

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND  
SUBSTANCE USE

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April 15, 2026  
Start: 10:56 a.m.  
Recess: 11:01 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - 8TH FLOOR - HEARING  
ROOM 3

B E F O R E: Tiffany Cabán, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shirley Aldebol  
Joann Ariola  
Simcha Felder  
Ty Hankerson  
Linda Lee

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Lynn C. Schulman

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone  
3 check for the Committee on Mental Health and  
4 Substance Use. Today's date is April 15, 2026.

5 Recorded by Tavell King (phonetic) in Hearing Room 3.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and  
7 welcome to today's New York City Council vote on the  
8 Committee of Mental Health and Substance Use.

9 At this time, please silence all  
10 electronic devices.

11 Chair, you may begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: [GAVEL] Good morning,  
13 everyone. My name is Council Member Tiffany Cabán,  
14 Chair of the New York City Council's Committee on  
15 Mental Health and Substance Use. Before we begin, I'd  
16 like to recognize that we are joined by the following  
17 Council Members, Council Member Schulman, Aldebol,  
18 Council Member Lee online, Council Member Felder, and  
19 Council Member Ariola.

20 Today, the Committee will consider  
21 Proposed Introduction Number 722-A, sponsored by  
22 Council Member Schulman, which would require that the  
23 New York City Mayor's Office of Community Mental  
24 Health publicly publish a report twice a year on

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2 mental health emergency calls from the prior six  
3 months. Each report would include various data points  
4 relating to mental health emergency calls and B-HEARD  
5 responses. It would also require the FDNY to add  
6 information relating to B-HEARD dispatches to its  
7 publicly available 9-1-1 call data. As we aim to  
8 improve our City's mental health emergency response  
9 and move away from over-reliance on law enforcement  
10 in crisis situations, it's important to have  
11 reliable, consistent, and comprehensive data. And as  
12 legislators, we need this information to be able to  
13 make evidence-based decisions and to improve how  
14 these programs serve our neighbors in crisis.

15 So, I will now turn the mic to Council  
16 Member Schulman to make a brief statement on her  
17 bill.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Thank you very  
19 much, Chair Cabán, who is a co-prime sponsor of this  
20 legislation.

21 When B-HEARD first launched in June 2021  
as a pilot program in Harlem, it marked the first  
time in New York City's history that teams of health  
professionals, not police officers, were dispatched

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2 as first responders to 9-1-1 mental health calls. The  
3 premise was straightforward. Pair EMTs with mental  
4 health clinicians and treat a mental health crisis as  
5 a public health emergency, not a public safety issue.  
6 The program aims to route eligible 9-1-1 calls to a  
7 health-centered response, reduce unnecessary police  
8 involvement, connect people to community-based care,  
9 and avoid unnecessary trips to emergency rooms. By  
10 certain measures, B-HEARD has delivered. From its  
11 launch through June 2025, teams responded to nearly  
12 35,000 mental health 9-1-1 calls. 43 percent of  
13 patients were served in the community rather than  
14 transported to a hospital. Among those surveyed, 96  
15 percent said B-HEARD helped them, and 94 percent said  
16 the response better matched their needs than a  
17 traditional emergency response. At the same time,  
18 significant issues and gaps remain. 35 percent of  
19 calls deemed eligible for B-HEARD still received a  
20 traditional response, and this is important, the City  
21 does not consistently track or publish data on the  
program in a way that supports thorough evaluation.  
Good policy depends on good data. People experiencing  
mental health crises are too often met with force

1  
2 when they need care, and without clear, consistent  
3 reporting, it is difficult to measure progress or  
4 identify where improvements are needed. This  
5 legislation comes at an important moment. Just last  
6 month, Mayor Mamdani signed an executive order  
7 creating the Office of Community Safety, signaling a  
8 commitment to strengthening the City's mental health  
9 crisis response. To support that effort, the Council  
10 needs the tools to evaluate whether programs like  
11 B-HEARD are working effectively and equitably. This  
12 bill is a step in that direction. It requires the  
13 City to report every six months on how mental health  
14 emergency calls are handled, who responds, response  
15 times, whether additional responders are involved,  
16 and what outcomes follow. It requires coordination  
17 among the NYPD, FDNY, and the Office of Community  
18 Mental Health to provide clear, consistent  
19 information to the Council and to the public. It also  
20 requires reporting on location and demographic data,  
21 including age, race, ethnicity, disability status,  
and housing situation. Finally, it requires the Fire  
Department to publish B-HEARD response data on the  
City's Open Data Portal. This bill does not expand

2 the program itself. It asks the City to clearly and  
3 consistently report on what it is already doing, so  
4 informed decisions about the allocation of resources  
5 can be made. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you, Council  
7 Member Schulman.

8 And I'd like to acknowledge that we've  
9 been joined by Council Member Hankerson on Zoom.

10 And, Clerk, we are ready to begin the  
11 vote.

12 COUNCIL CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you.  
13 Good morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll  
14 call vote, Committee on Mental Health and Substance  
15 Use. Proposed Introduction 722-A.

16 Chair Cabán.

17 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Aye.

18 COUNCIL CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Lee.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Aye.

20 COUNCIL CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you,  
21 Council Member.

Stevens. Felder.

COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Aldebol.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ALDEBOL: Aye.

3 COUNCIL CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hankerson.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKERSON: I vote aye.

5 COUNCIL CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you.

6 Ariola.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: I vote aye.

8 COUNCIL CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: With a vote  
9 of six in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and  
10 no abstentions, item has been adopted by the  
11 Committee.

12 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: All right. We're  
13 adjourned. [GAVEL]  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date June 15, 2026