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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY 1
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES
Of the
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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November 27, 2019
Start: 10:18 a.m.
Recess: 2:59 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Helen K. Rosenthal,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Diana Ayala
Laurie A. Cumbo
Ben Kallos
Brad S. Lander

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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A P P E A R A N C E S

- Demoya Gorden
Supervising Attorney at the New York City
Commission on Human Rights
- Chanel Lopez
Transgender Community Liaison from the New York
City Commission on Human Rights
- Ashe McGovern from the New York City Unity
Project and the New York City Mayor's Office
- Elisa Crespo
Representing the Bronx Borough President
- Quadira Coles
Girls for Gender Equity
- Deborah Lolai
Bronx Defenders
- Taylor Brown
Lambda Legal
- Kathleen McKenna
Brooklyn Defender Services
- Dr. Brianne Waycoff
Associate Professor at CUNY Borough of Manhattan
Community College
- Paisley Currah
Professor of Political Science and Women Studies
at Brooklyn College
- Dr. Yarri Felber-Seligman
City College CUNY

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Red Washburn
Associate Professor of English and the Director
of Women and Gender Studies at Kingsborough

Brianna Silverberg
Community Organizer with the New York City Anti-
Violence Project

Reem Ramadan
Lead Organizer at the NYC Anti-Violence Project

Sonya Steinman
Community member of the New York City Anti-
Violence Project

Emilia Decaudin
Senior at the City College of New York

Kyle Reese
Transgender student at Brooklyn College

Riley Marcano
Trans New York Social Worker and a CUNY student

Jason Rodriguez Escalona
Student at the College of Staten Island

Simone Zaleski
non-binary Transmasculine Student at Borough of
Manhattan Community College

Charlie Solidum
Program Manager of HIV services at the LGBT
Network in Long Island City Queens

Cynthia Demise
Project Managing Consultant for the new Pride
Agenda

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Cecilia Gentili
New Pride Agenda

Bianey Garcia
TGNC Organizer at Make the Road New York

Tias Candy[SP?]
Campaign leads working to repeal walking while
trans law

Seions Danovich[SP?]
Co-Director of the Queer Detainee Empowerment
Project

Shad Lae
Walking While Trans Coalition, Queer Detainee
Empowerment Project and No New Jails

Tonya Lee Price
Anti-Violence Project

Twinkle Paul[SP?]
Gay Men's Health Crisis

Naning Supata

Wayne Reed
Faculty member at Brooklyn College

Eileen Makak
LGBTQ Resource Center at Brooklyn College

Arnold Pedrum[SP?]
Trans non-binary student at Craig Newmark
Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY

Zachary Mitnick
Representative to the CUNY Graduate Centers
Doctoral Student Counsel

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Amanda Friedman
Social Work Student at Silberman School of Social
Work at Hunter College

Barissa Peña[SP?]
Trans non-binary Afro Latinx

Melissa Sklarz
Government Relations person representing SAGE,
LGBT and TGNC Elders

Tiffany Baruty[SP?]
manager of Youth Organizing at Planned Parenthood
of New York City

Shannon Wittington
Gender Affirmation Program at the Visiting Nurse
Service of New York

Daphne Chang
Member of Red Canary Song

Natalia Gibs
LGBTQ Coordinator from the Harm Reduction
Coalition

Dani Brovand[SP?]
MSW Candidate at New York University

Max Masure
Co-Founder of Argo Collective

Jewel Cadet
Black Queer Activist

John Peña
Community organizer and teaching artist

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Tamara Lock
Lead Organizer with NYTAG, The New York
Transgender Advocacy Group

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [GAVEL] Good morning, I
3 am Council Member Helen Rosenthal; my pronouns are
4 she, her, hers. I am Chair of the Committee on Women
5 and Gender Equity and I'm calling this hearing to
6 open. This hearing is now open.

7 Thank you all for joining us at this oversight
8 hearing on Gender Equity in New York City, Access
9 Resources and Support for Transgender, Gender Non-
10 Conforming, and Non-Binary or TGNC/NB New Yorkers.

11 Before I go into my opening statement, I want to
12 note that while the Mayor's Office to End Domestic
13 and Gender Based Violence and the New York City
14 Commission on Gender Equity, were unfortunately
15 unable to attend. We are very excited to have
16 representation from the City's Commission on Human
17 Rights and the New York City Unity Project.

18 Additionally, it is incredibly important to note
19 that all government agencies engage New Yorkers of
20 all gender identities. With that in mind, we, the
21 Committee on Women and Gender Equity look forward to
22 hearing from you on the issues and policy gaps
23 concerning New Yorkers who are transgender as well as
24 those who identify outside of wholly reject gender
25 binary.

2 Today is only the beginning of a concerted effort
3 by this Committee and the City Council to uplift and
4 listen to TGNC/NB voices across the five boroughs.
5 It is fitting that we are holding this hearing in
6 November. The same month as Transgender Awareness
7 Week, when advocates and allies come together to
8 raise awareness of the transgender community through
9 education and advocacy activities.

10 And the Transgender Day of Remembrance, which
11 memorializes victims of transphobic violence. We
12 gather only a couple of days after Janette
13 O'Sullivan; a 28 year old Black transwoman was found
14 in her East Harlem apartment. While the
15 investigation of Janette's death remains open, we
16 know that across the country, transwomen of color
17 have a life expectancy of 35 years of age, while that
18 of their cisgender counterparts is 78.

19 TGNC/NB people are facing a national human rights
20 crisis, as anti-trans-violence threatens their lives.
21 Yet the Supreme Court is still deliberating whether
22 the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects LGBTQ+ workers at
23 all. This is an example of the serious disconnect
24 between the reality TGNC/NB people live with and the
25 dominant public focus. TGNC/NB New Yorkers deserve

2 gender affirming life experiences. No one should
3 ever fear harass due to their gender expression or
4 identity or have to explain the gender on their
5 personal identification, or have their privacy
6 violated with invasive questioning or have to skip
7 school or lose work.

8 The multitudes of gender expression are part of
9 the diversity that makes New York City great. Thank
10 you everyone, especially the young people who are
11 here today to testify. We look forward to hearing
12 from all of the advocates and learning about the
13 lived experiences of our participants.

14 I'd like to thank Marisa Maack; my Chief of
15 Staff; Madhuri Shukla my Legislative Director; and
16 the Committee Staff for their work in preparing for
17 this hearing Jayasri Ganapathy my Legislative
18 Council; Chloe Rivera Senior Legislative Policy
19 Analyst; Monica Pepple Financial Analyst; John Blasco
20 LGBTQ Liaison in the Community Engagement Division,
21 Elizabeth Arts Women's Issues Liaison in the
22 Community Engagement Division. They have gone above
23 and beyond in preparation for this hearing and
24 deserve a lot of praise for that work. It reflects
25 incredibly well I think, on this City Council.

2 Finally, I want to acknowledge the Committee
3 Members who are present Diana Ayala from East Harlem.

4 COUNCIL CLERK: Now in accordance with the rules
5 of the Council I will administer the affirmation to
6 the witnesses from the Mayoral Administration.

7 Please raise your right hand.

8 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth
9 and nothing but the truth in your testimony before
10 this Committee and to respond to Council Members
11 questions honestly?

12 PANEL: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, our first panel is
14 Demoya Gorden, a Supervising Attorney at the New York
15 City Commission on Human Rights; Chanel Lopez the
16 Transgender Community Liaison from the New York City
17 Commission on Human Rights and Ashe McGovern from the
18 New York City Unity Project and the New York City
19 Mayor's Office. Ashe, do you want to begin?

20 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much.

22 ASHE MCGOVERN: Thank you. Good morning Chair
23 Rosenthal and Members of the Committee on Women and
24 Gender Equity. My name is Ashe McGovern and I am the
25 Senior Policy Advisor on LGBTQ Initiatives in the

1
2 Mayor's Office and the Executive Director of the NYC
3 Unity Project.

4 The Administration citywide initiative to support
5 and empower LGBTQ people particularly young people
6 through innovative, policy and program change. I use
7 they and them pronouns.

8 I want to thank you for the opportunity to
9 testify today and for holding this important hearing.
10 As a transgender person myself and an advocate for
11 trans-rights and justice for many years, I know that
12 these conversations could not be more urgent.

13 Today, I will be sharing information about the
14 NYC Unity Project and providing a high level overview
15 of some key agency policies and programs aimed at
16 supporting and empowering our communities in New York
17 City.

18 After my colleagues testify, I would be happy to
19 answer any additional questions you have.

20 It would be an understatement to call the past
21 few years challenging for Trans, Non-Binary and
22 Gender Nonconforming or TGNC/NC Communities. This
23 year alone, 22 trans people that we know of, mostly
24 Black transwomen have been killed nationwide.
25 Countless others have been lost.

2 Recently reported data show that bias and hate
3 motivated crimes against TGNB/NC communities continue
4 to rise across the country. Since taking office, the
5 Trump Administration has engaged in a calculated and
6 systematic effort to dismantle nearly all legal
7 protections promulgated under the Obama
8 Administration for TGNB/NC people. In housing,
9 shelter, education, health care and beyond and this
10 year, as you mentioned Chair Rosenthal, for the first
11 time, the Supreme Court is directly considering
12 whether our communities will continue to hold the
13 legal rights and protections we are fundamentally
14 entitled to, by virtue of our human existence as
15 human beings and under federal law.

16 These actions have only intensified the
17 discrimination, harassment and mistreatment that
18 TGNB/NC communities currently experience and have
19 historically experiences in nearly every area of
20 their and our lives.

21 In an effort to fight back and send a clear
22 message of support and affirmation to TGNB/NC
23 communities, the de Blasio Administration has
24 directly challenged some of the Trump Administrations
25

1
2 most targeted efforts to erase and deny our
3 existence.

4 In July of this year, we submitted an amicus
5 brief to the Supreme Court as part of a coalition of
6 66 local governments across the nation. Arguing that
7 government agencies, institutions and communities are
8 strengthened by long standing local laws prohibiting
9 discrimination on the basis of sex and that these
10 institutions and individuals would be harmed if the
11 court eliminates federal discrimination protections
12 for LGBTQ workers.

13 We have also submitted comments to the Federal
14 Register challenging the Trump Administrations
15 attempts to eliminate legal protections for TGNB/NC
16 people through regulatory change. Including comments
17 arguing for the maintenance of federal protections in
18 health care, employment in other key areas. We have
19 even partnered with the New York Attorney General's
20 Office and others to take on the Trump Administration
21 in court. Arguing the federal expansion of so-called
22 religious exemptions in health care would directly
23 harm LGBTQ and other vulnerable communities.

24 Locally, we have fought hard to ensure that
25 Trans, Non-Binary and Gender Nonconforming people's

1 rights while being challenged federally, are fully
2 protected and enforced here in New York City.

3
4 My colleges from the New York City Commission on
5 Human Rights will speak in greater detail about our
6 enforcement and outreach efforts on that front, but
7 it is worth noting at the outset of this hearing,
8 that the breath, depth and continued enforcement of
9 our city's human rights protections for TGNB/NC
10 communities are among the most robust and
11 comprehensive in the entire nation.

12 Of course, we know that enforcing legal
13 protections and fighting back against efforts to
14 dismantle those protections are not enough. That's
15 why our city agencies and offices including the NYC
16 Unity Project, have invested in creating some of the
17 most inclusive and affirming policies and programs in
18 the nation for TGNB/NC people, to ensure that our
19 most vulnerable community members get the support and
20 services that they so desperately need.

21 Across the city, we are collecting more
22 comprehensive data about TGNB/NC people to whom we
23 provide services and to our own city employees, to
24 ensure our programs and services are safer and more
25 affirming. We are expanding gender options in our

1 official documents including our city's birth
2 certificates and IDNYC to ensure that all TGNB/NC
3 communities are able to have official identity
4 documents that affirm who they are.
5

6 While the Unity Project often coordinates
7 interagency LGBTQ policy efforts across the
8 administration, many of our city agencies also have
9 staff dedicated as directors and liaisons to LGBTQ
10 outreach efforts. And initiatives, including the
11 Department of Social Services, the Department of
12 Education, DOHMH, New York City Health and Hospitals,
13 NYPD, Department of Correction, ACS and other partner
14 agencies, including of course, my colleagues here
15 from the New York City Commission on Human Rights.

16 In addition to the citywide policy efforts I've
17 mentioned thus far, I would also like to share some
18 of the programs led directly by the Unity Project and
19 our efforts to better support and empower TGNB/NC
20 communities. The Unity Project was started as an
21 initiative of the Mayor's Office in 2017, to ensure
22 that LGBTQ communities particularly youth, are safe,
23 supported and healthy.

24 We work both to address root cause issues that
25 impact lifelong disparities faced by LGBQ and TGNB/NC

2 communities and we also invest in the programs and
3 services our communities need right now.

4 Particularly in the areas of health equity,
5 homelessness, employment and economic insecurity.

6 While most of our programs are open to all LGBTQ
7 community members, we know that across the board,
8 TGNC/NC communities, particularly communities of
9 color are more likely to experience the disparities
10 and inequities we work to combat.

11 In an effort to address a key root cause of these
12 inequities, we have made tackling family rejection a
13 key priority. We know that family acceptance is an
14 incredibly protective factor in the overall health
15 and wellness of our communities and that rejection
16 can result in a range of negative lifelong
17 consequences and outcomes, including school
18 absenteeism, school dropout, worse physical health
19 outcomes due to stress, higher rates of poverty and
20 unemployment due to lack of financial support,
21 susceptibility to violence, sometimes at the hands of
22 family members and notably higher rates of mental
23 illness, substance misuse and suicidality.

24 To tackle these issues, we have invested in
25 several key programs including, a first of its kind

1
2 yearlong certification program and partnership with
3 the Ackerman Institutes Gender and Family Project and
4 ACS to help licensed clinicians develop skills needed
5 to mediate family conflict between trans and gender
6 expansive youth and their families and encourage
7 healthy unification.

8 We co-sponsored this year, Gender Conference NYC
9 in partnership again with the Ackerman Institute and
10 PFLAG NYC. This conference was held in May of this
11 year for the first time and included over 700
12 participants and two full days of workshops and
13 programming for professionals, families and trans and
14 gender expansive young people.

15 Relatedly, we closely partner with and fund the
16 LGBTQ Institute for Family Therapy, also known as
17 Project Lift, in partnership with the LGBT Center of
18 New York and ACS. This program provides a six months
19 training certification process for licensed mental
20 health clinicians working with families that are
21 involved in the ACS system.

22 Recognizing the needs of Spanish speaking
23 communities and the high rates of mental health
24 disparities particularly for youth in these
25 communities, we have also partnered with CAMBA's

1 project Accept LGBTQ Youth or Project ALLY with
2 DOHMH. This program offers educational outreach and
3 peer support groups for parents and families of LGBTQ
4 young people.
5

6 Finally, recognizing the lack of youth led and
7 centered research on this issue, we have partnered
8 with DOHMH and CUNY's Public Science project to
9 conduct a first of its kind participatory action
10 research project on LGBTQ family acceptance. Where
11 young people themselves are directly designing,
12 conducting and developing research on the needs and
13 concerns of LGBTQ young people in relation to their
14 experiences with family rejection or acceptance.

15 CUNY's Public Science project has been a vital
16 partner in this work and recently conducted the
17 largest participatory action research project on the
18 needs of LGBTQ youth in the country.

19 We have also made addressing homelessness a key
20 priority of the project. One of the most devastating
21 consequences of familial rejection is the
22 disproportionately high rates of LGBTQ youth
23 homelessness. LGBTQ young people in New York City
24 make up an astonishing 40 percent of the youth
25 homeless population. Nationally, one in five

1
2 transgender individuals have experienced homelessness
3 at some point in their lives.

4 Recognizing these urgent needs, we have invested
5 in first an expansion of 24 hour youth drop-in
6 centers into every single borough with DYCD, to
7 ensure that all young people have a safe place to
8 turn at all hours across the city. These centers
9 provide LGBTQ supportive mental health services, case
10 management and programming. We have also in
11 partnership with City Council made significant
12 investments in creating more youth shelter beds for
13 our young people age 21-24 that need them, in
14 partnership with DYCD.

15 Finally, we are deeply committed to creating
16 programs and services that result in long term
17 economic security for our communities. We know that
18 TGNC/NB community members face a crisis of
19 unemployment and poverty. Nationwide, transgender
20 people of color report five times the unemployment
21 rate of the general US population. And 22 percent of
22 TGNC/NB New Yorkers surveyed are unemployed, which is
23 nearly five times higher than the New York City
24 unemployment rate.

2 That is why in October of this year, the NYC
3 Unity Project announced the launch of a brand new
4 program. NYC Unity Works, which we believe will be
5 the most comprehensive publicly funded LGBTQ+
6 workforce program in the nation. This program will
7 provide two years of direct service and one year of
8 follow up, offering comprehensive wrap around support
9 services including: Access to case managers, benefit
10 navigators, mental health clinicians, job developers,
11 paid employment opportunities and paid opportunities
12 for advance credentialing and training. All in an
13 LGBTQ affirming and supportive environment.

14 Even with these commitments, we know that our
15 work is not nearly done. The programs, policies and
16 services I've mentioned here today are by no means
17 exhaustive. Across our administration we are
18 prioritizing the needs of TGNB/NC communities and we
19 will continue to do so vigorously.

20 In conclusion, I want to share my deep gratitude
21 to members of this Committee for servicing this
22 important topic and I am grateful for our shared
23 commitment to ensuring that TGNB/NC people in the
24 city get the resources they need to survive and
25 thrive. The Unity project welcomes the opportunity

1
2 to collaborate further with City Council and I truly
3 appreciate being able to speak with you today.

4 I will now turn it over to my colleagues at CCHR
5 and I look forward to taking your questions after
6 testimony.

7 CHANEL LOPEZ: Good morning Chair Rosenthal and
8 members of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity.
9 Also, I want to acknowledge and welcome the public
10 who will be testifying later on.

11 Thank you for having today's oversight hearing on
12 Access, Resources and Support for Transgender and
13 Gender Non-Conforming New Yorkers.

14 I am Chanel Lopez; the Transgender Communities
15 Liaison's at the New York City Commission on Human
16 Rights. My pronouns are she, her, hers. I am
17 testifying today along with my colleague Demoya
18 Gordon on behalf of the New York City Commission on
19 Human Rights.

20 The Commission on Human Rights has been
21 prioritizing, creating access, and visibility and
22 supporting transgender and gender non-conforming and
23 non-binary people since the start of Commissioner
24 Malalis tenure, which was back in 2015 and we are

1
2 very proud to talk about the work that we are doing
3 at our agency.

4 I will focus my remarks on the Commissions
5 outreach initiatives and Ms. Gordon, my colleague,
6 will address the agencies law enforcement work in
7 that area. I must say, as a proud Latina Transwoman,
8 I am thrilled to have the opportunity to talk to you
9 all today and to tell you about the important work my
10 colleagues and I are performing at the Commission for
11 our very own community and our efforts to make New
12 York City more inclusive for transgender and non-
13 binary brothers, sisters and family. As well as a
14 model for other cities and state nationwide.

15 This work is incredibly personal to me as I know
16 firsthand how important it is to the lives of
17 transgender and gender non-conforming and non-binary
18 people in New York City.

19 I started working at the Commission back in April
20 of 2018 after having worked at the New York City
21 Antiviolence Project, also known as AVP, for seven
22 years as the Senior Counsel Advocate in that role. I
23 worked directly with survivors of domestic and sexual
24 violence, many of whom identified as transgender and
25

1
2 gender non-conforming offering counseling, referrals,
3 and accompaniments to courts, prisons and hospitals.

4 When I heard that the Commission was hiring to
5 refill its trans-community liaisons position, I was
6 very excited to apply for this position, to bring my
7 own experience as a community member and advocate for
8 many years, and also as a survivor to the agency.
9 And have the power of the government behind me to
10 provide resources to transgender communities.

11 Many of my transgender brothers and sisters who I
12 spoke to about the position, had encouraged me to
13 apply because under the Commissioner Malalis
14 leadership, the Commission had developed a reputation
15 for being a strong supporter and ally of our
16 communities.

17 Within her first few months of starting at the
18 agency, she convened a round table of transgender and
19 gender non-conforming leaders, advocates, and
20 community members, including one of my own AVP
21 colleagues and many of whom had been vocal about
22 their criticism and disappointments of government and
23 law enforcement in our communities. While I was not
24 at the meeting, I did hear from people who were
25 present that the meeting was a success for several

1 reasons. First, we saw that multiple transgender and
2 gender non-conforming and non-binary people were
3 ready working at the commission.
4

5 These were people from our own communities that
6 we knew and trusted working in both the Law
7 Enforcement Bureau and the Community Relations
8 Bureau. Seeing transgender and gender non-conforming
9 and non-binary people in government agencies and
10 working for elected officials in positions where they
11 are able to inform government policies and laws is
12 still very rare now. And was even more so then, yet,
13 I can not tell you how important it is to see
14 yourself reflected in such position of power.

15 Second, Commissioner Malalis and her team were
16 welcoming transparent, supportive and already
17 knowledgeable about many of our concerns. And, as
18 basic as this may sound, culturally competent about
19 our communities. They recognize the diversity within
20 our communities and demonstrated an understanding of
21 the specific challenges faced by non-binary people.

22 Finally, they outlined a few specific projects
23 and initiatives they were already working on to
24 protect and serve our communities. One of these
25 projects ended up being the Commissioners highly

1
2 successful and groundbreaking, Look Past Pink and
3 Blue Campaign. A citywide public education effort
4 launched across city transit stations, kioskos[SP?],
5 and social media that affirmed New Yorkers right to
6 use restrooms consistent with their gender identity
7 and gender expression.

8 At that time, over 20 hateful anti-trans bills
9 had been introduced in a variety of jurisdiction
10 across the country and it was a welcome reminder for
11 transgender New Yorkers that our city was behind us.
12 It received over 62 million impressions across
13 various media platforms.

14 The Campaign featured two videos, which you can
15 find on our website. When the videos were premiered
16 along with the posters at another roundtable of trans
17 and non-binary folks at the LGBT Center, I can tell
18 you there was hardly a dry eye in that house.

19 The impact of that kind of visibility and public
20 support for my trans community who are used to being
21 targeted shunned and even demonized cannot be
22 understated. That's another reason why I'm so proud
23 of my position as the Transgender Community Liaison
24 which sits within the agencies Community Relations
25 Bureau. Though there are several other transgender

1 and gender non-conforming and non-binary staff
2 working across many areas of the commission, the role
3 reflects the commissions commitment to our
4 communities. As far as I am aware, it is one of the
5 only positions within city government dedicated
6 exclusively to outreach and engagement to
7 transgender, gender non-conforming and non-binary
8 communities.
9

10 As part of my duties, I represent the commission
11 at events, rallies, and convenings across the five
12 boroughs, including Staten Island, sharing my life
13 experience, showing others that the city is committed
14 to uplifting the voices of transgender and gender
15 non-conforming and non-binary New Yorkers. And
16 building necessary connections to city resources,
17 programs and employments.

18 In 2016, the commission launched a training
19 focused on educating city agencies, community based
20 organization and businesses on the experiences of
21 transgender and gender non-conforming and non-binary
22 communities. It was created as a train the trainer
23 workshop to help build cultural competency regarding
24 community members and it is often provided by me.
25

1 Since the commission launched the training,
2
3 nearly 4,000 people across all five boroughs have
4 taken the trainings. It has become one of our most
5 requested trainings and our staff have trained
6 several other local, state, and federal government
7 agencies including the New York Parks, the US
8 Department of Labor, the US Equal Employment
9 Opportunity Commission and even the New York City
10 Console, to name a few.

11 We've also trained large cities, institutions,
12 like the Queens Museum, the Columbia University of
13 Social Work, the New York City Opera and the YMCA
14 along with the diversity of other businesses and
15 employers.

16 For transgender people and transgender women of
17 color in particular, addressing safety, biased based
18 policing and barriers to employment remain a
19 priority. I hear directly from the community. I
20 recently organized a roundtable with over a dozen
21 transgender and gender non-conforming leaders to
22 discuss their ongoing work. Hear about the most
23 pressing issues facing our communities and to
24 strategize on how the commission can better serve and
25 support our communities. At which Commissioner

1 Malalis and other senior staff heard directly from
2 transgender and non-binary communities, advocates and
3 stakeholders.
4

5 Earlier this year, I spoke at a listening
6 sessions on issues facing transgender women of color
7 with the Trans Latinx Network, Make the Road New York
8 and New York State Senator Jessica Ramos. To
9 celebrate women's history month, the commission
10 cohosted a panel discussion with Destination Tomorrow
11 and the Trans Latinx Network, focusing on adjusting
12 issues affecting transgender women of color.

13 And just last week, I along with my colleagues at
14 the commission, hosted a forum for transgender and
15 gender non-conforming and non-binary community
16 members focusing on their rights in the housing
17 context and how to navigate government resources when
18 experienced discrimination.

19 In Fiscal Year of 2019, the Commissions Community
20 Relations Bureau engaged in over 7,000 attendees and
21 214 workshops and outreach activities on LGBTQI.
22 Discrimination and educated participants about sexual
23 orientation and gender identity based protection
24 under the New York City Human Rights Law.
25

2 In addition to the commission workshops, we have
3 continued to host vibrant community gatherings. For
4 the third year in a row, the commission organized its
5 annual LGBTQI community IFTAR in partner with the
6 LGBT Center, Muslims for Progressive Values, Tarab
7 NYC, Saga NYC, the Muslim Alliance for Sexual and
8 Gender Diversity, Nur Ashki Jerrahi Community and the
9 Caribbean Equality Project.

10 This event has grown every year and this year,
11 the commission broke with over 130 LGBTQI Muslim New
12 Yorkers and ally's.

13 Finally, the commission continues to serve as one
14 of the lead agencies of the Unity Project with Ashe
15 McGovern has already discussed today. The commission
16 expanded its conversation series with Gender and
17 Sexuality Alliance, also known as GSA within the
18 Department of Education schools about discrimination
19 based on gender, gender identity and sexual
20 orientation. Which began as an initiative through
21 the Unity Project.

22 In Fiscal Year 2019, the Commissions programming
23 with GFA's group from six schools to 14 and more than
24 tripled its numbers from 63 students in its first
25 year to 209 in its second.

2 These programs create basis for young people to
3 address anti-LGBTQI bullying and harassment in their
4 schools and communities; provide participants with
5 resources to foster more welcoming school
6 environments and support youth to create action plans
7 to address these challenges. This year, we expect to
8 engage 20 schools across all five boroughs and
9 connect directly with over 1,000 students.

10 As I have been able to do this work with the
11 support of the Commission, it has been incredibly
12 satisfying to see the impact on transgender, gender
13 non-conforming and non-binary people throughout the
14 city. As I do my work out in the community, I am
15 constantly hearing from folks on how happy they are
16 to see someone who looks like them represent them in
17 government.

18 Early this month, after I gave remarks at the
19 Osborne Association for their Trans Day of Remember
20 and Resiliency Event, a transwoman came up to me and
21 told me how inspired she was seeing someone who is
22 like them in a leadership role in government.

23 Commissioner Malalis often talks about the
24 importance of representation within government and it
25 is difficult to overstate this importance especially

1 with trans folks. So, many trans folks now know they
2 have an advocate in city government because they see
3 me, and yes, they have my direct number and email
4 when they need to reach me. They know they don't
5 have to explain their challenges to me since I've
6 experienced similar situations and feel comfortable
7 when working with me.
8

9 Thank you again for convening today's hearing and
10 for your interest in serving my community. It is my
11 deepest honor to be a visible and proud member of the
12 commission, dedicated to combating discrimination of
13 transgender and gender non-conforming and non-binary
14 New Yorkers and serving as a model for what local
15 government can do to uphold the rights and dignity of
16 my trans brothers, sisters, and family. Thank you.

17 DEMOYA GORDON: Good morning. Thank you, Council
18 Member Rosenthal and members of the Committee, for
19 convening today's hearing. My name is Demoya Gordon
20 and I am a Supervising Attorney in the Commissions
21 Law Enforcement Bureau, where I investigate and
22 prosecute cases of discrimination and harassment. I
23 use she, her pronouns.

24 I joined the Commission in 2018, after working
25 for several years at Lambda Legal. The oldest and

1 largest national legal organization whose mission is
2 to achieve full recognition of the civil rights of
3 LGBT people and people living with HIV.

4 At Lambda Legal I engaged in impact litigation,
5 policy advocacy, and public education on a range of
6 issues effecting transgender, gender non-conforming,
7 non-binary and intersex people. Including
8 discriminatory treatment in the criminal legal
9 system, employment, health care, education,
10 government services, and other public accommodations.

11 While I loved the work, I was doing at the
12 national level, I jumped at the opportunity to work
13 at the New York Commission on Human Rights, because
14 it was clear to me that local antidiscrimination laws
15 like the New York City Human Rights Law would be
16 increasingly essential bulwarks against the ongoing
17 efforts that the federal level to curtail our
18 communities rights. In light of those efforts, I
19 wanted to work on behalf of my fellow New Yorkers to
20 ensure that New York City continues to be a beacon
21 and an example for other local governments in this
22 particularly challenging time.

23 The New York City Commission on Human Rights was
24 a perfect place to do just that. Even before I
25

1
2 joined the Commission, it was clear to me and my
3 fellow LGBTQ rights advocates, that from the very
4 start of Commissioner Malalis's tenure, the agency
5 had endeavored to be a place where transgender,
6 gender non-conforming, and the binary New Yorkers
7 could feel heard, seen, respected and have their
8 rights defended.

9 In December 2015, the Commission issued
10 groundbreaking legal enforcement guidance on gender
11 identity and gender expression discrimination. The
12 guidance established that New York City's broad
13 protections which have existed since 2002 but had
14 been underutilized and not well understood could
15 serve as a model for other jurisdictions and a signal
16 to local and state governments across the country.
17 That social upheaval would not result from providing
18 clear rights and protections to transgender, gender
19 non-conforming and non-binary people. It provided
20 transparency and clarity about what it means to have
21 protections from discrimination in this area and
22 addressed real life scenarios that spoke to the lived
23 realities of transgender, gender non-conforming and
24 non-binary people.

1 For example, the guidance made clear that people
2 in New York City have the right to use bathrooms and
3 other single sex facilities consistent with their
4 gender identity. That intentional misgendering and
5 deadnaming employment, housing and places with public
6 accommodation could form the basis of a complaint at
7 the commission and that gender uniform and grooming
8 standards would violate the city human rights law.

9 At the time the commission issued this guidance,
10 more than 20 jurisdictions across the country had
11 introduced bills targeting this community, as Chanel
12 noted. Most of these bills sought to ban transgender
13 people from using bathrooms and other single sex
14 facilities consistent with their gender identity. As
15 I worked nationally to try to address these attacks,
16 the commissions legal enforcement guidance was an
17 immensely useful and significant example of how
18 government should act to affirmatively protect the
19 rights of vulnerable communities rather than
20 attacking them.

21 In fact, while was at Lambda Legal, I often
22 pointed to the Commission's legal guidance and it's
23 look past Pink and Blue Public Education Campaign in
24 my presentations, trainings and in my policy and
25

1 legal efficacy on behalf of transgender, gender non-
2 conforming and non-binary people across the country.
3 The legal guidance was updated earlier this year to
4 make the city human rights law protections for
5 transgender, gender non-conforming and non-binary
6 people even clearer, and it is not also codified into
7 formal rules that were adopted after notice and
8 comment from the public.
9

10 In March 2016, the Mayor signed Executive Order
11 16, directing all city agencies to provide training
12 to supervisory and front line staff on diversity and
13 inclusion issues affecting transgender, gender non-
14 conforming, and non-binary people. And to publicly
15 post the city's policy that people must be allowed to
16 use the single sex facilities that most closely
17 aligns with their gender identity or expression
18 without being required to show proof of gender.

19 Historically, transgender, gender non-conforming,
20 and non-binary people have had challenging
21 relationships with government offices, and this
22 executive order signaled the de Blasio
23 administrations desire to change that relationship
24 and chart a new path forward.
25

1
2 Consistent with that goal, the commission has
3 worked with and continues to work with the New York
4 City Department of Correction to help bring its
5 policies inline with the ethos of Executive Order 16.

6 In April 2018, Mayor de Blasio announced that the
7 New York City Department of Correction would house
8 people in its custody consistent with their gender
9 identity and that DOC would be working with the
10 commission to maintain what was formally called, The
11 Transgender Housing Unit and now called, The Special
12 Considerations Unit, as an additional safe housing
13 option for transgender, gender non-conforming and
14 non-binary people in correctional facilities.

15 By doing so, New York City became one of the
16 first major cities in the nation to commit publicly
17 to housing detained persons in accordance with their
18 gender identity. Committing to keeping the special
19 considerations unit open, ensures that transgender,
20 gender non-conforming and non-binary people continue
21 to have this housing option available to them and the
22 commission continues to work with DOC to ensure that
23 people housed in the special considerations unit are
24 provided services in the same manner as people housed
25 in general population.

1
2 Representatives from the commission also serve on
3 the Board of Corrections Task Force for transgender,
4 gender non-conforming, non-binary and intersex people
5 in DOC custody. As Ashe noted, in partnership with
6 other city agencies and the Law Department, the
7 Commission has been active in using its expertise on
8 transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary and
9 LGBTQ rights issues to contribute to amicus briefs in
10 a federal litigation and comments to proposed federal
11 rules.

12 The Commission's enforcement work defending the
13 rights of transgender, gender non-conforming and non-
14 binary New Yorkers is robust. The Commission has
15 initiated widespread investigations based on
16 information received from the public and has resolved
17 cases for a maximum impact. Including in some cases,
18 years long monitoring by the Commission, mandated
19 staff training, the creation of new positions to
20 ensure compliance, overhaul the policies and other
21 relief aimed at preventing future harm.

22 The Commission takes its lead directly from the
23 community, which often results in targeted
24 investigations and enforcement actions. For example,
25 in July 2017, the commission announced four

1
2 complaints filed against substance abuse centers
3 across the city for discriminatory policies that
4 affected transgender patients access to these crucial
5 services. The complaints which the commission filed
6 on behalf of the city, were the result of proactive
7 testing conducted by the commission following
8 advocates reports of discrimination.

9 The centers include Salvation Army Adult
10 Rehabilitation Center in Brooklyn, Promesa
11 Residential Healthcare Facility in the Bronx, and the
12 Thomas and Marie White Healthcare Center in Queens.

13 The Commission's complaints filed by its Law
14 Enforcement Bureau charged the centers with gender
15 identity discrimination for refusing to accept
16 transgender patients and for discriminatory housing
17 policies. Including refusing to assign rooms based
18 on gender identity, subjecting patients to physical
19 examinations and restricting transgender patients to
20 separate rooms.

21 These investigations concluded with the payment
22 of \$10,000 in civil penalties to the City of New York
23 by Promesa; a private entity, as well as affirmative
24 relief from all of the centers. As part of that
25 relief, the respondents agreed to implement policies

1 that prohibit gender based discrimination and
2 harassment. Including by permitting transgender
3 people to participate in all aspects of their
4 services in a manner consistent with their gender
5 identity including room assignments and other gender
6 specific programs and facilities.
7

8 Respondents also agreed to conduct ongoing
9 antidiscrimination training and submit to monitoring
10 by the commission. These enforcement actions which
11 were commission initiated, reflects the commissions
12 recommendation that particularly vulnerable
13 communities including transgender, gender non-
14 conforming and non-binary people of color, may not
15 feel safe or comfortable filing a public
16 discrimination complaint.

17 In these situations, as it deter, the commission
18 will serve as a complainant and will work to achieve
19 broad impactful relief on the communities behalf.

20 Another example of the commissions commitment to
21 obtaining broad and systemic change involved a
22 transgender woman who while being treated at Mount
23 Sinai Beth Israel Medical Center was subjected to
24 invasive questions about her transition and was told
25 that she could not room with other women and would

1 have to be roomed alone, because she had not had the
2 "operation".
3

4 After an investigation, the Law Enforcement
5 Bureau issued a probable cause of termination. The
6 Commission, the Complainant and the Respondent
7 entered into a conciliation agreement which required
8 Beth Israel to pay the complainant \$25,000 in
9 compensation to her damages, hold ongoing staff
10 trainings on working with transgender patients, post
11 the New York City Department of Health's LGBT Rights
12 Bill of Rights poster, update its systems to make
13 patients self-identified names and pronouns visible
14 to all frontline staff, update its website with
15 information on its non-discrimination policies and
16 how individuals can file grievance with the
17 hospital, flag and direct grievances regarding
18 transgender patients to its patients safety and
19 patient grievances committee, continue twice yearly
20 meetings with the Community Advisory Board and submit
21 to monitoring by the commission.

22 Creating this kind of change takes a lot of time
23 and effort. It would be much easier and quicker to
24 seek only monetary damages or civil fines and call it
25 a day. But the commission is committed to making

2 meaningful systemic change, even if that sometimes
3 means taking a more difficult path to get there.

4 The commission has also reached out to several
5 large companies in the city, where it came to the
6 commissions attention that these companies health
7 insurance policies for their employees discriminated
8 against trans employees by excluding certain aspect
9 of gender affirming medical care.

10 Using its pre-complaint intervention process, the
11 Law Enforcement Bureau has worked with these
12 companies to remove those exclusions, so that
13 transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary
14 employees can have equitable access to medical care.
15 In the year prior to the start of Commissioner
16 Malalis's tenure 2014, the Commission filed just two
17 cases of gender identity or gender expression
18 discrimination. In each year since, the commission
19 has filed between 16 and 32 cases of gender identity
20 or gender expression discrimination, a substantial
21 increase.

22 Additionally, in the last two years since the
23 commissions pre-complaint intervention unit launched,
24 the commission has also resolved an additional nine
25 cases without having to file a complaint in the first

1
2 place, by using cease and desist letters, pre-
3 complaint resolutions, and other quick interventions.

4 We're grateful for the opportunity to testify
5 today on this important subject and to work in
6 partnership with the Council. To build a city
7 government that both reflects the beautiful and
8 diverse transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-
9 binary communities and is responsive to their needs.

10 Thank you for convening today's hearing and I
11 look forward to your questions.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much to all
13 three of you. This is very powerful testimony and it
14 really shows the ground that you are covering, which
15 is extraordinary. I'm going to allow my colleague
16 Brad Lander to start with the questions. Although,
17 can I just start with one quick one?

18 I know that you all coordinate regularly and meet
19 regularly. Is it possible to take the findings from
20 the work of the commission on human rights to then go
21 back and make sure that those things are happening in
22 city agencies? The Mount Sinai example is a really
23 interesting one where the sort of remediation was to
24 post signs, do some training. Do you then take that
25

1 information and work with H&H hospitals to make sure
2 that they are doing the same?

3 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yeah, I would defer to CCHR; CCHR
4 also has collaborative relationships with many
5 agencies but absolutely, we try and facilitate those
6 conversations as well.

7 DEMOYA GORDON: So, I work in the Law Enforcement
8 Bureau, so we're the enforcement arm, the muscle. We
9 also have folks in the Office of the Chair that are
10 dedicated to Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs and
11 those folks are in conversation all the time with
12 city agencies.

13 The Commission on Human Rights has jurisdiction
14 over all entities in the city that are city based,
15 whether those are public or private, so we receive
16 and investigate and if we find probable cause,
17 prosecute cases against city agencies and private
18 entities. But because we do have folks that are in
19 our policy unit that have ongoing relationships with
20 their counterparts in city agencies, we're constantly
21 in conversations about how we can make systemic
22 changes like this, where we hear about issues.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I mean, that's kind of
24 what I'm asking. So, is it - I can't quite access
25

1
2 out though, is it a fully complaint driven system or
3 is there opportunity for proactive— just simply
4 signage. If I were to walk into World Health
5 Hospital or Bellevue today, would I see all the same
6 signage of what you required Mount Sinai to do?

7 DEMOYA GORDON: So, to tackle the first part of
8 your question as to whether or not our process if
9 fully complaint driven, it's not. We hear about
10 issues through many mechanisms. One of the
11 mechanisms is people come to us and say, I want to
12 file a complaint because I've experienced
13 discrimination. Another of those mechanisms is folks
14 like Chanel going out into the community, speaking to
15 advocates, doing presentation and hearing about
16 issues that way. And you know, we are out in the
17 community all the time, so we get tips, we get ideas,
18 we get input of where there are issues and we are
19 empowered as the commission to take action, even if
20 there isn't an individual complainant. And so, our
21 pre-complaint intervention is an example of where you
22 know, someone does come to us and we're able to
23 decide whether we need to file a complaint or not.
24 But if someone tells us there's an issue and they
25 either personally didn't experience it or they don't

1
2 feel like they can start a legal process, we can
3 function as the complainant and decide whether or not
4 either through our pre-complaint processes or through
5 a formal complaint, we want to take enforcement
6 action.

7 And again, our policy folks, if the issue is in
8 city agencies, our policy folks will work. Sometimes
9 in consultation with us in the Law Enforcement area
10 to do things like require postings and require
11 trainings and require policy changes.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I guess I'm asking
13 specifically, so there's a Department of Health, LGBT
14 Bill of Rights poster, do we know that those are up
15 at all of our H&H hospitals, posted in easy to find
16 places? Do we know if H&H has the technology to make
17 patients self-identify names and pronouns visible for
18 the frontline staff?

19 DEMOYA GORDON: So, I would have to double check
20 to see if we know anything about that. I would also
21 defer to those agencies to get back to the Council
22 about that.

23 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yeah, and just sort of a top
24 level response and of course addition questions we
25 might want to turn over to the agencies, but DOH does

1
2 work to have the LGBTQ Health Bill of Rights posted
3 in their facilities and I know your question is
4 around also H&H and data collection there. They
5 recently updated their system, sort of very broadly.
6 So, questions like preferred pronouns, gender
7 identity and with more expansive options are now
8 available through their systems.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Oh, wow, at H&H?

10 DEMOYA GORDON: At H&H, yeah.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much for
12 that. Okay, Council Member Lander.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thanks very much Chair
14 Rosenthal for convening this important hearing and
15 thanks to all of you for testifying to everyone who's
16 here. I just want to echo, it's really important and
17 valuable, the work that you are doing and valuable
18 that you are pushing us to do better on these issues
19 and valuable that we're pushing together, to push
20 this city to do better on them and I appreciate that,
21 that work.

22 I'm Brad Lander, I use he, him pronouns. Honored
23 to be a member of the Committee and grateful for its
24 renaming as the Committee on Women and Gender Equity

1
2 and this hearing is really a valuable example of what
3 that's about. So, thank you to the Chair.

4 I want to ask a couple budget questions. First,
5 we had this dialogue the other day with the
6 Commissioner on Human Rights when we were here in the
7 Civil and Human Rights Committee about the expansion
8 of the human rights law to cover domestic workers and
9 there's lot of growth in the work of the commission
10 as reflected by all the things you're talking about.
11 You've brought more cases; you've been proactive in
12 your investigations. You have Transgender Liaison,
13 there's more education work, there's more people
14 bringing in complaints. But there isn't that much
15 more money, so do you have dedicated funding for this
16 work? What are the resources that are paying for it?
17 And you know, this is set up as a question for like,
18 don't we need to do better to bring resources to this
19 work if we're going to want to do more of it? And
20 yes, I see the Deputy Commissioner is advising for
21 how to play along in this particular dance that we
22 do.

23 DEMOYA GORDON: Yes, so, you know, we work hard
24 every day to leverage the resources that we do have
25 and for which we are very grateful. We have grown

1
2 three times the size since 2015, and so, there are
3 more people thankfully now doing all the work. That
4 does continue to expand, which is a good thing and we
5 look forward to working with the Council to figure
6 out ways that we can continue to strategically use
7 the resources that we have and to figure out ways
8 that we can expand the work that we're already doing.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And I'm not going to go
10 back and forth too much. I think all the proactive
11 work, all the education work is great. There was a
12 nice big jump at the beginning of this
13 administration. Its been a little slower since then
14 and you know, the consequence when you do great
15 additional work and we don't provide you great
16 additional money, is that it takes longer to process
17 complaints and we're up at historic levels now where
18 people wait a long time. I think it's like over 500
19 days.

20 So, I want to put us on record. This work is
21 great, it's important. We need to give you the
22 resources for it, so it doesn't compete with other
23 critical, civil and human rights protection.

24 So, I just hope that this hearing is part of our
25 case making for pushing for more resources for the

1
2 Commission and this work in general in the coming
3 budget cycle.

4 Director McGovern, I want to ask, also I was
5 intrigued by and interested in learning a little more
6 about the unity works, the Workforce Development
7 Program. So, I guess, can you just say a little more
8 about what that is and also, where the resources
9 there are coming from.

10 ASHE MCGOVERN: Sure, sure, so as I mentioned, we
11 announced the launch of the project in October of
12 this year. We're currently in the process of
13 distributing our concept paper, so just yesterday
14 actually we had a really wonderful listening session
15 with almost 30 providers to ask them for feedback on
16 our concept and we'll be going through sort of the
17 implementation and contracting process for the next
18 several months.

19 The reason for this program, as I mentioned, is
20 that we know that unemployment and poverty rates for
21 LGBTQ communities, particularly TGNB/NC communities,
22 is disproportionately high. Connection to long term
23 career opportunities is vital for young people,
24 connection to educational opportunity as sort of a
25

1 foundation to get long term employment is very
2 important.

3
4 So, I'll just touch on a few key elements and
5 happy to answer follow up questions. So, as I
6 mentioned, the program itself is two year of direct
7 service and one year of additional follow up and
8 that's a long term of service very intentionally,
9 because these are young folks who are - we're
10 specifically working with LGBTQ young folks who are
11 at risk of homelessness or currently experiencing
12 homelessness. So, we know that those are folks who
13 need wrap around services that are comprehensive and
14 robust in order to make sure that they are able to
15 pursue career opportunities that they want. So,
16 that's one key element, two years of service, one
17 year of follow up.

18 There are a number of key staffing positions that
19 are created in order to support these young folks in
20 their process including job developers, case
21 managers, outreach support to make sure we're getting
22 young folks into the program, workforce facilitators,
23 educational support, so educational specialists who
24 can actually help young people get for example their
25 HSE, in order to make sure that they can access the

1 jobs that they're desiring access to and also, mental
2 health services.

3
4 So, that's another piece of it. We know that
5 young folks in our communities need access to mental
6 health support and services and that it's one key way
7 that we can make sure that they are ready and
8 prepared to connect to whatever employment
9 opportunities they're interested in.

10 And of course, there is program money for a
11 variety of incentives for young people to participate
12 including transportation etc., but those are sort of
13 the key staffing positions and then I'll just mention
14 one other element, which is that we know young people
15 want more access to advanced certification training.

16 So, we know not every young person is going to go
17 to college. Some young people may not even get their
18 high school equivalency but that in order to be
19 competitive in some of the job opportunities that
20 they're most excited about, some level of advanced
21 certification and training is necessary.

22 So, as part of this program, we're offering
23 incentives and compensation for actually accessing
24 those training opportunities.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And this was in the
3 budget we passed in June or you are proposing it for
4 a budget amendment now or it's wonderful to have new
5 programs but then we have to ask, alright, did we
6 allocate for that and not know it or are you planning
7 to come to us to ask for the resources?

8 ASHE MCGOVERN: No, it was allocated for.
9 Contracts will start in Fiscal Year 2021.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay, it was in the FY'20
11 budget.

12 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay, just two more
14 questions. I was glad when the Mayor announced
15 Executive Order 16 and it's good to hear the update
16 on it. I wonder if you could say a little more,
17 that's about I guess, what's now being called the
18 Special Considerations Unit in the Department of
19 Corrections. My understanding, that's at the Rose's
20 Facility on Rikers.

21 So, just say a little more there. Is that
22 exclusively for transwomen? What about transmen?
23 How do you get there you know, if you're in a place
24 where - yeah, I mean, just talk a little more about
25

1
2 what that is and how it's really going to provide
3 people broadly the protections that they need.

4 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yeah, so I'll defer to CCHR to
5 talk a little bit more about the Executive Order and
6 any other sort of clients legal issues related there,
7 other than to mention that yes, there is correct, the
8 housing unit is at Rose's currently and I would defer
9 to DOC to answer more specific questions about
10 programs within the unit at the moment.

11 DEMOYA GORDON: Yeah, so as far as the policies
12 and how DOC receives applications for the unit and
13 how they make their determinations and placement and
14 those kinds of things, I would defer to them on that.
15 What I will say is, we have been in conversation with
16 them and continue to be in conversation with them
17 about compliance with EO 16 and New York City Human
18 Rights Law. We have jurisdiction over them and we
19 accept complaints from people who are incarcerated in
20 DOC who feel like they've been discriminated against,
21 whether that's in housing or other ways.

22 And we plan to do a training for DOC staff soon,
23 so they can understand their obligations and Chanel
24 can talk a little bit about that. But as far as how
25

1
2 they do their internal processes, I would not be able
3 to speak that specifically.

4 ASHE MCGOVERN: And I would just flag as Demoya
5 mentioned earlier in testimony, both CCHR and the
6 Unity Project are a part of the Board of Correction,
7 the newly formed Board of Correction Task Force on
8 TGNB/NC experiences. Thank you, Chair Rosenthal and
9 other members of Council, for the creation of that
10 task force. So, we'll have more to report as that
11 task force continues.

12 CHANEL LOPEZ: And just to add, we have been in
13 conversation and me, myself will be going into DOC to
14 provide these trainings on how to engage with my
15 community much better.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I know obviously
17 Rose's and DOC and this issue in general is of strong
18 importance to the Chair, so I will defer to the Chair
19 for follow up questions here and I guess, just for my
20 last question, I want to kind of ask for some
21 analogizing from the work you've done with Department
22 of Corrections to the NYPD? Because none of you have
23 mentioned the NYPD. There is nothing about the NYPD
24 in any of your testimony. We know that transgender
25 and non-binary and gender non-conforming New Yorkers

1
2 experience a substantial amount of the discrimination
3 and harassment they face in relationship to our
4 police officers.

5 There was a 2019 NYPD Inspector Generals Report,
6 finding failure of the NYPD to live up to its
7 training obligations under the 2012 Executive Order.
8 So, I mean, one, I just want to say, I mean, I
9 understand it's complicated to like speak truth to
10 power but why, if it's important to push the
11 Department of Corrections to have an advisory board
12 and hear the voices of transgender and gender non-
13 conforming New Yorkers. Is it not equally important
14 to push the NYPD.

15 Are you doing that? I guess, I'll start by
16 asking, are you doing it and just didn't talk about
17 it? Well, I might have some follow up questions
18 here, so let me ask generally are you doing it and
19 you just didn't talk about it this morning and if
20 you're not, is that because you believe things are
21 going great?

22 And if they're not, what do we need to be doing
23 to make sure that the rights of transgender and
24 gender non-conforming New Yorkers are respected by
25

1
2 Law Enforcement in Corrections but also, by Law
3 Enforcement in Policing.

4 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yeah, I can start there, thank
5 you for the question. We are of course aware of the
6 experiences of policing and criminalization and
7 TFNB/NC communities particularly.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And I did not mean the
9 question as insulting. I know you know it but I've
10 got to point out the gap.

11 ASHE MCGOVERN: Oh, no, no.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And ask about it.

13 ASHE MCGOVERN: Absolutely, totally understood
14 and aware of the Inspector Generals report. I would
15 say sort of at a top level. Yes, we have been in
16 conversation with NYPD, I would defer to them to
17 speak to more about their policies and procedures
18 around these issues and where they stand currently
19 but yes, we have engaged in collaboration. I'll let
20 CCHR speak to their collaboration.

21 DEMOYA GORDON: Yes, so I can also say at a very
22 top level that we've been in conversations. Our
23 policy folks have been in conversations with the PD
24 about their policies and how those can be in
25 compliance with the New York City Human Rights Law.

1
2 In my role as representing the enforcement arm of
3 the CCHR, we accept and investigate and prosecute
4 complaints against Law Enforcement including NYPD. I
5 can't speak to any current pending or possible
6 investigations or complaints but we do accept those
7 and we have been and continue to welcome any
8 opportunities to speak with NYPD about their policies
9 and bringing those - you know, making sure that those
10 comply with the New York City Human Rights Law.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So, from that answer and
12 kind of comparing what you've said about the
13 collaboration with the NYPD and I appreciate that
14 you've reached out with them and asked for them to
15 work together but you know, you've given us a
16 narrative and you work with corrections which
17 reflects a sort of maybe, let's call it you know, a
18 kind of a collaboration where they're working with
19 you. Thanks to the Chair and others, they have this
20 taskforce, there's a partnership and some progress.

21 From the answer, we've reached out to the NYPD
22 and also knowing the existence of the Inspector
23 Generals report, like, what I would conclude from
24 that as a member of the council is, thinking broadly
25 about our criminal justice and law enforcement

1 system. There's collaboration and progress being
2 made imperfect perhaps, but visible with the
3 Corrections Department and there's not as much at
4 least partnership, dialogue, conversation, program
5 work between the unity project and the Commission on
6 Human Rights and the NYPD on this issue. Would you
7 dispute my characterization of how we're doing on
8 this issue in Law Enforcement?
9

10 ASHE MCGOVERN: Well, I would note that the
11 Commissioner does have an LGBTQ Liaison. There is an
12 LGBTQ Advisory Group that speaks with the
13 Commissioner with some frequency. There's a lot in
14 that statement.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And I don't want to put
16 you on the hot seat for the NYPD and I think both
17 with the Corrections Department and with the NYPD, if
18 we want to do follow up, then we'll need - you know,
19 the Chair can consider joint hearings with the Public
20 Safety Committee or with the Criminal Justice
21 Committee and we should follow up. So, I'm not going
22 to go further pushing you on this. It's just, you
23 know, part of job is to do oversight and it feels to
24 me like having looked at the NYPD Inspector Generals
25 report and having heard about your robust

1
2 collaborations with other agencies and not having
3 heard about it with the NYPD, who I'm sure you would
4 be glad to do it with, that that's knowledge the
5 Council needs to take into consideration. And as we
6 move forward to think about what we're going to do to
7 try to ensure equity and access and I'm sure we're
8 going to hear testimony later today that lets us know
9 about the things we need to be doing in that area.
10 But that's a responsibility that we all have and
11 that's the responsibility for folks internally to
12 push internally and it's a responsibility for the
13 Council as well as advocates.

14 So, we'll leave it there but I think you know one
15 of my take a ways from the hearing is going to be
16 that that's an area that we have a long way to go on.

17 ASHE MCGOVERN: Thank you for those comments. I
18 will say that we have been building relationships
19 with folks at NYPD. Primarily our policy folks, in
20 terms of having those ongoing conversations and we
21 continue to look for opportunities to have those
22 conversations, so we welcome the Council's support in
23 that.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's great, thank you
25 and again, that was not meant as a criticism of you

1
2 guys and all the work that you're doing but you know,
3 I think as we listen and come out of this hearing, we
4 got to think about where the gaps are and that is one
5 of them.

6 So, thank you Chair for all this time in advance
7 of your questions and I will stick around and listen
8 to yours and thank you to this panel and in advance
9 to all the advocates who are here today.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much Council
11 Member Lander and just to follow up and to jump into
12 the weeds, are there particular precinct's perhaps in
13 Jackson Heights where you have gone into train
14 officers about the importance of not criminalizing
15 trans people who maybe walking about doing their
16 daily lives?

17 CHANEL LOPEZ: We haven't provided any of those
18 trainings as of yet, but we sure welcome the
19 opportunity to do so.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, thank you and so,
21 I'm going to make note of that. Thank you. That
22 that might be something that CCHR could do to reach
23 out for those trainings. I was intrigued by how many
24 training you have done and the laudable goal of
25 training city workers who are supervisors to be

1
2 knowledgeable and I was wondering if you have a
3 target for how people you want to train and sort of
4 where you are along that effort in training city
5 workers to be knowledgeable.

6 DEMOYA GORDON: We can get back to you to clarify
7 if I get anything wrong here, but I don't believe
8 there's a target so much as EO 16 requires that all
9 city supervisors from staff get trained on TGNC
10 diversity and inclusion issues. And our in person
11 interactive training, which Chanel often leads, is a
12 way to meet that requirement and we make ourselves
13 available to do those for anyone who wants us to do
14 it.

15 And so, I don't know that we have like a specific
16 target. Our target is to do as much as we humanly
17 and physically can do.

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Well, it sort of gets to
19 Council Member Lander's question about funding as
20 well. You know, recently I was looking at the DOE
21 IG's report on Title 9 Coordinators at DOE and you
22 know, one person had done 40 trainings in order to
23 make sure that one person at every school had gotten
24 training on Title 9 requirements and their duties but
25 they know how many schools there are. They know that

1
2 each school has to have a liaison. And so, they have
3 to train all those people within a year. And so, I'm
4 just wondering and if I could make a you know, sort
5 of educated guess, there are so many people you have
6 to train that you know, as many as you can touch you
7 touch, but I'm just wondering; is there's any sense
8 of scale, if you could know that well, if we had ten
9 more people doing trainings, we could obviously train
10 ten times as many people. And this is how many it
11 would equate to and we'd be then a quarter of the way
12 along our goal.

13 ASHE MCGOVERN: Well, I think to answer your
14 question, the goal of EO 16 is to make sure that all
15 city employees get trained on how to effectively and
16 humanly and nondiscriminatory interact with LGBT.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Wait, there are 330,000
18 FTE's.

19 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yes, and every single one of
20 those people have to do that training. They can do
21 that through DCAS, provides a training or they can
22 utilize our training which is an in-person training
23 led by a personal trans experience, most of the time,
24 Chanel.

2 And so, we want to make sure that that resource
3 is there for folks because you know, we're very proud
4 of our training but DCAS's training is also available
5 and pursuant to EO 16, every single city employee has
6 to go through that training and does go through that
7 training.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, is that a sort of
9 online training?

10 ASHE MCGOVERN: I think there's an online
11 version. I do think there's in person available as
12 well but I can't speak explicitly for DCAS.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I recently looked at the
14 training you do on sexual harassment, the online
15 module and I thought it was terrific.

16 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Have you reviewed the one
18 that DCAS uses for diversity and inclusion training?

19 ASHE MCGOVERN: Could you say that again?

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sure. Have you - in the
21 same way that I know CCHR works so hard in the sexual
22 harassment training that you have online, have you
23 similarly reviewed the diversity and inclusion
24 training that DCAS does?
25

1 ASHE MCGOVERN: Well, I personally have taken
2 that training as part of -

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Online?

4 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yes, yes, I've taken the training
5 to answer your question.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And did you give them any
7 feedback or was it spot on great?

8 ASHE MCGOVERN: So, I would probably need to
9 confer with my colleagues, but I believe that we have
10 had input in that training and we've pointed out
11 things to them that we think could be framed better,
12 said better.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Do you think that DCAS
14 maybe tracks whether or not city employees are taking
15 the training?

16 ASHE MCGOVERN: I can't speak for DCAS but I
17 would assume so but I think it's each agencies
18 responsibility to track to make sure that their
19 employees are taking the training.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, do you think that
21 something that - I'm just going to leave it there,
22 I'm not going to dwell on it, but do you think that's
23 something that perhaps could fall under the purview
24 of the Unity Project or CGE or CCHR to sort of give
25

1
2 an assessment? Maybe it should be in the Mayor's
3 Management Report as an assessment of how well the
4 city is doing. I just made that up, Mayor's
5 Management Report. Maybe it's a good way to go.

6 ASHE MCGOVERN: In terms of actually tracking
7 whose completed the training or not?

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah.

9 ASHE MCGOVERN: Yeah, I agree with you, it would
10 be valuable to have a way to track that.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you. Okay, great,
12 thank you very much. And then, how about training at
13 CUNY campuses? We are going to hear from so many
14 CUNY students who are here in the audience and we're
15 anxious to get to. I promise we'll wrap this up
16 soon.

17 But we've going to hear from so many students and
18 you know, they have a number of concerns. One is
19 access to gender neutral bathrooms, but is there
20 training going on at CUNY campuses?

21 CHANEL LOPEZ: Not to my knowledge, however, we
22 certainly welcome the opportunity like I said before,
23 to provide these trainings to better engage with the
24 trans and TGNC non-binary communities and for them to
25 feel safe.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you. Do you think
3 that CUNY has access to or possibly uses the DCAS
4 training module online?

5 ASHE MCGOVERN: I would have to defer to CUNY on
6 that. I don't know what they -

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, can we leave that
8 as a question hanging out there that maybe Unity
9 Project can -

10 ASHE MCGOVERN: Absolutely.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you. And then
12 similarly to the point of tracking and I think this
13 is for Director McGovern. Did I say that right?
14 Yes. That's funny, I wrote down Executive Director
15 Ashe.

16 ASHE MCGOVERN: I'll take that to.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yes, thank you. Are you
18 able to track the number of specific workers across
19 city agencies who are dedicated to addressing TGNC/NB
20 diversity and inclusion issues in each city agency,
21 can you say oh, here are the 16 agencies that I know
22 have one LGBT coordinator. We know there's; I'm
23 making this up, funding at ACS for two workers who
24 deal with this in particular with our youth. We know
25 there are two workers at HRA in the DV unit who

specifically are paying attention to LGBTQ issues.

Do you either have that today or do you have a sort of framework to be able to ask and get that information?

ASHE MCGOVERN: Yeah, so, there are LGBTQ Liaisons and directors at various agencies. I definitely have access currently to who those folks are. And then of course there are some people at different agencies who may not have the formal title of LGBTQ Liaison or director but who I know personally and work with personally on those issues.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And then could you add on the layer of contracting out? Like MOCJ has contracts with you know, the Anti-Violence project. You know, the city has contracts with Callen-Lorde. Can you add in the contracts that we have for services that some of the nonprofits do on behalf of the city?

ASHE MCGOVERN: I don't have access right now to the list of all the - I think it's a very long list of contracted services with various community organizations but I can certainly get, particularly if you had specific questions about particular agencies, I'm happy to follow up on that.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You know, it's more in
3 preparation for the budget hearings coming up in
4 March. I think it would be amazing to have from your
5 perspective, an issue based list of funding and I
6 very much am fine with back of the envelop
7 accounting. It doesn't have to be perfect, so if you
8 want to include staff who are doing the work who
9 possibly don't have the title, fine by me but in
10 addition to the staff, I really am particularly
11 interested in the agencies that the administration,
12 the nonprofits that the administration funds to do
13 this work properly on behalf of the city.

14 You know, thank you so much for this. We have a
15 list of the New York City Council Initiative Funding
16 that we allocate for work in this area and in many
17 ways, you know, I'm going to be squishy with you
18 know, including LGBTQ. The total is \$21.4 million;
19 we contract on a variety of issues. Trans equity
20 programs, community services, hate crime prevention,
21 so I'm just wondering if the administration, thank
22 you, can do the same thing.

23 ASHE MCGOVERN: I'm happy to chat with OMB and
24 MOCs and figure out what we can do.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: That'd be great and then
3 similarly I was trying to map out sort of what the
4 responsibilities are of the four different entities
5 that seem to be focused on equity.

6 So, there's CGE, NGBV, CCHR, sorry for all the
7 initials, Unity Project. Is there one entity that's
8 ultimately responsible to make sure all the work is
9 going on? Could I safely say that's Unity Project?

10 ASHE MCGOVERN: I think you could safely say that
11 one of the core missions and responsibility of the
12 Unity Project is to coordinate interagency
13 initiatives and to provide top level strategic
14 advising on policies and programs across the
15 administration, so yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And would that be along
17 side of CGE in tandem with CGE? I mean, again, you
18 know, I'm thinking about, I happen to be a Commission
19 on the Commission on Gender Equity, so I'm present at
20 our meetings where we're discussing a range of
21 issues. There is a safety work group that's doing
22 some of this work. Well, I guess, so I'm wondering
23 you know, to what extent the Unity Project is part of
24 that. I know both fall under the auspices of the
25

1
2 First Lady, so I'm trying to figure this out in my
3 mind's eye.

4 ASHE MCGOVERN: Figure it all out, makes sense.
5 So, as you know CG's mission is broader than LGBTQ or
6 trans and non-binary gender nonconforming justice and
7 that's the center of what we do. So, we are close
8 collaborators with CGE. I personally meet with their
9 staff weekly for just check-ins about what's going on
10 and what upcoming events look like and then we meet
11 bi-weekly to talk about longer term strategy and
12 collaboration.

13 So, we are absolutely close partners and I think
14 you know, they submitted written testimony and spoke
15 I believe also about their partnership with the Unity
16 Project. So, while their mission is inclusive, of
17 course, LGBTQ folks, it's not the center of what they
18 do and it is the center of what we do.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You know, we were
20 noodling around online in preparation for this
21 hearing and noticed that San Francisco has an office
22 of transgender policy, teaching on CNB policy. Is
23 that something that you think might be a goal for New
24 York City?

2 ASHE MCGOVERN: Potentially. I think it's worth
3 having more conversation about.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, and then a quick
5 question for CCHR. One of the constant concerns that
6 we're hearing about and I mentioned it a little bit
7 as it has to with CUNY, but in businesses, that there
8 are not gender neutral bathrooms. Are you receiving
9 complaints on this? How many complaints have you
10 received? How many have you investigated? Is there
11 outreach on your part, educational outreach on your
12 part, maybe working in collaboration with Consumer
13 Affairs? They have a new name but that agency.

14 DEMOYA GORDON: So, we do receive complaints
15 about access, equitable and nondiscriminatory access
16 to sex segregated spaces. I can't speak specifically
17 to our pending cases, but you know, some of those
18 involved complaints by people who are non-binary or
19 identified on the spectrum who have been met with
20 discriminatory harassment and treatment.

21 As far as our outreach about the access to gender
22 neutral bathrooms, I believe that that sits with
23 Department of Buildings primarily but we do work with
24 them proactively to figure out ways that we can make
25 sure that the community knows that single stall

1
2 bathrooms that are operating in the city should be
3 labeled as open to all genders. And we continue to
4 look for opportunities to work to make sure that all
5 businesses in the city are complying with that law.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I mean, go ahead sorry.

7 ASHE MCGOVERN: I was just going to add that DOB
8 has developed sort of signage for businesses. They
9 do take complaints. The Unity Project coordinated a
10 meeting between Department of Buildings, Department
11 of Cultural Affairs, CCHR and other agencies with the
12 Anti-Violence Project, whose done a lot of work
13 around this and done independent investigation.

14 So, DOB is very actively working on this issue in
15 making sure that our businesses are in compliance.

16 CHANEL LOPEZ: And also, I've worked closely with
17 the New York City Anti-Violence Project. We've met
18 over the summer also to go out to these businesses
19 and perform outreach and offer them trainings if they
20 need it and also, a package that was put together
21 with the signage of a gender neutral bathroom.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Could you refresh my
23 memory about the law. I recall that going forward,
24 so this is where Department of Buildings would be
25 instrumental. Going forward, all buildings need

1
2 gender neutral bathrooms, all gender, sorry, all
3 gender bathrooms. Thank you, but as for current
4 buildings, you know, buildings that have already been
5 built, what's the law there?

6 DEMOYA GORDON: So, I believe the law actually
7 requires that if you have a single stall bathroom, it
8 must be labeled as open to all genders. That's
9 actually what the law requires to my understanding.

10 So, that's what we're working with, Department of
11 Buildings to make sure the community knows and
12 businesses know that they need to comply with that
13 law.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Can you give me a sense
15 of how — I don't need information on specific cases
16 but in total over the last, since the law was passed,
17 how many cases have come before or complaints have
18 come before CCHR? I mean, and maybe even scale, is
19 it 5-10, 10-20, 20-50?

20 DEMOYA GORDON: So, as far as that specific law,
21 we don't enforce that specific law but again, we work
22 with Department of Buildings under which that law
23 sits to help to make sure that it is being complied
24 with and that education is going out to the
25 community.

1 What our law does require folks to do is to make
2 sure that people have access to facilities that most
3 closely align with their gender identity and that
4 folks are not harassed or prevented from using the
5 bathroom that they decide is most closely aligned
6 with their gender identity. I don't have the
7 breakdown here of how many of the complaints that
8 receive, include those kinds of complaints but we can
9 circle back to you.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, I mean, just again,
12 a sense of scale. Are we talking about 100 or 1,000,
13 I'm just curious.

14 DEMOYA GORDON: Well, right now, total we have 48
15 open cases that involved gender identity related
16 discrimination. Not all of those necessarily involve
17 access to bathrooms however, because I don't have the
18 breakdown in front of me as far as how many of those
19 involve.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sure, sure, sure.

21 DEMOYA GORDON: But I can circle back with that
22 information.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, thanks and I'd be
24 interested to know sense of scale like, how does that
25 compare to San Francisco? How does that compare to

1
2 other cities in terms of achieving our goals? It
3 would be interesting I think to look at.

4 And at CUNY in particular, do you take – have you
5 heard complaints from CUNY students in particular or
6 would that go only to the administration at CUNY?

7 DEMOYA GORDON: Well, what I can say is that,
8 folks attending CUNY have been discriminated against.
9 We accept those complaints for investigation and
10 prosecution. I can't speak to currently pending
11 matters.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Is that a sort of project
13 that maybe Unity Project would be willing to take on,
14 or perhaps Chanel, for you to take on to say I'm
15 going to do an assessment of all CUNY campuses, just
16 to get a sense of whether or not it's accessible for
17 students – an all gender bathroom is accessible. It
18 would be, just given the nature of the testimony
19 that's been sent in, it seems like a pretty common
20 and important concern.

21 DEMOYA GORDON: Well, we certainly appreciate
22 that information and we will take it into
23 consideration and we look for opportunities to do
24 work as a policy matter, affirmative work to see if
25

1
2 we can help to move folks into compliance with the
3 New York City Human Rights Law.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, it would be an
5 interesting report. Whose office would do a report
6 like that, an analysis like that. I mean, what that
7 have to complaint driven to CCHR or to DOI to say, we
8 want an analysis of all gender bathrooms at CUNY
9 campuses?

10 DEMOYA GORDON: A report specifically
11 understanding whether there's compliance or not?

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, would that be
13 something your office could take on?

14 DEMOYA GORDON: It's something we could
15 definitely help coordinate. I mean, it would make
16 sense for CCHR to be a part of that conversation,
17 certainly Department of Buildings, certainly CUNY
18 directly.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, and to your
20 knowledge, is there such a report?

21 DEMOYA GORDON: Not that I know of.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay.

23 ASHE MCGOVERN: We do work on an issue reports
24 periodically about various things that fall under our
25 jurisdiction and we work with various partners on

1
2 those reports, so it's certainly something that we're
3 interested in being involved in conversations.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, I would love to
5 talk more about the possibility of doing something
6 like that. It's just such a common thread through
7 all the testimony.

8 Thank you, and lastly, I want to get to the issue
9 of the challenges of reporting and for somebody who
10 is facing discrimination, most importantly with the
11 Police Department. The challenges of reporting that
12 somebody's been discriminated against just because of
13 their gender identity. I'm wondering what
14 protections are there for such individuals as they
15 come forward to CCHR?

16 DEMOYA GORDON: Are you asking what protections
17 are there for folks who file complaints?

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: In particular with the
19 NYPD.

20 DEMOYA GORDON: So, under our law — our law
21 prohibits discrimination and harassment across
22 various jurisdictions, whether that's employment,
23 public accommodations, housing, the bias based
24 profiling statute. It also prohibits retaliation for
25 filing a complaint or for cooperating with an

1 investigation. And so, we make sure that both folks
2 who come to us with complaints know that and we make
3 sure that respondents know that.
4

5 They are liable under our law as an additional
6 count of discrimination, if they retaliate against
7 folks for either complaining to us or cooperating
8 with our investigation. And so, when we hear or you
9 know, whether it's in the employment context,
10 whatever context it's in, where folks are vulnerable,
11 when we hear of retaliation, we will reach out
12 through respondents and let them know, you know, you
13 need to cease and desist from doing this and if you
14 don't, you are subject to liability under our law.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: How many cases of
16 retaliation do you have?

17 DEMOYA GORDAN: I don't have that number in front
18 of me, but we can certainly circle back on that.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, is it - I'd be
20 interested in knowing. So, if there are 48 open
21 cases, having to do with TGNC/NB discrimination, as
22 those get investigated, what proportion on average
23 also result in a retaliation case?

24 DEMOYA GORDON: We can circle back on that with
25 that information for you.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, okay, I'm going to
3 wrap up. Oh, great point. I would like to thank my
4 amazing staff once again for the Committee on Women
5 and Gender Equity for their thorough efforts.

6 We've talked about a couple of things that you
7 said you would be able to get back to us on. Could
8 we get a time limit on that? Do you want to say -
9 and some are easier than others. You know, the
10 budget thing might be a challenge, so why don't we do
11 a rolling timeline, maybe the stuff that you can get
12 to us sooner rather than later, could we say
13 somewhere you know, after the Thanksgiving holidays,
14 before the winter break and then maybe early in
15 January. I'd be very interested in seeing the budget
16 if we could get a confirmation and sort of maybe
17 biweekly update that indeed it's moving along. So,
18 we will get to something, because that will prepare
19 us well for the hearings in March.

20 DEMOYA GORDON: Yeah, particularly on the budget,
21 I hear you and agree that it's something that we want
22 to prioritize. I can't speak without talking to OMB
23 and MOCS particularly on the contracting about
24 timeline but we will circle back for sure.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Great, thank you so much.
3 I really admire the work that all of you are doing.
4 I appreciate your efforts very much. This has been a
5 very impressive panel, impressive testimony. You
6 know, there's always more work to be done. We're
7 going to hear from the advocates; I'm anxious to do
8 that and from individuals but you know, I appreciate
9 the work of this administration. Thank you very
10 much.

11 PANEL: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I'm going to call up the
13 next panel; Elisa Crespo representing the Bronx
14 Borough President; Quadira Coles from Girls for
15 Gender Equity; Deborah Lolai from the Bronx
16 Defenders; Taylor Brown from Lambda Legal; and
17 Kathleen McKenna from Brooklyn Defender Services.

18 You know, we have over 50 people who have signed
19 up to testify today. And so, in respect of everyone
20 who has been here to testify, I'm going to ask the
21 Sergeant to set a two minute clock for testimony and
22 I would ask people to try to stay within that
23 guideline.

24 All of your testimony, both written and oral will
25 be part of the record, so rest assure that the public

2 will know what you have to offer and we appreciate
3 that very much. We can go down the line, I'd like to
4 start though with Elisa Crespo from the Bronx Borough
5 Presidents Office.

6 ELISA CRESPO: Good morning Chairperson
7 Rosenthal. Hello, there we are. Good morning
8 Chairperson Rosenthal and members of the Committee.
9 My name is Elisa Crespo; I am the Education Liaison
10 at the Office of the Bronx Borough President Ruben
11 Diaz Jr. and most are proud women of trans
12 experience.

13 I'm very pleased to be here testifying on behalf
14 of the Bronx Borough President about how the City of
15 New York can provide access, resources and support
16 for transgender and gender non-conforming New
17 Yorkers.

18 I'd like to start out by saying that trans and
19 gender non-conforming New Yorkers are very fortunate
20 to live in a city that provide robust anti-
21 discrimination protections. Moreover, New York City
22 is home to some of the best non-for-profit
23 organizations whose mission is to serve the LGBTQ+
24 community. Our office would like to take a moment to
25 praise those organizations, several of which have

1
2 assisted trans and gender non-conforming individuals
3 with inviable support of services along the way.

4 Organizations like Callen-Lorde, the Sylvia
5 Rivera Law Project, the Hetrick Martin Institute, the
6 LGBT Center, the Gay Men's Health Crisis and the
7 Bronx's very own Destination Tomorrow.

8 These organizations and many others have been
9 doing the work of the people and at times, have been
10 the communities only source of support. For that,
11 they deserve recognition during today's hearing. We
12 ask that you continue to support these organizations
13 by providing them with discretionary funds, so that
14 they can continue doing the work that is necessary
15 for the LGBTQ+ and the trans and gender non-
16 conforming community.

17 For many trans and gender non-conforming
18 individuals, their first experience with rejection
19 starts in their homes. Many transgender non-
20 conforming individual youth are disowned by their
21 families because of how they identify. That
22 abandonment starts a perpetual cycle of homelessness
23 declining health and criminalization.

24 Statistics show that the overwhelming majority of
25 New York City's homeless youth identify as trans or

2 gender non-conforming. Despite this alarming fact,
3 the city has only opened one Department of Homeless
4 Services run shelter that caters specifically to the
5 LGBTQ and trans and gender non-conforming community.

6 What is more, there are still cases being
7 reported of DHS employees misgendering and treating
8 trans and gender conforming homeless youth very
9 poorly.

10 It is imperative that the city mandate the
11 Department of Homeless Services and the New York City
12 Human Resources Administration to create a priority
13 status for trans and gender non-conforming
14 individuals for rental assistance vouchers and
15 supportive housing much like those agencies have done
16 for other vulnerable populations.

17 Not with standing trans and gender non-conforming
18 folks suffer from a societal stigma that causes us to
19 be shut out from the private sector job market.

20 Despite the city's laws prohibiting
21 discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sex,
22 sexual orientation and gender identity, far too many
23 trans and gender non-conforming folks are woefully
24 unemployed or under employed. And particularly,
25 trans and gender non-conforming individuals of color.

1 It is not enough for the city to implement
2 diversity and inclusion trainings in the workplace.
3 The city should consider increasing its recruitment
4 efforts to trans and gender non-conforming
5 individuals, so that there is a pathway into the
6 municipal workforce for them.
7

8 Trans and gender non-conforming New Yorkers also
9 need a pathway to public higher education. There are
10 thousands of talented trans and gender non-conforming
11 youth without a post-secondary education because the
12 public higher education system does not create a safe
13 pathway for them. All too often, trans and gender
14 non-conforming youth, who are in the process of
15 transitioning drop out of school because of an
16 unsafe, hostile environment.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: If you could wrap it up.
18 Again, we have your written testimony, just the last
19 thought.

20 ELISA CRESPO: Yes, ma'am. I'm almost done.
21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: If it were not for
23 schools like Harvey Milk High School, which creates
24 safe spaces for trans and gender non-conforming
25 youth, thousands of trans and gender non-conforming

2 New Yorkers would be shut out from the public school
3 system and not be able to obtain their high school
4 diploma. It's time for New York City to consider
5 implementing a pathway to public higher education
6 specifically for LGBTQ and TGNC youth.

7 The city should consider in addition to the City
8 University of New York that is designed for, but not
9 limited to LGBTQ and TGNC New Yorkers.

10 I'd be remiss if I did not address the issue of
11 transwomen of color being profiled -

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, I'm really sorry.
13 There are 49 other people who -

14 ELISA CRESPO: Yes ma'am.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Who want to testify and
16 I've given you the courtesy of going first. I would
17 ask that you just give a last punchline and let's
18 move on. Thank you. We have your written testimony.

19 ELISA CRESPO: Thank you for scheduling this
20 hearing and for listening to the stakeholders. If
21 you take nothing else from this testimony today, know
22 that trans and gender non-conforming New Yorkers need
23 jobs, we need pathways to public higher education and
24 we need priority status in the shelter system. Thank
25 you.

2 DEBORAH LOLAI: Good morning, my name is Deborah
3 Lolai. I use she and her pronouns and I am the
4 supervising attorney of the LGBTQ Defense Project at
5 the Bronx Defenders. Thank you for the opportunity
6 to testify before you on this important matter today.

7 Our office has represented hundreds of trans and
8 gender non-conforming, non-binary people in criminal
9 cases and related legal matters.

10 I'm here today to discuss three important topics
11 with the Committee. The first is NYPD misconduct
12 against TGNC/NB people. The second is mistreatment
13 of this community in DOC custody, and the third, is
14 limited access to alternatives to incarceration and
15 other court mandated programs for this community.

16 As I'm sure all of you know, the NYPD has a
17 record of abusing TGNC New Yorkers throughout
18 history. As a result of this pattern of abuse, the
19 NYPD Patrol Guide which governs NYPD conduct, was
20 revised in 2012 to include protections for TGNC
21 people.

22 In the hundreds of TGNC clients I have personally
23 represented in criminal cases, there has never been
24 one client whose arrest and treatment by the involved
25 officers complied with the 2012 revisions.

1 Our clients are routinely profiled by the police.
2
3 Throughout the course of their arrests, they are
4 physically assaulted, sexually assaulted, called
5 derogatory names, placed in the wrong holding cells
6 and misgendered both orally and in writing in police
7 paperwork.

8 In terms of the Department of Correction, over
9 the past couple of years City Council has paid much
10 attention to the treatment of incarcerated TGNC
11 people. In fact, much improvement has been made
12 thanks to the efforts of many agencies in this room
13 today including advocates, City Council Members, the
14 Board of Correction and the New York City Commission
15 on Human Rights.

16 I personally want to thank you Council Member
17 Rosenthal for your leadership in this area and we
18 look forward to continuing working on the task force
19 to address these issues, but I do want to acknowledge
20 that really serious problems are continuing within
21 DOC against this population.

22 And finally, I just want to briefly discuss the
23 lack of access to alternatives to incarceration and
24 court mandated programming for TGNC people. Many of
25 our clients are court mandated to engage in these

2 programs. In the criminal context, if they are not
3 successful in these programs, they are facing jail or
4 prison alternatives.

5 In the family court context, these programs and
6 success in them largely determine whether or not they
7 are going to be able to reunify with their families.
8 The problem is that these programs are often gender
9 specific and culturally incompetent. TGNC clients
10 are sometimes not accepted to programs because they
11 are transgender and when they are accepted, they are
12 often forced to sleep in gender designated areas that
13 are inconsistent with their gender and they face
14 gender based harassment from other residents in these
15 program which are left unaddressed by staff.

16 This discrimination and harassment results in an
17 inability to complete the program successfully,
18 exposing people to a prison sentence or to a delay in
19 family reunification.

20 Thank you again for this opportunity to testify
21 before you on these important issues. I'd ask the
22 Committee to begin monitoring NYPD misconduct and
23 Council Member Lander, I would be happy to also
24 address the issues you brought up earlier. I'd ask
25 that you investigate the rampant discrimination in

1
2 these programs across New York City and that you
3 continue your incredible work pushing the Department
4 of Correction to treat trans and gender non-
5 conforming people the right way.

6 QUADIRA COLES: Good afternoon Council Member
7 Rosenthal and Committee on Women and Gender Equity.
8 My name is Quadira Coles, I use pronouns she, her and
9 I am the Policy Manager at Girls for Gender Equity.

10 Girls for Gender Equity's work center safety and
11 healing for cisgender, transgender girls and gender
12 non-conforming and non-binary youth of color with an
13 understanding that safety and healing cannot happen
14 without appropriate investments and meeting their
15 material needs. A significant part of our work has
16 been shifting narratives in public conversations and
17 bringing an intergenerational anti-carceral feminist
18 analysis to the discourse around gender.

19 Justice; Girls for Gender Equity offer two
20 resources. Our youth driven participatory action
21 research projects School Girls Deserve and a
22 comprehensive recommendations crafted through the
23 City Council's Young Women's Initiative.

24 Among the following recommendations through the
25 School Girls Deserve Report, address experience of

1 transgender and gender non-conforming youth of color
2 which include investing in holistic curriculum that
3 is culturally responsive, intersectional and
4 feminist, so that schools can become an affirming
5 community for transgender and gender non-conforming
6 youth of color, create resourceful and dignified
7 schools by guaranteeing access to all gender
8 bathrooms, increasing dignified access to menstrual
9 materials and fully allocating old funds to New York
10 City Public Schools, create safe and supportive
11 learning environments through Title 9 and in school
12 support for survivors of sexual violence, trained
13 guidance counselors and social workers, increase
14 school based health centers in school based mental
15 health programs and stronger implementation of the
16 Dignity Act, Transgender and Gender Non-conforming
17 student guidelines and respect for all, decriminalize
18 learning environments by removing police and school
19 safety agents from all New York City public schools.

20 The Young Women Initiative issued the following:

21 Overarching recommendations, collect disaggregated
22 data on sexuality and gender identity separately,
23 secured rights of youth in foster care, juvenile
24 detention and all other government operated in
25

1 regulated youth facilities, conduct meaningful review
2 of current policies relating to the safe and
3 appropriate housing of transgender and gender non-
4 conforming people in the city, require comprehensive
5 sex ed in New York City public schools. GE continues
6 to champion the work that removes barriers in the
7 lives of transgender and gender non-conforming youth
8 of color.

9
10 We ask to be a resource for the Council in
11 upcoming efforts to address the issues laid out by
12 advocates today and that the youth are centered in
13 this work as well.

14 Thank you for your time.

15 KATHLEEN MCKENNA: Good morning, my name is
16 Kathleen McKenna; I use she, her pronouns and I'm a
17 Policy Social Worker at Brooklyn Defender Services.
18 In my limited time, I'd like to highlight two points
19 that you'll find our written testimony. First, while
20 we recognize that this hearing is not about the
21 resolution, we call on the City Council to adopt
22 resolution 923 calling on the New York State
23 Legislature to pass Senate Bill 2253 Assembly Bill
24 654. Which would repeal penal law Section 24037
25 loitering for the purposes of prostitution.

1 Enforcement of the bill if not the bill itself is
2 patently racist, sexist. The majority of the people
3 arrested for the charge are Black and Latinx women,
4 Black and Latinx women consistently report being
5 stopped and harassed by police for simply walking
6 down the street, speaking with friends and
7 congregating in certain neighborhoods. The
8 resolution would send a strong message to New Yorkers
9 that criminalizing, walking while trans is
10 inappropriate and unacceptable.
11

12 Secondly, we'd like to highlight the point raised
13 earlier that the city has to ensure that trans and
14 gender non-conforming people can access court
15 mandated services. Our clients are given the choice
16 to participate in insensitive gender, segregated
17 programming or to go to jail. And when our trans and
18 gender non-conforming clients are forced into these
19 programs, their set up for failure. They often don't
20 complete the programming because of harassment and
21 issues which too, result in going to jail.

22 We recognize that many agencies and organizations
23 and people, many of which are led by trans and gender
24 non-conforming people are doing this work and are
25 filling the gaps that our agencies are identifying

1
2 and we hope that the City Council will listen to the
3 folks in the room who are trans, non-binary and
4 gender non-conforming and recognize this as an
5 opportunity to invest in the programs that you'll
6 hear about today and the people in this room who are
7 doing this work.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you, just a really
10 quick question for Bronx Defenders. Do you think
11 that - Oh, I'm so sorry, of course, there wasn't a
12 chair for you. We're going to get you a chair. Hang
13 on one second, the Sergeant at Arms will get you a
14 chair. Thank you, thanks for standing up.

15 TAYLOR BROWN: Sorry for interrupting again,
16 Taylor Brown from Lambda Legal. It looks like the
17 clocks up, so I'm an attorney with Lambda Legal at
18 our headquarters here in New York City. Lambda Legal
19 is the nation's oldest and largest LGBT and HIV legal
20 organization, dedicated to the full recognition of
21 Civil Rights for lesbians, gay men, bisexual, or
22 transgender people and all people living with HIV.

23 I'm here today to commend all of these advocates
24 and to also just voice Lambda support for the
25 Commission on Human Rights. When we talk about

1
2 Access Resources and support for transgender and
3 gender non-conforming residents in New York City, the
4 Commission is on the frontline doing some of the
5 hardest and most important work.

6 Increasingly, Lambda Legal is devoting the
7 majority of our resources spinning off a tax by the
8 Trump Administration on the Civil Rights of our
9 community. We are able to do this because we have
10 partners like the commission defending our
11 communities locally.

12 The Civil Rights work that the Commission does is
13 unparalleled and serves as a national model for other
14 cities and states when it comes to meaningful
15 enforcement of civil rights, protections and
16 guarantees.

17 As an impact lawyer, I am reminded every day of
18 the limitation of impact litigation. While legal
19 equality is important and gives us the ammunition to
20 tackle systemic issues in our communities,
21 enforcement is essential to effectuate real legal
22 equality, equity and meaningful change in people's
23 everyday lives.

24 Even today, TGNC residents of New York City are
25 still dealing with discrimination across the spectrum

1 from everyday interpersonal harassment and violence
2 to discrimination and employment, health care,
3 educational opportunities and the penal system. We
4 know that discrimination in these important areas of
5 life directly correlate to higher levels of poverty,
6 homelessness, negative health outcomes and encounters
7 with law enforcement. And just a general lower
8 quality of life and wellbeing and to combat the
9 effects of the discrimination, the commission not
10 only brings enforcement actions, but also works
11 proactively by engaging the community to educate the
12 public about civil rights and to promote diversity
13 and equity.

14 This model of civil rights work enforcement
15 education is vital in the battle for the lives of
16 TGNB people. And what is more, the commission is
17 able to directly tackle intersectional issues.
18 Discrimination does not only occur because of
19 transgender, gender non-conforming status. It is
20 often deeply intertwined with race, socioeconomic
21 status, interactions with the criminal justice
22 system, credit, all of these things and by being
23 empowered to enforce one of the most comprehensive
24 civil rights, because in the country, the commission
25

1
2 has the unmatched ability to meet people where they
3 are and combat the myriad of intersectional
4 discrimination many TGNC people face.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you. Just a quick
6 question Deborah for you. I'm looking at supervised
7 release and thinking about January and the people who
8 will be released at that time and wanting to make
9 sure that there are programs that are sensitive.

10 Do you have a sense of the numbers, like how many
11 people we might be talking about who will be coming
12 into supervised release or ATI system that hadn't
13 been there before? And where this is going is, I
14 would like to start pressing the administration on
15 supervised release and ATI programs for a particular
16 - I don't know how to say it, buckets of people. I'm
17 thinking also about the DV community, batterers and
18 what supervised release is available for them. So,
19 I'm wondering if we should be, the city should be
20 thinking about this as well.

21 DEBORAH LOLAI: I think it's definitely something
22 we should be thinking about. I do want to make a
23 crucial distinction between the programs that I'm
24 talking about and programs such as CCI, Bronx
25 Community Solutions and supervised Release which

1
2 historically, we have not had as much of an issue
3 with then residential inpatient treatment programs
4 and specifically alternatives to incarceration that
5 are part of somebody's sentence or plea deal. Those
6 are the programs that I'm referring to. So, an
7 inpatient substance abuse program for example, right.

8 If somebody is sentenced to complete one year of
9 this program, right, and is told, if you do not
10 complete this program successfully, the prison
11 alternative will be three years. And then they go
12 into the program and their not able to complete it
13 because of the harassment they face.

14 But I will say it is something that we should be
15 talking about with all agencies and organizations
16 that are going to be working with people who would
17 have otherwise been incarcerated. Because there are
18 specific issues that TGNC people have to navigate.
19 That other people coming through the system may not
20 have to navigate to the same extent and I would be
21 happy to continue those conversations with you.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you, I'd like to
23 take you up on that. Oh, yeah, sorry, do you have a
24 written copy of your testimony? Okay, if you could
25 give that to the Sergeant at Arms, that would be

1
2 really helpful. Thank you all for coming today,
3 thank you for your time. I'm going to call up the
4 next panel.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Chair, could I ask a
6 question or two?

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Oh, I'm so sorry.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: No, no, problem. I
9 should have come over.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Of course.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you. I want to I
12 guess draw it a little more of the NYPD issues to
13 just make sure, again, I suspect we'll hear more but
14 Deborah, you know, just the fact that you have not
15 seen in your experience you know, any of the - I
16 wonder if you could say a little more about what the
17 kinds of complaints that people bring to you are.
18 Where they take them, do they take them to CCRB? You
19 know, and where should we be looking to try to
20 address the issue?

21 DEBORAH LOLAI: I really appreciate your interest
22 in this topic. The most common complaints that we
23 are getting are the ones that I listed in my
24 testimony. So, almost 100 percent of the time,
25 people are placed in holding cells inconsistent with

1
2 their gender identity both at the precinct and in the
3 courthouse awaiting arraignment. The alternative is
4 being in a cell by themselves which sometimes happens
5 as well.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I should say that
7 happened on my last arrest when I was arrested at the
8 Amazon Ice Protest. There were 44 of us and there
9 was one person who was in a cell by themselves.

10 DEBORAH LOLAI: Yes, and the arrestees preferred
11 names and pronouns are also almost never respected,
12 which actually has devastating consequences if that
13 person continues through the system and ends up
14 having bail set on them because DOC initially looks
15 at the police paperwork and what gender designation
16 they used on that paperwork to fill out what's called
17 a securing order which is what determines which
18 intake facility they're going to be sent to.

19 Right, so if a transgender woman has male on her
20 police paperwork and she goes through the court
21 system and the court officer fills out the securing
22 order based on that paperwork and writes male, she's
23 going to the male jail facility for intake. And they
24 can be there for several, sometimes a day, sometimes
25 two days before maybe they are sent to rows and when

1 they go straight to the men's jail for intake, it's
2 much less likely that their going to be accepted into
3 rows, that's what we've seen.

4 You know, and then there are sort of the more
5 egregious offenses like physical assault, like sexual
6 assault. Usually those things are accompanied by
7 derogatory statement made against them, targeting
8 their gender identity and sexual orientation. And
9 then there's you know, what people would consider
10 sort of the everyday experiences with NYPD, the
11 profiling, the harassment on the streets. Right,
12 that may not even result in an arrest, but it
13 definitely takes a toll on someone.

14 And in terms of your second part of the question,
15 so, we represent people in criminal cases and we
16 always advise our clients to make complaints with the
17 commission, to make complaints with the CCRB. We
18 advise them on how to file civil rights lawsuits with
19 they would like to and if they would like to do any
20 of these things, they usually do. The problem is
21 follow-up. Right, that's become the struggle for us
22 is trying to figure out the best system in following
23 up. Right, often times we never see our clients
24 again after arraignments, if the case is resolved.
25

1 Right, and to be fair, I understand why they never
2 want to see us again to.

3 So, that's been primarily the struggle, but I
4 think it's crucial for us to figure out a way to
5 monitor these abuses, and to see how with numbers,
6 how often they are happening. And we can give you
7 our data. Right, we collect that data but we only
8 represent a portion of people arrested in the Bronx.

9 So, there's citywide data that needs to be
10 collected on this.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: It's my understanding
12 from the Inspector General's Report on the NYPD
13 response, that they're resisting asking about gender
14 identity and I guess, kind of hiding behind. People
15 don't want their privacy invaded although, that
16 hasn't been my experience that the NYPD worries that
17 much about invading people's privacy but I guess, is
18 that an issue here? If there isn't you know, on the
19 arresting forms and the documents and the intake
20 forms, a question about gender identity, then I get
21 one, it doesn't sort of comply with the guidance to
22 respect it and it just seems like it would make it
23 much more likely that an officer would just go ahead
24 and use a dead name, would use the identity that they

1
2 assumed, and process someone in the way that you
3 refer to.

4 DEBORAH LOLAI: That's a really good question.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I understand there might
6 be multiple perspectives on it.

7 DEBORAH LOLAI: It's a complicated question to
8 answer because first of all, I highly doubt that the
9 concern of the NYPD is people's privacy. But there
10 is a genuine concern that has been brought up by
11 community members about not wanting this data
12 collecting when they're being arrested, right.

13 If the NYPD isn't able to identify them as
14 transgender for example, and they don't want to be
15 outed as transgender, we can be putting someone in a
16 really unsafe situation by requiring them to answer
17 questions about their gender identity. I think the
18 way that we move forward with compliance of these
19 revisions is a conversation that needs to involve
20 community members, many of whom are in this room and
21 who can be in the best position to advise the Council
22 on what is the safest way to address this for them.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay, thank you and my
24 last question, one of you and I can't remember which
25 it was mentioned the shelter system and I realize

1 that was something that we didn't ask the prior
2 panel, as my understanding from staff that we have
3 very limited TGNC capacity or shelter in the shelter
4 system. So, if one of you has a little more to tell
5 us about that, it would be helpful.

7 TAYLOR BROWN: Yes, I did mention the shelter
8 system in my testimony. There are a couple of
9 shelters that are dedicated to LGBTQ youth from 16-24
10 and lately we've seen more that are dedicated to
11 LGBTQ+ elderly. There is a lack for anyone that's
12 from 24-like 60. Most of those shelters are done by
13 nonprofits and I assume funded by the City Council,
14 but the city itself, has only taken it upon itself to
15 make one LGBTQ shelter which is Marsha's Place in the
16 Bronx and I would argue there's a need for more.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I'm sure.

18 DEBORAH LOLAI: And if I may add something on
19 that point and there's a section on housing in my
20 written testimony, but the way that it would work for
21 any adult going into the shelter system is that they
22 need to go to either the female or male intake
23 shelter and then they're designated to a shelter,
24 right and I think a lot of people don't know their
25 rights and DHS has pretty extensive protections for

1
2 TGNC people but many folks don't know that and that's
3 in part because shelter staff don't know that. And
4 they are violating people's rights by not permitting
5 them to enter the shelter of their choice and I think
6 that would be remedied if there were more options
7 that were specific to TGNC adults.

8 There are plenty of LGBTQ youth shelters but our
9 clients who are really suffering are TGNC adult
10 clients.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you, thank you
12 Chair.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, thank you for
14 following up on that. I think that's incredibly
15 important and goes to the issue of training that we
16 were asking about previously whether or not CCHR has
17 the staff available to do all the training it needs
18 to do and similarly, we have done some work around
19 preferences and have legislation that we're hoping to
20 move through the Council so that people could self-
21 identify earlier and get appropriate housing. And
22 that the staff at homeless services would be better
23 prepared and equipped. That's a problem we've heard
24 quite a bit about.

1
2 Real quickly, we're trying to pull up and if we
3 don't get it right now, that's okay, but the website
4 for the San Francisco office for TGNC/NB folk and
5 have you spent any time on that? Because they do
6 seem to collect quite a bit of data and have a lot of
7 reporting. When you look at that, do you see any
8 privacy concerns or any red flags?

9 DEBORAH LOLAI: This is the first time I'm
10 hearing of that office, so no. Although I think in
11 creating these sorts of data bases, there are ways to
12 both collect and publish crucial data without
13 sacrificing or compromising confidentiality.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Terrific. We look
15 forward to continuing to work with you. I'm going to
16 call up the next panel. Riley Marciano[SP?] and this
17 is primarily a CUNY panel, faculty and students.
18 Hang on one second, sorry, that's the next panel.
19 Can you hang on one second. My bad, whoever I just
20 called up. Hang on one second, you'll be in the next
21 panel.

22 Brianne Waycoff from BMCC, Paisley Currah CUNY
23 faculty member, Dr. Yarri Felber-Seligman and Red
24 Washburn and I mispronounced some of your names. And
25 as you are coming up, I just want to thank the

1
2 translators who are in the room, who are working
3 incredibly hard to make sure our Spanish speaking
4 participants here today can stay up to date with what
5 we're talking about. I know how hard that work is
6 and I really want to appreciate the work that you are
7 doing. Thank you.

8 Okay, if everyone could give copies of their
9 testimony and whenever you're ready. We are trying
10 to limit the timing with apologies, to two minutes.
11 So, if you could summarize your testimony and know
12 that your written material is here with us.

13 Okay, if you could start please and just make
14 sure the red dot is on.

15 DR. BRIANNE WAYCOFF: Hi, my name is Dr. Brianne
16 Waycoff; I am an Associate Professor at CUNY Borough
17 of Manhattan Community College, just a few blocks
18 away where I created and coordinate the gender and
19 women's studies program. I use she, her pronouns.
20 Thank you to the Committee for holding this hearing.

21 I'm here to testify about the lack of support and
22 lack of resources for TGNC community members in CUNY
23 that I witness and experience daily.

24 In January 2019, I started the spring semester
25 teaching my classes, really excited to talk about the

1 passage of agenda and the City Council bill creating
2 non-binary birth certificates. Within a week, as I
3 walked to class, I got a call from an emotionally
4 distressed non-binary student. They were being held
5 after being cuffed and taken to the ground by Public
6 Safety. This use of force on a student who is
7 smaller than I am as a result of a verbal
8 confrontation between two other students. No
9 physical altercation happened and the only student
10 public safety investigated was the non-binary student
11 who was also a bystander.

12
13 Public Safety threatened the student with
14 expulsion. I used my professorial credentials to
15 convince Public Safety that that wasn't necessary.

16 What I want to note today is the number of TGNC
17 students who upon witnessing or seeing bystander
18 video of the event noted they had had similar
19 experiences with public safety. I also want to
20 suggest that there are many more students who didn't
21 have a professors cell number who may not be students
22 anymore.

23 When we were reporting what was clearly
24 discriminatory to our chief diversity officer, we
25 were told we did not have sufficient evidence of

1
2 discrimination and the reporting itself was so
3 frustrating that we dropped it.

4 There are other issues at BMCC. We have only
5 four all gender restrooms across our entire campus,
6 one building has none. Stickers outside restrooms
7 designated in both visual and verbal language as
8 single sex, confusingly announced that individuals
9 have the legal right to use that which is consistent
10 with their gender identity or expression.

11 Campus community members are misgendered by other
12 community members regularly. We know this is a
13 problem and yet, the college and university cannot
14 find money to fund programs like gender and women
15 studies. Sometimes the only programs creating
16 temporary spaces where students feel safe.

17 I run BMCC's program without compensation or a
18 physical space. The City University of New York, the
19 greatest urban university in the world has issued
20 statements of support for the transgender, non-
21 binary, non-conforming community. However, these
22 statements ring hollow when considering the reality
23 of experiences on our campus.

24

25

1
2 We don't even have a center to support these
3 students while we continue to expand other centers
4 such as those four religiously affiliated students.

5 I'm here to ask you to tell CUNY that if they
6 support trans lives, they need to show us, not tell
7 us.

8 Thank you for your time. We're counting on the
9 positive changes you plan to make.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you. If your
11 remarks were beyond what is in your written
12 testimony, if you have – you can submit a fuller set
13 of remarks if you'd like online. Thank you.

14 PAISLEY CURRAH: Thank you, I would first like to
15 acknowledge that this hearing is being held on the
16 traditional lands of the Lenape people. So, thank
17 you for providing me with the opportunity to speak
18 today. My name is Paisley Currah and I'm a Professor
19 of Political Science and Women Studies at Brooklyn
20 College in the graduate center.

21 I'm a transgender man and my pronouns are he,
22 him. I want to say that there are certainly faculty
23 staff and administrative people across the CUNY
24 system working very hard to ensure that trans and
25 non-binary students are treated with dignity and

1
2 respect. But was you will see from the testimony
3 today; overall CUNY is not in compliance with city
4 and state laws passed to protect individuals from
5 discrimination based on gender identity and
6 expression or state laws regarding access to and
7 signage for bathrooms.

8 Many campuses have not made the changes necessary
9 to ensure that trans and non-binary students are able
10 to learn and take part in college life in a safe and
11 inclusive environment. For example, some faculty and
12 staff are outright hostile to trans and non-binary
13 students repeatedly misgendering them. Even though
14 CUNY policy allows students to have their preferred
15 names and ID in rosters without providing supporting
16 documents. Some staff have demanded such
17 documentation before they will change ID's. This
18 maybe because staff are unaware of CUNY policy or
19 unwilling to adhere to it.

20 In some situations, CUNY First, the software that
21 is the backbone of CUNY will override the preferred
22 names of faculty and staff with their dead names,
23 effectively owning them at work. This problem was
24 pointed out to CUNY administrators in March of 2019
25 and they have yet to respond with a solution.

2 Some CUNY public safety officers have attempted
3 to not enter the campus facilities when they realize
4 from a students ID that they are trans or non-binary.
5 New York City Local Law 79 requires all single
6 occupant bathrooms to be made available for use by
7 persons of any sex, we will call this L-gender. The
8 law require appropriate signage. In many campuses,
9 this signage has not been put up.

10 The New York City Human Rights Law requires that
11 people be allowed to use the restroom or locker room
12 that most closely aligns with their gender. At
13 Brooklyn College, where I teach, temporary signs
14 indicating this are regularly torn off.

15 CUNY students are the future of New York. Our
16 trans and non-binary students deserve to be part of
17 that future. They should not have to drop out
18 because the learning environment isn't safe and
19 inclusive.

20 Thank you.

21 YARRI FELBER-SELIGMAN: Thank you, is it working
22 now? Good morning, I'm very grateful to be here. I
23 will keep my spoken remarks brief to avoid repetition
24 with that of my colleagues.

1
2 To be clear today, I speak for myself, not
3 specifically representing city college. I am Dr.
4 Yarri Felber-Seligman; an out member of LGBTQ
5 community and specifically, I am a transgender, non-
6 binary person. I use they, them pronouns.

7 I am an Assistant Professor of history, tenure
8 track at City College CUNY. I speak today reflecting
9 on my experience as a historian and mentor to
10 transgender and gender expansive students. I flag
11 two issues of concerns, one, I abbreviate because of
12 the prior discussion for many. But in brief, the
13 first concern is there is seriously limited resources
14 for young transgender people who face housing
15 uncertainty. Many of them in my mentoring
16 conversations also happen to be our top performing
17 CUNY students. That issue has been discussed much,
18 so I'm going to abbreviate that.

19 My second issue of concern, I would love to see
20 overall greater efforts here in our New York City to
21 support LGBTQ+ education, in addition to the very
22 pertinent remarks of my colleagues, I want to
23 highlight personally the states of New Jersey,
24 Illinois, Colorado and California have all adopted
25 path breaking legislation to mandate LGBTQ inclusive

1
2 K-12 curriculums. While ultimately this is a
3 decision for state legislature, New York City could
4 and should begin to offer pilot educational programs
5 to that affect.

6 As a professional historian, I know well the
7 significance of including only certain people's
8 histories in our classrooms and excluding others. If
9 we want to build a greater New York City culture of
10 inclusion and diversity, in celebration of all
11 diversity including our transgender and gender
12 expansive members, that should begin with how we
13 prioritize this topic of educational curriculum.
14 Teaching LGBTQ history alongside the many histories
15 of diverse New Yorkers would do much towards
16 protecting and celebrating LGBTQ students lives.

17 Thank you so much.

18 RED WASHBURN: Hi, my name is Red Washburn; I use
19 they, them pronouns. I'm a transgender nonconforming
20 and non-binary Associate Professor of English and the
21 Director of Women and Gender Studies at Kingsborough.

22 Six months after I came out as trans at work by
23 requesting a name and pronoun change, ensuring I was
24 getting top surgery, Kingsborough's Administration
25 announced it was defunding women and gender studies.

2 I filed a complaint regarding my concerns as an
3 employee. I filed with CCHR in November of 2018 and
4 I've been going through that slow process while the
5 harassment and retaliation is ongoing. However, this
6 month, early November 2019, due to CCHR delays and
7 backlogs, my lawyer suggested we withdraw the
8 complaint and instead make a federal complaint.

9 After almost a month, I'm still awaiting
10 administrative withdraw and a notice of right to sue
11 from EEOC. In total, this experience has been going
12 on for two years and counting and I've experienced
13 relentless institutional trauma and gaslighting
14 without repair.

15 I published in the Daily News in mid-June 2019,
16 shortly thereafter, Kingsborough organized a PR
17 coverup campaign that denied transphobic behavior
18 towards me and students over email to the entire
19 college community and sent a letter to the Daily
20 News. In addition, it started to include LGBTQ
21 students on their website and social media without
22 their consent. Many of these students were not out.

23 It also posted pride flags and attitudes about
24 Trans Day Remembrance on its faculty and staff
25 listeners since then. It's coached study about job

1 satisfaction recently administered does not include
2 LGBT employees. And when I said it was not
3 inclusive, they said they were using it anyway
4 because it was CUNY-wide.
5

6 This sustained harassment caused me and my
7 students in the program much harm. Many students
8 have been targeted by public safety. In particular,
9 the last two days, there have been two sexual
10 assaults. Public Safety is looking at their ID's now
11 and harming those students. It created the need for
12 me to take sick leave in the fall and get a second
13 revision surgery in the winter. I will require
14 another, yet a third procedure in December this year
15 as well.

16 I would like to make several recommendations to
17 the Committee. Can I keep going, sorry.

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Please, go ahead.

19 RED WASHBURN: I would like to request that CUNY
20 school be held accountable for the harm being done to
21 women as well as GNC, trans and non-binary faculty
22 and students by not abiding by New York City Laws.
23 These accountability areas include not having all
24 gender bathrooms, ID's, emails, pay stubs, CUNY
25 online services, such as Black word, CUNY First the

1 CUNY Portal. Courses study in academic forms and
2 other institutional records like faculty files,
3 evaluations and tenure certificates that do not have
4 people's names and genders on them.
5

6 I'd also like to recommend that all faculty and
7 staff have a mandatory statement about names and
8 pronouns on their syllabus including their email and
9 letter signatures and pronoun buttons are provided on
10 all campuses.

11 More importantly, and this is my strongest
12 recommendation, is that all the funding for women and
13 gender studies and LGBTQ studies, programs,
14 departments and centers is restored and build up on
15 in campuses in the forms reassigned time, office
16 space, administrative support, scholarships,
17 internships, and curriculum work.

18 Academic and advocacy programs, departments and
19 centers, should work together to bridge gaps between
20 knowledge and experience both in and outside the
21 classroom. It is a form of institutional violence to
22 cut resources for at risk women and LGBT students,
23 most of whom are working class students of color. It
24 signals that their personal and intellectual lives
25 and studies do not matter.

1
2 Lastly, I'd recommend more funding and resources
3 for CCHR to expedite its complaints to lessen
4 retaliation as investigations are in process. WGS
5 and LGBTQ studies funds not only need to be restored
6 but bulked up on in this incredibly complex time of
7 height and tension on our campuses in New York City
8 communities and the world. All campuses should have
9 a stable structure with funding and resources not
10 left up to administrators who may or may not support
11 trans rights.

12 I'm grateful to the committee on women and gender
13 equity, especially Council Member Helen Rosenthal for
14 hearing my testimony today. Today's hearing is
15 giving me much hope that we will receive justice in
16 our healing process.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: It's inexplicable what's
18 happened with your case in particular. It's
19 heartbreaking and you already know this; how much I
20 admire you for continuing your efforts at CUNY. And
21 you know, it's incredibly – I got nothing. I really
22 admire your work and to everyone here, thank you for
23 coming forward, sharing these concerns. They will
24 certainly be on our list of issues to raise at the
25 budget hearings with CUNY. I think the first step

1 and you've already done this, Red, but just keep
2 speaking the truth. Keep talking about it. Keep
3 talking about what's happening and bringing these
4 issues to light. I hope there is someone from the
5 media here who will write about your case in
6 particular to shine a spotlight on it.

8 I wish I had something brilliant to say. Council
9 Member Lander. Thank you so much for coming and
10 providing this testimony. I hope that CUNY steps up
11 and we'll do what we can. Thank you very much.

12 RED WASHBURN: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: As a response to some
14 concerns that have been raised by members in the
15 audience, we're going to next call up a panel of
16 advocates and we'll be going back and forth. There's
17 such a large CUNY contingent here. We'll be going
18 back and forth between advocate, who are working so
19 hard and CUNY students whose experiences must be
20 validated.

21 So, next, I'm calling up, okay, I'm going to
22 start here with Brianna Silber- I'm sorry Brianna,
23 Silverberg from the Anti-violence Project; Reem
24 Ramadan for the Anti-Violence Project; Jaz Boden from
25 Anti-Violence Project/Silvia Rivera Law Project. You

1
2 can start to come up. I guess this is an entire
3 panel of staff from the Anti-Violence Project, fill
4 free to come on up. We have Sonya Steinman, Virginia
5 Goggin and Tonya Lee Price. All from the New York
6 City Anti-Violence Project. I think there are six
7 people today, on this panel. So, if the Sergeant
8 could make sure we add a chair so everyone, there are
9 six. Oh, you already did it, okay.

10 And frankly, given the amazing work that the
11 Anti-Violence Project does, I'm glad to have a full
12 panel of representation and really you know, want to
13 start with a huge note of appreciation. You've
14 testified at so many of the hearings, we've worked
15 with you on these issues, so I really thank everyone
16 for being here today.

17 Brianna, do you want to kick off?

18 BRIANNA SILVERBERG: Absolutely. Thank you and I
19 also want to say Jazz Boden unfortunately had to
20 leave and I also appreciate putting Tonya together.
21 I thought that I was cleverly putting her in later.
22 She is going to take awhile to arrive, but I do
23 appreciate you bunching us together and I'll put in
24 another slip if she does end up coming later but
25 thank you everybody.

1
2 Thank you, Chair Rosenthal and the rest of the
3 Committee for having us here today. My name is
4 Brianna Silverberg; I'm a Community Organizer with
5 the New York City Anti-Violence Project. I'm a
6 transgender woman here in New York City but what I
7 wanted to talk about today is really the dire state
8 of employment and access to economic resources for
9 the trans and gender non-conforming communities
10 throughout New York.

11 On December of 2018, AVP released a report on
12 employment discrimination against TGNC peoples
13 throughout the city. I included it with my remarks
14 for everyone here. What we found and a lot of it was
15 really shocking and staggering. So, we surveyed TGNC
16 people all throughout New York and from what we were
17 seeing, 22 percent of our respondents were
18 unemployed, which is five times the rate of the
19 general population. 52 percent of our respondents
20 reported an income of less than \$39,000 a year. 41
21 percent of the people of color surveyed in the report
22 an income of less than \$10,000 a year.

23 Even when respondents had a high level of
24 education in contrast to the options available to the
25 general public and largely gendered populations, 30

1
2 percent, 7 percent of respondents with a bachelor's
3 degree or higher reported an income of less than
4 \$30,000 a year.

5 What these numbers are really showing us is
6 there's this glaring and dire need that despite you
7 know, New York priding ourselves and promoting itself
8 as a haven and sanctuary for trans communities. At
9 the height of today's sort of tumultuous and toxic
10 critical climate, the truth is that things are
11 really, really difficult today for trans New Yorkers
12 in need of work and looking to get by.

13 Trans people are routinely denied access to the
14 same resources as our cisgender compatriots. We're
15 often taken off the normal path of life to acquire
16 resources. We're kicked out of our homes, we're
17 bullied out of school, from life's course towards
18 getting opportunity and prosperity.

19 In particular, I think I want to highlight is our
20 city really does not have a response for how to train
21 and prepare for employment. Trans people who are no
22 longer classified as youth, it is truly admirable and
23 necessary that we are seeing programs coming out of
24 places like the Department of Youth and Community
25 Development to help prepare the skills you know, for

1
2 trans folks for employment. Particularly in runaway
3 homeless youth, and also things like the Trans Equity
4 Initiative have been tremendously helpful in
5 empowering our communities. But many trans people
6 are over 25 and are in really dire need of help.

7 In my work and in my personal life, I know a ton
8 of trans folks who are 40 and older who have barely
9 ever been in the formal economy. Who have largely
10 relied on sex work and informal jobs to stay afloat
11 and are in fear of the consequences of aging out of
12 that and the lack of stable options that are
13 available as they get older. Where is there a
14 program to these sorts of problems. Where is the
15 city's solution there?

16 The new Unity Works program that was mentioned
17 earlier by the administration that works intensively
18 with runaway homeless youth and pours a lot resources
19 into individual development is really a great first
20 step and I think a good model that we can look at to
21 how we can help other vulnerable communities within
22 the TGNC umbrella, get trained, get gainful
23 employment and eventually lead the self-determined
24 affirming lives that I know that we are all committed
25 together to seeing communities.

1 So, thank you so much for all of your time and I
2 look forward to working forward on these issues.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

4 REEM RAMADAN: Hi, peace, my name is Reem. My
5 pronouns are she, her. I'm the Lead Organizer at the
6 NYC Anti-Violence Project. I'm going to be sharing
7 some concerns from Department of Education employees.
8

9 In 2016 and 2017, the New York City Anti-Violence
10 project along with partner organizations held public
11 forums in each borough to address the needs of TGNC
12 community members and in NYC and in all the forums,
13 we had TGNC identifying NYC Department of Education
14 employees in attendance.

15 Through the forums, and collective discussion,
16 DOE staff identified some concerns, mostly around
17 lack of access to resources, facilities, supports and
18 accountability both in the NYC DOE and in their
19 respective sites. This is relevant given that the
20 DOE is not only the city's largest employers but also
21 one of it's most progressive.

22 I want to note that while we did reach out to the
23 TGNC teachers and staff we have had previous contact
24 with, none of them were able to attend today because
25

1
2 discrimination complaints to the administration,
3 their complaints were either brushed aside or
4 completely overlooked and dismissed.

5 I will sum this up. We do want to acknowledge to
6 sort of end this, that the education of competency
7 should not fall on those experiencing harassment and
8 discrimination and that there should exist consistent
9 efforts from DOE to further enforce anti-
10 discrimination policies and to advocate for the
11 safety and wellbeing and inclusion of their TGNC/NB
12 employees.

13 Thank you for your time.

14 SONYA STEINMAN: Thank you, Council Member
15 Rosenthal and the rest of the Committee for having us
16 here today. My name is Sonya Steinman and I'm a
17 community member of the New York City Anti-Violence
18 Project and a transgender woman living in New York
19 City.

20 And I want to talk to you about some of my
21 personal difficulties in finding a job and the
22 necessity of fighting discrimination against
23 transgender people in the workforce.

24 And so, building off of some of the statistics
25 that Brianna shared about the general dire state of

1 employments in the TGNC community of New York City.

2 I want to tell you about my own job search. I am 22
3 years old and a recent graduate of Columbia College
4 and in this way, I've been more privileged than most
5 in the opportunities available to me. But despite
6 this education, I have been unsuccessful in getting a
7 job for over six months. I have applied to countless
8 nonprofits and gotten a first interview, only to
9 never hear back from the employer again.
10

11 This was the case even for positions where I was
12 clearly qualified. Of course, the job market is
13 competitive for young people, but why did so many
14 employers turn me away after meeting me in person,
15 even though they were excited about my application on
16 paper? And why were the only organizations that
17 showed persist interest in me even though rounds of
18 interviews, those organizations we interviewed by
19 transgender people and where transgender people
20 mostly worked.

21 The Gender Expression on Discrimination Act or
22 GENDA passed into law this year and is a major step
23 forward for protecting transgender people from
24 discrimination. But along the books, is a far cry
25 from the reality in New York City today. Things

1
2 don't change overnight and as long as widespread
3 discrimination remains, I along with trans New
4 Yorkers with even fewer resources than me, will
5 remain excluded from most economic opportunities.

6 I ask the city to continue enforcing GENDA and
7 leveling systems and leveling systems of unequal
8 opportunity in order to allow transgender New Yorkers
9 economic stability and dignity.

10 Thank you for your time and we wish you all the
11 best.

12 VIRGINIA GOGGIN: Good afternoon, thank you very
13 much for allowing so many folks from the New York
14 City Anti-Violence Project to testify today and thank
15 you for your commitment to transgender, gender non-
16 conforming or TGNC New Yorkers. My name is Virginia
17 Goggin; I'm the Legal Director at the New York City
18 Anti-Violence Project.

19 As you know, AVP was founded in 1980 and we're
20 the largest LGBTQ specific Anti-Violence program in
21 the country. With our key services all being free of
22 charge including a 24-hour bilingual hotline,
23 Counseling, direct legal services, community
24 organizing and public advocacy. AVP's Legal
25

1 Department which was launched in 2013 has experienced
2 escalating demand for services.
3

4 Last year, we provided free services to more than
5 250 individuals with 368 legal matters, which was up
6 44 percent from the year prior. We've seen a 30
7 percent increase in the number of clients seeking
8 assistance with immigration matters. We prioritize
9 low income survivors without access to crucial legal
10 supports and we continue targeted outreach
11 specifically in underserved TGNC, Latinx communities,
12 including working closely with the Community
13 Healthcare Network in Queens where many trans Latino
14 women receive medical care.

15 I'm here today to speak to you about the need to
16 fund legal services for TGNC immigrants. While AVP
17 has prioritized expansion of its immigration legal
18 services, our current client demand for these
19 services far exceeds our ability to provide
20 representation for clients with these immigration
21 matters.

22 The capacity of other legal organizations with
23 this particular expertise in TGNC Legal Services are
24 forced to close their intakes for weeks or months at
25 a time or limit their services to consultations

1 without the capacity to take on cases for full
2 representation.

3
4 If I may just take one more minute. Starting in
5 December of this year, in just a few weeks, we are
6 providing a three module series of trainings called,
7 Working with TGNC Immigrants, a guide for legal
8 practitioners which is a free CLE program I have some
9 information about. With support from the Mayor's
10 office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Social
11 Services Office of LGBTQI Affairs and HRA's Office of
12 Civil Justice, we seek to train over 100 attorney's
13 through this series which within the first week of
14 posting, we received almost 50 registrants.

15 So, we see that this is definitely important and
16 people are hungry for this information.

17 I want to thank you for considering the needs and
18 further reading additional information in our
19 testimony. We look forward to working with the
20 Council specifically on increasing the capacity of
21 the immigration legal services field in serving TGNC
22 people and of course, you can contact me if you have
23 further questions or our policy consultant Andrea
24 Bowen whose information is in the testimony.
25 Thank you very much.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you all very much.
3 You know I really just want to double down on saying
4 how much I respect and appreciate the work that AVP
5 does and I'll come back to that in a minute but I
6 just want to recognize Council Member Kallos from
7 Manhattan has joined us and I think he has a
8 question.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you to Chair
10 Rosenthal and your tremendous Counselor and Senior
11 Analyst for their great work in putting this hearing
12 together.

13 Council Member Ben Kallos; my pronouns are he,
14 him, his. I want to apologize for being late to this
15 important hearing. Despite stereotypes and outmoded
16 gender roles, I join my partner this morning to take
17 my daughter to the doctor. She had a fever and I
18 believe that childcare is every parents
19 responsibility and I had hoped to stay longer. I do
20 want to give a shout out to somebody I see in the
21 audience, Elisa Crespo; she was an intern with our
22 office before we actually very quickly found her
23 employment.

24

25

1 So, it is our loss but we are very glad to have
2
3 had the opportunity to work with her and I hope that
4 she is received and gets a chance to testify.

5 I have a particular question for Reem Ramadan.
6 Last term, we had middle school students come to us
7 and they wanted to have a gender sexuality alliance
8 in every school in the city. This came out of a
9 hearing Danny Dromm held around bullying in schools
10 relating to gender or sexual orientation. And as we
11 went through the process, we were meeting with the
12 students and their principal who thank God has tenure
13 and during the process, they said, that their
14 curriculum in a middle school in this city of New
15 York, where Mayor de Blasio and at the time,
16 Chancellor Farina said that everyone was getting an
17 LGBT inclusive health education said, we didn't get
18 that.

19 And so, we worked with the kids to go to the
20 school leadership team. The principal actually felt
21 comfortable doing it on his own and the SLT said yes,
22 so then we went to the DOE and said, we want this
23 LGBT curriculum, that health education curriculum
24 that you said you had and you announced as soon as
25 you were elected. And they said there was none. So,

1 we've been developing it in my district for middle
2 school students. What has been your experience about
3 health education at DOE, we passed this law, do you
4 know of any teachers who have actually taken
5 advantage of this LGBT sensitivity training and
6 support training that we've commanded by law that DOE
7 is supposed to be providing to all the teachers. Are
8 students aware of these teachers who's registered in
9 their ability to actually access these teachers and
10 provide a resource for the kids, because I think what
11 the kids felt at the time is, if DOE won't give us
12 this education and won't give us the support and
13 access, we need to give it to ourselves.

14 Thank you for sharing that and although

15 REEM RAMADAN: Thank you for sharing that and
16 although I may not have an exact answer, I think it's
17 really great that you highlighted that. Thank you
18 for bringing that into this space. I think that
19 further enforces the message that we're trying to
20 share. But what I was sharing was only from a couple
21 of forums that we've had with DOE staff. So, I
22 personally haven't had much interaction working
23 through that, unless other folks may but thank you
24 for developing that curriculum within your district.
25

1 I think that's really important but that is something
2 that we will look into and speak to DOE about.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Have any of the staff had
5 opportunity to access the LGBT program in support and
6 training or is this news to folks? Because one of
7 the critics I think and one of the concerns is we all
8 try to do a lot and we may say we do things but not
9 having access can be a problem. So, I guess, has
10 anyone reported having access to this program or even
11 having had access to the training?

12 REEM RAMADAN: Not that I know of.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Okay, if you're
14 interested, I'd love to work with you to try to get
15 the work out. Thank you.

16 REEM RAMADAN: Absolutely, totally, thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much Council
18 Member Kallos. I was just looking and noticing that
19 I think city funds for AVP is roughly \$1 billion,
20 \$932 million which can sound like a lot but in the
21 context of the need that we've heard about today, my
22 inclination is that the city could be doing more. I
23 appreciate you raising in particular the concerns for
24 immigrant trans community and the legal needs.

1
2 Thank you all so much for coming and waiting to
3 testify. The issue of there being a lot people here
4 to testify today is a challenging one.

5 Unfortunately, the physicians from Callen-Lorde had
6 to head back to work to see patients, but we have
7 their testimony and we appreciate that very much.

8 Similarly, we have Destination Tomorrow and Pride
9 Center of Staten Island, who also have left their
10 testimony but were not able to stay and testify. We
11 really appreciate your being here; we appreciate your
12 testimony. We'll read it; it will be part of the
13 record.

14 I'm going to next call up a panel of CUNY
15 students and then move back to a panel of advocates.
16 We have Riley Marcano, Emilia Decaudin, Kyle Reese,
17 Simone Zaleski, Jason Rodriguez Escalona.

18 If you could come up and if you have written
19 testimony, give it to the Sergeant at Arms who will
20 distribute this to the Council Members and have a
21 seat. Remember to turn on the microphone, you'll see
22 the red dot when you testify and again, we so
23 appreciate your being here. I'm sure many people are
24 missing classes. So, thank you for taking the time
25

1
2 to come here and share your experiences. Emilia, can
3 we start with you.

4 EMILIA DECAUDIN: Hello and thank you for giving
5 me the time to speak today. My name is Emilia
6 Decaudin; my pronouns are she, her and hers and I am
7 a senior at the City College of New York and a proud
8 transgender woman.

9 I'm here today to talk about some small but
10 immediate steps that CUNY can take to be more
11 inclusive of the transgender, non-binary and gender
12 non-conforming community. Which applies to students
13 and faculty as well as staff members.

14 So, I came out over the summer. This semester is
15 the first semester where I've been at school as an
16 out transgender woman and while my experiences with
17 instructors have generally been smooth, they have
18 been supportive and they use my name and my pronouns,
19 there have been some small things. Small in the
20 context of some other issues that have been spoken
21 about today, but things that I've experienced that
22 reflect the steps that CUNY and CCNY in particular
23 still need to take in order to be fully inclusive of
24 the TGNB/NC community.

1 So, the first one is my experience with sharing
2 my pronouns. In most classes, professors do
3 introductions. They go around and people say theirs,
4 their names and where they go to school, what their
5 major is and my experience has been that in most
6 cases professors do not share their pronouns, they do
7 not ask the students share theirs and by the time it
8 comes around to me, I'm the only one sharing mine.

9 In most cases this just simple is embarrassing or
10 puts an undo burden on me to out my identity. In
11 many other cases for many other people, this puts
12 them in a position of danger that they should not be
13 subjected to. So, CUNY should take the immediate
14 step of asking instructors to share their pronouns
15 with students at the beginning of classes and ask
16 that students share theirs.

17 The second thing and really quickly, is I took
18 the time to update my ID card at the CCNYD office.
19 On two occasions I was given different answer as to
20 why that could not be the case and it was only
21 because I was able to leverage the privilege I have
22 as a White person, someone experienced in navigating
23 bureaucracy that I was able to finally make that
24 change.
25

1 This is a CUNY policy that was implemented last
2 year and so, there's no reason that one of the one of
3 CUNY schools staff is still unaware about the
4 specifics about how to implement this policy. So,
5 CUNY should take the steps of following up with
6 colleges to see if they've properly implemented this
7 policy and make sure that they're showing this
8 information on their websites.
9

10 What I would like to end with very quickly is
11 something that you see when you update your name in
12 CUNY First and you see this in a lot of discussions,
13 is that our names and our pronouns are commonly
14 referred as preferred. The word preferred is used in
15 official language in CUNY in many places. My name is
16 not preferred, it's my name. Likewise, my pronouns
17 are not preferred, they are my pronouns and I really
18 like that people use them. And so, CUNY should
19 investigate whether or not it would be possible to
20 update that language to either remove the word
21 preferred or otherwise change it to a word that does
22 not imply that our identities are contingent on our
23 desires. There simply recorded who we are.

24 Thank you, Chair Rosenthal for giving me the time
25 to speak today.

2 KYLE REESE: Good morning, my name is Kyle Reese;
3 I'm a transgender student at Brooklyn College and
4 attended Kingsborough last year. Thank you for the
5 opportunity to testify today.

6 Attached to my testimony copies are those of
7 other CUNY students who did not feel confident or
8 safe enough to testify today.

9 On November 20, the Transgender Day of
10 Remembrance, I sat in the center for LGBT Studies at
11 the graduate center holding 49 pages of the names of
12 every trans person killed this year. The same day,
13 statistics were released showing 29 percent of
14 transgender youth alone, attempt suicide and over
15 half consider it. 41 percent of all trans people
16 consider or attempt suicide in their lifetimes.
17 We're scared, we're hurting and we're dying.

18 There is a large population of transgender and
19 gender non-conforming students at CUNY. Some changes
20 have been made but have been insincere or limited at
21 best. We're constantly told that administration is
22 working on it but nothing is ever enforced.

23 At Kingsborough, I was called Ms. Purposefully by
24 a financial aid officer because my birth certificate
25 cannot be changed. He asked me repeatedly in

1
2 succession if I was a girl or a boy, a girl or a boy,
3 a girl or a boy. He ended the conversation by
4 dismissing me, okay Ms. The Title 9 officer barely
5 addressed this. The entire department got a training
6 and warning. He was not individually disciplined.

7 At Queens Borough, my partner faced repeated
8 transphobic remarks and unsafe situations. He was
9 told to not legally change his name because it would
10 be difficult for the department to explain to the
11 hospital where he was doing his clinical rotations.

12 He was so badly mistreated by one of his
13 instructors, so he could not go to her after
14 experiencing transphobic abuse at his clinical site.
15 He felt threatened and he dropped out of nursing
16 school. No student should feel so unsafe that they
17 need to leave their program.

18 We experience emotional violence at the hands of
19 CUNY staff administration. People we look to for
20 safety. This needs to stop. Considering the
21 alarming statistics on suicide and mental health,
22 this abuse is a great disservice and even danger to
23 CUNY's transgender and non-binary student staff,
24 staff and faculty.

1
2 When other staff and faculty act this way towards
3 us, students are involved in to act in violence
4 towards us as well. Those 49 pages should be a
5 reminder to everyone that things need to change.

6 Thank you.

7 RILEY MARCANO: Thank you, thank you City Council
8 for having us here today. My name is Riley Marcano
9 and I use they, them pronouns and I'm here as a trans
10 New York Social Worker and a CUNY student.

11 Being a trans New Yorker is costing my community
12 our lives. As a social worker, I have seen and
13 experienced the life threatening policies that affect
14 trans New Yorkers every day. That seem to go
15 unnoticed by people who have no trans experience.

16 Through my work as a runaway, a homeless youth case
17 manager, and a care coordinator, I have seen how the
18 housing medical and employment systems discriminate
19 against trans New Yorkers and make it impossible to
20 live.

21 NYC shelters is policy trans people can go to the
22 shelter that correlates with their gender identity.
23 However, I have seen clients turned away because the
24 gender expression doesn't correlate with their gender
25

1 identity. I've seen clients have been mocked by
2 staff at shelters due to their gender.
3

4 As a Social Worker and as a trans New Yorker
5 myself, I have seen the affects that the lack of
6 trans competent healthcare and insurances have on my
7 community. I have seen clients afraid to go to any
8 medical provider that isn't [INAUDIBLE 4:08:48] in
9 order to get needed medical care because they are
10 concerned that they will not be treated with respect
11 or that the medical team themselves won't be able to
12 treat them.

13 I, myself, have gone to other medical providers
14 and have been asked trans one on one questions by a
15 doctor years in their field, just to get help with
16 strep throat.

17 Trans New Yorkers are dying because they are
18 afraid to go to the doctor and the doctors are not
19 knowing what to do with them because they are trans.
20 As a Social Worker and as a trans New Yorker, I have
21 seen the lack of employment in our jobs and our
22 community. Trans people are less likely to get jobs
23 in our city and in this nation.

24 When we get jobs, we're more likely to get sexual
25 harassed than other non-trans coworkers. I have been

1 sexually assaulted and or harassed at every job I
2 have gotten at NYC as an out trans person. The
3 question you may have is did I file a report with the
4 Commission on Human Rights? Yes, but after the third
5 time I was harassed at different jobs, I started to
6 see that it is the system that is stacked up against
7 me. Because the system isn't broken, it's running
8 the way it's supposed to.

10 The system doesn't account for trans New Yorkers
11 because there are a lack of trans people in
12 government and because the systems themselves are
13 transphobic.

14 I would like to take an extra minute because I
15 feel like our voices are more than two minutes and
16 worthy.

17 I also would like to point out that I have been
18 talking about me and my clients as being trans,
19 however, my clients and I are trans, people of color,
20 disabled New Yorkers. Due to humans being
21 intersecting beings, the problems trans New Yorkers
22 face are doubled or tripled when you have other
23 identities. Me being a trans, queer, person of
24 color, disabled New Yorker is not livable.

1
2 Lastly, I'd like to talk about being a CUNY
3 student in the system. I am a graduate student at
4 the Silverman School of Social Work at Hunter
5 College. In the CUNY system, there is no respect for
6 trans students in our schools. Starting with the
7 admissions process, that only allows for genders if
8 you are lucky. To getting on campus where you are
9 constantly misgendered by professors and then you
10 can't find a bathroom to go to that correlates with
11 your gender identity.

12 When we talk about the multiple failing system,
13 that means that the governments in charge are
14 failing. And I will say this again, when multiple
15 systems that are supposed to be the safety nets for
16 New Yorkers is failing, that means that the
17 government body that do those policies are failing.

18 This is our time to finally start carrying about
19 trans New Yorkers.

20 Thank you for your time and I wish you the best.

21 JASON RODRIGUEZ ESCALONA: Good afternoon, my
22 name is Jason Rodriguez Escalona; I'm a student at
23 the College of Staten Island. I'm a Social Work
24 major and I'm a member of the transgender community.

1
2 Over the last three years at my college, I have
3 witnessed, heard, and experience multiple injustice
4 towards myself and the LGBTQ community within the
5 CUNY system. As a former leader of the CUNY LGBTQI
6 Leadership Program, it is my responsibility and
7 obligation to stand here today and give my testimony
8 with the hope that it will help better CUNY colleges
9 and ease the college life of upcoming students,
10 faculty and staff.

11 As it is important to have accessible resources
12 for presentation and a safe environment for the
13 LGBTQI community in our colleges.

14 Last year, my sophomore year when I began
15 transitioning, I found myself going through many
16 loops by having to speak with several staff and visit
17 different buildings to update my name, post preferred
18 name implementation within CUNY first.

19 This failed to protect my privacy as a student
20 because of the one thing that hasn't changed, my CUNY
21 first login. As for the college email source of
22 communication, it fails its functionality and rejects
23 my current email created for my preference and
24 privacy.

2 As a result, it gives me no choice but to access
3 my old email under my legal name and I am uninformed
4 of email provided by my college and my program I'm
5 enrolled in.

6 In addition, although CUNY First recognizes my
7 preferred name, it neglects my identity and puts me
8 at risk of potential denial of financial aid or
9 accuse of fraud. This is because I've been given a
10 mid-semester alert reporting my attendance and I
11 cannot make error given by legal name, not my
12 preferred name stated in CUNY First.

13 Moreover, all gender bathrooms within TSI's
14 campus have been issued to negligence by lack of
15 running hot water and dysfunctional sinks. Overall,
16 I am here to testify that minimizing and tackling
17 these issues, such as the recognition preferred names
18 throughout all CUNY databases and emailing systems
19 and providing the necessary care to the all gender
20 bathrooms, which are primarily used by the LGBTQ
21 community will be a helpful start in reaching
22 equality on the CUNY campus.

23 Thank you for your time.

24 SIMONE ZALESKI: I'd like to thank everyone for
25 the opportunity to voice my concerns and experiences

1
2 today. I would also like to acknowledge those who
3 are not able to be here today with stories we need to
4 hear, and whose lives have been cut short before they
5 were given the chance to take part in momentous
6 occasions such as this one.

7 My name is Simone Zaleski and I am a non-binary
8 transmasculine student at Borough of Manhattan
9 Community College. I'm switching my major to Gender
10 and Women Studies out of necessity to protect and
11 advocate for the identities for myself and others in
12 hopes that future students won't have to turn their
13 fight for basic human rights into their passion.

14 My school is home to 28,000 students and
15 counting. It took me two years to hear about the
16 existence of all gender bathrooms on campus. I have
17 only found one of them to sometimes be open when I
18 need it. I have seen the placards outside the binary
19 restrooms go up, but I still do not feel safe or
20 comfortable using them, as I am not a man or a woman.
21 My only option is to truck across campus in the hopes
22 that one bathroom I can use is open. Unfortunately,
23 restroom politics are just one part of a larger
24 issue. I feel as though the school I entered as a
25 closeted freshman is completely different than the

1 school I attend now, when the only thing that's
2 changed is how authentically I live my truth and
3 therefore, how I'm perceived and treated.

4
5 Under the veil of generic acceptance and surface
6 level inclusivity, indirect transphobia has space to
7 linger. I did not enroll in the greatest urban
8 university in the world to be ostracized, alienated,
9 and ignored. I came here to learn and thrive just
10 like everyone else.

11 No priority is given to training administration,
12 staff, faculty or students on trans issues. It
13 varies class to class on how trans and non-binary
14 students are treated. Individual students take on
15 the task of correcting peers and professors after
16 being repeatedly misgendered often to no avail. I
17 have had amazing professors at BMCC and I like to
18 think none of them have ill intent but if there is no
19 consideration given to inclusive B training, how are
20 we supposed to hold people accountable for well-
21 intended ignorance and harm?

22 Trans people were not put on this earth to
23 educate people on these issues. It should not be our
24 job. Compared to many of my trans siblings, my
25 experiences are minute. That should be very telling.

1
2 It's about to be 2020 and this should no longer be
3 our reality.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you all for your
6 testimony. Thank you for everything that you've
7 said. There's clearly a consistent theme of
8 nonrecognition by CUNY and we'll be following up on
9 that. But this point that I've heard over and over
10 again of why is it my responsibility to educate the
11 world and the burden of that and how exhausting it
12 is. I really appreciate your bringing it up and I
13 just certainly want to validate. You don't need me
14 to validate it.

15 I appreciate your bringing it up again, and I
16 really want to thank you all for your time in coming
17 here today. We hear you; we hear you, thank you.

18 Okay, I'm calling up the next panel and again
19 apologies for butchering peoples names. Charles
20 Solidum from LGBT Network, Cecilia Gentili from the
21 New Pride Agenda and Cynthia Demise if she is here as
22 well. Joselyn Castillo from Make the Road, Bianey
23 Garcia from Make the Road, Mateo Guerrero-Tabares,
24 sorry, from Make the Road and Terron[SP?] Lack from
25 NYTAG. Thank you all for being here. Okay, we might

1
2 need another chair. I just want to make sure
3 everyone has a proper seat.

4 Thank you all for being here. Okay, we could
5 start here, just turn on the microphone.

6 CHARLES SOLIDUM: Good afternoon Council Members
7 and staff of the Committee on Women and Gender
8 Equity. My name is Charlie Solidum; I serve as the
9 Program Manager of HIV services at the LGBT Network
10 in Long Island City Queens.

11 I'm here to advocate for more inclusive and
12 comprehensive services for the transgender community
13 beyond HIV services. I've seen over my 13 years of
14 work in this field that historically the vast
15 majority of transgender services are linked to HIV
16 services. Yes, transgender people are
17 disproportionately impacted by HIV, but the way the
18 funding systems are structured is problematic for
19 several reasons. Two of which I will mention here.

20 The first is that available services focus on HIV
21 and do not address the comprehensive needs of our
22 community beyond sexual health.

23 The second is that this creates a gap in access
24 for trans people who are HIV negative. We know that
25 the lack of access and resources affect the

1
2 transgender community at higher rates than our
3 cisgender counterparts. Transgender people need
4 healthcare, we need housing, we need jobs, we need
5 food, we need shelter. Yes, these are all social
6 determinants that ultimately impact HIV risk, but we
7 should be able to address these issues as issues in
8 their own right.

9 Those services to sexual health, limits the
10 potential for nuance programming as if we're only
11 able to view transgender services through one lens.
12 Also, there's a vast gap in services that are
13 available to HIV negative trans people. Because of
14 the aforementioned framework, strict eligibility
15 requirement limit who can access what resources.
16 During my work in HIV prevention, I've actually seen
17 clients who have actually expressed that they are
18 glad to have acquired HIV because it means that they
19 finally have access to housing.

20 When that happens, there's something terribly
21 wrong. Supportive case management, a necessity for
22 trans folks experiencing comorbid conditions and
23 navigating complex systems, it is largely not
24 available to transgender clients who are HIV
25 negative.

2 The same goes for trans people over the age of 24
3 or those who are not on Medicaid. If you are
4 uninsured or privately insured, you are unfortunately
5 ineligible for services that can improve health and
6 save lives.

7 Thank you, Chair Rosenthal and the Committee for
8 your time.

9 CYNTHIA DEMISE: Hi, my name is Cynthia Demise; I
10 am the Project Managing Consultant for the new Pride
11 Agenda. I want to give you just a brief overview of
12 our reasons for having come together again and
13 opportunity to focus on GENDA and the transgender
14 community.

15 As you know, our predecessor, Empire State Pride
16 Agenda had enormous working on Hate crimes, DASA and
17 marriage equality. I was privileged to be part of
18 their government affairs team for many years. They
19 also led efforts to start the first million of LGBT
20 health and human service funding.

21 Sadly, however, they chose to dissolve in July
22 2018. A number of us who are formally involved with
23 the pride agenda as well as new leadership, began to
24 meet informally throughout 2018 about whether there
25 is a need for public policy and in fact political

1
2 advocacy organization to continue the work
3 particularly focused on transgender, people of color,
4 people that continue to be discriminated against
5 within our community.

6 Some of us that are older, are looking to merge
7 our seasoned understanding of things with younger
8 people with sort of like a mix of rolodex and social
9 media and look to move on and have younger
10 individuals take over the leadership of the
11 organization. The focus of the new Pride Agenda,
12 which it will officially launch in January of next
13 year, will be to create a civic engagement focus for
14 LGBTQ progressive organizations in New York City and
15 in fact, statewide.

16 Our second focus is going to be work with many of
17 you in the field regarding public policy advocacy.
18 In that regard, we've already had a half a dozen
19 meetings with a Governor Cuomo leadership in Albany
20 focusing on three issues.

21 First, GENDA, we want a full implementation of
22 GENDA and we would like the governor to use his
23 cabinet to help provide resources and help for state
24 agencies to take it on.

1
2 Secondly, we're looking to try to ask the state
3 to come up with new funding for trans led
4 organizations to do training throughout New York
5 State regarding transgender issues and understanding
6 how to work respectfully with the community. We're
7 also working on trying to double the size of the
8 Health and Human Services budget and dig in deeper
9 regarding dignity for all students, which already has
10 been very poorly implemented.

11 In regard to New York City, we welcome a
12 collaboration with you. We acknowledge the
13 additional funding the City Council put in for trans
14 equity this last year. We encourage you to increase
15 that funding and again, address it to trans
16 community.

17 We are small, but we are focused, we are
18 organizing again and I want to introduce our Board
19 members Cecilia Gentili, who will be our incoming co-
20 chair as of January for the new Pride Agenda.

21 Thank you.

22 CECILIA GENTILI: Hi, thank you for having me and
23 thank you Cynthia for introducing me. I wrote a long
24 testimony but I'm just going to summarize it in a
25

1 couple of things that are really, really important
2 for me.

3
4 As a person who is in recovery, I believe
5 substance abuse and substance abuse treatment should
6 be something that everybody could approach. I can
7 tell you horrible stories about my stay in long term
8 treatment as a trans person. I spend 17 months
9 sleeping and showering with men, being miss pronoun,
10 being a miss gender all the time and that's not - you
11 know, that's not uncommon.

12 You know, transgender people are verbally
13 harassed, physically attacked in drug and alcohol
14 treatment programs. Unfortunately, the Commission of
15 Human Rights has been doing great work around that
16 and doing an investigation into several substance
17 abuse centers for discriminatory against trans
18 people. The Commission announced at that measures
19 save their men, an agreement that require several
20 providers to implement policies that are not
21 transphobic.

22 So, I really think like you know, their work
23 should continue to be funded because it's really
24 important, as a person who suffered so much in a
25 substance abuse setting.

2 Another thing that is very important for me that
3 you can read more into detail, is the support for
4 24037, which is the New York Penal Law, loitering for
5 the purpose of engaging prostitution offense. I
6 believe that I don't have to explain that trans
7 people shouldn't have to be loitering for purposes of
8 prostitution if the state, the city and the federal
9 government will give them what they need to have a
10 life that doesn't require engaging in the sex trade.

11 Another thing that would make a big difference
12 for sex workers of trans experience would be the
13 funding vice. The city would then have to put all
14 the money that they spend in vice, which is a very
15 terrible part of the police department that goes
16 around setting people up into prostitution arrest.
17 We all know the case of Layleen Polanco in her road
18 to her death in Rikers Island started with the vice
19 police officer setting her up for a prostitution
20 arrest. We really don't need that, we really don't
21 need that and if the city would give us what we need
22 in terms of education, employment and housing, many
23 of us wouldn't need to engage in the sex trade.

24 Thank you.

1 BIANEY GARCIA: Hello, good afternoon everybody,
2 my name is BianeY Garcia. I am a TGNC Organizer at
3 Make the Road New York. I'm here to share my
4 testimony of on how one morning in 2008, when I was
5 18 years old, the second time that I decided to dress
6 as a woman and I decided to go out and have fun with
7 my boyfriend, I was stopped and frisked by an
8 undercover police officer at 82nd Rosebud Avenue. It
9 was at 4 a.m. in the morning when my partner and we
10 was walking on Rosebud Avenue, we were holding hands,
11 from no where a police officer came out from a van,
12 they pushed me face to the wall. They didn't ask me
13 for permission to take my purse, they just took my
14 purse. They threw everything to the floor, they
15 found condoms and there was not enough evidence to
16 accuse me of doing sex work.

17 My boyfriend and I, we tried to explain that we
18 were a couple. The police didn't believe me and they
19 intimidated my partner with arresting him if he leave
20 the scene. I began my transition at the age 17 with
21 two other undocumented trans friends. They are no
22 longer in this country because they were sex worker
23 and were arrested and they deported to their country
24 of origin.
25

1 I wanted to express our gender or dressing sexy.
2 It's enough evidence to the police to file ourselves
3 as sex workers. We must do more to protect
4 transgender and gender non-conforming and non-binary
5 communities. Many of us are afraid to go to the
6 corner store or go out to dinner or walk with our
7 partners in public because of police misconduct and
8 profiling.
9

10 I know histories of trans women's who have to
11 carry their marriage certificate for fear of being
12 profiled a sex worker.

13 My ask is that penal code 24037 loitering with
14 the purposes of prostitutions revoked because the
15 police use it to justify their illegal stops and
16 frisk practices, stop and frisk against transgender
17 people like me. The problem with the penal code is
18 that it's too broad and gives the police the freedom
19 to stop at any time without recognition and impact it
20 can have on us.

21 So, many of the transgender community have been
22 stopped, arrested, and then deported. It was my case
23 that was in 2008, I was almost deported to my country
24 and it's something that is impacting people that are
25 doing sex work to survive.

1 Thank you so much for the time.

2 JOSELYN CASTILLO: SPEAKING IN SPANISH [4:39:19-
3 4:42:12]

4 TRANSLATOR: My name is Joselyn Castillo; today I
5 want to testify that during interactions with the
6 police, the officers do not respect our gender and
7 refer to us as if we did not have a humanity,
8 discriminate against us and speak to us in a bad way.
9 These interactions with the police are not only
10 emotionally exhaustive but they are also traumatic
11 because they try to criminalize us without having any
12 type of evidence.
13

14 The police in New York harass trans women like me
15 and profile us as sex workers, solely based on our
16 gender expression, such as our clothes and our makeup
17 and harass us for walking in the streets of our
18 neighborhoods. One night when my brother came to New
19 York to visit me, we went to the pharmacy. While we
20 were walking, the police stopped us, hinting that he
21 was my client assuming that I was doing sex work. We
22 explained to the police that we are siblings and we
23 had to show our ID's to verify our relationship.

24 New York Police has given a lot of discretion
25 about who they can arrest, especially with the

1
2 loitering codes, penal code 24037, loitering with the
3 purpose of prostitution is used to justify their
4 legal stops and frisks against transgender people
5 like me.

6 The problem with this penal code is that it is
7 too broad and gives the police the freedom to stop at
8 any time without recognizing the migratory impact it
9 can have. These unjustified arrests can bring many
10 problems to my trans sisters when they want to fix
11 their immigration status because we have to explain
12 at any type of immigration arrest. Therefore, I
13 demand that the City of New York commits itself to
14 pressuring the state to repeal the penal code 240.37.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you all so much for
17 this powerful testimony. You know, I agree with you
18 of course on the resolution, our resolution but of
19 course the state needs to pass this law and I'm with
20 you on that.

21 I really appreciate all of you taking the time to
22 come out and I just want to check, is Mateo Guerrero-
23 Tabares in?

24 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, but he leave the testimony.
25

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Got it, thank you, I have
3 his testimony. So, I have their testimony, so thank
4 you for that. Thank you for all the work that you
5 do, your advocacy. We see each other frequently
6 because I know you're on the frontlines of trying to
7 make a change. I really appreciate all your work.

8 Thank you.

9 PANEL: Thank you Council Member.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Calling up the next
11 panel. We have Eon Seions Danovich, nice, Shad
12 Lae[SP?], with apologies for mispronunciation,
13 Twinkle Paul, Tias Candy and Naning Supata[SP?].

14 Again, apologies, please interduce yourselves and
15 then I'll learn the proper pronunciation of your
16 name. Hang on one second.

17 Also, calling up Tanya Lee Price who I think was
18 from Anti-Violence Project who wasn't here earlier,
19 so thank you for being here and joining us. The
20 Sergeant at Arms is collecting the testimony and if I
21 could ask you to begin, just introduce yourself and
22 start your testimony. Thank you.

23 TIAS CANDY: Good evening, my name is Tias Candy;
24 I am one of the Campaign leads working to repeal
25 walking while trans law.

1 Today, we have to honor the lives of the
2
3 transgender siblings that we have lost this year and
4 speak about the continuous violence Black and Latino
5 transgender people continue to experience in this
6 progressive New York State.

7 I first want to start off with the remembrance of
8 our siblings. Today, we have lost 27 transgender
9 people to community violence and state violence all
10 rooted deep in transphobia.

11 I come today angry and frustrated. I'm angry
12 because in my Black trans body, I cannot walk down
13 the streets without being harassed by people. I can
14 not walk down the streets without fearing or being
15 harassed, stopped, frisked and potentially arrested
16 by police because of who I am and what I wear.

17 I'm angry even though I'm an activist, even
18 though I walk the halls of Albany fighting for trans
19 rights, I still come home to police harassment and
20 profiling. Me, like many other Black and Latino
21 trans people consist in fear of police harassment
22 because this is why we ask NYC Council to pass
23 Resolution 0923 and laws such as penal 24037. I also
24 want it known as the walking White trans being,
25 where is my apology for being stopped because they

1 assume, I was doing work based on what I'm wearing?
2 Where is the apology of my Latinx transgender
3 siblings and the [INAUDIBLE 4:51:57] who has to walk
4 around with a picture of a marriage license because
5 the police continue to profile her every time she
6 walks with her husband? Or for the fear and terror
7 by the police that stops her from even going to the
8 supermarket at night.
9

10 Where is our apology for the sexual violence, we
11 experience because of laws allowing police to stop
12 and frisk us all because of what we wear and where we
13 are? I'm frustrated because well, I would like to
14 say police profiling is only the violence we
15 experience, we know it isn't true.

16 Every day we are fighting against systems to kill
17 us. We are denied safe housing, shelter, employment,
18 education, healthcare, safe spaces to just be. And
19 when we do what we do to survive, to feed ourselves,
20 to put clothes on our backs, to get off the streets,
21 we are criminalized. We consistently told to just
22 apply for jobs like every one else.

23 Well, I ask you to tell me how many Black and
24 Latinx transgender people work in your offices? We
25 are consistently used by nonprofits and other spaces

1
2 for our stories to add to their numbers to apply for
3 funding but not paying salaries to the work and need.

4 I'm frustrated that there is more love for us
5 after our death rather than when we are alive. I am
6 frustrated and angry and I'm tired. We know these
7 issues impact our communities, we need elected
8 officials to have political courage to stand up for
9 our transgender communities and get things done.

10 We need change now. We need to center
11 experiences of Black and Latinx transgender people to
12 make those changes. And to answer your question,
13 yes, we do need a transgender policy for transgender
14 and nongender conforming leaders in this community.
15 We do need that office.

16 Thank you.

17 SEIONS DANOVIICH: Thank you, Council Member
18 Rosenthal and the rest of the Committee on Women and
19 Gender Equity, for having us here today. My name
20 Seions Danovich[SP?]; he, they, them pronouns and I
21 am the Co-Director of the Queer Detainee Empowerment
22 Project and I'm responsible for our direct services
23 program.

24 We support LGBTQ gender non-conforming and HIV
25 positive immigrants who are detained in immigration

1
2 prisons. I am here as a trans immigrant and as an
3 advocate for the queer and trans immigrant community,
4 especially those who went through detention and
5 incarceration and are facing very specific struggles
6 in New York City after their release.

7 I want to speak about the most pressing problems
8 in our community, those which expose trans, gender
9 nonconforming immigrants the poverty, physical danger
10 and slow death.

11 Our first ask to the Committee is to prevent New
12 York City from building more new jails. Jails and
13 prisons are places of torture where human dignity and
14 rights are broken every day. For us, more new jails
15 equates the more ICE contracts and more spaces to
16 incarcerate immigrants including queer, trans, and
17 gender non-conforming people.

18 Solitary confinement, medical neglect,
19 perpetuating violence, sexual harassment and rape,
20 lack of access to Pro Bono legal presentation without
21 which our members have no chance to be released and
22 are doomed to deportation. And hygiene condition and
23 poor nutrition, all of these issues have catastrophic
24 impacts on the physical and mental health of all of
25

1
2 our members of the LGBTQ community including trans
3 and gender non-conforming people.

4 In the past year, two transwomen, [INAUDIBLE
5 4:57:51-4:57:53] who lived with HIV and informed ICE
6 officers about their medical conditions, died in ICE
7 because of medical neglect. We have also heard
8 multiple accounts from our members of the denial by
9 ICE of medical treatment for HIV or HIV testing.
10 Some of our members discovered that they were HIV
11 positive only when released, because of lack of
12 access to HIV testing and treatment in immigration
13 prisons.

14 Various members who were released with other
15 health conditions due to ICE medical neglect. For
16 all of these reasons, we urge you to stop new jails
17 from being built in our city.

18 Next, I would like to talk about the second
19 biggest issue our trans and gender non-conforming
20 immigrants face. Once they are released from
21 detention centers and arrive in New York City, they
22 are met with a lack of sustainable housing. Queer,
23 trans and gender non-conforming immigrants who have
24 been released from ICE detention arrive in New York
25 City without nothing but the clothes on their backs.

1
2 They do not have financial or social support when
3 they first arrive because they are rejected by their
4 families due to their gender identities and sexual
5 orientations.

6 Resources from the city and resources provided by
7 our queer communities is all that they have. These
8 resources are often extremely limited, especially
9 when it come to housing. The Queer Detainee
10 Empowerment Project is trying our best to provide our
11 members with all that they need to be able to reveal
12 their lives, but housing is one of our greatest
13 worries.

14 We have absolutely nowhere to house those who are
15 over 25 years old and are HIV negative. The right to
16 shelter is a right that the city should provide to
17 every New Yorker. We urge the city to provide
18 appropriate housing to trans and gender non-
19 conforming immigrants, so they can have a home for
20 their first months after release while they get back
21 on their feet. Our members need houses that are run
22 by our community. Houses without discrimination
23 regarding gender identities and gender expression
24 without sexual harassment, phobia and without racism.
25 Houses that have onsite social workers from our

1
2 community, mental health support, and peer supports
3 to help our members during the first difficult months
4 of healing and rebuilding.

5 The last issue I would like to bring to your
6 attention today, is the lack of employment
7 opportunities for trans and gender non-conforming
8 immigrants in New York City. This community not only
9 faces obstacles to be hired using immigration status,
10 language barriers and gender discrimination but in
11 the case of those who do find jobs, keeping them is
12 another issue. Because of the withholding of their
13 wages and harassment regarding their gender
14 expression.

15 We have seen that happen numerous times. Because
16 of the lack of necessary resources and mentioned
17 obstacles, a lot of members of our community have to
18 choose between living in extreme poverty and being
19 permanently exposed to homelessness or try to make
20 ends meet by engaging in sex work that is
21 criminalized in New York City which exposes them to
22 the risk of losing their immigration status or losing
23 a change of being granted one.

24 With the help of the city in creating programs
25 addressing the needs of trans and gender non-

1 conforming New Yorkers to access stable and well paid
2 employment, we hope to lower the higher unemployment
3 rate within our community. More support from the
4 city will help our members rebuild their lives. Lack
5 of housing resources and jobs are the two main
6 factors as to why members leave New York City.

7
8 If we want to keep this amazing, beautiful and
9 unstoppable people within our communities, we need
10 support from you and the city to close all the jails,
11 create safer and accessible housing and employment
12 resources for all of them.

13 Thank you so much for your time and for
14 listening.

15 Thank you, Chair Rosenthal. I want to first
16 start off by saying that Black transgender women are
17 dying and we are here talking about bathrooms,
18 colleges, and grad school students when Black
19 transgender and Latinx women are doing sex work to
20 survive or being harassed and being murdered.

21 And I also want to note that earlier you guys
22 were talking about facilities that were inclusive of
23 trans people and I just want to let you know that if
24 you really want to support trans people that you have
25 to allow them to live freely and not – supporting

1
2 trans people is not creating jails for them. Trans
3 people don't deserve to be in jail. No one deserves
4 to be in jail, jails shouldn't exist and I want to
5 get to my statement.

6 SHAD LAE: My name is Shad Lae, I speak on behalf
7 of repeal Walking While Trans Coalition, Queer
8 Detainee Empowerment Project and No New Jails to
9 share this testimony with you today on how society
10 and cisgender people can start to show up, defend and
11 protect trans and gender non-conforming communities.

12 Structural oppression and policing by [INAUDIBLE
13 5:04:59-5:05:03] culture has put me here today to
14 argue why trans people deserve the right to their
15 bodies and argument that in a just world should never
16 be needed to be made.

17 Constitutional language can protect trans and
18 gender non-conforming people to give them rights to
19 exist as human beings. Trans people deserve to walk
20 freely down the street and share spaces with us cis
21 people, free from judgement, prejudice, harassment,
22 violence and policing. Because of penal code 24037,
23 women are being stopped, frisked, arrested and
24 experiencing sexual violence for walking, for wearing
25 what they wear and gather where they gather.

1
2 We ask this this New York City Council pass
3 Resolution 923, because support passage of S2253 and
4 A659 in Albany which would remove loitering and
5 purpose of prostitution from penal code.

6 The way that Colonialism produces White
7 supremacy, that is connected to successes [INAUDIBLE
8 5:06:40] to put women of color in spaces where
9 they're targeted with police violence in Jackson
10 Heights and all over, results in being stopped,
11 frisked, arrested, harassed for wearing tight jeans
12 and tank tops that show cleavage.

13 Women of color on this land, having to explain
14 their humanity and why they should have the right to
15 be because of colonial violence on our bodies,
16 especially Black trans women.

17 New York City isn't a sanctuary city if immigrant
18 communities can't adjust their status because they
19 were arrested for wearing thigh high boots and short
20 skirts while standing in certain areas. If they get
21 threatened with deportation because they missed a
22 rent payment or if they couldn't pay \$2.75 for an
23 over policed subway ride.

24 In 2018, there were 152 arrests for penal code
25 240, 49 percent Black, 42 percent Latinx and 7

1 percent White. More than 80 percent of people
2 arrested are trans and cis women. Black trans women
3 deserve to be able to walk while trans without the
4 state sanction violence. Repeal walk while trans,
5 because their bodies are not a crime.
6

7 Passing S2253-A659 is one in many steps New York
8 City needs to take to affirm transgender communities
9 and protect the liberties of LGBTQ and gender non-
10 conforming people to wear, walk and gather and any
11 space they choose to.

12 Repeal Walking While Trans; to turn a blind eye
13 to the violence this community face is a violation of
14 basic human rights committed and enabled by the
15 state.

16 TONYA LEE PRICE: Hello everybody, my name is
17 Tonya Lee Price and this testimony is for the Anti-
18 Violence Project.

19 I believe in the Anti-Violence Project. TGNC
20 folks need protection and safety against
21 discrimination, sexual assaults, and walking while
22 trans. Discrimination is humane, it's inhuman, an
23 abomination to people's lives and wellbeing.
24 Discrimination is a weapon used by people that do not
25 have acceptance or pick and choose who they want to

1
2 discriminate on. Discrimination destroyed a lot of
3 lives and genocide, I repeat in genocide communities
4 of color, trans people of color specifically.

5 TGNCI folks go through all types of sexual abuse,
6 molestation, gang rape, rape and sexual targets for
7 men who may have lack of respect for us as human
8 beings. Even other women put us through sexual tests
9 to see if in their minds, we really want to be women.

10 Sexual child abuse and targeted as a prostitute
11 in many people's eyes. Walking while trans is very
12 scary to deal with because you are who you were born
13 to be; however, people excuse that by saying, you are
14 not a woman or pointing fingers at you while
15 laughing. God forbid anybody that is a trans person
16 of color could be physically victimized while walking
17 as a trans person.

18 The mixture of people that want you sexually or
19 hate your guts is meant to be challenging and this is
20 how trans people suffer from PTSD, anxiety,
21 depression and gender dysphoria. Out of everything
22 I've discussed in my essay, the City Council should
23 repeal the Walking While Trans ban Reso. 923. The
24 City should acknowledge Walking While Trans Ban
25 Repeal Reso. 923. The City Council needs to

1
2 understand peoples lives are at stake and trans
3 people need to be safe while walking while trans.

4 TWINKLE PAUL: Chairwoman Helen Rosenthal, thank
5 you for having us here at this hearing today. Hello
6 all, my name is Twinkle Aria Paul; I'm a transgender
7 woman, an immigrant of Caribbean decent, a community
8 activist and an outreach worker, Gay Men's Health
9 Crisis. More importantly, I'm a human being.

10 I'm here today to call upon this body to pass
11 City Council Resolution 923 which demands that New
12 York State immediately repeal New York State Penal
13 Law 240.37, also known as the Walking While Trans
14 Ban.

15 The Walking While Trans Ban, disproportionately
16 affects Black and Brown trans people, including
17 transgender immigrants like myself and puts us at
18 risk for criminalization and wrongful arrests.

19 I moved to New York City from [INAUDIBLE 5:14:36]
20 in 2018 because of the injustice and brutality I
21 faced as a transgender woman in my country at the
22 hands of society and the police. However, since
23 arriving here, I've learned that transgender people
24 in New York are subject to similar abuse and
25 mistreatment because of discriminatory laws. Like

1
2 New York State Penal Law 240.37, also known as the
3 Walking While Trans Ban.

4 New York State Penal Law 240.37 criminalizes
5 Black and Brown transgender women just for who we
6 are. It gives Law Enforcement the license to stop,
7 frisk and arrest us without a cause, just because of
8 what we're wearing or where we are. Because of laws
9 like this, I feel scared and unsafe. We're treated
10 like criminals by Law Enforcement instead of human
11 beings. That's why I'm testifying before this
12 committee today.

13 As a community activist and outreach worker who
14 serve all members of the transgender community
15 including those who depend on sex work to survive,
16 I've seen the impact of Walking While Trans Ban at
17 first hand. The Walking While Trans Ban puts me at
18 risk of criminalization and harassment by Law
19 Enforcement when I'm just doing my job.

20 As an immigrant, discriminatory arrests like
21 these can negatively impact my immigration status and
22 even lead to deportation and inadmissibility. Once
23 arrested transgender women like myself are also at
24 risk of being housed in men's prison where we suffer
25 violence, harassment and abuse.

1
2 Layleen Polanco, a transgender woman died at
3 Rikers Island this summer is a tragic example of
4 deaths.

5 Layleen was at Rikers Island because she was
6 profiled as a sex worker. So, her death is a result
7 of loss like this one we're calling on Albany to
8 repeal. Discriminatory laws and practices have no
9 place in our society.

10 So, we should all condemn laws like New York
11 State Penal Code 240.37 and police practices that
12 deprive people of their gender, of their dignity and
13 liberty.

14 Therefore, I call upon the City Council to
15 provide resources, access and support for the
16 transgender community by passing Resolution 923 and
17 calling upon Albany to end the Walking While Trans
18 Ban immediately.

19 Thank you.

20 NANING SUPATA: Good afternoon and thank you
21 Council Member for having us here. My name is Naning
22 Supata[SP?]; I use she, hers pronouns and I'm a
23 [INAUDIBLE 5:18:34] and organizer in INAUDIBLE
24 5:18:37] Members.

1 I was born in a small town called Sambo Creek,
2 located in La Ceiba, Honduras. I am Black, I am
3 Garifuna, African descendants, I am immigrant. I am
4 Honduras and I am transgender.

5 I am a professional who fled from her country to
6 save her life and fight for a right to be. To be
7 free, to be a woman, to be alive. I arrived in the
8 United States in October 2015, but I was so afraid.
9 I was carrying the courage to tell the immigration
10 officers and afraid to return. I thought he cared
11 about my feelings. I thought I would be free, unless
12 that would happen in the United States I watch on TV.

13 However, I was chained to the hands and feet like
14 I was not a human being. I was first to feel a scare
15 again. A scare of returning and staying in that
16 situation or speaking. It was clear, nobody cares
17 about my feelings. I had spent six months living in
18 inhumane situations at detention centers. I saw a
19 man who tried to killed himself and he was [INAUDIBLE
20 5:20:28-5:20:29], later deported.

21 Recently I found out that he was killed when he
22 arrived to his country. There was a colleague who
23 would get up every single day at 4 a.m. to work in
24 Chesham[SP?] a dollar one day, so he could call his
25

1 family. I just cry and wonder, will this be the
2 American dreams? With the [INAUDIBLE 5:21:07] first,
3 a bill of \$5,000, and self-esteem on the floor, I get
4 off of detention on February 2016. That's my welcome
5 to USA. Again, I live in freedom, and once again, I
6 was disappointed when I watched as they are closing
7 on me for not have the valid status to work. I could
8 not [INAUDIBLE 5:21:41].

10 I apply for shelters and my application was
11 denied for not having Social Security. Everything
12 was a difficult and painful process. I'm here in the
13 name of everyone who failed to overcome it. I know
14 of many who were deported and then later killed or
15 raped in their countries. For them, I am here to
16 demand the Council Members to work to create a system
17 that would end policing. I demand the repeal of
18 Walking of Trans. I demand that the Council Member
19 support Reso. 0923. I demand end [inaudible 5:22:43,
20 detention and deportations.

21 The Council Members should pass a bill that
22 allows all immigrant New Yorkers, especially TGNC
23 folk access to work employment. I demand that the
24 Council Member focus on investing money to our
25

1
2 community of creating jails and system that would end
3 our [Inaudible 5:23:18]. DNC New Yorker members.

4 I am the voice of all the Black. I am the voice
5 of the LGBTQ community and the voice of the migrant
6 who cries in silence.

7 I am here to claim for justice and equality for
8 all. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: This is an extraordinary
10 panel. I want you to know that I'm hearing you. I'm
11 hearing your frustration and your anger and I want to
12 stress that the purpose of this hearing is to amplify
13 your voices. And especially within government, which
14 is why there are representatives from the agencies
15 here today who have to fight for your future. I
16 appreciate you for coming today, thank you.

17 We have 21 more people who would like to testify.
18 I'm going to call up the next panel. This is a CUNY
19 panel. Zachary Mitnick, Arno Pedrum, Wayne Reed,
20 Amanda Freedman, Eileen Makak, apologies again
21 Harissa Peña.

22 Alright, is everyone settled in? Can we start
23 with you?

24 Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

2 WAYNE REED: Is this on? Hello, my name is Wayne
3 Reed; I'm a Faculty member at Brooklyn College. I'm
4 an ally of the trans GNC/NB community. I identify as
5 gay and cisgender; pronouns he and him. I'm
6 representing an anonymous student who has given me a
7 testimony that they very much would like to have
8 read.

9 As follows: I am a pre-health care student who
10 is transgender. I am asking an ally to read this
11 testimony because it's too hard for me to talk about.
12 All I wanted was to be able to get an education in a
13 safe environment. One free of harassment and
14 discrimination. Unfortunately, that is not what I
15 experienced at CUNY Queens Borough Community College.
16 The events I experienced resulted in my departure
17 from Queens Borough. I am still coping with the most
18 recent events that have happened and as a result, had
19 to take time away from continuing my education.

20 I started my medical transition in 2015, during
21 my first semester at Queens Borough. The first
22 interactions I experienced that were negative in
23 nature were during the semester. I had started using
24 the male restroom and was getting comments from other
25

1 students and faculty that I was using the wrong
2 restroom.

3
4 They would point to the girls room or to inform
5 me that I was going to the wrong restroom. When I
6 said that I knew I was going to the boys restroom,
7 and this in fact was the correct restroom for me,
8 people would give me a look or snicker or talk about
9 me to their friends.

10 In my public speaking class, we were given a
11 chance to do a speech on whatever topic we wanted. I
12 stated that I wanted to do a speech on the bathroom
13 situations of transgender individuals that we weren't
14 being allowed to use the bathrooms we wanted and that
15 this was a violation of the New York City Human
16 Rights Law. I also wanted to discuss the need for
17 gender neutral restrooms on the campus, my professor
18 said no. Her reasoning was concern for her children
19 and the reaction from the class. She asked me about
20 men coming into the restroom and harming her
21 children, I educated her on this topic and she still
22 said no.

23 She said it was too controversial. Only after
24 the students in the class signed a petition for me to
25

1
2 do the speech did she relent and allow me to do the
3 speech.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I see the testimony.

5 WAYNE REED: Good, thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Is it possible to sum it
7 up?

8 WAYNE REED: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

10 WAYNE REED: Yes, indeed. I would make note of a
11 significant narrative there about dropping out of
12 nursing – the nursing school. After this incident, I
13 wrote the financial aid committee because I withdrew
14 from my classes. I wrote about the situation, the
15 difficulty with the professor and some other things.
16 Their reply was that this is part of the rigors of
17 the program.

18 And said, that I had to pay the rest of my
19 tuition. I suppose it's nice to know that they feel
20 discrimination due to being transgender is called,
21 the rigors of the program.

22 EILEEN MAKAK: Hi, my name is Eileen Makak;
23 pronouns she, her, hers. I work at Baruch College
24 but this statement is being made on behalf of the
25 LGBTQ Resource Center at Brooklyn College.

1 The center is only about five years old but it
2 has had many achievements in making the campuses
3 safer, more inclusive space. However, it is not
4 receiving enough support to reach its full potential.
5 The LGBTQ Resource Center is currently the only
6 identity based student service center in the division
7 of student affairs that is staffed entirely by part-
8 time employees. All other centers have at least a
9 full time director and most also have a full time
10 program coordinator or the equivalent.
11

12 Along with other part-time staff, the center has
13 a part-time director who if he stuck to his appointed
14 hours, would hardly have enough hours to be at all
15 the department meetings he is supposed to attend.

16 Instead, he often ends up working extra hours
17 without pay. This semester, he's been on an
18 unofficial medical leave but because he's not a full-
19 time employee, he's not actually receiving medical
20 leave benefits and he and his partner are dealing
21 with the added stress of a loss of income.

22 The Center currently has two college assistance.
23 Most college assistance perform receptionist duties.
24 At the center, one functions more as a program
25 coordinator or assistant director performing duties

1 that are well above their pay grade. With the
2 director on medical leave, the college assistant has
3 stepped in as interim coordinator performing all of
4 the directors duties without an increase in pay.
5

6 The college was able to give them 34 NT hours to
7 help supplement the extra hours they must work to
8 keep the center running but piecing together two part
9 time positions, so someone can perform full time work
10 without full time benefits is not the proper
11 solution.

12 There should be a full time director and a full
13 time coordinator in addition to part time staff that
14 are not expected to perform tasks beyond their pay.
15 Without this, the center cannot reach its full
16 potential and this negatively impacts the students we
17 are meant to serve.

18 Not having full time staff hurts the employees,
19 but it also sends a message to LGBTQI+ students that
20 they do not matter. CUNY needs to step up and do
21 whatever work necessary to prove its support to these
22 students. Making statements without taking action to
23 follow through is not enough.

24 Two and a half years ago, we worked with
25 facilities and the presidential task force on LGBTQ

1 issues to put signs on all the bathrooms that state
2 New York policy that "Under the Law, all individuals
3 have the right to use the single sex facility
4 consistent with their gender identity or expression."
5

6 These signs were meant to be temporary and were
7 to be replaced with permanent signage. Over two
8 years later, we are still without the permanent signs
9 and many of the temporary signs have been removed.

10 Students are facing all sorts of issues related
11 to bathrooms, ID's, discrimination in the classroom
12 and more.

13 Many LGBTQI+ students are only able to be
14 themselves at the center, not elsewhere on campus,
15 not at work, not at their own homes. Many students
16 live with abusive transphobic and queer phobic
17 families or are homeless.

18 The come to us for help and for a safe space but
19 we can only do so much with what we are given. We
20 work hours without proper compensation because we
21 care about these students, but that cannot and should
22 not be expected of us.

23 CUNY needs to properly support the LGBTQ Resource
24 Center, so that we can properly support ourselves and
25 our students.

1
2 Thank you for your time.

3 ARNOLD PEDRUM: Hello, thank you to Council
4 Members Rosenthal and the Committee on Women and
5 Gender Equity for inviting us today. My name is
6 Arnold Pedrum and my pronouns are they, them. I am a
7 trans non-binary student at Craig Newmark Graduate
8 School of Journalism at CUNY. I am also the Co-
9 President of the LGBTQ+ club at the school and I have
10 been working on trans inclusion at school from the
11 first day I stepped into class, and I am here to tell
12 that story.

13 I want to quickly preface in my testimony by
14 highlighting by highlighting that my experience of
15 transphobia is unmatched in my privilege such as
16 race, class, or access to higher education and I hope
17 that the Council will prioritize urgent changes that
18 need to be done for Black, Latinx and undocumented
19 trans women are outlined just before.

20 The first days in school, made it clear to me
21 that accommodating trans students was news to the
22 administration. I was surprised that no one would
23 give their pronouns and introductions, a normal thing
24 I do during my undergraduate studies.
25

1 During the first week of school, we formed a
2 queer club and discussed what our problems were. We
3 started a log of issues at the school that quickly
4 filled up. Every trans student had a story. Backed
5 from hostility, glares, misgendering my professors,
6 students, by both or by one encouraging the others to
7 do so. I personally have been and continue to be
8 misgendered by faculty staff and students. We met
9 with the administration to find away around New York
10 Legislation to make bathrooms inclusive. The
11 legislation still divides bathroom by gender and
12 there's a note in our bathrooms pretending to solve a
13 court case, saying trans people can use the men's or
14 women's bathroom they wish to use accept no one wants
15 to read a court case when they go to the bathroom.
16

17 Following the meeting, successfully worked around
18 putting more signs on the door and inside the
19 bathroom indicating they're open to all. The
20 administration is also installing signs in the men's
21 bathroom that were only in the women's until then.

22 We also have a faculty we laid out foundational
23 best practices to include trans students in class,
24 fight misgendering and bring awareness to what
25 transphobia feels like to faculty. We're working on

1 changes to the syllabus and are defining gender
2 options and admissions procedure which are better but
3 then most but not perfect.

4
5 Sorry, I'm almost done. We were lucky to have a
6 period of administration that acted in humility,
7 listening and being responsive to our worries but
8 this has placed a lot of responsibility on trans
9 students with change of culture, when it ultimately
10 should be up to the administration to do so. We want
11 CUNY to become more responsive to students needs. To
12 do so, we need a humble administration open to
13 criticism and quick change but also a proactive
14 administration that supports the trans students and
15 faculty.

16 Thank you for listening to my testimony today.

17 ZACHARY MITNICK: Hello everyone and thank you
18 for taking the time to listen to all of our
19 testimony. My name is Zachary Mitnick; I'm an at
20 large representative to the CUNY Graduate Centers
21 Doctoral Student Counsel. I use he and they
22 pronouns. I recently stepped up as the Chair for the
23 DSC's newly instated at HOP Committee on all gender
24 bathrooms which continues the work of At HOP
25 Committees on general neutral bathrooms. But when

1 reinstating the committees for this year, we decided
2 to switch to more inclusive language going forward.

3 Well, the current iteration of the committee
4 hasn't yet held any meetings, I'm fully capable of
5 testifying as to the efforts of the prior iterations
6 and the current state of bathrooms at the Graduate
7 Center.

8 The Graduate Center currently has a single
9 restroom facility designated for uses of bio genders.
10 It was installed in 2015 as part of a commitment to
11 create a respectful, inclusive and safe campus
12 environment. In a letter that was sent to the
13 administration to follow it up, we insisted that one
14 bathroom on the 7th floor was not enough and they
15 needed to do more including having bathrooms in the
16 library on the first that could be accessible without
17 a CUNY ID.

18 In resulting discussion, it became clear that
19 there was a significant number of logistical
20 obstacles to implementing these bathrooms, but there
21 were plans made to renovate the first floor and
22 possibly a sixth floor pantry.

23 As things stand now, three to four years later,
24 the first floor bathroom renovations are held up by
25

1 red tape. No indication to any timeline, the plans
2 regarding 6th floor pantry went nowhere. There have
3 been signs put in place indicating that individuals
4 are welcome to use who identify as the designated
5 gender can use any of these bathrooms but that
6 doesn't do anything for non-binary individuals who
7 don't identify as either gender and I suspect that
8 the implementation of these signs had more to do with
9 the Mayor de Blasio's executive order than any
10 efforts on the part of the committee.
11

12 So, quite frankly, the stagnation on this issue
13 is alarming and it puts non-binary individuals in a
14 position where we have to choose between using a
15 facility that doesn't reflect our gender versus
16 making our way all the way to the back corner of the
17 7th floor. Assuming we're even aware that the back
18 room is there. Quite frankly, I probably wouldn't
19 know it was there if it weren't literally my job to
20 know about it.

21 So, I'm concerned that the implementation of the
22 signage to correspond with the executive order has
23 led the Graduate Center Administration to conclude
24 they have fulfilled their commitment to create a
25 respective inclusive and safe campus environment.

1 That phrasing is taken directly from their
2 announcement of the first all gender bathroom.

3 But the truth is that they still have a ways to
4 go on this front.

5
6 AMANDA FRIEDMAN: Good afternoon and thank you
7 for your time today. My name is Amanda Friedman and
8 I am White Queer non-binary New Yorker.

9 I'm a social work student at Silberman School of
10 Social Work at Hunter College and an advocate for
11 queer and trans communities and I sincerely thank you
12 for holding this absolutely necessary hearing today.

13 Before I lose myself in my testimony, I just want
14 to highlight a couple of things. So, we're speaking
15 to the needs of CUNY to promote competency with among
16 staff, among professors and especially at the Social
17 Work School where we're all current or future service
18 providers. That competency is literally vital, we're
19 hearing today all the reasons why and how
20 incompetency or incompetent care, or lack of
21 attention on certain issues is literally killing us.
22 So, I just want to highlight the need for that CUNY-
23 wide and Silberman School of Social Work is no
24 exception. And if the CUNY budget is at all in
25 consideration here, there is a new center for gender

1 and sexuality at Silberman and I'm part of it and we
2 want to be involved in helping to promote CUNY-wide
3 gender affirmation in whatever. That's curriculum,
4 that's bathrooms, it's competency among professors,
5 and it obviously goes deeper than that.
6

7 I mean, we're talking about bathrooms but it
8 really is - it's a recognition of humanity and we
9 want to promote that in whatever way we can. So, I
10 want to highlight that.

11 I want to reiterate some of the needs that have
12 been spoken about regarding the LGBTQ youth
13 homelessness and especially among TGNC folks and TGNC
14 people of color. Last year I worked at the Ali
15 Forney Center, which is one of the leading
16 organizations in the country working on that. They
17 are at capacity. They are I mean, like, there is
18 never enough funding of course and the people are on
19 waiting lists for months long. People think that
20 they have a place to go, a safe place to stay and
21 they might a few months down the line, but tonight,
22 tomorrow night, they do not and Marsha's Place
23 similarly is often at full capacity and again, these
24 folks need a safe place to be and I also encourage
25 the committee to think about TGNC issues as a public

1 health issue and it's not just a policy issue. You
2 know, it's not just a bathroom and it's not just
3 prison, it's a full blown public health issue. We're
4 talking about mental health and prisons and
5 homelessness and wellbeing, and all of these things
6 are completely intertwined and family rejection of
7 course.

8
9 So, I encourage the Committee to think about it
10 as a holistic public health issue and again, I thank
11 you so much for your time and my heart is with
12 everybody here in the room today.

13 BARISSA PENYA: Thank you, Council and Committee
14 Members for hearing us today. My name is Barissa
15 Penya[SP?] and I'm a trans non-binary Afro Latinx.
16 My pronouns are she, her, they and them.

17 I just want to apologize for any of my
18 shuddering, I have social anxiety. Currently, we are
19 really concerned as the TGNC group within John Jay
20 where there's a few members part of the LGBT group
21 who see that there is a lot of microaggressions
22 within the community.

23 So, I'm going to currently speak about my
24 experiences as a student that was both in
25 Kingsborough and John Jay.

1
2 In Kingsborough Community College, it was a very
3 interesting experience. When I first started
4 Kingsborough, I came in as the non-binary student who
5 used she, they, him pronouns. I personally never
6 felt welcome in these classes to speak of my other
7 pronouns.

8 I decided that for me to be safe, I should
9 transfer through the hallways as a gender non-
10 conforming male. However, once I decided that I
11 would be medically transitioning, I no longer felt
12 comfortable using him pronouns. My esthetic is very
13 feminine and I express my gender through my clothing,
14 but there wasn't one thing at Kingsborough that I
15 wasn't receiving in intense microaggressions.

16 From the staff giving me looks and my teachers
17 not using my pronouns, it wasn't just the student
18 body that made me feel unwelcome. I did receive
19 resource within the men's center and there I was able
20 to express my race with my queer nurse inter-
21 sectionally and as an Afro Latinx, I appreciate the
22 space. As a trans woman, I still felt like I didn't
23 belong.

24 The feelings of having to sell myself to only
25 show one side of my personality so I don't become

1 ostracized, while still being othered was extremely
2 exhausting.

3
4 My biggest issue came when the school outed me
5 without my consent. Plastering a picture of me as a
6 pretense for trans inclusion within Kingsborough.
7 Outing a trans person is dangerous, especially in a
8 school full of so much transphobia. Students would
9 never feel safe and through my personal experience
10 with fellow students who have harassed me outside of
11 the bathrooms, recorded me, followed with defamation.
12 The only thing that he received was a conversation
13 about why it's wrong.

14 This is why we need women and gender studies.
15 This is why it should be funded and its been proven
16 that with programs that promote an understanding of
17 gender and queerness, students tend to be more
18 respectful and even perpetuate conversation within
19 their peers. Trans students aren't capital, they
20 aren't supposed to be othered and they shouldn't have
21 to be warriors. Trans students are human and non-
22 binary students are human as well.

23 The Walking While Trans Ban very much also
24 targets Black, Trans women as well. And at this
25 point, the bathrooms are clearly just the bare

1 minimum of treatment and TGNC people deserve more
2 than just the bare minimum. We deserve more action
3 from the committee.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I want to thank all of
6 you for your testimony. I thought your testimony in
7 particular, if everyone could just make sure if the
8 testimony wasn't provided here today, please submit
9 it. If you need an email address for where to submit
10 it, we can provide you with that. But everything
11 you've said today was incredibly powerful and will
12 help lead us forward.

13 Thank you so much for your time and your
14 testimony today.

15 Unfortunately, some people had to leave early but
16 we hope we have their testimony. Martha Greeves from
17 Brooklyn Community Pride Center and Next Access.

18 And the next panel is an advocate panel. Again,
19 the importance of handwriting. Oh, Shannon
20 Whittington, I think, thank you. Natalia Gibbs, Tia
21 Dole, Tiffany Baruty, Daphne Chang.

22 Melissa, come on up. We have your testimony,
23 come on up and join us, thank you. Yeah, no, no, no,
24 Melissa, we have room on this panel if you could join
25 us.

1 Thanks for the tickler, appreciate it. Got you,
2 thank you. Thank you, Melissa. Alright, are we
3 missing one person? No, okay, no, that's alright, I
4 was just was wondering. Melissa, actually if you
5 could start this time, thank you.
6

7 MELISSA SKLARZ: Thank you so much. Thank you,
8 Council Member, thank the Committee, thank your
9 colleagues who are here today. My name is Melissa
10 Sklarz; I'm the Government Relations Person
11 representing SAGE, LGBT and TGNC elders.

12 Ironically, it's been about 20 years since we
13 first came here as a community. You get a lot
14 different response say then we did with Mayor
15 Giuliani and Speaker Vallone, as you can imagine.

16 I also have to say that as one of the original
17 negotiators with the NYPD on changing the patrol
18 guide for trans people, I am very disappointed to
19 hear that all of those reforms have not been taken
20 seriously.

21 You have our testimony, you know we're SAGE,
22 we've been here for 40 years. We're advocating for
23 LGBT and TGNC elders. People are aging every day,
24 10,000 people in America age over 65. I have studies
25 for you to review. The targeting data on TGNC

1
2 elders, I have a study from 2009 and 2011 and 2013
3 being aging in America is hard, being aging in New
4 York is hard. Being gay and lesbian is harder and
5 being trans as an elder is hardest of all and each
6 step along the way, it's harder to get access to
7 resources. It's harder to have your needs taken
8 seriously. Discrimination, rage, anger from care
9 providers, from neighbors. As the expression goes,
10 the crap rolls downhill.

11 We'll be able to talk more, I just briefly wanted
12 to touch base on two of the programs that SAGE is
13 doing for trans people.

14 As you know we are involved in LGBT Friendly
15 Affordable Senior Housing. Our first building will
16 be opening in Brooklyn, it will be opening. We're
17 going to have our ribbon cutting next month.
18 Certainly, you and Council Member Lander have both
19 been invited. It's in Laurie Cumbo's district. It's
20 145 units, 25 percent will be for formerly homeless
21 elders. We had split between NYCHA to first come
22 first serve. I think that our LGBT communitied very
23 well. We should be able to have a final count.
24 We're hoping that LGBT people will count for over 50
25 percent.

1 Of course, you will be invited. It will be
2 December 17, and that will be very exciting. Our
3 second building will be in the beginning of 2020. It
4 will be in the Bronx; it will be in Council Member
5 Salamanca's district. It will be 84 units, both will
6 have SAGE centers, full services not only for the
7 residents but for elders in the neighborhood. No one
8 can ever say the problem is that there is too much
9 elder services in New York.
10

11 So, we'll be providing not only for the residents
12 but also for the people that live there and finally,
13 we have created a program called SAGE vets. There's
14 a whole cohort of aging veteran's. An amazing amount
15 of course live in New York City but also live out of
16 town. We're providing services; don't ask them to
17 tail gate people, negative discharges, we want to
18 bring them back, give them access to legal services,
19 health care and SAGE vets has been very successful.

20 The Council has been supportive. One of the more
21 exciting things that we're seeing out of Albany among
22 all the new legislation with pro-equality majorities
23 in the legislature, is there's a new sexual
24 orientation gender identity bill that's been signed
25 by the governor that will make it easier for LGB and

1 especially trans New Yorkers to get counted, get
2 access to services. Whether it's healthcare, whether
3 it's legal services, housing, whether it's going to
4 be nutrition. All the issues that are so important
5 for LGB and of course trans elders. You have our
6 testimony; I'll be happy to answer any questions.

7
8 TIFFANY BARUTY: Hi, good afternoon, my name is
9 Tiffany Baruty[SP?] and I work as the manager of
10 Youth Organizing at Planned Parenthood of New York
11 City. I'm also a transgender woman and my pronouns
12 are she, her.

13 Planned Parenthood in New York City, PPNYC has
14 been a trusted provider of sexual and reproductive
15 health services in New York City for more than 100
16 years. Thank you for this opportunity to testify
17 today at this important hearing.

18 PPNYC firmly believes that the right to
19 reproductive and sexual healthcare should be afforded
20 to all New Yorkers who proudly offer a wide range of
21 services to the LGBTQ trans and gender non-conforming
22 community. TGNC individuals face barriers to
23 accessing basic services across New York. Despite
24 the growing visibility and understanding of
25 transgender people in New York City, there is still

1 major disparities in access to housing, employment
2 and healthcare.
3

4 Though New York City has a Human Rights Law that
5 protects individuals from discrimination based on
6 gender, TGNC individuals still face high rates of
7 discrimination. Housing and security
8 disproportionately impacts TGNC individuals and with
9 compounded identities of race and class and economic
10 status, securing quality and affordable housing is
11 extremely difficult.

12 TGNC individuals are often targeted by police and
13 unnecessarily entered into the criminal justice
14 system for just existing. They are dissuaded from
15 advancing their education due to difficulties
16 navigating the public school and university systems,
17 bullying and bias bureaucracy.

18 I am also a transgender alumni from Hunter
19 College. In my role, I work with our Planned
20 Parenthood generation student activist to advocate
21 for necessary changes on their respective CUNY
22 campuses.

23 Through my own experience as a student and as a
24 youth organizer for PPNYC, I have noticed that there
25

1
2 are some unnecessary barriers for transgender
3 students at CUNY, in which we've heard about today.

4 Our PPGN activist found that the process for
5 changing ones name on a student ID card is difficult
6 and many students have trouble navigating the system.
7 They also found that general neutral bathrooms across
8 CUNY campuses often necessary for transgender and
9 gender non-conforming students are not very
10 accessible. Their locations tend not to be well
11 advertised and, in some cases, the signage for the
12 bathroom is not properly updated and maintained.

13 We applaud the New York City Council for
14 protecting the rights of marginalized groups and
15 safeguarding access.

16 Thank you.

17 SHANNON WHITTINGTON: Council Chair Rosenthal,
18 thank you so much. We've heard a lot today about the
19 social determinates of health within the transgender
20 population and I think what's also important is the
21 education determinates and what do I mean by that?

22 Many of us as healthcare providers simply do not
23 know how to take care of this population.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: One sec. Could you just
3 introduce yourself and the name of the organization?
4 Do you have written testimony?

5 SHANNON WHITTINGTON: Sure, yes ma'am I do.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Okay, great, thank you.

7 SHANNON WHITTINGTON: Alright, I apologize. My
8 name Shannon Wittington and I am the Gender
9 Affirmation Program at the Visiting Nurse Service of
10 New York. And what I was saying was that many
11 healthcare providers do not know how to care for this
12 population, and the question is, is it that we don't
13 want to know or is it that we simply choose not to
14 care? That's the question.

15 That the Visiting Nurse Services of New York, we
16 in fact, do care. We care so much that we have a
17 dedicated program, a gender affirmation program
18 dedicated to caring for trans patients after they've
19 had gender affirming surgeries. That's my full time
20 job folks and it's also my full time passion to
21 support this community.

22 I am a part of this community and I feel duty
23 bound to do so. I feel obligated to educate
24 clinicians. I've educated over 250 clinicians and
25 we've serviced over 400 patients thus far. We

1
2 currently have, I have 25 patients on my desk right
3 now, that are actively getting care from us in all
4 five boroughs.

5 So, we have the care and we have the coverage.
6 The coverage is our choice select health special
7 needs plan that covers all of these surgeries for
8 Medicaid eligible individuals. We have the care; we
9 have the coverage but we also have the gap. What is
10 the gap? Some patients do not have money for their
11 copays. They do not have money for their wound care
12 supplies. This is what we have petitioned City
13 Council for funding for. We want to help these
14 individuals to integrate back into society. Being
15 able to follow them longer than their home care stay
16 with us.

17 That's why we have asked for funding. Thank you
18 so much.

19 DAPHNE CHANG: Hello, Chairwoman Rosenthal and
20 Members of the NYC City Council Committee on Women
21 and Gender Equity. My name is Daphne Chang and I'm a
22 member of Red Canary Song.

23 Red Canary Song is a grassroots group of Asian
24 American sex workers, Asian migrants, sex and Mossad
25

1
2 workers and allies organizing to secure sex workers
3 rights dignity and safety.

4 Before I say my written testimony, I would like
5 to say that it has not escaped my notice that the way
6 the City Council has organized the Speakers, given
7 that there are so many, is actually a reflection of
8 the problem. To me, you know, nonprofits, groups
9 with legitimacy academics were prioritized and this
10 does not actually reflect the costs of the different
11 individuals experiencing when they come to speak.

12 Right, like, the people who are more directly
13 impacted have higher costs for even coming to speak.
14 So, by deprioritizing them and putting them later in
15 the panel is not honoring the fact the risks that
16 they take to even come to speak in the first place,
17 while they're fighting for their communities, while
18 they're fighting for their lives.

19 So, I just want to say that. So, as a group of
20 sex workers, I'm also non-binary and gender non-
21 conforming, identified as a sex worker and as a group
22 of Asian sex workers which includes transgender and
23 non-trans and gender non-conforming people, we have
24 survived and suffered gender violence from the course
25 of projections and actions by others. We have this

1
2 experience and we've experienced this from the state
3 as well. So, Red Canary Song is in staunch support of
4 New York City Council Resolution 923, which supports
5 the passage of New York State Senate Bill S2253 and
6 Assembly Bill 0654 and this would repeal the penal
7 law 240.37 which is loitering for prostitution.

8 While this discriminatory law negatively affects
9 women and gender non-conforming people, it
10 disproportionately targets transgender Black and our
11 Latinx women by intensely subjecting them to arrests,
12 harassment, assault and other forms of violence at
13 the arbitrary discretion of the NYPD.

14 Women and people perceive to be women have been
15 profiled and frisked for wearing tight clothing. The
16 induced trauma and criminal record on the arrested
17 individual is unjust punishment for people simply
18 expressing their identities in public.

19 If the person is not a US citizen, they face
20 further risk of being detained and departed by ICE.
21 In our work at Red Canary Song, we constantly
22 encounter migrant Asian women facing arrests,
23 experiencing sexual coercion, risking deportation and
24 detention and more at the hands of the NYPD. This is
25 a chronic problem; we hear about it all the time.

2 Penal Law 240.37 is simply state sanctioned violence
3 against women and gender non-conforming people. It
4 is our duty to demand and repeal of penal law 240.37
5 and passing S2253-A0654. This targeted violence,
6 especially of transgender Black and our Latinx women
7 has to stop now.

8 NATALIA GIBS: So, good afternoon and thank you
9 to the entire Committee or whose still here of the
10 Women and Gender Equity for this opportunity to
11 testify. My name is Natalia, I use she or they
12 pronouns and I'm the LGBTQ Coordinator from the Harm
13 Reduction Coalition. A national advocacy and
14 capacity building organization focused on the rights,
15 dignity and health and safety of people who use
16 drugs.

17 I'm here today to also urge you to support
18 Resolution 923 to show City Council support for
19 repealing the Walking Law Trans Bill.

20 At it's core, the Walking Law Trans Law punishes
21 people for daring to take up space freely, by
22 allowing police to profile, harass and arrest an
23 individual based on their appearance and gender is
24 not only inappropriate but it violates people's
25 autonomy and ability to exist and enjoy their bodies.

1 Walking While Trans is another example of the
2 biased policing of illegal stop and frisk. Where the
3 only crime being committed is existing publicly.
4 Harm Reduction Coalition has learned from our decades
5 of experience with HIV, hepatitis C and the overdose
6 crisis that police harassments keep people from
7 particularly, people of color and poor people away
8 from lifesaving services at the risk of greater harm.

9 As of 2018, there has been a 120 percent increase
10 in arrests for loitering. 80 percent of those
11 arrests were people identified as female and 90
12 percent of those arrests were Black, of Black and
13 Latinx New Yorkers. The NYPD target women who have
14 been previously arrested and increase risks on
15 immigrant communities by collecting them into
16 surveillance systems that put them at risk for
17 involvement with ICE.

18 Beyond the criminalization of Black and Brown
19 trans women, the Walking Law Trans Ban continues to
20 uphold false narratives and mistruth about the trans
21 community. This notions that LGBTQ+ individuals and
22 Black individuals are hypersexual and promiscuous is
23 harmful and this law, as well as the harms that it is
24 harmful and this law, as well as the harms that it is

1
2 perpetuated, is a direct manifestation of those
3 stereotypes.

4 As the death toll for trans women of color climbs
5 in New York and across the country, it is no longer
6 enough to continue to invoke the names of people once
7 we've lost them. We must begin to take concrete
8 steps to affirm and protect the rights of the TGNC
9 community.

10 I urge you to think about the message that it
11 sends to keep laws like this in place, to think about
12 talking about bathrooms, talking about all of these
13 things but upholding and keeping in place a law that
14 punishes freedom and punishes joy.

15 Now is the time to take action on Resolution 923,
16 it is an important step in the pathway to full rights
17 and protection for trans New Yorkers.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I mean, again, thank you
20 all for the testimony but also, the work that you're
21 doing every day to support this community, support
22 yourselves in the variety today but on this panel but
23 it's really impressive and I really appreciate you.
24 I hear you and I want to thank you for coming today.

2 Okay, we have two, three more panels to call up.
3 Dani Brovand, Kay Usher, Max Masure, Kai
4 Castudio[SP?], Ranese Conja[SP?]. And I'm sure the
5 public who are here to testify, thank you for
6 staying. Thank you for your patience. I appreciate
7 your coming here today.

8 We have one more panel, but I'm going to ask you,
9 if it's okay with you, just testify as your own panel
10 because I think it's important that the public be
11 heard. So, thank you for coming here today. Thank
12 you for your patience, I see a lot of people couldn't
13 stay and I hope they submit their testimony
14 electronically. Please.

15 DANI BROVAND: Can you hear me? Does that work?
16 There we go. Hi, my name is Dani Brovand[SP?]; I am
17 an MSW Candidate at New York University. I use he,
18 him pronouns and I am transgender.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Can I just ask you to
20 hold the mic a little closer or speak up a little
21 bit. Thank you so much.

22 DANI BROVAND: Yeah sure, yeah. I had some
23 testimony prepared today, but I think it's more
24 important to speak to some of the comments made by
25 Congressman Lander.

2 I would like to respond a little bit to some of
3 the things that he brought up. He spoke about how we
4 need to be concerned about competing funding between
5 the folks coming to this group and other at risk
6 communities.

7 I would like to respond to that by saying that I
8 think it's important for us to broaden our scope. To
9 stop looking at communities that are oppressed by our
10 society as competing against one another and perhaps
11 consider the 25,230 residents in New York who made at
12 least \$1 million in salary in 2016.

13 If we taxed all of those people just one percent
14 more than we do on their income, we would raise \$330
15 million a year for some of these people that do not
16 need to be competing against each other in order to
17 be represented in our communities.

18 Furthermore, I would like to emphasize the
19 importance placed on the idea that we have so many
20 people who are showing up today. This is a
21 reflection of the lack of opportunity for us to be
22 engaged with our Council Members. This is not an
23 issue where we should have our time reduced. This is
24 an issue where we should have more time and more
25 connection and more opportunity.

1
2 One of the main issues I was hoping to speak to
3 today is the lack of awareness and competency as it
4 pertains to trans inclusive mental health care. As
5 an MSW, as someone who has been in a counseling
6 program, I am highly aware of the fact that the first
7 people that are put in place that are supposed to be
8 representing the health and safety of young trans
9 people in our schools, do not have or reflect the
10 awareness of how to take care of trans youth in a way
11 that is trans affirming and that does not further
12 perpetuate the oppression in our society. We need to
13 increase the expectations that we have on our
14 licensing measures in this state for anyone who is
15 going to go into the mental health field, as well as
16 go into nonprofit fields.

17 The last thing I wanted to say, is just that I
18 really appreciate the opportunity to speak with you
19 today. I really hope that you take it as a message
20 that we desperately need our voices to be heard in
21 these environments because they're not. And more
22 than we need them to be heard, we need them to be
23 activated. We need to see actual change. Being
24 recognized and being heard and having empathy is one
25 thing. Having actual laws put into place is another.

2 We need higher accountability for people that are
3 supposed to be taking care of trans folks and we need
4 to cut back on the trickle down economics that are
5 finding their way into the nonprofit organizational
6 system, so that the people who the money are supposed
7 to support is actually supporting them.

8 Thank you.

9 MAX MASURE: Hi, thank you so much for having us
10 today. My name is Max Masure and I use they, them
11 pronouns. I'm very glad to hear everyone today and I
12 realize also that having more like law or removing
13 stuff from law is one part, but like the training and
14 having actually people care for us is like a big part
15 of how can solve this.

16 I'm the Co-Founder of Argo Collective, an
17 organization that provides inclusion trainings for
18 our schools and companies. We teach active ways to
19 respect and affirm trans and non-binary entities. We
20 worked with the New York Times, BMCC, Forum
21 University, to name just a few. We are our own
22 company. We are just two people and we're trying to
23 be what we can be for a lot of trans people.

24 I want to highlight an area where the city fails
25 us and therefore contributes to our suffering as a

1 group, access to inclusive and respectful healthcare
2 for trans and gender non-conforming people,
3 especially around reproduced health.
4

5 The majority of trans and non-binary folks in our
6 community do not receive adequate healthcare because
7 of fear founded on experience of not being respected
8 when stepping into a doctors office. That means
9 increasing our risk for serious issues especially
10 around reproduce health.

11 Caring for our own health should not be
12 jeopardized because of the lack of education, respect
13 and affirmation around our identity. Inclusive and
14 caring OBGYN visits would benefit everyone. Trans
15 and non-binary people and also cisgender women,
16 meaning not trans. A lot of cis women also suffer
17 from body trauma and we rarely have a safe medical
18 space where we are comfortable of our body and
19 procedures are done to us and how we can advocate for
20 what we feel is right and safe for us.

21 Just two days ago, I offered my friend support,
22 who is a transgender pregnant person. It was an
23 OBGYN appointment to his baby on ultrasound for the
24 first time. This is a beautiful and emotional
25 experience and a way to affirm those moments are

1 still and foremost as we have to overcome being
2 misgendered and the name putting us in a painful
3 mental space.
4

5 I offered my support to him by being by his side,
6 being the one who checked him in. Filling out the
7 paperwork so he wouldn't have to write his own birth
8 name. Making sure everyone at the clinic would refer
9 to him as his name, not his birth name and respecting
10 the pronouns he was using, he, him.

11 He confessed to me that in the past, he had to be
12 sedated to go through a regular GYN exam. His
13 anxiety I'm sure, being too overwhelming otherwise.
14 By having me by his side, I'm making the space for
15 him to express his needs and discomfort, just before
16 the exam. It allowed him to forego sedating
17 medication and to be mentally as well as emotionally
18 present during the exam, feeling comfortable, tapping
19 into his own willpower and ardency. The critical
20 missing part is finding trans educated facilities and
21 doctors, places where we are not ordered. Where we
22 feel safe and encouraged to be our own true self.
23 Where our voices are heard and respected.

24 Thank you for your time.
25

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you both so much.
3 Again, both of you gave very powerful testimony. I
4 really hope you'll find a way to submit it. We have
5 it on the record, but if you could submit your
6 testimony in writing, that's very important.

7 MAX MASURE: Yeah, you have mine.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I have yours, op, my bad.
9 Okay, sorry, thank you, got it.

10 Max, I wanted to ask you does Argo have a
11 consultant contract with New York City?

12 MAX MASURE: No, and we're only two years old as
13 a company and I would love to what would be those
14 steps, because I would like to see how we could work
15 together.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, I mean, I think
17 what the city has to offer is the Department of Small
18 Business Services. You can go on their website and
19 they'll give you the steps and training in order to -

20 MAX MASURE: Yeah, we've been through that and
21 you wanted to know the irony on that is like, because
22 my Co-founder - I changed my name legally on my ID's,
23 they did not.

24

25

2 So, because the ID wasn't matching the name they
3 use, the whole process was stopped. So, that's the
4 irony of us trying to be more involved.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So, can we stay in touch
6 after - right after and I'll give you or I'll pass
7 your information along to some people who should
8 reach out to you.

9 MAX MASURE: That would be great, thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, thank you very
11 much. Thank you both for coming today. I appreciate
12 your time.

13 This will be the last panel. Diana Faluche[SP?],
14 Jewel Cadet, Brian Doth, Lindell Urbana, and John
15 Penya.

16 JEWEL CADET: Okay, I also just want to echo a
17 panelist from earlier. So, I've been here since
18 9:45, I don't know what type of plug folks need to
19 get on here sooner, but I just want to say that just
20 to honor folks time, I work for a very important
21 organization, as do many folks do and I was out of
22 the office all day, waiting to speak right.

23 My name is Jewel Cadet and my pronouns are she
24 and her. Personally, I'm a Black queer activist
25 who's a radical ally, accomplice and comrade to the

2 transgender and gender non-conforming and non-binary
3 community. I'm also the Director of Programs at the
4 Center for Anti-Violence Education, an organization
5 that has actively supported and helped to empower
6 marginalized communities since 1974.

7 As a Youth Coordinator, I started a program
8 called pride per sectors in 2015. The Social Justice
9 Leadership program created for LGB TGNC youth, many
10 of which were homeless youth of color was intentional
11 on providing support to those who needed it most. We
12 asked what they need and they responded with,
13 physical and verbal self-defense skills, job
14 readiness skills, public speaking skills, advocacy
15 skills. We listened and provided what we could based
16 on what was needed.

17 How often are we asking and listening to the
18 needs of transgender and gender non-conforming New
19 Yorkers? Is that on a regular basis, or is that just
20 for the sake of hearings such as these?

21 As I rose up in leadership at CAE, I began to
22 realize that I had a duty to do something to make
23 their lives better. I couldn't stand by and listen
24 to the ways of which the city have left them
25 literally out in the cold with little to no

1 resources. I refused to stand by and do nothing as
2 they described how walking into a hospital, job, and
3 housing interviews all felt like violent acts as they
4 were misgendered, denied, humanized, dehumanized and
5 disrespected.
6

7 I felt it was my duty to support them and all New
8 Yorkers have this duty. On this 27th day of
9 November, I would like to say it's an honor to
10 testify before you on behalf of transgender and
11 gender non-conforming New Yorkers but it's not.

12 No one should have to listen to stories of the
13 ways of which the TGNC community, especially those
14 who are Black and of color continue to be at the
15 margins of the margins. A community that New York
16 has abandoned and left to fend for themselves.

17 Access to equitable, safe and gender affirming
18 healthcare is a human right. Access to safe,
19 affordable and inclusive housing is a human right.
20 Access to employment services that connect them to
21 career opportunities that will support them to earn a
22 livable wage in a place that values and affirms them
23 as TGNC people is a right.

24 These are things that many cisgender New Yorkers
25 like myself don't have to think about on a daily

1 basis. Often times these things are guaranteed to us
2 and serves as privilege and if you have any other
3 privileges based on race, class, citizenship,
4 ability, you can assert that to.
5

6 Transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary
7 and a-gender people are human and deserve human
8 rights. How long will we continue to turn our backs
9 on them? How long will New Yorkers continue to give
10 this community the cold shoulder as thousands of TGNC
11 youth like cold and homeless on the streets? How
12 long will New York Law Makers allow these atrocities
13 to happen? The lack of resources are leading to
14 genocide.

15 Black trans women, many of which who we've heard
16 from today, Black trans women are being murdered
17 across the country and in our own back yard, because
18 we are not centering their needs.

19 So, before another murder becomes another hash
20 tag, let's honor the transgender and gender non-
21 conforming community while they are still with us,
22 while they are still alive, while they can still
23 benefit from the many resources New York has. The
24 time is now and the clock is ticking.

25 Thank you.

1
2 JOHN PENYA: Hello, my name is John Penya and I
3 am gender non-conforming person from New York City.
4 I am a community organizer and teaching artist.

5 I came here today to listen to the many
6 testimonies that came before me and to resonate and
7 echo the thoughts that I felt as a gender non-
8 conforming person witnessing the horrors and harms
9 that exist within our city.

10 I started a lot of my work after the Post Night
11 Club shooting several years ago and it really ways
12 heavy on my heart that I have to continue to have
13 these conversations with people in spaces that don't
14 necessarily care for or understand the humanity of
15 the people that they are interacting with on a daily
16 basis.

17 It has broken my heart to sit here and listen to
18 testimonies about restrooms and conversations that
19 we've been having for years. This is about our
20 humanity; this is about our lives. This is not about
21 my life, this is about the lives of transwomen of
22 color and Latinx women of color who continue to be
23 murdered, that the numbers continue to rise and they
24 continue to go missing.

2 I can't continue to sit idly by and see that it
3 exists in our city and exist in the U.S. I would
4 also like to speak to the fact that I'm going to
5 reference issues with our city and its policing
6 habits, adding 250 to 500 MTA cops is putting our
7 trans women and trans gender non-conforming people at
8 harms. These police officers had very little care
9 for the way that they handle or don't handle the
10 people that their interacting with. If you go on a
11 city bus and you see someone and an undercover cops
12 grabs them. They grab them, they throw them out of
13 the bus and that is not care.

14 That is not taking care of a system that is not
15 taking care of the people that are supposed to be
16 occupying the system, so that it can run. The city
17 continues to let our trans and gender non-conforming
18 people down the way that it does not act, and the way
19 that it touts its sanctuary status and does not act
20 in a way that actually preserves our livelihoods and
21 betterment.

22 Our communities are falling apart. I am from the
23 Bronx in Washington Heights that are quickly facing
24 gentrification. Some gentrification coming in the
25 form of arts projects, housing, etc., that also

1 facilitate the harm that goes against our communities
2 and the harm that brings police to our doorstep. So,
3 I'd like all that to be taken into account when you
4 continue to have these conversations and go into
5 these rooms and understand that by not acting on how
6 you facilitate the city or how your voice is used to
7 facilitate the city, that harm continues to be
8 perpetuated in these cycles. Because change has been
9 very slow, but it doesn't need to be.

11 Thank you.

12 JEWEL CADET: I also, I just want to say one
13 quick thing. I know that there was some
14 mispronunciations of people's names and I just want
15 to just make sure if there's like a call that you
16 could just make for folks who may have not heard
17 their name, because it was mispronounced. For folks
18 to be able to have the opportunity to speak. Because
19 I know we were the last panel, but you know
20 everyone's voice in here matters and it shouldn't be
21 because you weren't able to pronounce it for them not
22 to be able to hear their name.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, it's a great
24 suggestion. I'll do that but could I also ask you
25 both, you gave such powerful testimony and maybe you

1 spoke from your heart, but if there's something you
2 have in writing and you could submit it, it's
3 important that you do that. I appreciate both of you
4 and what you had to say today. And that's a great
5 suggestion, I will say it is handwriting, but it's
6 not. Just me, but I appreciate your suggesting that.
7 I have a pile of 20 more people to read, names to
8 read out and I'm happy to do that again.

9
10 JEWEL CADET: Okay.

11 JOHN PENYA: Please don't just appreciate our
12 voices and our thoughts, please utilize them. This
13 is intellectual property that we are providing you,
14 so that you can better assist the way that we live
15 and then better the way that we can support you, so
16 that you can do this work. Utilize our intellectual
17 property and our lived experience to better our
18 lives.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

21 JEWEL CADET: And, because the mic is hot, and
22 also, I waited five hours. This court room should be
23 filled up here with people and I just want to say
24 that like, when we say that we support TGNC New
25 Yorkers, we mean that when - if we all had to wait

1
2 hours to speak, then we should have people – this
3 should be filled. Like every single seat and mic
4 should be filled. And I just want to just highlight
5 that. That folks should not be able to come in and
6 out and put their City Council name and then pull
7 out. Our voices matter the entire time. And so, I
8 just want to make that very clear.

9 Specifically, Council folks who are men and I
10 think highlighting gender early on and just being
11 mindful of what it means for women to stay the entire
12 time and for people who don't identify as that, to be
13 able to come in and out. That's also not okay and I
14 just wanted to highlight because the mic is hot and I
15 got it.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you. Good use of
18 the mic. Diana Viglucy[SP?], Brian Douth[SP?], oh,
19 that's a much better idea. Is there anyone here who
20 would like to testify, who perhaps didn't sign up or
21 I didn't read their name? Please come forward and
22 just announce yourself. We're going to do that
23 rather than reading the names. Anyone's welcome to
24 come and testify and if you have copies of your
25 testimony, that helps us well.

1 Thank you, thank you very much. Please.

2
3 TAMARA LOCK: Hi, my name is Tamara Lock; I'm a
4 Lead Organizer with NYTAG, The New York Transgender
5 Advocacy Group.

6 I'd like to say thank you to Jewel because my
7 name was one of the mispronounced ones.

8 So, good morning, which is now afternoon. I'd
9 like to thank City Council for inviting me to speak
10 this afternoon. Like I said, I'm from NYTAG, New
11 York Transgender Advocacy Group. Our mission is to
12 advocate for TGNC Inclusive policies. NYTAG has
13 always understood that the current disparities that
14 the TGNC/NB community face are a result of historical
15 and structural violence that can only be addressed
16 affectively by empowering TGNC and NB individuals, to
17 be effective leaders in our community.

18 However, doing so requires that TGNC/NB folks
19 have equitable access to city resources. Well there
20 are many issues obviously regarding the TGNC/NB
21 community that need to be addressed. Two of the most
22 urgent concerns that we are seeing from our members
23 are high levels of unemployment and a lack of access
24 to affordable housing.

2 The National Transgender Discrimination Survey
3 found that unemployment rate for transgender workers
4 was twice the rate of the population as a whole, 14
5 percent compared to 7. This is unacceptable.

6 TGNC people of color face even higher, four times
7 as high as the national employment rate. New York
8 City's current workforce development initiatives have
9 not been designed to best serve TGNC/NB individuals
10 and because of transphobia and other systemic
11 impediments, many TGNC/NB folks are unable to
12 successfully find employment through these services.

13 We are recommending that City Council invest in
14 an employment program that is tailored to the needs
15 of TGNC/NB individuals and leads to sustainability of
16 the community.

17 In addition to high unemployment rates and access
18 to affordable housing is a critical issue also facing
19 the community. As transequity.org has stated, one in
20 five transgender people in the United States have
21 been discriminated against when seeking for housing.
22 And more than one in ten have been evicted from their
23 homes because of their gender identity.

24 We recommend also the City Council should invest
25 more resources in training staff, so the government

1 funded housing is safe and accessible to all
2 participants regardless of gender, identity or sexual
3 orientation.
4

5 There also needs to be an increase in the number
6 of designated housing vouchers and units specifically
7 for TGNC/NB identified folks.

8 I'm going to wrap that up but thank you for
9 letting me speak and I hope that in future, more City
10 Council will be represented to hear our voices.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you so much. Thank
12 you for coming forward and testifying. Thank you for
13 the people here who stayed throughout the whole
14 thing. We really appreciate that. I mean, I think
15 it's a testament to the issue that this ended up
16 being a five hour hearing. It's a testimony to the
17 hunger by individuals to have a voice. To be able to
18 have a public hearing and I am really glad we did
19 this today. This is the first hearing that I think
20 the City Council has had that specifically devoted to
21 services that an administration provides to TGNC,
22 transgender non-conforming, non-binary, people. I'm
23 very proud to have Chaired it and know that we will
24 be reading through the testimony providing a report
25 and urging the administration to work harder.

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Thank you very much. This hearing is closed.

[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 April 1, 2018