up to this morning because of the  
12 blizzard tomorrow so if you'd just say a little  
13 prayer for my dad, Peter Vallone I'm hearing that  
14 the surgery is going well but you know my heart is  
15 in this room but my heart belongs to my family so I  
16 am... before I turn it over I'm going to run over to  
17 the hospital, make sure he's well and get him home,  
18 so thank you commissioner.

19 [applause]

20 DONNA CORRADO: Good morning everyone.

21 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Commissioner before  
22 you start I also want to recognize that we've been  
23 joined by Council Member Karen Koslowitz from  
24 Queens and our general... our council for the  
25 committee will swear you in commissioner.

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COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please raise your...  
please raise your right hand. Do you swear affirm  
to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but  
the truth in your testimony today?

DONNA CORRADO: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

DONNA CORRADO: Good morning  
Chairperson Chin, Chairperson Vallone who just left  
our thoughts are with you and your dad. Members of  
the Aging Committee, DFTA staff that are joined  
with me today and especially our senior advocates,  
thank you for coming out on this cold day. I am  
Donna Corrado, Commissioner of the New York City  
Department for the Aging and I'm joined today by  
Sasha Fishman, Associate Commissioner for Budget  
and Fiscal Operations to discuss DFTA's preliminary  
budget for fiscal year '18. The fiscal year '18  
preliminary budget projects 306.5 million in  
funding. The budget includes allocation,  
allocations of 129 million to support senior  
centers, 37 million for home delivered meals, 34  
million for case management services, 24 million to  
support home care for home bound seniors who are  
not Medicaid eligible, and 6.7 million for NORC

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programs and another four million for care giver support services. In his recent state of the city address and testimony before the state legislature on the proposed fiscal year '18 executive budget, Mayor Bill De Blasio called for the authority to implement a city mansion tax on the sale of high value condominiums, co-ops, and 1-2-3 family homes with revenues earmarked for senior affordable housing. The mansion tax would institute a marginal transfer tax of two and a half percent on the incremental price over two million. Proceeds would be used to reduce the rent burden that low income seniors face. Approximately 4500 residential real estate transactions in fiscal year '18 would be affected raising 336 million in fiscal year '18 that will be dedicated to a new initiative, the elder rental assistance program also known as ERAP. ERAP will provide more than 25,000 low income New Yorkers with a monthly rental assistance of up to \$1300 a month. For hundreds of thousands of seniors living on fixed incomes the rapid rise in rent has threatened their ability to stay in their homes and in their neighborhoods. With 20 percent of seniors living below the poverty level and half of them

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paying more than 30 percent of their income towards housing many seniors are at risk of having to choose between food and rent. Also, more than 100,000 seniors have waited for seven years or longer on an affordable housing wait list. The mayor has aggressively pushed for the creation of new senior housing since his taking office. The scale of the affordable housing prices however is immense. This 336 million in revenue from additional tax would fund a new monthly rental assistance program reserved solely for seniors aged 62 and older who earn less than \$50,000 per year. This would prevent unnecessary evictions and allow seniors to remain in the community supported by established social networks which are essential to successful aging in place. Assembly Member Steven Cymbrowitz, Chair of the Housing Committee introduced assembly bill A6584 which would establish ERAP. Language will be included in the assembly's one house budget in addition to this bill. New York State receives 98 million in federal Title 20 funding annually which is allocated to counties throughout New York State of this amount 66 million in funds, funds adult protective

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2 services and domestic violence services, five  
3 million supports training activities for county and  
4 state staff, and 27 million is allocated to all  
5 other services which counties can use at their  
6 discretion to... for... to fund a variety of allowable  
7 programs. As you are aware the state executive  
8 budget proposes to require the 27 million in Title  
9 20 discretionary funding to be used to support  
10 child care subsidies. This would enable the state  
11 to supplant general funds with formally  
12 discretionary funds in order to maintain the  
13 state's current level of child care subsidies. As a  
14 result, DFTA would lose its entire fiscal year '17  
15 Title 20 discretionary allocation of 17 million and  
16 now that's complicated but I'm going to tell you  
17 what the impact would be. In New York City Title 20  
18 funding supports critical senior center programs  
19 including congregant meals, case assistance,  
20 information services, health promotion activities,  
21 education, recreation, and transportation. The  
22 reduction of Title 20 funding would have a  
23 devastating consequence on New York City, 65  
24 neighborhood senior centers or 26 percent of our  
25 network are at risk, 6,000 seniors a day would lose

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vital nutrition, health promotion, and socialization services as well as assistance with benefits. Senior centers in every borough and every community district would be effected and consequently one or more centers would close in every district across the city. Seniors would lose 6500 nutritious meals a day which equals 1.6 million meals annually, 40,000 health promotion and disease prevention sessions would be lost and 36,000 education and rec activities would not take place, 25,000 case assistance and information hours would be cut which links seniors to critical services such as SCRIE and SNAP and connect them to mental health and elder abuse services, and 28,000 one way transportation trips would be eliminated. Last Monday I was in Albany and met with more than 30 state legislators urging them to advocate against this change in Title 20 funding which would have a serious impact on the Department for the Aging and our seniors throughout this city. Thank you, Chairperson Chin, and members of the committee on your support and advocacy to ensure the continued funding of these vital programs that are a lifeline for many of New York's elders. DFTA has

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2 oversight in monitoring responsibility at the local  
3 administrative agency for New York CNEX in New York  
4 City, the current DFTA New York CNEX allocation of  
5 3.6 million, DFTA requests that the state restores  
6 this allocation to the prior year's funding level  
7 of 6.8 million so roughly our funding may be cut in  
8 half. New York CNEX is a statewide system that  
9 provides free objective and comprehensive  
10 information on long term care services and supports  
11 regardless of age, income, disability, or diagnosis  
12 by working with client's families and connecting  
13 them to other city and state agencies, providers,  
14 and programs by providing person centered  
15 counseling, screening for Medicaid and assisting  
16 with benefit applications providing needed  
17 translation services and making home visits to the  
18 homebound if necessary. Through New York CNEX in  
19 New York City in... between October, 2015 and  
20 December, 2016, it's a fairly new initiative, more  
21 than 16,000 contacts were made citywide, 10,000 of  
22 these contacts were from individuals seeking  
23 services and 4,000 were from caregivers or  
24 professionals seeking assistance for their clients,  
25 30 percent of these contacts were for housing

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2 related issues such as access to assisted living  
3 and to shelters, eviction prevention, application  
4 assistance for public and other subsidized housing  
5 and SCRIE and other in, inquiries related to how to  
6 obtain food, receiving home care, and personal care  
7 assistance and getting some legal assistance. To  
8 illustrate the value of this program, New York CNEX  
9 staff assisted another... a mother of a 23-year-old  
10 who graduated at the top of his class from a  
11 residential therapeutic school in Massachusetts  
12 upon aging out of school and returning home to New  
13 York his mother was unable to access services for  
14 her son, her son began to regress, lost many of the  
15 gains he made while attending school, his speech  
16 deteriorated, he had behavioral outbursts and he  
17 refused to leave the house. A call to New York CNEX  
18 led to a referral to the state office for people  
19 with developmental disabilities and he obtained in  
20 home therapeutic services, the mother received  
21 caregiver services and social supports, there was a  
22 benefit screening that was done which offered  
23 financial assistance, a heavy-duty cleaning was  
24 done for the, for the home and a referral was made  
25 for mental health services, that's just an



1 illustration of how we help with New York CNEX.  
2 Last year the executive budget provided an  
3 additional 4.8 million in fiscal year '17 and 7.3  
4 million starting in fiscal year '18 to stabilize  
5 staffing for case management programs by  
6 significantly raising salaries of case managers and  
7 their supervisors. As high turnover rates among  
8 DFTA contract case management staff impeded service  
9 delivery meeting this acute need was a top  
10 priority. As a result of the salary increases staff  
11 retention has increased, currently 24 percent of  
12 all case manager case agent supervisors have been  
13 on staff for less than one year which is a  
14 reduction from 30 percent from the year before. One  
15 third of all case management staff have held their  
16 positions for three years or longer, this is much  
17 more improved. The more competitive salaries have  
18 helped reduce high turnover rates and improved  
19 service delivery through the retention of  
20 professionally qualified staff to ensure greater  
21 continuity of care. As you know in 2015 mayor De  
22 Blasio and first lady McCray released Thrive New  
23 York City, a mental health roadmap for all. Thrive  
24 New York City includes two initiatives that focus  
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on geriatric mental health. One initiative is embedded in mental health practitioners and 25 senior centers. These mental health professionals assist senior center members with issues ranging from depression and anxiety to highly disruptive behaviors. In year one of the program geriatric mental health services are provided in 15 centers, DFTA has received OMH approval for four senior center sights which are located in Manhattan, the Mott Street Senior Center, the Weinberg Center for Balanced Living both located in Chairperson Chin's district, Lenox Hill Neighborhood Housing ISC, and Project Find Hamilton House ISC. SPOP is the provider organization for clinical services at these Manhattan sights. Six more sights located in the Bronx and Queens are undergoing OMH approval process. JASA is the provider in the Bronx and Samuel Fields CAPE is the provider in Queens. The remaining five year one sights, four in Brooklyn and one in Staten Island do not require OMH approval, the provider organization for Brooklyn and Staten Island is Weill Cornell and they have started to provide clinical services at AMMICO 59<sup>TH</sup> Street Center, Boriquen Plaza, Plaza Center, Coney

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2 Island sea, seaside ISC located in, in Council  
3 Member Treyger's district, Council Center, and the  
4 JCC Innovative Senior Center. Each month between  
5 1500 and 2200 seniors attend engagement activities  
6 such as mind, mindfulness, meditation sessions,  
7 psycho educational groups at all of the 15 year one  
8 sights. We expect that the ten year two sights will  
9 commence in July, 2017. DFTA's budget includes 1.4  
10 million annually for the geriatric mental health  
11 program and senior centers initiatives. In  
12 addition, DFTA established a friendly visiting  
13 program within our case management agencies, DFTA  
14 oversees 21 case management contracts covering all  
15 59 community districts. Through the Friendly  
16 Visiting Program services are available to case  
17 manager and contracts through two paths. One we are  
18 launching new programs operated directly by the  
19 case management agencies and two clients are  
20 receiving services through an expansion of an  
21 existing city Meals on Wheels Friendly Visiting  
22 Program. DFTA is investing 1.8 million to reduce  
23 social isolation and enhance vital social  
24 connections as well as to help identify more  
25 intense physical and mental health needs in which

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2 case linkages will be made for higher level of  
3 intervention. Case management clients who are  
4 socially isolated are paired with trained  
5 volunteers who visit the clients regularly.  
6 Volunteer coordinators that are case management  
7 programs recruit, train, and supervise volunteers.  
8 Additionally, separate guides were developed and  
9 distributed to assist both the Friendly Visiting  
10 Program, administrators, and volunteers. Mayor De  
11 Blasio signed local law 97 in August of 2016 which  
12 introduced Chairperson Chin, Council Member Rose,  
13 and Speaker Mark-Viverito was... I'm sorry, which was  
14 introduced by Chairperson Chin, Council Member  
15 Rose, and Speaker Mark-Viverito. The legislation  
16 requires DFTA to serve a caregivers and care of  
17 eight... caregiver service providers throughout the  
18 city. Surveys results and recommendations will be  
19 completed and reported to the Mayor and the City  
20 Council in August of 2017. Westat was the selected  
21 researchers conducting the caregiver survey. The  
22 survey will collect information from caregivers of  
23 the frail elderly adults with disability and  
24 dependent young kin. DFTA, the mayor's office of  
25 operation and Westat have met with providers who

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2 represent the above-mentioned caregiver  
3 populations. We are developing the survey with  
4 Westat based on input from the mayor's office of  
5 people with disabilities, ACS, and our community  
6 providers. Surveys will be administered this spring  
7 and findings and recommendations will be issued  
8 this summer. We plan to distribute the survey via  
9 e-mail, regular mail, as well as in person. Also,  
10 we are determining the language needs for  
11 translation of the survey so I just wanted to give  
12 you an idea that this investment is ongoing and  
13 we're well underway with developing an  
14 administering the survey. DFTA has secured  
15 PricewaterhouseCoopers as a consultant in order to  
16 identify the means by which the city could better  
17 structure the home delivered meals program and to  
18 improve the efficiency and quality of the program  
19 for older New Yorkers. Currently DFTA holds 23  
20 contracts with 17 community based organizations  
21 that deliver 18,000 meals each day. It is the  
22 agencies vision to build capacity and to improve  
23 food service delivery across the city by broadening  
24 menu options, addressing consumer choice,  
25 increasing program efficiency, controlling costs,

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2 leveraging technology and emerging platforms, and  
3 tailoring meals to meet the nutritional needs of a  
4 diverse constituency. We anticipate, anticipate  
5 that Pricewaterhouse will issue recommendations by  
6 this summer. After obtaining stakeholder input DFTA  
7 plans to release an RFP for home delivered meals  
8 contract commencing in 2019. DFTA's objective is to  
9 make each of its 20... 246 senior centers and 29  
10 affiliated satellite centers of excellence, to  
11 attain this goal DFTA has conducted extensive  
12 analysis to determine how to achieve greater  
13 funding parity among centers while promoting  
14 uniformity amongst its programming. The  
15 administration is in discussion about how to  
16 achieve both parity and excellence over time. As a  
17 health and human service agency and also as the  
18 largest area agency on aging in the country DFTA  
19 provides direct services targeted to the most  
20 vulnerable older adults connecting the importance  
21 of Thrive New York City initiatives and the  
22 caregiver survey DFTA's Alzheimer's and Caregiver  
23 Resource Center was contacted by her daughter whose  
24 extremely stressed by the pressures of managing her  
25 job, caring for her mother who has dementia and

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2 dealing with an unsupportive brother residing with  
3 the mother. The mother was hospitalized after  
4 drinking dish soap and wandering for the daughter  
5 the hospitalization provided respite however after  
6 a few days of being in the hospital the daughter  
7 was informed that the mother was discharged to  
8 home, the daughter became emotionally unhinged  
9 reached out to DFTA and told staff that if her  
10 mother came home she would kill her mother and then  
11 herself. The staff immediately advised the daughter  
12 not to sign the discharge papers and then contacted  
13 the hospital to delay the discharge until DFTA  
14 could successfully negotiate the safe discharge to  
15 a long-term care setting for the mom and naturally  
16 the daughter received mental health counseling and  
17 follow up while the brother moved out of the  
18 mother's home. DFTA touches the lives of many New  
19 Yorkers like a woman fleeing political unrest in  
20 Venezuela leaving behind her sons and a spouse with  
21 only \$700 in her pocket, DFTA senior employment  
22 union matched... unit matched her with a home health  
23 aide position, she now works full time and has  
24 financial independence or another senior who lives  
25 alone and due to her deteriorating vision needs

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2 assistance with cooking, shopping, cleaning,  
3 reading her mail, and paying her bills, she  
4 receives case management services and a volunteer  
5 through DFTA's bill paying program who meets with  
6 her twice a month and assists her or a grandmother  
7 raising two grandchildren since the birth... since  
8 birth because their parents are incarcerated and  
9 struggle with addiction. DFTA helped the  
10 grandchildren obtain jobs through the summer youth  
11 employment program and referred the grandmother to  
12 support groups in the community and for other  
13 benefits. It is these and many other similar  
14 stories that we encounter every day that are at the  
15 core of DFTA's mission. Thank you for the  
16 opportunity to testify at the preliminary budget  
17 hearing, I look forward to our continued  
18 partnership with the city council in serving all  
19 New Yorkers and I thank you again for coming today  
20 and supporting the work of the Department for the  
21 Aging, thank you.

22 [applause]

23 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: I think the sergeant  
24 don't want us to clap so if you're happy wave your  
25 hands, okay? And we truly thank you all for being



1  
2 here today especially in this cold weather, I just  
3 want to let you know that there's still a lot of  
4 senior... they're still coming in and we've opened  
5 the numbers lounge for them downstairs and they can  
6 see us through a t.v. so they still also can  
7 participate. We've been joined by Council Member  
8 Mendez earlier and Council Member Deutsch from  
9 Brooklyn. Thank you Commissioner for your testimony  
10 and thank you for your partnership with us and  
11 seeing the size of the seniors that are turned out  
12 today we just wanted to reiterate that fiscal year  
13 FY '18 is the year of the seniors so we have a lot  
14 more budget requests this year and we want to help  
15 you, we want to work with you to make sure that the  
16 mayor and OMB hear our voices and put the money  
17 into the budget. So, I'm going to start off with a  
18 couple of questions and then I'm going to pass it  
19 on to my colleagues. I know in your testimony you  
20 talked about case management services now this  
21 fiscal year 4.8 million was added to just this  
22 budget for case management salary and this  
23 additional funding raises the average case manager  
24 with a master degree to \$65,000 and without a  
25 master degree \$45,000 and I think in your testimony

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that you did mention that because of the increase in case management salary it did impact the attrition rate for this position is actually improved?

DONNA CORRADO: Yes it has significantly.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So what is the current average case manager to case ratio?

DONNA CORRADO: Is it still 60? Yeah, there's been no change, it's still 65.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So right now it's still one to 65?

DONNA CORRADO: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Is there a current... is there currently a case management wait list?

DONNA CORRADO: Yes, there is.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So how many seniors are waiting for case management services and then also is there an anticipated wait list for the fiscal 2018 as well?

DONNA CORRADO: There's currently 1700 on the wait list and as case management agencies staff up we hope that this number will get better. We're still going through because of the, the

1  
2 timing of the registration of contracts where they  
3 actually got the money to raise salaries and the  
4 staffing issue which is going along as according to  
5 plan as, as case managers come online and those  
6 vacancies are filled we, we anticipate that that  
7 case management late... wait list will go down and  
8 we're monitoring it very closely because there's,  
9 there's two things operating, one is you have more  
10 case managers, you have people on a wait list, and  
11 then there's always the pressure on what is  
12 determined as a need for service so it's a, it's a  
13 balance but we're, we're progressing on that as  
14 well.

15 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Now is there  
16 additional funding that you need to meet... to  
17 eliminate the wait list?

18 DONNA CORRADO: We, we... currently we're  
19 okay but naturally we could always use more  
20 funding.

21 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Do you know how much  
22 more?

23 DONNA CORRADO: We're, we're doing that  
24 analysis now.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Alright, I... please  
share that with us so we can add it onto our list...

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DONNA CORRADO: Right...

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Now according to the  
PMMR the number of case management services  
provided decreased by 700 hours while the number of  
recipients of case management services increased by  
over 1,000 when comparing the first four months of  
fiscal 2017 to the first four months of fiscal '16  
so this indicates that while the number of  
recipients of case management has increased on  
average the total number of hours each recipient  
received has decreased.

15

DONNA CORRADO: Well in absolute  
numbers that's absolutely correct but given the  
fact that there are 169,254 hours in fiscal year  
'16 that difference was really negligible and not  
statistically significant.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So...

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DONNA CORRADO: So basically, it's the  
same.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So basically... so you  
don't think... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...from year to year...

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[cross-talk]

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...that there is also  
requiring of additional funding to... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...no, that... [cross-talk]

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...make sure that we  
don't decrease the hours of service?

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DONNA CORRADO: We'll have to... we'll  
have to monitor that but it's not statistically  
significant so it, it's definitely not a trend at  
this point.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Alright, my next  
question goes to home care service. Now in the  
DFTA's new needs for this year's budget, right,  
there was only 4.25 million dollars added for home  
care services so this additional funding maintains  
the funding level for home care services for fiscal  
2018 but then it does not address the wait list, is  
there currently a wait list for home care services  
and then how many seniors are waiting for home care  
services?

23

DONNA CORRADO: So we have 750 seniors  
currently on the wait list for services so that's  
another thing the... last year's allocation when we

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1  
2 allocated the number of home care hours we... if you  
3 remember way back when we had a significant wait  
4 list so we brought those clients on and we approved  
5 hours. What we did was we were overly generous in  
6 allocating those hours so we needed some time to  
7 adjust and to monitor those allocations, currently  
8 we have 750 on a wait list so we're continuing to  
9 monitor that closely but of course we can always  
10 use additional hours.

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: But is there a, a  
12 dollar amount additional funding that's required to  
13 eliminate this current home care wait list?

14 DONNA CORRADO: We're doing that  
15 analysis now.

16 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Is it going to be in  
17 time before the executive budget?

18 DONNA CORRADO: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Oh please share that  
20 with us so... because... [cross-talk]

21 DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh...

22 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: OMB being director,  
23 Dean Fuleihan we always have this back and forth...  
24 [cross-talk]

25 DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...he doesn't think there's a wait list but there is a wait list and seniors should not be on any wait list so we want to make sure the additional funding is going to be put in so that we can eliminate this wait list because the seniors who are waiting for home care they need that services and so we want to make sure that we get that money in by the executive budget. I'm going to pass it on to Council Member Koslowitz to ask some questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Thank, thank you madam Chair. I have found in my career as an elected official that senior centers save lives. I've seen it with my own eyes... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh...

COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOWITZ: There was a gentleman that I ran into that was so depressed, I never saw anybody as depressed as he was and I went over to him and I said to him you have to promise to come here every day and every day I would call the senior center to make sure that he was there. A year later I was at another senior center and someone taps me on the shoulder and I turn around... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOWITZ: ...and I look at this man with this big smile on his face and he said to me do you remember me, I'm Mr. Grouper [sp?], I'd like you to meet my girlfriend... to me, to me that has stuck in my mind forever, forever. I see the seniors, I go to... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOWITZ: ...the senior centers and I see the seniors mingling with each other on the weekends, I will see them in the coffee shops meeting, it saves lives, people if they're isolated they're alone and I don't have to tell you, you know this they're alone. Now they're being threatened with cuts and i... you know on the backs of children, there are two different categories, definitely children need more money but not on the backs of seniors and we have to do something...

[applause]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOWITZ: ...to stop this from happening and I know I will lobby Albany and the people I know in Albany to stop this, it happened a few years ago, where they threatened



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senior centers, we cannot threaten our seniors, they made New York what it is today and we thank them for it and we should never take anything away from them. Would you support putting in report of 70... 50... 750,000 baseline budget for all senior centers prorated by size, is DFTA exploring the funding?

DONNA CORRADO: I don't understand your question; can you repeat it?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOWITZ: Would you support putting in \$750,000 baselining it... baselining it to support the senior centers by size throughout New York City?

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Let me just... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...we could... I, I... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...let me just... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...I don't under... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...clarify that question a little bit, expand it on a little bit... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...that is what we are talking about right sizing the senior centers, right, so we have a proposal which we told OMB that the center, now they need a certain amount of money in order to run and the number that we talked out \$750,000 for the largest senior center and that's going to take after the funding that the innovative centers get so if we start with that premise that for the large center if their baseline budget is 750,000 which a lot of our centers don't get that much money but if they were able to get that and then you prorate it, if it's smaller you get a little bit less but if that is a baseline budget for a regular full size senior center then we can... if we can start with that I think that would be great.

DONNA CORRADO: Okay. Well in concept, yes I do support that, my staff and I are doing extensive analysis around what is the right programing and the appropriate staffing for centers so our methodology will most likely be a little bit more exacting but in principle I do support the fact that right sizing senior centers is the right

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2 thing to do and how we do that is up for discussion  
3 but in principle, yes I do think that, that we need  
4 to right size senior centers. How we go about that  
5 and how we approach that and the methodology we use  
6 probably is not a one size fits all approach but  
7 definitely one that needs further discussion and  
8 further analysis which we're undertaking right now.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Okay. What  
10 role do senior centers and other aging services  
11 programs play in serving immigrants during these  
12 troublesome times, senior centers are safe havens  
13 for elderly immigrants where staff is trusted, what  
14 is DFTA's plan at this time to ensure elderly  
15 immigrants are included and all the city's plans to  
16 protect and service immigrants... [cross-talk]

17 DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOLSOWITZ: ...is there  
19 city funding that could be allocated to senior  
20 centers to help them step up to the plate to serve  
21 immigrants?

22 DONNA CORRADO: Well this... I think it's  
23 a two-fold question as, as you know the  
24 administration has taken a very strong stance on  
25 immigration and I know from going to senior centers

1  
2 throughout the city that there is a general anxiety  
3 and a, a trepidation in our centers and if you  
4 speak to some of the seniors they, you know are  
5 very fearful like many other immigrants throughout  
6 the city so we've done some work in reassuring them  
7 that the... New York City has their back to the  
8 extent possible and that they're safe in their  
9 senior centers and that they have certain rights  
10 and we're working with the, the mayor's office of  
11 immigrant MOIA, Mayors Office of Immigrant Affairs  
12 to work in our senior centers and to distribute  
13 information so that they know what to do and not to  
14 do if someone should knock on their door and  
15 working with law enforcement so we've been  
16 reiterating those same messages that we have been  
17 for all immigrants throughout the city and in  
18 addition to that we, we are advocating as well for  
19 additional resources for immigrant centers.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOSWITZ: Okay, I have  
21 one more. Elder crime is up, what are we doing to..  
22 [cross-talk]

23 DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOSWITZ: ...make sure  
25 that our seniors are safe?

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DONNA CORRADO: We're working very closely with the NYPD and, and actually we're also monitoring the elderly crime situation very closely so that we can work with the NYPD to go into senior centers and do presentations around how to keep themselves safe in the community so that's been a very productive partnership with the NYPD and they're doing a lot of work around educating the seniors and it's an unfortunate trend that we're seeing that there are more crimes towards the elderly and, and some very visible ones that we've seen on television so we've, we've, we got on that right away and they've been tremendously responsive, the community police they go out to centers, they work with us in trying to get the word out.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOLOSWITZ: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you and we've been joined by Council Member Rosenthal. Council Member Deutsch, your question?

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you Madame Chair, good morning to you all... good morning to everyone. I see there's hundreds of seniors here

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2 and downstairs the lounge is all packed with  
3 seniors and I'm sure many of you did not bring your  
4 own cars, you came... you relied on transportation  
5 and we speak about different issues today, we speak  
6 about the home care wait list and then you know  
7 most of the time we ask questions about the  
8 transportation wait list, what is the  
9 transportation wait list for seniors, I mean how  
10 can we estimate what the transportation wait list  
11 is to seniors? I think every senior needs  
12 transportation, every senior needs reliable  
13 transportation, I mean how many times do... does a  
14 senior have to call Access-A-Ride or a person with  
15 disability and they could wait and wait and wait so  
16 what is called a wait list. I think waiting outside  
17 for sometimes hours or even getting Access-A-Ride  
18 and then traveling for hours before you get to  
19 your... before you get to your destination that is,  
20 is that called a wait list. Seniors... many seniors  
21 are stuck at home and we know there's a snow storm  
22 coming tomorrow and people need to go out and do  
23 their shopping and without proper reliable  
24 transportation it's an issue and the fact is, is  
25 that our subway systems less than a quarter of our

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2 mass transit of our train system is handicap  
3 accessible, our busses are not always a good option  
4 for seniors to take and many of our cabs... I'd say  
5 most of our cabs are not handicap accessible so we  
6 need to focus I think also on better transportation  
7 for seniors, reliable transportation for seniors  
8 and firstly we need to have... we need to hold MTA  
9 accountable after all these years we keep on  
10 screaming that Access-A-Ride is not accessible but  
11 we need to make sure that... we need to advocate and  
12 make sure that the MTA is held responsible for  
13 those seniors that use Access-A-Ride because if the  
14 senior has to wait outside in the cold and the rain  
15 and the snow and the heat it's not an option. So, I  
16 think we need to push more on better transportation  
17 and figure if we have those tens of thousands of  
18 seniors living in each district... as many as ten...  
19 thousands of seniors we need to make sure that  
20 every senior has reliable transportation, I mean I  
21 funded my district transportation for seniors so if  
22 someone needs a transportation they call my  
23 district office and we make arrangements for, for  
24 that senior to have the transportation especially a  
25 person with disability. So I think we need to put

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2 in the budget better transportation for senior  
3 citizens, reliable transportation for senior  
4 citizens, and I think they have a right to, to get  
5 out of the house when they're homebound not  
6 everyone has family around and even if they do the  
7 family members are working so my question to you  
8 commissioner is what more can we do and what more  
9 you think we should do and how much more money do  
10 we need in the budget to provide proper  
11 transportation, reliable transportation for our  
12 senior population... [cross-talk]

13 DONNA CORRADO: ...right... [cross-talk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: ...and with  
15 people with disabilities?

16 DONNA CORRADO: Okay. Well it... as far  
17 as the, the DFTA networks goes and, and senior  
18 transportation within our senior center contracts  
19 we've expanded that... the... that service and we've  
20 released an RFP those... the, the awards will be  
21 publicized today I believe or if not tomorrow at  
22 the latest. So, we've expanded that, not  
23 significantly because it's not necessarily the  
24 power of transit system for the city but it does  
25 provide a valuable service so it... so we expanded



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2 that, we listen to stakeholders to see how we can  
3 improve the program and we built that into the  
4 proposal. So we'll see that going forward but I  
5 join you and I commend you for your advocacy around  
6 doing a better job with, with Access-A-Ride and,  
7 and working with the MTA and the Department of  
8 Transportation and working with the commissioner  
9 to, to look at alternatives to Access-A-Ride  
10 because that is not the answer and we can do better  
11 than that and also with the commissioner of the  
12 taxi and limousine commission whose also looking at  
13 accessible transportation and cabs, we have to look  
14 at alternative ways to do transportation better and  
15 more efficiently for seniors because certainly  
16 Access-A-Ride is not an acceptable option and it  
17 has many problems, we are all on the same page, I  
18 join you when... if any of your advocacy efforts I'll  
19 be there right alongside of you because it's  
20 something that needs to expand, it needs to get  
21 better, we even have people who work for DFTA, my  
22 own staff that will be in the lobby of 2 Lafayette  
23 every evening if you go there and waiting for hours  
24 to... for their Access-A-Ride pickups, it's just a  
25 system that has a lot of room for improvement so we

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need to advocate for more resources to do that and better ways to provide transportation for seniors and for people with disabilities.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So how, how do you think we can advocate with the Department of Aging and the MTA to make sure that Access-A-Ride is, is reliable, I mean each year we sit here at the budget hearing and... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: ...we always scream about Access-A-Ride and how Access-A-Ride is, is unreliable but every year we go through the same thing... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...well I... I... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: ...so... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...I think... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: ...working with the Department of Aging... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...sure... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: ...and working with my colleagues in governments what... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: ...is your

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proposal in order to make sure that we finally get

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that done that we don't just come back here next

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year and we talk about the same issues?

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DONNA CORRADO: Well I... if, if you

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speak with my counterparts at the taxi and

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limousine commission and Department of

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Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg who

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also sits on the MTA they have made progress so

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that's, that's a hopeful in terms of alternative

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programs so I think that maybe perhaps we should

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all meet and see how we can advocate as the city to

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impact the decision making at the MTA but they have

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made some progress and I'll leave it to them to

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exculpate what that it is exactly, what they've...

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piloting some programs that, that seem more

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beneficial than the actual Access-A-Ride so you may

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want to invite them or certainly have a meeting and

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I think collectively we can advocate with the MTA

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to make some positive changes for seniors. I'd like

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to do that.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So just about...

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well this past year people were complaining, senior

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2 citizens in particular were complaining about the  
3 lack... the busses coming late and that was the B-44  
4 on Nostrand Avenue so after speaking have, having  
5 numerous conversation with the MTA is they told me  
6 yes we gave 41 citations to drivers... to bus drivers  
7 for not running on time because that was after I  
8 challenged the MTA to come out to wait with me with  
9 those seniors waiting at the bus stop when it was  
10 below zero, I mean I think every MTA worker who  
11 works for Access-A-Ride should wait outside for a  
12 bus with our seniors and with those people in wheel  
13 chair and then they will know how it feels while  
14 you're waiting outside, I mean I have waited at the  
15 bus with my seniors during the pouring rain and I  
16 felt it just as they felt it so... that's, that's how  
17 I feel for them and I think that part of the  
18 training should be that every person driving  
19 Access-A-Ride should be waiting outside in the  
20 street part of their training to wait outside with  
21 our seniors and with those who are... have walkers,  
22 who are in wheelchairs and maybe then we will get  
23 better transportation but we cannot wait any  
24 longer, we have to make sure that next year when  
25 we're here at the budget hearing that all those

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seniors when it comes to transportation they are all smiling. Thank you, Commissioner.

DONNA CORRADO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you Council Member Deutsch, I think we can take up, you know the commissioner's offer of meeting with MTA and also with DOT to work on that but in this year's budget we do have a request for additional two million dollars in transportation so that we can support the transportation services at our senior center. So, that, that is something we've asked for. Council Member Rosenthal, do you want to ask your question?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much Chair and Council Member Deutsch I love that idea in my mind's eye I can see the meeting taking place outside waiting for transportation, that's just... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...a wonderful, wonderful suggestion. I want to... as chair of the contracts committee I want to ask you a few questions about your contracted services... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...it's good  
to see you commissioner...

DONNA CORRADO: Good to see you...

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Always good  
to see you. Does the agency provide any direct  
services itself in any area or is it all contracted  
out?

DONNA CORRADO: It, it's predominately  
contracted out, we do provide direct services  
through our grandparent resource center and our  
Alzheimer's Resource Center so we do, do some  
direct service... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...uh-huh...  
[cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...but 93 percent...  
[cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...93... [cross-  
talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...of, of our budget is  
for contracted services.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay and how  
are these contracts paid for and perhaps it's  
different for different contracts... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...right... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...but are these things where the... you could... one could imagine a contract where the city decides we're going to spend x amount of money and then the financing is 50 percent federal, 50 percent... sorry, 25 percent state, 25 percent city... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...correct... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...are contracts like that or is it that the federal government says we're giving you x amount of money for these services?

DONNA CORRADO: It's a... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...or combination... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...it's a combination of all of that so for example the senior center may get funding from, from Department for the Aging, we get the money from the federal government and from the state and from the city so it's sort of behind the scenes... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...yes...  
[cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...very often and then a center may also contract for other services with... by that sponsor with directly contracting with the city, state, or federal government. So, it's a... it's any permutation thereof.

7

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Besides block, block grants... [cross-talk]

9

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

10

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...which are very clearly the federal government deciding how much money they're going to give down to a city agency are there any programs that are if, if the city were to decide to give additional services that the federal and state government would need to pick up their share of the cost?

17

DONNA CORRADO: Is that... with a match?

18

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yeah?

19

DONNA CORRADO: [off mic] You got a match... yeah...

21

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Here's what I'm getting at... [cross-talk]

23

DONNA CORRADO: ...right... [cross-talk]

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COMMITTEE ON AGING JOINTLY WITH  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SENIOR CENTERS

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COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: If you  
decided that... where... name a program where a match  
is involved?

DONNA CORRADO: Like a type... [cross-  
talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...home  
health? What does that... [cross-talk]

SASHA FISHMAN: ...Title three... [cross-  
talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...mean...  
[cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...funding which is...  
[cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...for...  
[cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...basically... it's  
federal funding that comes to us so we have enough  
money... we have enough money and city support that  
would offset any match required for the federal  
government because most of our money is from the,  
from the city. So, we... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...what I'm  
trying... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...we can leverage that...

3

[cross-talk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...to get at

5

is is there a a service... I... I'm sorry, I'm not

6

familiar with the exact title numbers... [cross-talk]

7

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

8

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...but is

9

there a service that you provide where if you added

10

more service to it, it would allow the city to

11

draw, yes pay more but then have... then be able to

12

draw down additional federal or state funding...

13

[cross-talk]

14

DONNA CORRADO: ...no, I know what you're

15

getting at but no, that's not how our contracting

16

works.

17

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. So

18

the... another words at some level a way to think

19

about it is the funding is capped?

20

DONNA CORRADO: Yes.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay.

22

Council Member Koslowitz spoke earlier and I'm sure

23

Council Member Chin before that the notion of right

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sizing these contracts and what I heard you say is

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going forward your plan is to... and, and I'm sure

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this is a result of the resiliency committee work  
and, and maybe some talk at city hall but that you  
could imagine a service sort of the right amount of  
service and then issuing a contract for that, for  
that program, right, I mean so right now... [cross-  
talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...so... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...now...

[cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...so let me tell you  
what we're looking at, we have 246 neighborhood  
senior centers throughout the city and it's no  
surprise and it's, it's well known and well  
documented that senior centers are funded at  
variable rates so one center, you know may have the  
same expectations in terms of outcomes and number  
of meals that they serve and the number of people  
they... that they're contracted to serve however  
there's a discrepancy in the level of funding  
across contracts... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...uh-huh...

[cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...so when we... and that's  
a historical thing that has gone on... perpetuated

1  
2 for a number of years so that's something that  
3 we're looking at, we're analyzing, we want our  
4 centers a, to have the correct amount of  
5 programming that would, would produce a positive  
6 outcome for the people and b, that, that they  
7 become centers of excellence so not only do they  
8 need enough money to have the programming they need  
9 to have the programming so they have the right  
10 outcomes, right, so we want all centers to be  
11 centers of excellence and how we get there is what  
12 remains to be seen and we need a lot more work on...  
13 to... a, to figure out what is the right programming  
14 that's going to make the center a center of  
15 excellence and what... and there's many different  
16 ways and many different methodologies we could use  
17 to say this is the right amount of funding so it's...  
18 we don't think it's a one size fits all but it's  
19 something that we're seriously diving into and  
20 looking at the numbers and, and we'll, we'll come  
21 up with a strategy and a methodology to address the  
22 issue.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Sure, I mean  
24 what I guess I would ask in an oversight capacity  
25 is that as you dive in and look at it... [cross-talk]

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DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...I think there are a couple of things that I found in my last three years that I think are important to consider, one is that these programs have been chronically underfunded for years... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...and that has taken a toll so that when a program says oh we can by on this amount of money as you know what that really means is yeah, I can live without a paycheck every once in a while and you know but it's really important that we pay our, you know case worker to come in that's what's critical so the question of what do you need is loaded, it really is how much does it cost to run, you know a right sized program and there the variability to some extent is driven by which social service providers are in there whether it be, you know activities, teachers, or case workers, social work but the reality of rent and how rent is different in... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...right... [cross-talk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...many  
different locations, you know certainly in my  
district and, and it's... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...true for my  
own office, you know... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...right... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...the cost of  
rent overwhelms the cost of anything else... [cross-  
talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...so we're... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...versus...  
[cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...looking... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...other  
parts... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...right... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...in the city  
but we have no fewer seniors... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...right, so we're  
looking at that and naturally we'll... what we'll do  
in our analysis is we'll take the occupancy cost  
and put that aside and then look at what does it  
take in programming and staffing to make a center

1  
2 of excellence so I think that's an absolutely..  
3 that's a terrific point but it does require a  
4 certain amount and a certain level of staffing to  
5 run a good center and we know this and of course  
6 it's not going to be the same for a smaller center  
7 or a medium size center and a larger center, we get  
8 that but we have to know what is that magic formula  
9 and that takes a lot of analysis and it takes a lot  
10 of work and a lot of input from a lot of different  
11 parties. So, we're, we're undergoing that right  
12 now.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Sure,  
14 although to... [cross-talk]

15 DONNA CORRADO: ...but that's division.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Right,  
17 although to some degree it's not complicated in the  
18 sense of you know whether you have one more or one  
19 fewer senior or ten more and ten fewer seniors you  
20 still need a yoga class, you still need a social  
21 worker, you still need an art class, you still need  
22 a case worker so that there are some fixed costs  
23 that yes, may not be used optimally but will be  
24 used and I mean I think it's why I would hope the  
25 department moves away from a cost per service model

1  
2 like ten dollars a meal and more toward a this is  
3 what it costs to keep the, the center open and to  
4 produce, you know this much food, I think that  
5 would be a more... you know for these people who have  
6 to run the center and then on the flip side... not on  
7 the flip side but as the sort of result of it you...  
8 as you know we're asking philanthropy to step up  
9 and pay for the cost of running services and you  
10 know where philanthropy should really be paying for  
11 innovation and creative new approaches but because  
12 government and trust me I'm very well aware, it's  
13 not just city at all, I mean as city I feel like  
14 we're the, you know last vestige but it's really  
15 the federal government and the state government  
16 that needs to step up more, there can't be a cap on  
17 how much money they provide for services, you know  
18 but my concern is that, you know government needs  
19 to step up and pay for the entire cost to the  
20 service much in the same way when, you know the  
21 city or the state contracts for a road to be paved  
22 or a bridge to be built, you know we would never  
23 say to the bridge builder how much does it cost and  
24 if they come back and say 100 million dollars we  
25 say here's 80 million and you go figure out how to



1

2 cross subsidize to get to the 100 million, we pay  
3 100 million... [cross-talk]

4

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...and when  
7 they say it cost ten million more for a cost over  
8 runs we write a check for ten million more and I'm  
9 just wondering whether or not, how we're going to  
10 get to the point where we're doing that for senior  
11 services, where a center says it cost us, you know  
12 100 million dollar to take care of the wait list,  
13 to provide home care, to provide meals, to you know  
14 provide elder abuse services... [cross-talk]

14

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

15

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...and we  
17 actually write them a check for 100 million  
18 dollars, when's that... you know are we... [cross-talk]

18

DONNA CORRADO: ...I look... [cross-talk]

19

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...on the  
21 road... [cross-talk]

21

22 DONNA CORRADO: ...forward to... [cross-  
23 talk]

23

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...to that...  
25 [cross-talk]

25

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DONNA CORRADO: ...that day. No, it's a  
3 good point but... [cross-talk]

4

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: The sector  
5 is asking for not just for aging but for many other  
6 areas of social services for care for those with  
7 disabilities, for children, the sector is asking  
8 for to start with a 12 percent bump to their  
9 contracts just so they could get to the point where  
10 they're covering the cost of rent, maintenance,  
11 overhead, you know not even talking about the  
12 poverty wages we pay staff but... [cross-talk]

13

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

14

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...to get  
15 people... get the centers themselves up to something  
16 closer to full funding for OTPS, is that something  
17 you see in the right sizing process that could be  
18 addressed?

19

DONNA CORRADO: I think that, you know  
20 it's an overlapping process so naturally if there's  
21 an investment to the sponsor and the not for profit  
22 for some of these salary and indirect costs that  
23 will be factored in so if they're getting it from  
24 one way or another. The point is that the, the, the  
25 service network overall, we need to, to, to look at

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2 parody and equity across and how that is done I  
3 know there's different... you know it's a moving  
4 target but there's different efforts in many  
5 different areas. One of them being the not for  
6 profit resiliency committee... [cross-talk]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...yeah...

8 [cross-talk]

9 DONNA CORRADO: ...right so that whatever  
10 investment is made there is something that will be  
11 factored into our analysis because that would be  
12 less that we would have to factor in but I think  
13 there is... we're all in agreement that we need  
14 parody and equity across programs and... for doing  
15 like services. So we're looking at an approach that  
16 in... while not so much how much does the service  
17 cost but how much does it cost for a senior in a  
18 senior center so we're looking at a client cost,  
19 it's just a different way of looking at it so it...  
20 whether you go to a senior center on the upper east  
21 side or if you go to a senior center in, in  
22 downtown Manhattan that they have a same dollar  
23 amount or something that's equivalent so they would  
24 get certain amount of funding and nutrition and  
25 programming and all of that so, so that all senior

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2 centers would be equally funded regardless of where  
3 that is located, taking out the fixed and occupancy  
4 cost because that's... [cross-talk]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...right...

6 [cross-talk]

7 DONNA CORRADO: ...variable... [cross-talk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: ...right.

9 Right, it sounds interesting I'm sure the Chair is  
10 interested in keeping her eye on the details of  
11 that as that moves forward, thank you so much for  
12 your time, thank you Chair.

13 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you Council  
14 Member Rosenthal, I mean to follow up on that is  
15 that... in talking with, you know service providers  
16 and... we did come up with some suggestions and I  
17 raised that to the OMB director first because when  
18 we created the innovative center that was the whole  
19 idea of what a center of excellence should be and  
20 the amount of funding to create that innovative  
21 center the budget was about \$750,000, right, so  
22 that is something that we're looking at as some... a  
23 baseline to do that and you can, you know prorate  
24 the budget so that the midsized or the smaller  
25 sized center would get, you know less but then that

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2 gives you an idea and we were hoping that... because  
3 every year the council, you know we put in money to  
4 support senior services at the senior center, right  
5 there is an initiative that we'd put in, last year  
6 was over three million dollars, three million five  
7 hundred seventy eight thousand dollars for senior  
8 center enhancement, right? So we want to make sure  
9 that when you look at this right sizing that we  
10 need to do it as quickly as possible and there are,  
11 you know examples out there that you can use and  
12 hopefully I think by... before we adopt the budget,  
13 you know by executive budget we should have some  
14 better idea and... because I have raised that  
15 discussion with OMB before and we've offered up the  
16 suggestion so we hope that in this year's budget  
17 all we're looking at is 15 million will get us  
18 started on right sizing senior center and that's  
19 what we are, you know advocating on and we want to  
20 work with you on that to really convince OMB that  
21 this is how it's got to go, we got to right size  
22 the budget, alright and 15 million will get us  
23 there to start... so now relating to all the council  
24 initiative that we provide every year to support  
25 the core services that, that DFTA provide, right,

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2 since 2011, fiscal year 2011 on average the council  
3 provide around 11 percent additional funding to  
4 support DFTA and other senior related services so  
5 last year's budget we allocated 30.1 million  
6 dollars to support and fill the gap in DFTA and so  
7 of the 30 million, 20.7 are citywide services that  
8 provide additional support for core services, that  
9 includes senior center, elder abuse prevention and  
10 information and referral services so you know the  
11 council is continuing to support core services but  
12 these services should be baseline as part of DFTA's  
13 budget. So, of all the initiatives that the council  
14 fund which one are you working with OMB to baseline  
15 this year?

16 DONNA CORRADO: So... and I want to say  
17 thank you for the council support because it's a...  
18 an essential to the aging service network and I  
19 know that that commitment is still there. We're in  
20 constant conversations with OMB and with the deputy  
21 mayor advocating for senior funding and it's only  
22 the preliminary budget so we're, we're... you know  
23 those conversations are ongoing so we're asking and  
24 working with OMB to figure out what the finalized

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budget will be but that remains to be seen, it's an ongoing discussion.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: But which one are, are the initiative you think that they should baseline, I mean what I raised earlier the enhancement, I mean that's what the senior center needs those funding every year and instead of waiting for, you know when we adopt the budget in June for them to... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...sort of like reaffirm that they're getting the money even though they know that we're supportive...

DONNA CORRADO: They're all... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...I... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...important... they're all... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...yeah, how do we... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...important... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...get a baseline, so it's already there...

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DONNA CORRADO: uh-huh...

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: You amend their contract and the money is already there so they don't have to worry.

DONNA CORRADO: Well we're going to be in conversation with OMB and, and that remains to be seen. Those, those discussions are ongoing, which, which one that you pick and choose I don't have them in front of me but I would say they're all important so I don't want to, you know put a value based on one service against the other because it depends on the person and what's valuable to them and I think they're all important but certainly we will be having and have been in discussion with OMB and with the deputy mayor to advocate for senior funding in general.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Well when you go in there you have to know that we have your back, right? I want... you know commissioner I really want you to feel that the seniors have your back because they know that they need these services and they are supporting you and I'm supporting you and the council is... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...I know... [cross-talk]



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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...supporting you and OMB needs to know that, it's about time we got to start investing in the infrastructure to meet the demand... you know the increasing demand that's coming...

DONNA CORRADO: Yes...

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So we can't wait and, and we're here for you.

DONNA CORRADO: Thank you...

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So that...

DONNA CORRADO: Thank you... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: I mean the council... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...the council we can be the creative one to start new initiatives, support new ideas but basic core services like transportation, home care, senior center, the NORC, I mean that's, that's basic core service, that needs to be funded by the administration. Back then it was a different administration, there was a lot of cuts but we got to get back... with this administration, this progressive administration we got to start investing in seniors and DFTA's budget

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is still less than half a percent, that's unacceptable alright so this year we're only asking for 60 million to really provide the safety nets for our senior...

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh...

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: And that's why we're declaring it as the year of the senior so that we make sure that the administration invests now and that I'll ask so we're going to be working with you to make sure we eliminate the wait list with case management... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...uh-huh... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...and home care and baseline all these essential core services.

DONNA CORRADO: Well...

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Alright, so... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...yes... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...when you have your conversation with OMB which we will continue to have our conversation with OMB you need to know that we have your back too.

DONNA CORRADO: Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: I know that we have a lot of people signed up for testifying so if there's other questions that we haven't gotten to we will send it over and... to get your response.

DONNA CORRADO: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Alright, I thank you for being here... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...and... and thank you... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...Commissioner... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...for your time... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...and I look forward... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...and see you... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...with you... [cross-talk]

DONNA CORRADO: ...same here... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...to make this a strong year of the senior, thank you.

DONNA CORRADO: Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So I'm going to call  
3 up... I know we have a lot of seniors signed up and a  
4 lot of providers sign up and I know that some  
5 seniors has to leave for lunch so let me call up  
6 Rita Karig from Riverdale Senior Center, Nora Moran  
7 United Neighborhood Houses, Jeanette Estimar from  
8 FPWA, Bobbie Sackman Live On New York, Rachel  
9 Sherrow from City Meals, and Chris Widelo from  
10 AARP. Okay, would the first panel please be seated.  
11 And thank you again to all the seniors who came out  
12 today to support us, thank you.

13 [applause]

14 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, so are you  
15 ready to start? You may begin?

16 RITA KARIG: Okay, my, my name is Rita  
17 Karig, I am a member of the Riverdale Senior Center  
18 in the Riverdale section of the Bronx. Senior  
19 centers are a valuable and important parts of the  
20 lives of those of us who have earned the title  
21 senior. The center is a safe place where one can be  
22 sure the prime interest of the people who are in  
23 charge of the center is quote, "what will benefit  
24 the people who come here". There, their work is to  
25 answer that question and I think part of the

1  
2 council's work is to provide the ways and the means  
3 with which to accomplish that. We appreciate your  
4 concern and we look forward to increase and  
5 continuous funding, thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you very much  
7 for being here today. Next, Bobbi?

8 BOBBIE SACKMAN: My name is Bobbie  
9 Sackman Director of Public Policy with Live on New  
10 York. first want to give a shout out, we had about  
11 500 seniors here today, there are many in the  
12 members lounge and you know oh it's 20 degrees out,  
13 you don't get to this age and not be strong so they  
14 showed up and thank you everybody from every corner  
15 of this city. I just... a little bit... I'm not going  
16 to go through my testimony repeat some of what I  
17 said earlier and my colleagues will probably  
18 reiterate it. We're asking for 60.6 million  
19 dollars, we are so far behind in funding aging  
20 services as you just questioned the Commissioner. I  
21 think the question is when the commissioner goes to  
22 OMB, when the commissioner goes to the Mayor or  
23 Deputy Mayor what response are they getting, if the  
24 budget is supposed to show the priorities as Nora  
25 said earlier then obviously, they're not getting a

1  
2 positive response. I think if we had 500 young  
3 people in this hall today we would of had more city  
4 council members, we would have had more press here,  
5 we would have had more attention here. All the  
6 years of life and experience in this city are here  
7 today, add that up and it's not just about standing  
8 on shoulders because that makes you the past, we  
9 are the future. There's more of us and we're not  
10 going away and if you just discard us to the side  
11 what a waste and, and very frustrating. So really  
12 quickly senior centers we're asking for 15 million  
13 dollars, it's a down payment, everything you heard  
14 the commissioner say today we don't have enough  
15 money for staff, we have some of the senior centers  
16 are not in very good physical shape and we just  
17 need more money. There's been studies that show  
18 that the physical and mental health has improved in  
19 senior centers, our health care system can't even  
20 do that. Secondly, immigration; thank you I, I  
21 appreciate that Council Member Menchaca is here,  
22 he's the Chair of the Immigration Committee, these  
23 are safe havens, people literally speak your  
24 language, they know your culture, people... elderly  
25 immigrants trust the staff and all the coverage

1  
2 we're seeing about immigrants we're not seeing  
3 coverage about older immigrants, that's nothing new  
4 seniors get spieled out, this is life and death,  
5 they cannot be spieled out. This is the network  
6 that sent 17,000 letters to Governor Coumo in a  
7 couple of weeks protesting the closing of senior  
8 centers. Any network that comes through with 17,000  
9 letters is a good communication network, you want  
10 to get information to senior centers, to NORC's, to  
11 the... even the home bound programs because they will  
12 go their families, their faith based groups and  
13 they will get the work into the communities but we  
14 need money to do this, we need to step up to the  
15 plate together. When we met with the commissioner  
16 of... Mayor's office of immigrant affairs we met with  
17 Commissioner Garoto together, she said that a  
18 substantial number of the people detained at JFK  
19 almost a month ago, were older adults and you know  
20 what everyone's reaction is when I say that,  
21 really, I didn't know that because nobody reports  
22 it. So, this has to stop and it has to stop for the  
23 basic services and it has to stop because we're in  
24 very terrible times. There is a war on old men and  
25 women in Washington right now, we hear a war about

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1  
2 women but there's a war on older women and men and,  
3 and Trump is going to destroy this city and this  
4 country and it's up to the city to take  
5 responsibility to do better than Donald Trump,  
6 thank you.

7           NORA MORAN: Okay, thank you to the  
8 aging committee for hosting this hearing today. My  
9 name is Nora Moran, I'm a policy analyst at United  
10 Neighborhood Houses. I'm sure I'm going to iterate  
11 a lot of what my colleagues have said here today so  
12 I'll just jump right in. so we're, you know very  
13 alarmed that there's no new sustained baseline  
14 funding for the Department for the Aging in the  
15 fiscal year 2018 preliminary budget. We know that  
16 waiting lists are growing, it... okay... we know that  
17 waiting lists are growing, that senior centers are  
18 not fairly funded and that funding threats from the  
19 state around Title 20 and from the federal  
20 government are real and that this is the time to  
21 look at this issue carefully, take these requests  
22 seriously and really think about the value that we  
23 place on older adults in our city. So, jumping  
24 right into recommendations, are first and most  
25 urgent request that many other groups in the city



1  
2 are also putting forth is a 12 percent across the  
3 board increase for all human service contracts used  
4 for the area of greatest need within a contract.  
5 This ask is really at the result of just decades of  
6 starvation and underfunding within the sector and  
7 really is essential just to make sure that the non-  
8 profit human service sector is stable in the coming  
9 years and obviously, you know this funding would  
10 support contracts within DFTA and start to write  
11 some of those inequities that we're seeing around  
12 salaries, around OTPS costs and things of that  
13 nature. And then we also are working with a  
14 coalition of advocates for aging services, many of  
15 whom are up here to ask for an investment of 133  
16 million dollars over the next five years in  
17 community based services for older adults. We're  
18 looking for a strong upfront commitment this year  
19 of 60 million dollars; baseline and core services  
20 that the council has funded for many years and  
21 closing some of those really significant gaps in  
22 existing services and we feel that this is, this is  
23 the time to step and look at this carefully. The  
24 first area just that UNH personally is going to  
25 emphasize is around baselining those, those core

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1  
2 services that the city council puts funding in  
3 every year, we're grateful that the council does  
4 this but I think everybody here agrees that this is  
5 just poor practice for providers and it translates  
6 into, you know substandard services for older  
7 people and nobody wants that. The other issue that  
8 we'd like to just raise is the senior center  
9 funding, a recent report from Union Settlement  
10 showed disparities in senior center funding ranging  
11 from some centers getting five dollars per senior  
12 per day for senior to support services and other  
13 centers getting 50 dollars per day per senior for  
14 senior to support services with no logical  
15 explanation as to why that, that is happening and  
16 we know that 15 million dollars would bring those  
17 lowest funded centers up to the median level. And  
18 the last thing I'll just say is an increase in... of  
19 1.12 million dollars for nursing services within  
20 NORC'S, NORC'S struggle every year to meet the  
21 required number of nursing hours and this amount of  
22 funding would help them, you know just, just to do  
23 what they're required to do already in their  
24 contracts, thank you.

25

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JEANETTE ESTIMA: Hello, my name is Jeanette Estima, I'm a policy analyst at FPWA an anti-poverty policy and advocacy non-profit with a membership network of nearly 200 human service and faith based organizations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today. Over one... there are well over a million older adults in New York City and this is a very diverse demographic group, it covers a life span of... it can cover a life span of 30 years or more, 60 percent of older New Yorkers are women, nearly half are immigrants, 33 percent have limited English proficiency. The average social security benefit is \$17,000, 32 percent live below or just above the poverty line. Many older New Yorkers need a community... a network of community based services such as senior centers, transportation, home delivered meals, home care, and respite for caregivers in order to remain in their communities safely and actively. Despite the growing needs of this rapidly increasing population DFTA's budget has endured stagnation and cuts and the FY '18 preliminary budget shows no sign of turning this tide. At 306.5 million the planned budget for DFTA still accounts for less than two

1  
2 percent of the city's spending on human services  
3 and doesn't address gaps in existing programs. A  
4 one year increase of 4.25 million for home care is  
5 the only new need reflected in the budget but it  
6 only maintains the current level of service and  
7 doesn't touch the wait list of 780 people. This  
8 budget will again force the council to allocate  
9 millions to shore up the core services rather than  
10 funding innovations and enhancements. We thank you  
11 for your leadership and baselining 1.8 million in  
12 case management and securing wage increases for  
13 case managers in FY '17 but given the threat of  
14 sweeping federal cuts to safety net programs we now  
15 ask that you fight to stabilize funding in order to  
16 meet current needs and push for significant  
17 investment to fully fund aging services. FPWA has  
18 been working in coalition with nine other advocates  
19 many of whom are here at this table and to... we have  
20 determined the service gaps in the sector and how  
21 we can build an infrastructure to meet the  
22 increasing needs that are just up the road. We're  
23 proposing an investment of 133 million over the  
24 next five years this is in addition to the human  
25 service sector ask for a 12 percent increase to all

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1  
2 human service contracts to cover indirect cost  
3 which we also support. We ask for a strong  
4 commitment of 60 million in FY '18 that's 15.7  
5 million to baseline discretionary funding that  
6 right now funds core services and 44.9 million to  
7 fill the gaps in current programs. In the following  
8 years, we'd see additional funding to plan and  
9 develop an infrastructure for building... for... sorry,  
10 for building an infrastructure for aging services  
11 that can bare the increasing needs and respond to  
12 changes and needs based on shifting demographics.  
13 Thank you.

14 RACHEL SHERROW: Hi, my name is Rachel  
15 Sherrow, I'm the Associate Executive Director at  
16 City Meals on Wheels. Thank you Chair and for the  
17 committee for holding this hearing. I again want to  
18 stand with my colleagues here and earlier this  
19 morning just to reiterate that we are asking for a  
20 commitment of 60.6 million in FY '18 really to  
21 right size, to baseline basic services, human  
22 needs. I'm not going to go into what our needs are  
23 exactly but I will say that our city has a social  
24 and moral imperative to feed our most vulnerable no  
25 matter how old or invisible. If City Meals on

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1  
2 Wheels did not exist the over 18,000 homebound  
3 elderlies who receive meals Monday through Friday  
4 would not get food on weekends, holidays, or  
5 emergencies. We're heading into a huge storm  
6 tomorrow those meals are, are going to be generated  
7 today, all the providers are working overtime to  
8 make sure that our recipients have food on hand in  
9 case this storm really does hit hard. I think that  
10 it's... our ask as 600,000 it's a very small ask in  
11 the scheme of things to make sure that our folks  
12 who are unable to access food and shop for  
13 themselves have a right to eat, they're in their  
14 homes, they're living, they're not slipping into  
15 deeper poverty, they are not being hospitalized  
16 where it costs us much more with Medicaid dollars  
17 so to me it's, it's an easy solution and we hope  
18 that you're supportive, thank you.

19 CHRIS WIDELO: Good morning council and  
20 Chairwoman Chin and Councilman Menchaca, thank you  
21 very much for the opportunity to speak today. My  
22 name is Chris Widelo, I'm the Associate State  
23 Director for AARP in New York and I just want to  
24 start off by saying that we fully support the slate  
25 of budgetary request that the coalition has made

1  
2 amounting to 60.6 million dollars to right size the  
3 DFTA budget, I mean it's just the time... the time is  
4 now. We feel like we're in a little bit of a rut  
5 here, right, we, we... we're... here we are again sort  
6 of asking for the same funding year after year yet  
7 the need continues to grow. So, AARP earlier this  
8 year commissioned a survey of about 1,000 voters 50  
9 and older across New York City and we asked them  
10 what they think the priorities should be for the  
11 administration and the council when it comes to  
12 funding the DFTA budget. So, the, the survey  
13 respondents overwhelmingly feel that caregiving and  
14 services that help New Yorkers age at home are  
15 priorities, that's not surprising given that two  
16 thirds of respondents either currently are expected  
17 to serve as caregivers in the next five years, I  
18 mean we, we know this. When it comes to support for  
19 caregivers a survey respondents want to see the  
20 city fund more home and respite services and adult  
21 day care among other services and these are all,  
22 you know many of the priorities that we're asking  
23 for year after year in the budget. Other priorities  
24 for the 50 plus here in New York City include over  
25 84 percent responded that providing services to

1  
2 help New Yorkers age safely in their homes is a  
3 priority and 88 percent noted that ensuring  
4 residents can easily access the public benefits and  
5 services they need to live comfortably and then of  
6 course our friend frauds, scams, and identity theft  
7 we know that is one of the most prevalent forms of  
8 elder abuse ranked very high at 88 percent feeling  
9 that that needs to be a strong priority. I think  
10 for us AARP is one of our, our national concerns  
11 are around care giving and there's a huge  
12 caregiving gap, we have 10,000 people nationally  
13 turning 65 years and older every day and that's  
14 been going on since 2010 so we have 12 more years  
15 of that happening and here in New York state it's  
16 about 500 people every single day. So, we're going  
17 to see a large number of people needing care or  
18 having to provide care to someone that they love  
19 and the... you know we, we see with a smaller  
20 generation behind the boomers there are just less  
21 people that are available to give care. There's  
22 only about five million paid caregivers available  
23 and about 40 million unpaid family caregivers  
24 available and nationally there's about 117,000... 117  
25 million people that will need care. So programs



1  
2 like adult day care, home care, case management,  
3 other types of respite care are vitally important  
4 to keeping people home in their community and safe  
5 and we talk about that there's a concern about what  
6 funding might be available for New York and New  
7 York City in the future around Medicaid which keeps  
8 people is that safety net and if, if that funding  
9 is reduced then these programs become even more  
10 imperative. So, I stand with the other members of  
11 the coalition and hope that the Mayor will  
12 reconsider his budget and put the money in that's  
13 needed to allow people to age safely in their  
14 community for as long as it's possible.

15 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you for your  
16 testimonies. I'd like to give... Council Member  
17 Menchaca, you want to say a few words or...

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Absolutely,  
19 thank you so much Chairwoman Chin and [speaking  
20 Spanish] I just want... I, I just said that I'm  
21 really thankful that you're here, you're present,  
22 you represent every, every borough of this city and  
23 it's such an important thing for, for you to be  
24 here as part of this process and you are here with  
25 such strength and, and vitality, the future as was

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1  
2 stated before. I, I don't have any questions  
3 because we're all on the same page as far as the  
4 needs here but I just do... I, I want to tell you... I  
5 want to say how important it is that this year of  
6 the senior becomes actualized in its budget and  
7 how, how important the work that Chairwoman Chin  
8 has done to get us here, it didn't start today, it  
9 was a three year process that embedded itself  
10 slowly and surely into the budget through all the  
11 initiatives and so I just want to say that this is,  
12 this is a, this is a long time coming but now is  
13 the time to really make that effort and that leap  
14 into, into that future and so when we talk about  
15 year of the seniors we're talking about, we're  
16 talking about out immigrants and our immigrant  
17 senior, we're talking about women and our women  
18 seniors, we're talking about the civic engagement  
19 as far as how our seniors are engaged not just in  
20 the voting process but in everything that we've put  
21 out there as far as asking you to be part of this  
22 like participatory budgeting. Some of our biggest  
23 engagement comes from our seniors, from our senior  
24 centers that care not just about their senior  
25 centers but about the future of our young people

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1  
2 when they vote for some of the things like  
3 technology in our schools because they understand  
4 that it's important to not only have computers in  
5 our senior centers but across the neighborhood. We  
6 talked about food and how important food is for...  
7 and nutrition, crisis management, sandy related  
8 issues for example and how seniors were impacted  
9 and how seniors came out to help their neighbors  
10 and the blizzard that's on, on its way tomorrow.  
11 This is, this is the fabric and we talked about  
12 this at the press, press conference earlier, the  
13 seniors represent the fabric that is holding our  
14 communities tight and so I'm just thankful that I'm  
15 here to support that the mission continues and I'm  
16 about to walk out to the NYCHA press conference as  
17 well. When you add NYCHA as a layer our seniors are  
18 also live in NYCHA and are getting short changed in  
19 that situation as well and so this is part of... the  
20 other pieces that we're all kind of connected to  
21 which is Helen Rosenthal's big cry for healing the  
22 human services contracts that are getting paid  
23 under, under the dollar and we need to, we need to  
24 boost that up too. So, this is all about protecting  
25 you all and I'm, I'm really happy to be here and

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1  
2 supporting our Chairwoman who has just done an... has  
3 been a, a valiant supporter of you... your champion,  
4 Margaret Chin, thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you Council  
6 Member and thank you to this panel for all the  
7 great work, on with... to the year of senior.  
8 Alright, next we're going to call up Molly  
9 Krakowski from JASA, Jackie Poling JASA and  
10 Hamilton Senior Center, Miss Po-Ling Ng and Winn  
11 Wau Lam [sp?] from the Chinese American Planning  
12 Council Open Door Center, Thomas Weber from SAGE  
13 Sasha Kesler from Selfhelp Community Services, and  
14 Leo Palumbo from Catholic Charities. Thank you and  
15 please say your name for the record and you may  
16 begin.

17 JACKIE POLING: My name is Jackie Poling  
18 and I represent JASA Senior Center in Manhattan. I  
19 have been a member of this center for the past four  
20 years as well as Hamilton Senior Center and it is  
21 imperative that these centers stay in effect. The  
22 activities they provide are unbelievable to all of  
23 us from dancing to art crafts, we socialize, the  
24 food they provide, and JASA in particular is one of  
25 the very few centers around that is kosher. I don't

1  
2 know how many there are across the city but there  
3 are very, very few right now and we do need that  
4 center to remain open. Hamilton is also in New York  
5 City and they provide a tremendous, tremendous  
6 amount of activities; dancing, food, and just the  
7 comradeship of people just getting together and  
8 being able to be in a place of warmth and kindness  
9 and I don't know what would happen if that senior  
10 center were not available to all of us, our seniors  
11 across the city. They come from different boroughs  
12 to Hamilton and we go to different boroughs also, I  
13 have been downtown, I have been to... across town on  
14 the East side, Woodstock, the Coffee House and they  
15 provide wonderful services like arts and crafts and  
16 just basically mind games, things which senior do  
17 need in order to help them to live a longer and  
18 happier life. We provide services for people that  
19 cannot really walk and besides the dancing we do  
20 have chair exercises for people that cannot stand  
21 and it seems to help, it's kind of a therapy  
22 session for everyone and also something which is  
23 really amazing we've had children from preschool,  
24 we've had therapy animals visit us and this seems  
25 to provide an exceptional happiness to people that

1  
2 are there, you know you just have to take a look at  
3 the happy faces when these children come in and  
4 they talk to the seniors and they go to the, the  
5 tables and it just... it, it gives you such joy  
6 besides the therapy animals that come and visit our  
7 seniors so please it is imperative to the honorable  
8 Andrew Cuomo please keep our, our senior centers in  
9 existence, we really need it to live a long, happy  
10 life. Thank you.

11 PO-LING NG: Good afternoon and our  
12 lovely, honorable and Chair Margaret Chin and  
13 Council Members and my name is Po-Ling Ng, everyone  
14 knows my really old face because I serve on the  
15 senior center for 49 years and so I did a good job  
16 but I will continue to do it and less to me is our  
17 Chair and Mr... Madame Wie [sp?] is our Chair of..  
18 today, I on behalf the Chinese American Planning  
19 Council to come over here to really say our very  
20 important mission to everybody. CPC is the huge  
21 land pipe social service organization, we have 70  
22 different programs. The senior service we you know  
23 and really service for the citywide. Manhattan,  
24 thank you and the, the Margaret Chin we have two  
25 senior center, the Chinatown Senior Center and the

1  
2 Open Door. Also, we had the... Senior Center in the  
3 Queens and also the Brooklyn we had the senior  
4 services. The first of all I thank you our lovely  
5 and Chair and Margaret Chin said that, you know and  
6 because over here set... put down the government for  
7 the people by the people, all the people. You  
8 should... all of you should follow this policy to do  
9 it not only for the people special for the senior  
10 something like you said that. You said that this  
11 year is our strongest in the year, not this year  
12 forever, every year is our senior years, everyone  
13 agree? How could we be the senior years for every  
14 year definitely we depend on the city council, the  
15 government to give us more money, with no money how  
16 could we run the very good program? I think  
17 everyone know our senior center very well, you  
18 listen to the Commissioner, listen to all our  
19 partners sharing the information to you how  
20 wonderful our senior services but the one thing I  
21 just want to know we did a good job because we know  
22 only sharing our voice to you we really want the  
23 city council... give us the money, that's the answer,  
24 the only lesson no more... not to, you know and force  
25 us to miss over here and talk the same issue..

1  
2 money, give us just less money we do a wonderful  
3 job, we service more than 1.4 million senior age 60  
4 and over, over so that's why. The one thing we do  
5 wonderful job, I sharing with you, everyone said  
6 that we don't want to keep our little elderly at  
7 home, we want them to enjoy their late life, how...  
8 transportation because something that Open Door a  
9 lot of people said that I want to give you the  
10 vehicle but no driver, may us ask you... may I ask  
11 you, you just said that Po-Ling I give for you a  
12 senior rice boat but no rice, how could you feed  
13 them, they're still hungry. So, that's why I want...  
14 we have the rice boat, please give us not only the  
15 rice, give us the... raise the beef, give, give us  
16 the beef too...

17 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: We'll give you beef  
18 and the sauce, okay... [cross-talk]

19 PO-LING NG: ...beef, sauce, and steak  
20 and also not only vehicle, please give us the  
21 driver, no driver how could take our senior from  
22 their home to the senior center... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: That's why we're  
24 asking... [cross-talk]

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PO-LING NG: ...we don't want them...

[cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...for... [cross-talk]

PO-LING NG: ...feel very lonely, we want them at the social life enjoy their life, I, I tell you Margaret Chin, you know us very well so I don't want to spend a lot of time to talking about what is our need, I think you're so smart, you know what is our need. I just want to let you know not only you and also your partner should meet our senior needs that's why not only this year is the senior years, every year is the senior years, senior power, thank you...

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you...

PO-LING NG: Senior power, we need you, senior power.

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you... [cross-talk]

PO-LING NG: ...thank you... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...Po-Ling. So we're going to start this year and we're going to continue every year. Next... thank you.

MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: Hold on a second, I'm sorry... Okay, good, good afternoon. Molly Krakowski,

1  
2 I'm Director of Legislative Affairs at JASA. I  
3 wanted to just talk for a few minutes about what we  
4 see as a big concern and it, and it really does  
5 talk to what the Council Member Rosenthal was  
6 describing as the underfunding of contracts and  
7 this is something that is really a conversation for  
8 any hearing but certainly as a conversation for  
9 this room and for anything that we're talking about  
10 when it comes to older adults. JASA has a range of  
11 services from senior centers, case management, and  
12 home delivered meals, guardian services, adult  
13 protective services, elder abuse, you name it and  
14 we're probably involved in it when it comes to  
15 older adults but we have about 2,000 staff, we have  
16 about 115 million dollars in terms of our budget  
17 and not one of our contracts with the city is fully  
18 funded, not one and it results in one... 1.5 million  
19 dollar deficit, you know give, give or take a  
20 little bit 100,000 dollar here or there. We need  
21 the city to pay for what the services require us to  
22 perform and, and you wouldn't ask... you know the  
23 Council Member mentioned, you would not ask for  
24 somebody to build a bridge and give them 90 percent  
25 of the funding, you have to fund it fully, we need

1  
2 to get across the bridge and we need the staff to  
3 be able to actually function and we were grateful  
4 last year with the additional funds that, that are  
5 going to be allocated towards case management  
6 however in a social service agency that spans all  
7 these different programs and clients and contracts  
8 it's extremely demoralizing to have case management  
9 receiving a huge bump which is what they're going  
10 to get which they deserve sitting next to somebody  
11 who serves adult protective services whose not  
12 getting that bump and the elder abuse client... you  
13 know the elder abuse social worker, every single  
14 one of those social workers deserves that parody  
15 and a livable wage and it's extremely challenging  
16 to retain staff, to attract staff and to maintain  
17 staff morale when there's that kind of discrepancy.  
18 So I'm just really urging that 12 percent for human  
19 services contracts be implemented that the, that  
20 the parody come up for all DFTA and HRA social work  
21 level to the same salary level because what's going  
22 to happen is that anyone who's not in case  
23 management is going to look at their neighbor and  
24 say what and either leave their position  
25 immediately and try and find a case management

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2 position or feel extremely frustrated in the  
3 position that they're in and they're handling the  
4 most challenging situations of the city. So, I, I  
5 can't say enough about it, we're extremely grateful  
6 to the support of the city council but we need you  
7 to be the big voice and this isn't in place of new...  
8 before we talk about new job creation with good  
9 salaries lets fund the salaried positions that  
10 currently exist in government contracts.

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you, before  
12 the next speaker I just wanted to welcome, we have  
13 some student in the back from I.S. 126 from... it's  
14 an eighth-grade class from Long Island City Queens,  
15 welcome and I hope you will help us advocate for  
16 more funding for senior services, right because  
17 they are your grandparents and great grandparents.  
18 Next?

19 SASHA KESLER: Hi, my name is Sasha  
20 Kesler and I'm... I work for Selfhelp Community  
21 Services. Selfhelp was founded in 1936 to support  
22 those fleeing Natzi Germany and today has evolved  
23 into one of the largest providers of senior  
24 services in the city. We have about 20,000 clients  
25 and provide a wide range of services from

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1  
2 affordable housing, NORC'S senior centers,  
3 guardianship programs, we have a, a New York  
4 Connects contract and also social adult day  
5 programs. Selfhelp has been working with the  
6 coalition of about 10 advocates for aging services  
7 to determine the gaps in the sector and how we can  
8 really build an infrastructure to support the  
9 skyrocketing need for services for older adults.  
10 One third of older adults in New York live at or  
11 just about the poverty line and half of older New  
12 Yorkers are immigrants and more than one third have  
13 limited English proficiency. Today I'm here to talk  
14 about Selfhelp and our 20,000 clients but I also  
15 want to begin by stating with the coalition to ask  
16 that the city invest 133 million dollars in aging  
17 services over the next five years and by beginning  
18 with an investment of 60 million dollars baselined  
19 for core services that are currently funded by city  
20 council and to... in order to close those existing  
21 gaps. To reflect what was just expressed by Molly  
22 we are incredibly grateful for the administrations  
23 investment in salary, salary parody for case  
24 management staff and as a multi service agency we  
25 strongly urge the city council and the

1  
2 administration to look at all salaries for social  
3 workers and to ensure that there's parity across  
4 every program. As Molly reflected in order to  
5 properly retain staff, hire effective staff, and  
6 really have the best possible morale for our social  
7 workers who are doing incredibly difficult work, we  
8 need to make sure that every contract across the  
9 city is funded at a livable wage that is at parity  
10 with those new case management salaries. In  
11 addition, we're asking this year that the city  
12 council renew the 2.5 million dollars for the  
13 holocaust survivor initiative. For the past two  
14 years' city council, has started and expanded this  
15 initiative and it has allowed us to reduce our wait  
16 list for services for holocaust survivors  
17 particularly in Brooklyn. The average age for a... or  
18 a holocaust survivor is, is in their 80's and for  
19 those from the former Soviet Union who tend to have  
20 less of a social safety net and often tend to be  
21 much poorer, their average age is in the 70's but  
22 their needs are the greatest and this program has  
23 been instrumental in allowing us to serve that  
24 population and to provide the socialization and the  
25 resources to help holocaust survivors age with

1  
2 dignity. In addition, we encourage city council and  
3 the administration to look at ways to expand  
4 technology services to help reduce social isolation  
5 amongst older adults and home bound older... home  
6 bound individuals. Selfhelp has the virtual senior  
7 center program that with the help of city council  
8 we've been able to expand over the last few years.  
9 So again, thank you so much for the opportunity to  
10 testify today and we look forward to working in  
11 partnership to make sure that core senior services  
12 are funding... funded in this city this year, thanks.

13 TOM WEBER: Thank you, my name is Tom  
14 Weber, I'm Director of Care Management at SAGE.  
15 Thank you very much for holding this hearing. SAGE  
16 stands for Services and Advocacy for Gay Lesbian  
17 Bisexual and Transgender Elders, we were founded  
18 here in New York City in 1978, we're the largest  
19 and oldest organization serving LGBT elder adults  
20 in the country and you know and here we provide  
21 social services, senior service... senior center  
22 services and programs to HIV positive in LGBT elder  
23 adults and have been doing so for the last 40 years  
24 almost. Our population remains one of the most  
25 invisible and at risk populations, we're twice as

1  
2 likely to live alone, twice as likely to be single,  
3 four times less likely to have children therefore  
4 our social networks are fairly thin, can be and you  
5 know in more need of community and social supports.  
6 The way that these factors cumulatively take a  
7 significant toll on the wellbeing of LGBT elders  
8 add to this a 24-hour new cycle reporting roll  
9 backs of LGBT protections and proposed cuts to  
10 health care, housing, and senior services and it is  
11 no wonder SAGE care managers and senior center  
12 staff are reporting an increase and elder reports  
13 of anxiety, depression, and fear. SAGE continues to  
14 see a rise in the demonstrated needs for services  
15 among LGBT elder adults in New York City. Further  
16 our population is diverse, a veritable melting pot  
17 of our city's larger aging population. The new  
18 federal administration's executive order is banning  
19 targeted refugees from entering the United State  
20 impacts many LGBT elder people adding to the  
21 distress faced by this community. We're also facing  
22 perhaps cuts to our federal funding, our national  
23 resource center and LGBT aging the country's  
24 clearinghouse and best practices on serving LGBT  
25 elders is funded through a federal grant with the



1  
2 administration in aging and addition support for  
3 our caregiving program comes from federal funds,  
4 that's a DFTA program, it's likely that one or both  
5 of those revenue streams which represent seven  
6 percent of our operating budget could be  
7 eliminated. Further at the state level SAGE is  
8 concerned about what the funding cuts to elder  
9 services supported through Title 20 means for LGBT  
10 elders and SAGE in particular. In short, our, our  
11 elders are at risk both due to cuts in aging  
12 services and roll backs of LGBT protections.  
13 Meantime our constituent population is more than  
14 doubled over the last five years, this is a  
15 testament to the penetration of our five SAGE  
16 centers across the city for which we have to thank  
17 the city council as well. Our care management  
18 client roles have ballooned to 838 in duplicated  
19 clients who received comprehensive services with  
20 335 currently receiving ongoing regular care  
21 management not paid for by a DFTA case management  
22 contract by the way. The demand for SAGE's services  
23 will likely skyrocket even more if the Trump  
24 administration proceeds with proposed cuts to  
25 health care, social security, housing, and senior

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2 services which will shred the very safety net on  
3 which most older Americans rely. In this new  
4 federal reality support from a New York City  
5 council is absolutely critical to SAGE and New York  
6 City's aging services more broadly. Support from  
7 the city council has been instrumental in serving  
8 our city's diverse population of LGBT elders,  
9 funding from the city council fueled SAGE's launch,  
10 launch of the Nation's first full time LGBT Senior  
11 Center, an innovative senior center in, in  
12 Manhattan, Midtown Manhattan in 2012, we thank you  
13 for that and we also thank the council for the  
14 funding of our four other centers in Brooklyn, the  
15 Bronx, Staten Island and, and upgrading our, our  
16 Harlem program to a full-fledged senior center...

17 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: We have your written  
18 testimony so you can just...

19 TOM WEBER: Don't have to read anymore?

20 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Yeah.

21 TOM WEBER: Got it.

22 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: We have the written  
23 testimony because we still have two more panels...

24 TOM WEBER: Got it, I'm done, thank you  
25 very much.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you for being  
here.

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TOM WEBER: Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Mr. Palumbo your  
next.

7

TOM WEBER: I'll trade with you.

8

9

LEO PALUMBO: Hello, hello my name is

10

Mr. Lee Palumbo, I am from the Bayside Senior

11

Center in Queens, Bayside Queens. We are a very

12

active center and we supply a lot of activities and

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social help to the people there but we're having a

14

lot of problems with... with money in supporting

15

these operations and so did a lot of other centers

16

I'm sure. We need this money very badly and

17

hopefully we can get something to help us because

18

it's very hard to keep the people, you know going

19

with our activities and they really need them so

20

much, they enjoy coming and... because there are a

21

lot of people who are living longer than years ago,

22

then my father did and they... we need these places

23

to come and, and enjoy themselves and live a... you

24

know they seem really enjoy coming to the centers.

25

So, we would really like some help with these

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1  
2 centers to help us with our... to keep us going and,  
3 and for you your help, thank you so much.

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you so much  
5 for being here and for your center please reach out  
6 to your local Council Member also so that they will  
7 understand what your needs are and work with us to  
8 advocate and thank you to this panel. Thank you  
9 Poling for all the great work [speaking foreign  
10 language].

11 JACKIE POLING: [off mic] Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Alright, the next  
13 panel Sari Teichman [sp?] from the Serovich Senior  
14 Center, center for Balanced Living, Karen Taylor  
15 Weinberg Center, Center, Karen Taylor, Kayla Chen  
16 [sp?] from Womankind, Miranda Appelbaum Lincoln  
17 Center for the Performing Arts, okay, Alice Fisher  
18 the Radical Age Movement, Alexa also from the same  
19 group, the Radical Age Movement, Iren Leverwitz  
20 [sp?] from the East Midwood Jewish Center, and  
21 Thelma Thomas. Did I miss anybody? Okay, you may  
22 begin.

23 SARI THEICHMAN: Hi, my name is Sari  
24 Tiechman and I'm on the advisory board of the  
25 Serovich Senior Center for Balanced Living. Thank

1  
2 you so much for allowing me to speak today. As a  
3 junior senior and disabled New Yorker I can  
4 personally attest to the importance of senior  
5 centers in the fabric of New York City life. My own  
6 life has been enhanced in many ways. Serovich, one  
7 of New York City's innovative senior centers weaves  
8 needed human services including three meals a day  
9 with high quality fine arts, music, drama, dance,  
10 and health and wellness programs to a large  
11 multicultural membership from the East Village and  
12 lower East side majority of low income. Much  
13 research shows the importance of creativity in  
14 healthy aging as well as the sense of community  
15 that comes from having a home away home with  
16 stimulating group activities and friendships. Per  
17 capita spending at centers is a fraction of what  
18 other health service, services cost and even a  
19 shoestring staff with a dedicated army of  
20 volunteers cannot offset the full cost of quality  
21 programs and services. Programs that save lives and  
22 let people age in place. Instead of cutting funds  
23 we need to increase funds to continue to provide  
24 services for this growing and deserving population  
25 and it's about time that funding for senior centers

1  
2 is baselined in the Mayor's budget so that we don't  
3 have to go through this annual exercise and  
4 uncertainty and anxiety. Finally, I'd just like to  
5 add that with this new political reality in  
6 Washington and the threats to our already fragile  
7 safety nets we need to err on the side of kindness  
8 and generosity in taking care of each other and our  
9 vulnerable populations, thank you.

10 KAYLA CHEN: Good afternoon

11 Chairperson, person Chin and distinguished members  
12 of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to  
13 speak today. My name is Kayla Chen and I am the  
14 manager of the Later in Life Program at womankind  
15 and we were formally New York agent women center  
16 and first of all thank you for ensuring that  
17 services for older adults remain a priority. So,  
18 Womankind aging American focus domestic violence  
19 agency in New York so our later in life program we  
20 serve survivors above the age of 50 and we advocate  
21 for culturally appropriate responses to elder abuse  
22 and provide multilingual support programs to aging  
23 seniors. So, aging seniors are the first fastest  
24 growing segment in the senior population of New  
25 York City and more than two in three aging seniors

1  
2 has limited English proficiency so... but yet funding  
3 for aging senior programs has yet to respond to the  
4 increasing demands and needs of this community  
5 therefore I'm here today to talk about the need for  
6 culturally effective responses to elder abuse. So I  
7 won't talk too much about the details of the  
8 numbers, it could be found in there but just to  
9 share with you just recently we have been working  
10 with a survivor whose son-in-law was both  
11 physically and psychologically abusive so a case  
12 against the son-in-law was opened in criminal court  
13 and the survivor reached out to Womankind for help  
14 and the survivor shared that she received an order  
15 of protection which caused a huge strain in her  
16 relationship with the family and in addition she  
17 was unable to express the shame and guilt that she  
18 felt for breaking the family apart moreover she  
19 also had a family member who was, who was  
20 undocumented so that add on to the further  
21 constraints as to why she was scared to ask for  
22 help and she does not identify herself as an elder  
23 abuse victim so this burden it caused for the  
24 isolation as she distends herself from her  
25 community so we continued to work closely with the

1  
2 survivor who expressed her desire for the case to  
3 be closed and she wanted good relations with the  
4 family so we assisted her with navigating the  
5 criminal justice system and we helped her with  
6 safety planning as well as our other services where  
7 she joined our wellness group as well as culturally  
8 effective competent so Womankind we urge the New  
9 York City council to sustain and increase the elder  
10 abuse enhancement fund for the immigrant  
11 population. This funding will allow us to continue  
12 this critically culturally appropriate services  
13 that include safety planning, case management, home  
14 visits, we do immigration legal, education  
15 outreach, multilingual hotline, workshops, and  
16 shelter space for seniors especially in this  
17 particular climate we call on the city council to  
18 continue to dedicate and increase resources to  
19 support the most vulnerable population in New York  
20 City. Thank you.

21 KAREN TAYLOR: I'd written good morning  
22 but now good afternoon and thank you Council Member  
23 Chin and members of the... of, of city council for  
24 inviting us to speak today. I'm Karen Taylor, I'm  
25 the program director of Educational Alliances



1  
2 Weinberg Center for Balanced Living the senior  
3 center located in our Flagship building on the  
4 lower east side. Our center is experiencing the  
5 reality of the baby boom, our membership has jumped  
6 from 700 members in 2013 to over 4,100 members  
7 today. Educational Alliances Innovative Senior  
8 Center, the Serovich Center is also experiencing a  
9 tremendous growth in its membership. Together we  
10 provide meals, arts and exercise classes,  
11 education, and discussion groups, health and  
12 nutrition programs, case work and mental health  
13 counseling to more than 7,000 seniors each year and  
14 we do this work hoping each year that our work and  
15 the work of our colleagues will be recognized as an  
16 intricate service that makes New York City one of  
17 the best places in the country to age in place. We  
18 know that 18 percent of New York City's population  
19 is over the age of 60 and by 2030 that's going to  
20 jump to one in five New Yorkers and yet the funding  
21 for services of senior centers that offer for this  
22 growing percentage of our population has not kept  
23 pace with demand, I can speak for my program, our  
24 staff to member ratio is about one full time  
25 equivalent staff for every 580 seniors at the

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1  
2 Serovich Innovative Senior Program they have a few  
3 more staff folks there so there a staff to member  
4 ratio is one to every 480 seniors. Our center  
5 continues to see 80 to 100 new members joining  
6 every month and that ratio means that those members  
7 have to wait for assistance filling out  
8 applications for their basic needs; housing, food  
9 assistance, health care. We want funding for senior  
10 services to be increased and every year senior  
11 centers like Weinberg and the Serovich Centers  
12 reach out to city council to enhance the funding  
13 that we desperately need to support our core  
14 programs. This annual discretionary funding helps  
15 us pay for senior meals, supports culturally  
16 competent services, supports basic needs that keeps  
17 seniors safe and engaged in their community and  
18 each year we must return to city council and hope  
19 to receive this support. This cycle means that  
20 senior centers cannot plan for their future, we  
21 can't even affectively address the present growth  
22 that all of us are facing, it is time for this  
23 funding to be baselined in the mayor's budget to  
24 stabilize our centers. Thank you for this  
25 opportunity to testify and on behalf of Educational

1  
2 Alliance we look forward to working with you to  
3 improve the lives of New York City's older adults.

4 ALICE FISHER: Good Morning Council  
5 Member Chin. My name is Alice Fisher and I'm  
6 representing the Radical Age Movement this morning.  
7 The Radical Age Movement is a two-year-old non-  
8 profit based here in New York City. We are  
9 dedicated to confronting and eliminating ageism and  
10 its effect on the older members of our society. We  
11 see ageism as systemic discrimination not unlike  
12 racism, sexism, homophobia, other prejudices  
13 against people who are construed as different. The  
14 Radical Age Movement supports the 60.6 million  
15 dollars proposed for senior care services. It is  
16 now up to New York City to fund this budget. In  
17 this year of the senior it's time to strengthen the  
18 social safety net for our oldest and most  
19 vulnerable citizens. We cannot be complicit in  
20 Washington's immoral and unethical intention to rip  
21 the fabric of the safety net to shreds. We are  
22 dismayed over the proposed reallocation of the  
23 Title 20 funding in the budget, this is  
24 particularly, particularly salient at a time when  
25 the older adult population in New York is growing

1  
2 rapidly, living longer, and making up a significant  
3 part of our city's population. We see this move on  
4 the governor's behalf as another ageist decision  
5 not to give older adults their fair share. Before  
6 founding the Radical Age Movement, I was the  
7 government liaison to the older adults in the  
8 senate district where I worked. When thinking about  
9 the devastating problems facing our oldest  
10 constituents I always came back to the same  
11 conclusion, ageism which is entrenched in almost  
12 every aspect of our society including government  
13 policy. Ageism is an insidious prejudice that in  
14 its extreme lays at the root of elder abuse and the  
15 marginalization of an entire group of people based  
16 solely on age, it lays at the root of poverty for  
17 older people who have been turned away by our  
18 workforce, it lays at the root of elderly  
19 homelessness and malnutrition, it lays at the root  
20 of the many elderly people wandering our city in  
21 some stage of dementia without any social support  
22 and it lays at the root of underfunding the  
23 services that provide quality of life for people  
24 who have worked hard and dedicated their lives to  
25 contributing to the growth of our city and our

1  
2 society at large. Aging issues are equality issues,  
3 women's issues and immigrant issues, aging issues  
4 are affordable housing issues and food security  
5 issues. Finally, ageism prevents us from developing  
6 an informative vision for a full human life and a  
7 vital multigenerational society. If we're fortunate  
8 we become old, it should not be unfortunate to be  
9 old. Thank you for allowing me to speak here today.

10 ALEXA SONE: Good afternoon, good  
11 afternoon my name is Alexa Sone [sp?] and I'm also  
12 here with Radical Age. Through my work with Radical  
13 Age Movement I've become aware of how easy it is to  
14 dismiss people by their age, my interaction with  
15 older members of our community has highlighted for  
16 me how disposable these people are within our  
17 society at large. They are shut out of  
18 participating in our communities while being locked  
19 into isolation and loneliness. The year by year  
20 underfunding for older New Yorkers is a reflection  
21 of the imbedded ageism and discriminatory policies  
22 for older adults. We hope that seeing the  
23 discrimination imbedded in these decisions will  
24 allow New York City in this year of the senior to  
25 fully fund the 60.6 million dollars proposed for

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1  
2 senior care services. When the city... when the state  
3 and city underfund these programs we further the  
4 isolation and invisibility of older and elder New  
5 Yorkers who are already marginalized in our  
6 communities. As people live longer lives and its  
7 population keeps growing how is New York City going  
8 to support this expanding population without  
9 adequately funding senior services. We need to see  
10 older and elder adults as capable of bettering our  
11 society through intergenerational programs to  
12 achieve to active engagement in daily life older  
13 and elder New Yorkers add the diversity to make...  
14 that make our city the vibrant community we all  
15 love yet without the proper funding the oldest  
16 among us will become more invisible than they  
17 already are. We are asking you at this budget  
18 hearing to examine not only the budget shortfalls  
19 for the old but examine our own assumptions  
20 attitudes and beliefs that allow so many to easily  
21 consider diminishing resources for older New  
22 Yorkers. If we do not confront the ageism imbedded  
23 in decisions to underfund senior services, the  
24 shortfalls in this and every other budget will  
25 continue. Older New Yorkers are shortchanged

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because of who they are not getting their fair share harms everyone and it's time for that to stop.

MIRANDA APPLEBAUM: Chairwoman Chin, my name is Miranda Applebaum, I'm the assistant director of Accessibility and Guest Services at Lincoln Center. I'm honored to be here to discuss how Lincoln Center is serving one particularly vulnerable and isolated group within New York City's senior population and those are individuals with dementia and their caregivers. It is estimated that over five million Americans are living with dementia and that number is expected to triple by 2050. At Lincoln Center, we seek to combat the isolation and day to day stress that the disease causes through Lincoln Center Moments, a new program that is performance based. This spring we will welcome up to 450 New Yorkers for performances followed by art making workshops bringing the town of Lincoln center stages to an intimate and supportive setting, individuals with dementia and their caregivers will access world class performances and workshops that foster discussions, self expression, and socialization. For many

1  
2 participants, the arts are an essential reason why  
3 they make New York their home and this program aims  
4 to return that vital part to their lives. This  
5 project also has a unique cross disciplinary  
6 approach blending the arts, science, and social  
7 services. We're partnering with CaringKind, the  
8 former Alzheimer's associations New York Chapter to  
9 conduct focus groups, consult on supporting both  
10 individuals and caregivers and reaching out to  
11 underserved New Yorkers. We've also engaged Mount  
12 Sinai's Louis Armstrong Center for music and  
13 medicine to co-teach workshops with their music  
14 therapy students as well as conduct a research  
15 study on participants to understand the impact of  
16 the program based on quality of life measures. A  
17 second study will be on our own staff to understand  
18 if this project reduces the stigma of dementia. All  
19 this and the development of the project will be  
20 made into training modules and shared with  
21 performing art centers throughout the country to  
22 encourage more access to the arts for people with  
23 dementia. Lincoln Center aims to partner with the  
24 council and organization serving seniors citywide  
25 to bring Lincoln Center Moments to more New Yorkers



1  
2 with dementia to... and thereby make meaningful live  
3 performing arts experiences more accessible to this  
4 audience. So as the aging committee considers its  
5 priorities for FY '18 Lincoln Center joins with our  
6 CIG colleagues in support of CIG's request for a 40  
7 million dollar increase to DCLA's budget. We also  
8 ask that the aging committee strongly consider  
9 Lincoln Center's 150,000-dollar speaker and  
10 initiative requests for Lincoln Center Moments  
11 including our request to the existing council  
12 initiatives for social adult day care enhancement,  
13 geriatric mental health, healthy aging, senior  
14 centers, programs and enhancements, and other  
15 initiatives for senior programs. This funding will  
16 be leveraged by Lincoln Center into significant  
17 private dollars and thereby expand our ability to  
18 bring performing arts to more New Yorkers with  
19 dementia. On behalf of Lincoln Center, we thank the  
20 council for its continued partnership in making the  
21 arts more accessible for people of all ages and  
22 abilities, thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you, wanted to  
24 thank this panel for your hard work on behalf of  
25 all seniors and we're going to continue to fight

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for the year of the senior, thank you. We're going to call on the, the last panel Esther Holmes, Esther Jolly from the R. A. I. N. Eastchester, Irma Zello from the Bayside Senior Center, Leonard Falumbo [sp?] from Bayside Senior Center, I think they were here earlier, Mildred Gore from R. A. I. N. Eastchester, Maxine Lothian from R. A. I. N. Boston sector, another is Inalin [sp?] Norman, anyone else from... on senior center... senior services that want to testify that have not signed up? Okay, I think we're done. Well thank you all for being here today, we had a wonderful hearing to fight for the year of the seniors and we will make sure that we get this funding that we've request, 60 million into the executive budget, thank you. thank you for being here today. Hearing is adjourned.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date March 22, 2017