

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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JULY 29, 2021
Start: 11:50 A.M.
Recess: 12:00 P.M.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: CHAIR MATHIEU EUGENE

COUNCIL MEMBERS: MATHIEU EUGENE
INEZ BARRON
DANIEL DROMM
BRAD LANDER
BILL PERKINS
DEBORAH ROSE
KAREN KOSLOWITZ

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

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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2 SGT. AT ARMS: This is a sound check for
3 the Committee on Civil and Human Rights being
4 recorded by Israel Martinez, July 29th, 2021, taking
5 place in City Council Chambers.

6 CHAIR EUGENE: Good morning. I'm Council
7 Member Mathieu Eugene and I'm the Chair of the Civil
8 and Humans Rights Committee. Today, the committee
9 will be voting on Introduction number 339B, sponsored
10 by Council Member Debbie Rose which expands
11 protection under the City Human Rights Law to
12 domestic workers. There are an estimated 2.5 million
13 domestic workers in the United Stated which is one of
14 the nation's fastest growing professions as domestic
15 worker is often intermittent, isolated and perform
16 for very small enterprise such as an individual
17 family. Domestic workers are uniquely vulnerable to
18 abuse including sexual harassment, assault, and
19 various forms of this combination. Domestic workers
20 also belong to a vulnerable population in the
21 workforce as 95 percent of domestic workers are women
22 and 54 percent identify as non-right. In a recent
23 survey of domestic workers, over 80 percent reported
24 that they have worked in an abusive situation.
25 Despite rampant violations, they are limited legal

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

2 resources and law for domestic workers. In 2010, the
3 New York State Human Rights Law was amended to
4 protect domestic workers from sexual and
5 discriminatory arrangement, but domestic workers did
6 not receive the full promised protection of the City
7 Human Rights Law. Similarly, New York City's Human
8 Rights Law only applied to entrepreneurs with four or
9 more employees. Therefore, domestic workers were
10 often employed in private home by those who have few
11 employees, are left vulnerable without many of the
12 city's human rights protection. In 2018, the City
13 Council passes a law 1998 which removed the four-
14 employee requirement for gender-based arrangement
15 claim. Today, we'll be voting on Intro 339B which
16 would amend the New York City Human Rights Law to
17 extend employee protections to domestic workers
18 regardless of the number of staff employed. Before
19 we begin, I would like to congratulate the members of
20 the committee with use today. Today, we have Council
21 Member Barron, thank you very much, Council Member;
22 Council Member Dromm, thank you very much; Council
23 Member Lander, thank you; Council Member Perkins,
24 thank you very much; and we have with us also the
25 sponsor of this wonderful legislation, Council Member

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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2 Rose and also Council Member Koslowitz. Thank you so
3 very much, and now, I would like to invite Council
4 Member Rose to deliver a statement.

5 CM ROSE: Thank you so much, Chair
6 Eugene. Today, we will vote to pass Intro 339 which
7 will grant protections for our domestic workers under
8 the Human Rights Law. New York City's Human Rights
9 Law is one of the most expansive human rights laws in
10 the country and is intended to be more liberally
11 construed than similar states and federal laws. The
12 Law provides protections to employees and prospective
13 employees from discrimination in the workplace. In
14 2011, it was brought to my attention, however, that
15 the law is not, in fact, being construed literally,
16 and that there are people who are not afforded
17 protections from discrimination. Intro 339 would
18 otherwise apply the entirety of the human rights law
19 to domestic workers including discrimination in
20 hiring, firing, promotions, and all employment
21 decisions based on all protected categories; race,
22 gender, disability, and obligations related to
23 pregnancy and other medical accommodations as well as
24 sexual harassment which would include training for
25 the employer and the obligation to disclose rights of

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

2 the employee upon hiring. I'm really proud to be
3 here today on behalf of all of the domestic workers
4 who have been in unprotected status for far too long.
5 So, domestic workers and healthcare workers across
6 the state are moments away from being protected as
7 all other employees currently are. I want to thank
8 Speaker Corey Johnson for his leadership, his
9 steadfast dedication to the people of our city, and
10 his support of this Bill. I also want to thank Jason
11 Goldman who is Chief of Staff. I'd like to thank Isa
12 Cortez (SP?), my Legislative and Budget Director who
13 has fervently worked over the years to get this Bill
14 passed, and I want to thank Alina Francis Martin
15 (SP?), my previous Legislative and Budget Director
16 who recognized that the Human Right Law excluded
17 protections for so many workers back in 2011. I want
18 to thank Jay Shree Gonapathy (SP?) whose the Counsel
19 to the Civil and Human Rights Committee, Rachel
20 Cordero (SP?), and Larissa Santino (SP?) who is the
21 Co-Director of the National Domestic Workers
22 Alliance, as well as everybody else who is a part of
23 the Domestic Workers Alliance, my colleagues and all
24 of the domestic workers and health care workers
25 across the state. Chair Eugene, I thank you so much

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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2 for bringing this Bill to the floor for a vote, and I
3 know that domestic workers are also very thankful and
4 grateful for this Bill being heard today, being
5 passed hopefully today.

6 CHAIR EUGENE: Thank you so very much,
7 Council Member Rose and congratulations. I think I
8 have acknowledged Council Member Perkins, but if I
9 didn't, let me do it again, Council Member Bill
10 Perkins, thank you very much, my brother, thank you,
11 and before I call the vote, I would like also to
12 thank committee staff, Daya Shree (SP?), Dana Patty
13 (SP?), Counsel to the Committee; William Durey (SP?)
14 Policy Analyst; and Jack Cain, Finance Analyst, as
15 well as my staff Melissa Wilson (SP?). Now, I would
16 like to ask Mr. Clerk to call the vote. Please, call
17 the roll, please.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
19 Committee Clerk, roll call vote, Committee on Civil
20 and Human Rights, proposed Introduction 339B. Chair
21 Eugene.

22 CHAIR EUGENE: I vote I.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Barron.

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1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

2 CM BARRON: Thank you, I want to commend
3 the sponsor of this Bill, glad to be a co-sponsor,
4 and I vote I.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: Dromm

6 CM DROMM: I vote I.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK: Lander.

8 CM LANDER: I want to give just really
9 special props for this fight to Council Member Debi
10 Rose who has been pushing for this Bill for years,
11 including in the last term as well as this one,
12 standing with domestic worker, some of the, the, the
13 people who need human rights protections the most,
14 and in New York City have had it the least, and
15 you've really, they've shown up in organizing over
16 and over and you've had their back, and I just want
17 to give them and you big props on today's Bill. I
18 vote I.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Perkins.

20 CM PERKINS: I vote I.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Perkins
22 votes I. By a vote of 5 in the affirmative, zero in
23 the negative, and no abstentions, item has been
24 adopted by the committee. Mr. Chair, that is a full
25 committee.

1 COMMITTEE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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3 CHAIR EUGENE: Thank you so very much,

4 Mr. Clerk. Thank you very, very much. This meeting

5 is adjourned.

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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 August 1, 2021