

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 1
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

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September 18, 2025
Start: 10:08 a.m.
Recess: 12:03 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - 8TH FLOOR - HEARING
ROOM 1

B E F O R E: Shaun Abreu, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chris Banks
David M. Carr
Julie Menin
Sandy Nurse
Sandra Ung
Inna Vernikov
Susan Zhuang

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Eric Dinowitz

A P P E A R A N C E S

Anthony Pennolino, Chief of Department at the New York City Department of Sanitation

Jeff Pitts, Chief of Cleaning and Collection at the New York City Department of Sanitation

Joshua Goodman, Deputy Commissioner of Public Affairs and Customer Experience

Jenille Scott, Climate Director at Align

Eric Goldstein, New York City Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council

Lacey Tauber, representing Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso

Justin Wood, Director of Policy at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Erin Piscopink, Co-Chair of the New York City BID Association

Andrew Dahl, Vice President of Emergency Preparedness and Response at the Greater New York Hospital Association

Josh Haraf, Market Vice President for Action Carting, subsidiary of Interstate Waste Services

Josh Carrero, Business Manager of Local 108

Christopher Leon Johnson, self

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

David Biderman, President of Biderman Consulting

Lew Dubuque, National Waste and Recycling
Association

Charles Dippolito, Jr., owner of Approved Storage
and Waste Hauling

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 4

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. This is a
3 microphone check for the Committee on Sanitation and
4 Solid Waste Management. Today's date is September 18,
5 2025. Location is 250 Broadway, 8th Floor, Hearing
6 Room 1, recorded by Ginelle Yearwood.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. Welcome
8 to today's New York City Council hearing for the
9 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.

10 Please silence all cell phones and
11 electronic devices and do not approach the dais.

12 If you wish to participate in today's
13 hearing, please fill out an appearance card with the
14 Sergeant-at-Arms.

15 Without further ado, Chair Abreu, we're
16 ready to begin.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: [GAVEL] Good morning,
18 everyone. Welcome to the Committee on Sanitation and
19 Solid Waste Management. Thank you, Members of the
20 Committee, for joining us today. I'd also like to
21 thank the members of the public who are here to
22 testify.

23 To minimize disruption, please place
24 electronic devices on vibrate or silent mode.

25

The purpose of today's hearing is to look into DSNY's work to address cleanliness across the city's streets and sidewalks. We will also be looking at four pieces of legislation.

Street cleanliness is an issue that affects each of us. It is important not only for aesthetics and general quality of life, it is paramount to our individual and collective safety and health, both physically and mentally. Poor sanitation poses greater risks for the transmission of disease and pathogens, especially in cities like ours, which have high human population densities. We know that prioritizing sanitation improves stormwater management, promotes economic development, and heightens community dignity. Poor sanitation is linked with a lower state of emotional well-being. Many of us can relate. Cluttered environments and lack of organization can exacerbate mental tension. In addition to the millions of New Yorkers who must navigate the city every day, New York City's tourism industry drives people from all over the world to visit, and when they see the city's condition, they decide whether they wish to come back. For all New Yorkers to enjoy sound physical and mental health and

the wide range of opportunities available in the city, we must ensure a high baseline level of cleanliness at all times.

In addition to oversight, we will be hearing four bills today, the first of which is Intro. Number 536, sponsored by Council Member Justin Brannan, which would require certain stores that sell food for off-premises consumption, such as grocery stores, to post notices on the food donation web portal regarding excess food they have available for donation at least once per month. Stores would also be required to arrange for the retrieval of the food that they are donating and to make a reasonable effort to arrange for the transportation of such food if requested by the recipient. The agencies would be required to submit a report to the Mayor and the Speaker of the Council detailing the results of available food on the web portal and whether that food is expected to meet the demands of city residents in the coming year.

After that, we have Intro. Number 1279, sponsored by Council Member Diana Ayala, which would delay until August 1st, 2028, the effective date of rules adopted by DSNY which prohibit a supplemental

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

7

sanitation service provider from placing refuse or recycling next to a public litter basket and instead be placed in rigid receptacles with tight-fitting lids.

We will also be hearing Intro. Number 1349, sponsored by Council Member Eric Dinowitz, which would exempt generators of regulated medical waste from being required to engage in commercial waste collection agreements with private waste carting companies serving the city's commercial waste zones program.

Finally, we have Intro. Number 1370, sponsored by Council Member Althea Stevens, which would require DSNY to establish an online mechanism for citizens to submit information and sworn statements of potential illegal dumping of refuse onto any public or private space when carried out during commercial activity and through the use of a vehicle.

I look forward to the dialogue regarding these bills today.

I would like to thank everyone on my team for their work on this legislation and oversight hearing preparations.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

8

I'll first pass the floor to Council
Members who are, my apologies, they are not here. And
now we will now turn over to the Committee Counsel to
administer the oath.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning. Chief
Jeff Pitts, Chief Anthony Pennolino, and Deputy
Commissioner Josh Goodman, please raise your right
hands.

Thank you. Do you affirm to tell the
truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,
before the Council Members and to respond honestly to
Council Member questions?

ADMINISTRATION: (INAUDIBLE)

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may
begin your testimony when ready.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Good morning, Chair
Abreu and Members of the Committee on Sanitation and
Solid Waste Management. I am Anthony Pennolino, Chief
of Department at the New York City Department of
Sanitation. I am joined today by Chief of Cleaning
Operations, Jeff Pitts, and by Joshua Goodman, Deputy
Commissioner of Public Affairs and Customer
Experience. When I joined the Department as a
sanitation worker more than 20 years ago, the nature

of our work was very different. With less technology, less data analysis, and bureaucratic red tape, that meant some areas were not regularly cleaned. Every Sanitation wanted to work harder and deliver to the city, but that was hampered by a status quo that accepted less than perfect conditions in large parts of the city. Those days are over. In recent years, we have doubled down on these core cleaning functions with significant additional resources while also adding several new initiatives. The creation of Targeted Neighborhood Task Force, Highway Unit, Precision Cleaning Unit, and Graffiti Unit have been incredibly gratifying, as has the addition of specialized equipment to sweep our expanding network of protected bike lanes. Though there is more to do, as the parent of a young child, I wake up every day and feel pride at the quality of life this Department is now working to deliver.

Allow me to provide a few examples. In October of 2022, the Adams Administration kicked off the Trash Revolution. Effective April 2023, set-out times for both residential and commercial waste became 8 p.m. instead of 4 p.m., one of the earliest set-out times in the country. Containerized waste

would be set out two hours earlier at 6 p.m., encouraging people to use containers. DSNY also changed our operations to collect more of the trash earlier and together. This ended a practice by which one-fifth of the trash was left out for almost a full day.

Just over one year ago, container rules went into effect for all businesses of every type in New York City. These rules require businesses to get their trash off the streets and into secured bins. We wrote 70,000 warnings to businesses as this rule went into effect. We have written tens of thousands of summonses since. This has resulted in broad compliance. Restaurants, delis, shops, and other businesses on our commercial corridors now use bins to keep their streets clean and free of millions of pounds of trash.

The first containerization requirement for residential buildings in more than 50 years went into effect November 12, 2024. All buildings with one to nine residential units are now required to use bins. This can be either their own or the official NYC bin. This program was designed thoughtfully so that these discounted bins would be a reasonable

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

11

responsibility for most New York City property owners as part of the Trash Revolution. To date, New Yorkers have purchased over 900,000 of these bins at www.bin.nyc or at NYC Home Depot locations. These bins have fundamentally altered the look and feel of our streets, replacing piles of black trash bags that attracted the rats and were unsightly, smelly obstacles to pedestrians. These bins may look like simple pieces of plastic, but they have led to double digit percentage decreases in rat sightings citywide with sightings falling eight straight months in a row. Starting June 2026, this will be the only bin permitted for lower density residential trash to facilitate safer, cleaner collection.

Containerization for all businesses and for one to nine unit residential buildings accounts for 70 percent of trash already covered by containerization requirements. We have a plan for the remaining 30 percent which is already in action. We are currently collecting trash from 1,100 stationary on-street containers called Empire bins in Manhattan Community District 9 as part of the first full district containerization pilot. The pilot has taken those huge piles of trash bags generated by the

largest buildings off the streets and instead is storing them in secure containers just like you would see in Europe, South America, or Asia. As Mayor Adams and Acting Commissioner Lohan announced this week, we plan to expand this pilot to Brooklyn Community District 2 in the coming months. This containerization initiative for large buildings is happening faster than anyone thought possible.

While the Department of Sanitation will never enforce for enforcement's sake, during the last several years we have worked to hold property owners accountable for compliance with the very basic requirements around cleanliness. Property owners, our partners in maintaining street cleanliness, are required to maintain a clean sidewalk, to remove litter and debris from the first 18 inches into the street, and to set out waste at the proper time in the proper receptacles. We target ongoing enforcement in the highest density parts of our city, doubling down on this in the Council District designated rat mitigation zones.

In addition to enforcing the basic rules of cleanliness outside every property in the city, we have implemented new strategies to combat two

specific quality-of-life offenses. The first is our camera enforcement approach on the ongoing problem of illegal dumping. Illegal dumping is defined in the law as a disposal from a vehicle of at least one cubic yard of material, approximately two large trash bags. This occurs in areas that dumpers consider to be out of the way, like dead-end streets, underpasses, and perhaps worst of all, alongside cemeteries. For the first part of my career at DSNY, the Department did not have a meaningful enforcement strategy against the crime of illegal dumping. We just cleaned and cleaned over and over again, while violators continue to afflict neighborhoods like East New York, Glendale, and Hunts Point. We have significantly stepped up illegal dumping surveillance under the Adams Administration. Each illegal dumping summons starts at 4,000 dollars. The violator is required to pay the cost of cleaning up the mess. Importantly, we impound the vehicles that are used to break the law, and both fines and storage fees must be paid before it is returned.

We are also using new strategies against abandoned or derelict vehicles. For years, complaints about these conditions would fall through the cracks

because of bureaucratic confusion about whether a specific vehicle was the responsibility of DSNY or NYPD. We have cut through these black holes of bureaucracy by working with the NYPD to create an interagency abandoned vehicle task force. This task force has led thousands of additional vehicles removed from the streets, as reflected in the MMR.

But there are strategic gaps in our enforcement authority. Areas where the Department of Sanitation does not have the tools we need to do our job. And the Council has the chance to fill those gaps with legislation that has been introduced. We strongly support the passage of Intro. 11, sponsored by Council Member Bottcher, which will expand the hours of the day that DSNY may enforce commercial cleanliness rules. I will speak about this in more detail later in this testimony, but DSNY is disappointed today's hearing does not include a discussion of this bill, and we urge this Committee to add it to the upcoming hearing to support your stated goal of increased street cleanliness.

I do want to thank the Council for its support of State legislation to increase enforcement authority around alternate side parking. While the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

15

State legislation did not pass this year, we will continue to advocate for Albany to support clean streets by passing this necessary legislation. We appreciate your support.

I know many of you are rightfully concerned about selfish dog owners not picking up after their pets. As my colleagues have said here before, it is nearly impossible for us to enforce the law requiring dog owners to remove their pet's waste from the sidewalk because enforcement personnel has to visually observe the dog owner fail to remove that waste. We understand this continues to be an important quality-of-life issue in many areas of the city. We have done patrols in areas in the highest number of complaints. We are exploring the use of mobile cameras to increase enforcement against these careless residents. We have also done and continue to do several ad campaigns and educational outreach on this issue.

Early in my career, DSNY did not have resources to clean areas such as medians, step streets, or underpasses on a regular schedule. No one was sure which agency was responsible for cleaning them in a sustained way. The status quo answer to the

question, why doesn't DSNY clean these areas would be, well, that's the way it's always been. Status quo thinking is over. Since the Administration created the first DSNY Highway Unit in 2023, we have added specialized highway cleaning equipment and implemented important highway safety trainings. This new unit has now cleaned 15 million pounds of debris off the highways, areas that visitors to our city often see first. Another new unit, our Targeted Neighborhood Task Force, provides regular cleaning to over 1,700 areas that have been left out of prior plans. I guarantee there are several in every one of your Districts, areas where your constituents are finally seeing results, from Snake Road to the West 230th Street Step Streets to Conduit Boulevard.

We took management of the City's Graffiti Removal Program, increasing the number of 3-1-1 service requests closed by 80 percent.

And our Precision Cleaning Initiative is meeting 21st century challenges. Just this summer, we deployed to the Hub in the Bronx with a mobile command bus to ensure real-time cleaning as part of the interagency effort to restore safety and quality of life to that major intersection.

While this has always been a data-driven agency, we are using new technology to streamline public space cleaning. For decades, cleaning condition logs were maintained manually and locally. We have removed barriers between districts and created one single digital log that is used across the agency. This means more areas of your District serviced in even a more timely manner.

There's one more thing each of you can do to help. Rethinking how the trash is stored does not apply to waste set out for collection, but to public space trash as well. DSNY is proud that New York City's street corners now have approximately 5,000 litter baskets of the future, which we call the Better Bin. The old green mesh basket has become an icon over decades of use, but is an icon of a different type. The old baskets are full of holes that let garbage juice and odors out while welcoming rats in. The new baskets have no holes for the first eight inches and much smaller openings throughout. They are harder to misuse, take longer to fill up, and are far easier for Sanitation workers to service. This is in addition to a modular design that means only the least expensive part ever needs to be

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

18

replaced. We appreciate our Council partners who have purchased Better Bins over the past two fiscal years with their discretionary funds. We are excited to work with your offices in the next year to keep Better Bins rolling out. We look forward to discussing other discretionary cleanliness spending that may work for your Districts.

I will turn now to three bills being considered today. Intro. 1349, sponsored by Council Member Dinowitz, would exempt any business that produces medical waste from being required to participate in the landmark and groundbreaking Commercial Waste Zone Program. This program is getting real results for workers' rights, for pedestrian safety, and for sustainability, including by reducing vehicle miles traveled and emissions produced by commercial carters. Medical waste itself, as handled by specialized carters, is already exempt. Under this proposal, a pharmacy or hospital or veterinary practice that generates any amount of medical waste, large or small, wouldn't need to comply with this important piece of safety and workers' rights legislation. That means you might have major areas of a commercial waste zone around

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

19

hospital systems or clinics where the rules don't apply at all. That means more trucks on the road and more fumes in the air. The commercial waste zone system is a complete reimagining of a troubled industry. The idea of exempting all the regular trash from a place that also produces medical waste would be the first step in eliminating the entire program. In walking back this law, just as it is starting to get results, if that is the Council's intention, then certainly it is your right to proceed. But if you do not wish to undo the commercial waste zone program, then please oppose this bill as we do.

Intro. 536, sponsored by Council Member Brannan, will require certain retail food stores to post notices on a food donation web portal concerning the availability of excess food and arranging for the transportation and retrieval of such food. DSNY is interested in any opportunity to keep food waste out of landfill and to achieve this goal. Through the NYC Food Portal at DonateNYC, we already connect businesses and non-profits with excess food and organizations that can be used or redistributed. However, it would require additional staff and resources to mandate over 15,000 retail businesses to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

20

post food donations once a month. We support the spirit of the bill, and we hope to work with Council Member Brannan to align the bill with the Department's existing resources.

Intro. 1370, sponsored by Council Member Stevens, would create an online submission system for complaints about illegal dumping. This already exists via 3-1-1. Googling NYC 3-1-1 illegal dumping should take you right to the page. We are happy to work with the Council Member on any changes to the existing system, but do not feel that new legislation is necessary.

Intro. 1279, sponsored by Council Member Ayala, would delay containerization requirements for supplemental service providers by three years, to August 2028. DSNY has already engaged in more than one year of outreach around these rules, and this Council has allocated 5 million dollars to BIDs and supplemental service providers in order to facilitate implementation. As you all know, businesses and many residents are required to containerize their waste. Extending this requirement to supplemental service providers has been done slowly, thoughtfully, and with substantial resources. Legalizing the placement

of this trash in bags right on the street for three more years is a mistake, and we oppose this bill in order to get the streets clean.

As mentioned earlier, despite the stated goal of this hearing around street cleanliness, Intro. 11, which would expand the hours of the day that DSNY may enforce commercial cleanliness rules, is not being heard today. I want to be clear. Right now, all the commercial cleanliness rules can only be enforced during two hours each day. That limits our ability to keep every one of your Districts clean via quality-of-life enforcement. Extending these hours, as Intro. 11 seeks to do, would give DSNY more tools to do our job, and we again register our regret at the missed opportunity that is taking place by not hearing it today. This hearing includes multiple bills that would allow more trash on the streets, and does not include a bill that would allow us to take steps against this trash. It is very unfortunate.

We look forward to your questions and the opportunity to discuss street cleanliness concerns and strategies with you. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you,
Commissioner.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

22

I would like to recognize that we've been
joined by Council Members Carr, Ung, and Dinowitz.

Council Member Dinowitz, I believe you
have a statement to make.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: I do. Thank you.
Thank you, Chair Abreu. Thank you, DSNY. It's great
to see you here today in this beautiful new room. I
feel like I'm on an airplane with a screen right in
front of me. It's beautiful.

I'm here today to advocate for my bill,
Introduction 1349, which I introduced with Hospitals
Committee Chair Mercedes Narcisse. This bill would
exempt generators of medical waste from being
required to engage in commercial waste collection
agreements with private waste carting companies
serving the City's Commercial Waste Zone Program. As
we know, Phase 2 of the Commercial Waste Zone
Program's rollout is scheduled to be completed by the
end of the fall for this year. Phase 2 establishes
two zones in the Bronx, Bronx East and Bronx West,
which a significant portion of my District is
included. As part of the rollout, all businesses in
the Bronx must enter into a contract with a zone-
authorized private carter before November 30th of

'25, or they'll be assigned a carter at the maximum allowable rate. With this significant change on the horizon, many hospitals in the Bronx and New York City have expressed concern about how these changes may worsen their financial situations in the immediate future. Hospitals in New York City are facing a crisis. With the passage of that bill in Washington, our hospitals are set to face massive budget pitfalls with significant cuts to Medicaid, which so many of our constituents rely on for basic care and so many of our hospitals rely on for funding. In this current environment, burdening hospitals with further costs could result in reduction in patient care, something we all want to avoid, especially those of us who represent the Bronx, which has some of the worst healthcare outcomes in the entire city and in the United States. This bill will support our hospitals and patients by reducing administrative costs associated with the new requirements under CWZ program. Under CWZ, hospital systems like Montefiore, which has multiple campuses across multiple zones, many of which are in my District, would be required to contract with a separate carter for each zone, significantly

increasing their waste management costs. The intent of the bill is to ensure big hospital systems can efficiently manage their waste in a cost-effective manner so their money can go towards caring for patients while ensuring labor standards are adhered to. The bill is chiefly focused on ensuring an essential public service, health care, is not on the chopping block as our hospital systems endure the draconian cuts from our federal government.

I want to once again thank Chair Abreu for including my bill on Committee's agenda today, DSNY for being here, and encourage all of my Colleagues to sign on and support this legislation.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'm now going to read Council Member Stevens' statement on the record.

Thank you, Chair, and thank you to my Colleagues who have signed on to 1370. I'm proud to bring forward two important bills today that address the issues that too often go overlooked but have a major impact on the daily lives of New Yorkers. Intro. 1370 will amend the City's Administrative Code to require the Department of Sanitation to establish an easy-to-use online system for reporting illegal dumping when it involves a commercial vehicle. Right

now, too many New Yorkers try to do the right thing by calling 3-1-1, only to have their cases closed without real solution. And worse, many times those complaints don't even make it to DSNY. This bill would change that by creating a direct line to Sanitation, ensuring complaints aren't lost in the system, and that residents can actually see action taken. Far too often our neighborhoods, especially those that are underserved, are left to deal with the consequences of illegal dumping, unsafe conditions, unsanitary streets, and environmental hazards that undermine our quality of life. This legislation empowers residents to take an active role in protecting their communities by giving them a reliable way to report illegal dumping and hold bad actors accountable. It's about giving our neighbors the tools they need to keep their streets clean, safe, and livable.

I want to extend my gratitude to my Colleagues for supporting this effort, and I hope everyone will vote in favor. This is an important piece of legislation for our community and for the health and safety of all New Yorkers citywide.

I'm now going to proceed to questions.

All right, to kick us off, I want to begin by speaking about Intro. 1279. This bill delays for a third time rules requiring that BIDs and supplemental sanitation providers place their trash into receptacles instead of leaving trash in plastic bags on the sidewalks. Over the last two years, our City has made remarkable progress getting trash bags off our streets and into containers, and we've seen that pay off. Our sidewalks are cleaner, we're seeing fewer rats, and our neighborhoods are becoming more comfortable. Intro. 1279 would significantly delay this progress, significantly delay this progress. Establishing a giant carve-out for BIDs to continue leaving trash on our walkways, to continue feeding the rat population, to leave our streets an eyesore. In this year's budget, the City Council allocated 5 million dollars to BIDs and supplemental sanitation providers to ease the transition to trash containerization. Those funds are in the process of being allocated and yet this bill would add a three-year delay to set-out rules. It sends the wrong message to spend 5 million dollars on containerization and then effectively make those

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

27

funds, taxpayer dollars, free money with no strings attached until 2028. Homeowners, businesses, and property managers have already stepped up to containerize their trash and they have done so with the understanding that everyone would play their part so we all have the opportunity to live in a cleaner, healthier city. The proposed legislation is a monumental carve-out in the center of our City's sanitation efforts and a classic example of bad government at work. As DSNY is responsible for administering this rule, I have a series of questions about the implications. My first question, Commissioner, is BID trash special?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: I'm sorry, special? No, no, BID trash is not special. Trash is trash.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Does it automatically repel rodents by magic?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: No, it does not.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Do rats treat BID trash differently from how they treat commercial residential trash or is it all the same to them?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: No, Chair. Rats love all the trash.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

28

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So it's all the same
to them?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: If we hung a sign on
BID trash and said, dear rats, please leave this bag
alone. Would they obey?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: I don't think they
would. No, they would not.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Did DSNY spring this
rule on BIDs overnight or have they had more than a
year's notice?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: No. Well, this was not
done overnight. This was a thoughtful process and we
worked extremely hard with all the BIDs and
supplemental service providers.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: More than a year's
notice?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Did DSNY refuse to
help BIDs with trash management or did they offer an
immense amount of flexibility and support?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Not at all, Chair. No
one was refused.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What's better for public health, more trash on the streets or less trash on the streets?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: That would be less trash on the streets, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Are you aware of any parts of the city that wants to see more trash in rats?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: In my experience, no.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So this legislation sounds like a bad idea?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yeah. Sounds like that.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: All right. I'm ready to proceed to the next set of questions. Thank you for that.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The 2023 Mayor's Management Report announced the suspension of the Street Cleanliness Grading Program administered by the Mayor's Office of Operations and promised a successor program. Could you please provide a date by which the successor program will become operational?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you for the question, Chair. The Mayor's Office of Operations

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

30

actually already resumed the field inspections and the rating of city streets and sidewalks, and we are currently working with the Mayor's Office of Operations in fine-tuning that inspection data and the process now.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Which agency will perform this program?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: That'd be the Mayor's Office of Operations.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Will the program include on-the-ground inspections as in the last program or will different information or data be used to score an area?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yes, Chair. The basis of the program would still go on for field inspections.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Can you please describe the differences between the upcoming successor program and the earlier Street Cleanliness Grading Program? And what factors will be taken into consideration when scoring an area?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Sure. Thank you for the question, Chair. So, there are a couple of different things compared to the old program. For starters, there'll be more transparency and inter-agency data

sharing. There'll also be more block faces that would get rated by this new program. It's also set to rate and get the expected realities and expectations of what the public sees. And there's also going to be some public sharing data scheduled to deploy, I believe, in 2026, something that the old program did not have.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: In FY2024, how many abandoned vehicles did DSNY remove from City streets?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: FY2024 was 7,938 vehicles.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: In FY2024, how many days were met with unplanned suspension and alternate side parking regulations?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Chair, that would be seven unplanned and 40 planned due to holidays.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What led to the unplanned suspensions?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: In 2024, it'd be five due to snow and two due to heavy rain or possible flooding.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So in my District, on the Upper West Side on 96th Street, the New York Times just covered a story about folks constantly

engaging in pigeon feeding at the median on 96th Street and Broadway. I can't tell you. So what happens is during the day, there's a lot of pigeon feeding. I've seen a fair share of them. I'm not going to stop folks in the process because I'm not an enforcement officer. But sometimes I may get in trouble by my team for telling folks not to do it. The truth is that during the day, there's a lot of pigeon feeding. But then later in the day, the excess of the pigeon feeding, it stays because pigeons don't eat all the food and then rats just come on in and they have a parade. What can we do? My constituents are asking what can we do to address the pigeon feeding crisis on 96th Street at the median? If there's any littering enforcement that we can do on a constant basis, I'm sure we'd go a long way to addressing that issue there. Can you speak to that?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Sure. Thank you for that question, Chair. Yeah, so upon our investigation, we saw the same. A lot of the issues were due to feeding of the pigeons and the wildlife. This property is a shared location between MTA and the Parks Department. But of course, we do go in and supplementally help where we can. What constituents can do is, of course,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

33

regular cleaning habits. We can also go in and try to do some enforcement. Enforcing that type of summons is difficult because we have to visually observe it happen and also gain ID from the person as well. But we could definitely go in and try to do that as much as possible. And then, of course, for the surrounding area as well, for the businesses and building owners around the area can also help in aiding the situation by keeping clean streets, keeping clean sidewalks, and adhering to the set-out rules as well.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Can the agency make a commitment to send more resources there for enforcement, or are you not in position to do that at the moment?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: I'm happy to work with you on that, Council Member. We can try to send more enforcement assets there.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah. My Upper West Side constituents are really asking for that. I really appreciate your commitment to work with our office on that.

Regarding litter baskets, in the FY26 Executive Budget, litter basket service was given a 29.7-million-dollar enhancement in FY26, increasing

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

34

to 31.2 million in FY29 and the outyears. Which
litter basket service operations or programs will
DSNY allocate these resources to?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So that funding went to
baselining an additional 365 basket trucks citywide,
which would ensure the minimum of two-time service in
the commercial corridor.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'd like to recognize
that we've been joined by Council Member Menin and
Nurse and Banks and Susan Zhuang.

How does DSNY respond to litter baskets
which are found to be repeatedly overflowing?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, we get complaints
through multiple different outlets, whether it be
through 3-1-1, Council Member, or field observation
that our staff does and sees and reports. Typically,
whenever we get those complaints, DSNY will send a
supervisor to the location and first investigate to
see why this basket is overflowing. There could be a
number of different reasons. If it is overflowing,
first we want to find a good cause as to why it's
overflowing. Does it need more service? Does it need
to be put on a different shift? And sometimes we do
see that the basket is just being misused and we've

seen progress and we've been successful when we remove a basket from a certain area, the place does get cleaner.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So, do you find that given the enhancement in litter basket servicing that the number of complaints for overflow litter baskets has been reduced?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, as of right now the overflow baskets are pretty much flat, and we do look at our routes multiple times throughout the year and alter where necessary.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And how does DSNY determine routes for litter basket collection?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Routes are determined based off the need on a particular basket. Some baskets need to be serviced more than others, and they are serviced through designated basket truck service and also through their regularly scheduled refuse collection. Any basket that's along a regularly scheduled collection route is to be serviced by the collection group. And we do look at the routes multiple times and enhance where necessary.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

36

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'm going to ask a set of questions on containerization and then after that I'll pass on to my Colleagues for questions if they have any.

DSNY has begun the installation of on-street containers, also known as Empire bins, to hold residential trash and recycling between collection days, and congrats on the expansion to Brooklyn Community District 2. It's exciting. Which party will be held responsible for working to keep the areas around these Empire bins clean?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you for your question, Chair. Good question. Similar to current rules, the building owner or property owner is responsible for keeping a clean sidewalk 18 inches into the street and 18 inches around the Empire Bin, and DSNY continues their cleaning efforts on our street cleaning regulations as well.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And so beyond the 18 inches, would DSNY be in charge of the other of the other inches around the bin?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I've noticed in my District, sometimes the bollards comes off, cars are

driving into the bollards. What's the plan there? And how quickly are they replaced when they get trampled on?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thanks, Chair. So those bollards are placed strategically to try to keep those cars from being too close to the bins so it doesn't impede our ability to service those bins, but we have seen cases where cars do park on top of them and they do get damaged. The damage is reported to us by our crews, our supervisors on field observations or by members of the public and we do dispatch people to look at the damage, survey it, and either repair it or replace it as soon as possible.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And in some situations, I've seen the door to these bins stay wide open sometimes, I think unintentionally. Have you got a lot of complaints of that or is that a minimum? Because I know they obviously, it's hard to access without a key card, but sometimes they've stayed open and I'm curious to know what level of complaints you're getting on that.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, I personally never received any complaints of a door remaining open after it's being used. If you've seen that, please

contact me right away and I would definitely look directly at it immediately. But these bins are designed to close automatically after it's being used and lock automatically. If for some reason that mechanism fails and it doesn't close or lock, we get an alert and we would dispatch out to the location to see what's going on.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What mechanism does DSNY use to clean the Empire bins?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So right now we have a vendor that goes out. It's scheduled to go out four times a year. We just completed our first round of cleaning and they would be required to power wash inside, outside, and make sure underneath the bin is clean as well.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Has DSNY ever contemplated the use of power washing as a broader concept outside of these bins like power washing sidewalks, for instance?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Chair, no. DSNY does not power wash or any other means of cleaning around the city.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

39

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What is DSNY's plan for the Empire bins in M9 after the pilot there concludes?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, we've seen some tremendous success with the Empire bins and we are getting some positive feedback from members of the public and building staff. We're going to continue to track that progress and eventually one day to make this be the way of the future and strategize to make Empire bins go citywide.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How will DSNY prioritize which areas are containerized first? And will the Agency prioritize areas which are next to Districts that have already been containerized? For example, will Districts next to M9 be prioritized for subsequent phase of containerization? Because the way I see it is you containerize one neighborhood. Rats are going to go to the surrounding neighborhood after that, right, because they're going to try to find their food source, would be my expectation. And then the neighborhood south and north, west or east of the neighborhood that's containerized is going to bear the brunt so I guess I'm just trying to figure out if

you guys are factoring that in in terms of which
neighborhood gets containerized next.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Sure. Thank you, Chair.

As we stated, we did just expand to Brooklyn District
2. I'm going to pass to my colleague, Deputy
Commissioner Goodman, to expand on that question.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Thank you,
Chief. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our understanding, we're
not rodentologists...

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Same here.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Don't
commute more than a couple of blocks. And that when
you make changes in one neighborhood, it really leads
to sustained generational change. That's our
understanding. Certainly, proximity and routing are
one of the things we look at. You know, the
residential collection is, the District boundaries
are set. It actually doesn't help in any way to do a
neighboring District. It makes no difference. It
doesn't hurt. It just doesn't make a difference. But
the schools, there may be cross-district routing. And
so that is an area where it is one of several factors
we would consider. But other things like size of the
district, density of the district, housing type are

likely going to be more important in the rollout.

That said, the goal has always been to get this citywide. So, whether a district is third or fifth or seventh, it's moving forward.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Can you please describe DSNY's current plan to comply with Local Law 36, which requires DSNY to establish a reimbursement program for eligible building owners who purchase a New York City fit?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Sure. As you may have seen just this morning, the specific details of this program were announced. I apologize for cutting it so close to the hearing. But Mayor Adams committed 14 million dollars to getting this done, to making sure that all eligible homeowners, that's property owners in one- to two-unit buildings who also received the STAR or e-STAR tax exemption in either tax year 2024 or 2025, receive either funds to purchase one free bin or a rebate for one free bin already purchased. The specific implementation plan was announced this morning, and what's happening is all eligible property owners who bought a bin through bins.nyc or by phone, meaning bought it directly from the vendor, are just going to receive a check. In

October, they're going to get a check. Everybody who hasn't bought one yet or who bought one, but maybe from Home Depot where they're also available, will be able to purchase one or show proof of purchase, self-attestation, proof of purchase, just to check yes, I bought it, and then receive a check reimbursing them. So, the key point here is if you have not bought this bin yet, now is the time. By June of 2026, every one-to nine- residential unit building needs to be using the official NYC bin. It is the cheapest, best, high quality bin of its kind available. It is going to facilitate faster, safer, cleaner collection, and now that these checks are in the mail, so to speak, we really encourage everybody to go ahead and place their orders at www.bins.nyc.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What is the status of backlog orders and deliveries for containers from Otto?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: At this time, there is no backlog of orders. There may have been delivery delays in the spring when there was a surge of orders all at once. We never felt it was a backlog. You know, this is not Amazon, right? It's not two-day delivery. But people were getting their

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

43

bins, you know, two weeks, three weeks. There were a few outlier cases that were longer. At this point, though, deliveries are pretty much in a very narrow window, and anybody who has an issue can call 3-1-1 and we'll check on the status.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And my last question for now, does DSNY have any data available regarding diseases or bacteria originating from rats which have affected New York City residents? If so, what trends does the data support?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: No, we don't track that data. We'd have to defer to the Department of Health.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. I'd also like to recognize we've been joined by Council Member Vernikov.

I would like to pass it on to Council Member Nurse for her questions followed by Council Member Banks.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, everyone. I just have a couple questions.

One, I just want to thank you all for your help on a couple hot areas. And thank you, Chief

Pitts, for your support on Murdoch-Wyckoff and
Broadway Junction.

One, I wanted to ask, we know that the
Compost Collection Program enforcement (INAUDIBLE)
was canceled for political reasons. I'm wondering how
soon after the November election will it come back
on?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Thank you,
Council Member. It's nice to see you. And I also
wanted to say I appreciated your commemoration of
yesterday's anniversary. It was very nice to see
those pictures.

Obviously, we have a difference of
opinion about the rationale behind that policy, so
I'll just state that for the record and then answer
your specific question. In April of 2025, we began...

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: No. Just because I
don't have much time, if you could just say when you
estimate...

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: We have
stated previously that full summonsing will resume no
earlier than the end of this calendar year. We have a
number of qualitative factors that we're looking at
to determine whether January or later is the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

45

appropriate date. The fact is we are still writing summonses. It's a very important point. There is a belief that summonses are not being written. Summonses for the most egregious repeat offenders...

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: How many summonses have you written?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Are absolutely being written. I believe we have that. It's in the several dozen range. I want to make sure we get you the most...

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Several dozen or several thousand?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Several dozen.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Several dozen.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: To the most egregious repeat offenders. And the fact is we're seeing tremendous compliance. You know, every week since April 1st, we've collected between 4 and 5 million pounds of compostable material at the curb citywide. Prior to April, we'd had one week in history where we cleared 3 million pounds.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. I appreciate that. I just wanted to know the date. Thank you.

And then for containers, I guess I'm just wondering, I know that we just spent a lot of questioning on this, but I just want to encourage you all to look at areas where for example, I'll mention Fulton Street in my District where residents live on that street. It's a busy commercial corridor and there just isn't space for their personal trash containers. And so if we could prioritize containerization at the scale that you're rolling out in those areas where people are struggling to be in compliance with the law, I think that would be really helpful to kind of stop some of the oppositional chatter about it.

And then lastly, on the legislation around the health care facilities, I just want to personally say that I agree with you all. I think we should not be rolling back this or putting any delays at all on this legislation that's been taken so long to just get in effect. From my understanding, a lot of this waste is already exempt, and so I don't understand why we need to expand that. Everybody's going to have to participate in helping us divert waste, sort waste, and make this work, and so I just want to say that I'm not in support of that

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

47

legislation and I would like to see, I just want to understand a little bit more where it's coming from. I'm sorry if I missed the opening remarks from the Member.

So, thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Of course, Council Member Banks.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you, Chair, and thank you to Sanitation for coming this morning.

I particularly want to thank you for the work you've done with my office along Linden Boulevard and particularly also on East 94th and Avenue D. Obviously, consistency is important.

And specifically, I want to talk about the cameras. DSNY has cameras in place to monitor illegal dumping. How many of these incidents of dumping are actually being captured in these cameras? And of those, how many result in enforcement actions?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you for that question, Council Member. I will start by saying, obviously DSNY takes every aspect of sanitation seriously, but illegal dumping is something that is the most offensive thing someone could do to someone else's community.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

48

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Do you have a number of the amount of enforcement actions that have been taken?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yes. So, in since FY 2020, there's been 18 provided, 62 total, 18... I'm sorry, you asked for the total amount of?

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yes. How many incidents of dumping are actually being captured on the cameras and, of those, how many result in enforcement actions?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Bear with me one second. I'll have to get back on these.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. No, if you can get back, I mean it would be important that those numbers are being reported to the individual Council Members.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: There's a range of them. We make about 300-ish in pounds per year for illegal dumping and we can get you more specific numbers, but that's the right ballpark of how many times we take somebody's car and charge them a minimum of 4,000 dollars.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay. Well specifically, DSNY, can you provide a report on the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

49

fees collected from dumping related infractions and also, how much revenue is being generated annually and where these funds go on directly?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yes, Chair. So, just to go back to the original question, which for the year-to-date 2025 was 299 in pounds and 359 summonses.

As far as the revenue since the start of FY 2020, there's been 1,461,620.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay. Obviously, if you can send that information to the Committee as well.

How many of the enforcement agents are currently assigned to monitor the dumping footage and has staffing for this function increased over the last few years and does the Department of Sanitation believe that the current staffing levels are efficient to meet the need?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, all Sanitation police are interchangeable and go into illegal dumping so there's not a specific unit, but we do have right now a sufficient number of people reviewing these cases.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Yeah. I know there's been instances where people are doing illegal

1 dumping and we've heard stories where their plates
2 are being covered. Is there any type of new
3 technology to still capture those folks who are doing
4 the illegal dumping? Because we know the problematic
5 areas where it's constantly being, you know, where
6 the dumping is constantly taking place and it seems
7 like as Sanitation is called saying next day, they're
8 back again dumping. So, if they can cover their
9 plates, they can continue to evade the cameras as a
10 deterrent. What is being done and what is being
11 explored to, you know, listen, I'm not asking for 100
12 percent, but what could be done further to capture
13 these folks or to hold these folks accountable?

15 CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you, Council
16 Member. So yeah, our technology did advance with the
17 license plate readers but like you stated sometimes
18 the license plates can be covered. In those
19 instances, if we see that a lot in a particular area,
20 we will go back to a traditional way of doing
21 stakeouts to try to catch the person in action
22 visually and we are actually just exploring the
23 opportunity for using drones and how that might be
24 impactful to this operation as well.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

51

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay. Thank you. I
just want to claim my time back.

When it comes to street conditions post-cleaning, we constantly get complaints that residents are saying that, especially those streets where they're complying and they're removing the cars, that the street cleaners aren't coming by and it's like nothing's being done after they move or they clean a particular block, the trash is still (TIMER CHIME) on the block so I want to know what are you exploring to see if, you know, the garbage can be cleaned a little more efficiently. Is there some type of vacuum system on the trucks? What is being done because it seems like the garbage is being kicked to the other side of the street or it's not being moved.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Thank you, Council Member. So, the mechanical broom picks up about 1,500 pounds of litter on an average shift. It doesn't really do anything is one of those persistent things that we always hear but then we say well where, when, and it's very difficult to get anyone to provide evidence that the mechanical broom is not doing what they... I think that it's what people are really speaking to is sort of a broader concern about

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

52

quality of life because when we go out and watch it,
it works. So, if there's a specific area that you're
concerned about...

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: I'll give you
(TIMER CHIME) some specific areas where they're
coming by, they're cleaning but it's being done in
vain, so if we can work on that and see how we can
get those areas clean so that the residents can be
some degree of satisfaction.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Council
Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: I greatly
appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member
Dinowitz.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you.
That's a very aggressive timer. I prefer the ding-
dong that we get in the Chambers. It's okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Ten more seconds.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you all.
Thank you, Chair. I thank you for being here.

I have a few just a few questions about
my legislation. Many hospital systems have already
consolidated hauling to improve efficiency and reduce

costs and their operations remain uniquely complex, often managing multiple waste streams that require different treatments. Can you explain about the conversations that you've had with the hospital systems and how you engage directly with the major hospital systems to understand these challenges and how the feedback is reflected in the commercial waste zone implementation plan?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: So, this outreach was done in several phases. Many years of those conversations took place before the law was passed in 2019, and that's why medical waste itself is exempted from being part of the commercial waste zone system. The issue at hand here is that there are upwards of 15,000 businesses in the city that produce some medical waste and also regular trash. So, the large hospital system, but also the veterinary clinic, the CVS, the dentist's office all of a sudden don't need commercial...

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: I don't mean to interrupt. I don't want to get...

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: That's why I'm speaking.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

54

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: And so I just want to ask about that because you mentioned it in your testimony. Does the Department then see a distinction between large hospital systems and small veterinary offices as it pertains to this legislation?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: No, sir. We see a distinction between residential and commercial trash. Commercial trash has been a wild west for many, many years, and rolling back for one industry would open the floodgates to saying that this landmark legislation should not move forward.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Well, it's for an industry that produces a particular type of waste. I mean, it's not about the industry. It's about the type of waste that's produced.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: And medical waste is exempted.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you. The other piece is the workers' rights, which I think we're all in agreement, very interested in, and in exempting medical waste in your original legislation, did you also exempt workers' rights from that type of waste?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

55

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Medical waste has to be handled by specialized equipment. There was a legitimate business reason for excluding it from the legislation to begin with. The idea of, you know, when you mentioned cost savings for the hospital systems, I mean, we can think of a million other examples gosh, maybe the cafeteria staff shouldn't have to be paid minimum wage minimum wage because that would save them money. Maybe there shouldn't be so many sprinklers in the hospitals because it's expensive to install them. This is landmark legislation that keeps our streets clean, our air clean, and sets minimum safety standards that are going to protect pedestrians, and exempting one industry is just the beginning of saying there's, you know, as you mentioned, there are quite a few in your District. Your District will be less safe if this legislation passes.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Well, I'm going to go ahead and disagree with you there. I mean we don't have the commercial waste zones yet so to somehow claim that my District would be less safe is a little out there. And I would also point out that you know, we're in agreement about the workers'

rights. My question was if you're already exempting medical waste, you are then saying you are exempting worker protections from one particular industry.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: No. Medical waste is a small specialized part of the waste stream, which is exempted for a legitimate safety reason, right? It needs specialized training and specialized equipment. Exempting the regular trash from producers of regulated medical waste would be, you'd be talking about potentially millions of pounds of waste per year handled by people who, under this bill, would not have guaranteed worker protections

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Okay. Thank you for your testimony.

I do want to ask about one other issue that Council Member Banks was talking about. My office allocated 60,000 dollars for illegal dumping cameras, and this is a serious issue in my District, particularly on Webster Avenue between 233rd Street and Gunner Road where we have tried time and again to get vehicles towed, to get enforcement action taken there, and one of the ways that we sought to address the cleanliness there was through illegal dumping cameras in various parts of the District. We even had

a nice photo op where we installed the camera with the then Commissioner. However, on numerous occasions, my office has reached out to DSNY to request the data and we have not received it and I will tell you the only thing we have received. We received a nice email that just said we've put up eight cameras, how great is that? We've put up eight cameras. I know you put up eight cameras because we funded them in my office, but the data we are repeatedly requesting is what is the impact of those cameras and, if we can meaningfully reduce illegal dumping and enforce illegal dumping rules, we would love to help in that endeavor, but DSNY has not been a partner in that so far in allowing us to determine whether that's the case or not. Can you provide me, my office with the data that we have requested over the past two years.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yeah. Council Member, I'll have that by close of business today.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: I appreciate that very much and in perpetuity, right, because this isn't one-off. We want to know from month to month And our constituents that we represent are sort of expecting that we are all working together to make

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

58

sure our city is a cleaner place, that we're doing our part, and so I would also ask that that on a monthly basis, any data be shared with us, any enforcement actions that were taken be shared with us.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: And relatedly, Council Member, we'll take a look at who provided you with that unsatisfactory information in the past.

COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you very much. It was none of you. Don't worry. Thank you very much. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Saved by the clock. I understand Council Member Vernikov has to run so I just want to give her the floor for questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you very much. Thank you for all the work you guys do in my District.

I think everyone knows regarding this issue with build-up under the train trestles so I just wanted to know if there are any plans to develop a city-wide strategy to combat the build-up under the train trestles.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you for that question, Council Member. So, if you're having a particular situation at a particular train trestle, we'd be happy to work with you on that, but we do use our existing resources such as our (INAUDIBLE) assets in those particular scenarios to grab any dump outs or any 3-1-1s that might come our way.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I mean, I think the issues with enforcement. We have cameras in some of the locations, right, and you guys come and clean it up, but 24 hours later, we're in the same situation so I'm just asking if there is a plan to develop a bigger city-wide strategy to combat this because obviously when we get constituent complaints, we call you guys and you do come clean it up. But this is a wider issue that I'm wondering how you're going to handle.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you for the question again. And just to clarify. I apologize. Is this a matter of illegal dumping under the train trestle or just regular litter and trash just so I can properly answer?

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Yeah, regular litter and trash, yes.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

60

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Okay, because you mentioned cameras. Is it about a camera?

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, I mean I think it's both, right? We have the cameras catching the license plate but the question is with enforcement

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Okay. So, yeah, we could expand our enforcement efforts there and see what's going on. In my experience in DSNY, we're no strangers to going to an area, cleaning something up, and then, like you said, 24 hours later, there's a mess there again, right, but that's not our goal. Our goal is to try to stop this from happening, and if that's going to require more enforcement in a particular area, we'd be happy to work with you on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But is there a citywide strategy to combat this, not just in my District but citywide?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yeah. So, the citywide strategy is with our illegal dumping program if it's a matter of illegal dumping, but if it's also a matter of just passer-byers, again we go back to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

61

traditional stakeouts deploying our Sanitation police
in those areas.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay Thank you.

And then would more electronic waste
drop-off locations and disposals be possible.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, we have multiple
different ways electronic waste can be disposed of
right now. We're happy to announce that we expanded
our drop-off sites from one day a week to three days
a week. They're now open Thursday, Friday, and
Saturday between the hours of 9 and 5 p.m. We also
have a scheduled safe disposal event, which is in
every borough once per year, and there are a couple
of other opportunities we can use that Deputy
Commissioner Goodwin could speak on.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Yeah. I'll
just add that in the largest buildings, 10 units and
more, can sign up for a free e-waste box in their
building and then you don't have to go anywhere. When
it's full, it gets picked up automatically. That's
called the E-cycle Program. It's on our website and
also via 3-1-1. And for many e-waste items, although
not as many as it should be, the retailers are

required to take it back and we have a list online as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay. Thank you.

And then one last question. Regarding implementation timeline on the new reimbursement in the recently passed law, do you guys have an idea in the timeline.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Yes, ma'am. We anticipate that most eligible homeowners will receive their checks in the month of October. And if you believe that you are eligible and you don't hear something during that time, you know, November rolls around and you haven't received your letter yet, please do call 3-1-1.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay. That's great to know. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member Zhuang.

COUNCIL MEMBER Zhuang: Thank you, Chair, and thank our Sanitation Department, everyone working very hard in my District, and I'm very happy to hear the news finally everyone will get reimbursed for the trash bins. I just wonder how people know when they're going to expect their check. If they did not get their check, what's the procedure they need to do

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

63

and which Department we should follow up, with
Sanitation or Finance? How to get the check
basically?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Absolutely,
Council Member. The program is being administered by
the Department of Finance, although you can always
reach out to us of course. We're happy to help. But
we anticipate that most eligible homeowners will
receive their checks or letters about the voucher
system in the month of October, so if early November
rolls around and you haven't heard anything yet, just
call 3-1-1, a resident can call 3-1-1 and check on
their eligibility.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Do we need to fill
out an additional form or anything?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: No. If
you're an eligible homeowner and you've already
purchased the bin from DSNY, you're just going to get
the check. I mean by the from the vendor directly.
You don't purchase from DSNY, but if you bought it at
bins.nyc or over the phone, you'll receive the check
directly. If you are an eligible homeowner and
there's no record of you buying it that way, you're
going to get a letter in the mail that says you are

eligible for this rebate. If you've already bought one, go online, tell us you already bought one, and you'll get a check. And if you haven't bought one yet, go buy one and then you'll get the check. So, people who already purchased the bin and need a reimbursement, they're going to get that automatically. People who have not yet, they will just have to go and do it and then get the reimbursement.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Okay. Is there any particular website they should go?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: They're going to receive a letter in the mail addressed to the property owner that explains exactly how to use.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: So they should expect to get the letter by the end of September?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: I would say in the month of October. I think they're going to go out in early October, and everybody should get them in October.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Okay. Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member Ung.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Chief, for testifying today.

So one issue, which you guys have really, I appreciate all your efforts in my District dealing with (INAUDIBLE) is about illegal vending, the litter that leave behind. So, is there any comprehensive plan to deal with this? Sometimes I get a lot of complaints from small businesses that they're being fined for litter that's not their letter, but it's really the, you know, illegal vendors' litter so is there a way to address this? I know it's difficult. I ask these questions understanding that these are difficult issues to deal with.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you for the question, Council Member. So, our goal around vending enforcement is to make sure that everyone stays compliant and that we have a clean area and sidewalks and a safe area for not only the vendors but for the people that live in the community as well. DSNY's approach is governed under what, City laws govern the vending and when we go in, we'll go in and we'll see if there's illegal disposal, if they're blocking curbs or sidewalks and we would enforce that. In my experience, the people who are actually out there

vending and doing it the right way are actually happy to see us enforcing the people who aren't doing it the right way.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: So, speaking of that, so is there a way to distinguish really whose litter it is. I think that's the issue that, I mean in my area there's just so much small businesses as you know and so much illegal vending frankly and a lot of just illegal, just dumping of these, you know, cardboard boxes. I'll use my favorite, the cardboard boxes by the illegal street food vendors so that all these cardboard boxes are now in front of either like small businesses in front of frankly, you know, these bins that you're talking about so at the end of the day, and I know you guys are working very hard to come and clean up as fast as you can, but like is there a way, because I get complaints frankly from everywhere, right? From pedestrians and then when the small business gets fine, they're saying this is not my litter. Is there any way to distinguish that?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, it's very hard to distinguish where it's coming from but we do dedicate four teams a day where with our Illegal Vending Unit that have a pretty good handle on where it might be

coming home. We do go out, and our first approach is to try to educate these vendors and making sure that they're abiding by the rules of the laws, and then we will educate and give warnings. We will summons if something is really egregious or if it's just a repetitive issue with the same vendor. Obviously illegal vending would be another issue, and there would be grounds for us to actually go in and confiscate some of the material that they're using to do that illegal vending as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Thank you. I genuinely do appreciate all the efforts that Department Sanitation has been in my District dealing with this issue.

And the second question I have is about the law that was passed about, you know, the increased fines that will be put on businesses that violate the stoop lines. I think the last we talked it was, you know, some of these businesses are getting these summonses, but we don't exactly have the numbers because they're going to the OATH hearings. Is there any updates on that?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So citywide since that was passed, there's been 5,761 issues citywide. And

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

68

in your District, Council Member, was 554 of them,
which is a high number.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: I believe that. Is
there any way to contact my office about the actual
businesses that's been getting that?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yeah. We'll definitely
work with you on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Thank you. I
appreciate it.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: You bet.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member Menin.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Great. Thank you so
much.

So, first I just want to begin by saying
that I strongly support what the Chair said about
containerization and having no delays and
implementation. It's so important for our city, so I
just wanted to start with that.

I want to really talk about the daily
trash pickups because, as you know, my office is
funding four times a day daily trash pickups, which
is the highest amount our District has ever had, but
one of the issues we are receiving from constituents
is we almost on a weekly basis still receive photos

of overflowing litter baskets. What can be done about this?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you. And, Council Member, just to clarify, that's four-a-day pickups on litter baskets?

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Yes.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Okay. Thank you for the question. So, if you're still receiving some areas with overflowing baskets, I'm happy to work with you and send my staff out there and we can send people out to do walkthroughs with you to see what the root cause of why those baskets are overflowing with that amount of service and we'll investigate and see what's going on.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Great. Thank you. That would be incredibly helpful.

We also still receive many complaints about dog waste. As you know, I had a bill that the Committee heard to provide dog waste plastic bags basically on the litter baskets. What is the status of that bill?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, I think we'd be happy to work out some type of pilot in that matter. The only thing, one thing is we don't have the

resources to continuously reload these things with bags so we'd be happy to work with you and try something out in a joint effort. Maybe you might have a community group that would look to assist us in that.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Great. Thank you. I'm definitely going to take you up on that because we really want to tackle this issue of dog waste.

Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: It would be great to have a pilot in Council Member Menin's District on this issue. She's very passionate about it so I'm glad you said that today, Commissioner.

Pivoting now to highway cleaning. In FY 2024, DSNY reportedly tripled the number of miles cleaned compared to the prior year. What do these operations look like at this level, and how have they expanded since last year?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you for the question. Highway is something we're very proud about since the implementation. So, when we started, we started out with general litter picking along the highways. That would be behind the barriers or grassy knolls if you will. As we expanded, we incorporated a

lot of mechanical sweeping convoys that would go out,
and that allowed us to do get more progress on the
highways and cover more ground in a quicker time.
When you when you go out on the highway, you'll
either see either one of those convoys, either a
structured mechanical sweeping operation or a team of
people cleaning up on the side of the highway, but
it's something we're very proud of since we started.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And how have they
expanded since last year?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Just like I said,
Council Member. We started with the litter picking.
We expanded into a broader mechanicalized operation.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Which... Sorry. Go
ahead.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: And just to
clarify because I know a tripling might seem like
incredible. It's because the two years ago was only a
partial year. Yeah, so it's not it did increase and
it did expand but it's not really triple. It's a
longer timespan.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I appreciate that
context.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

72

Which highways were cleaned most frequently over the last 12 months and how does DSNY decide which highways to clean?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you, Chair. So, we generally schedule all of our highways to be serviced anywhere between a 30- and 60-day window, but I do have numbers on the most clean highways, which would be the FDR was 11 times, Major Deegan was 10 times, Cross Bronx was eight times, Bruckner was 10 times, and the BQE was seven times.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Do you have any data on the West Side Highway.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Not in front of me right now, but I could get that for you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah. It's not as bad as other highways, but I think we can get some love up in in the upper west side of Washington Heights.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: I think Chief Pitts would like to say something on that.

CHIEF PITTS: Yeah, Council Member. I'm aware you're talking about the cutouts, like in the 90s?

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah.

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2 CHIEF PITTS: Yeah, we're aware of that.
3 So, we have highway monitoring for that instance
4 because we have the cab drivers and people who just
5 pull over and just dump out, but we'll pay more
6 attention to it.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much.
8 Regarding precision cleaning, DSNY's Precision
9 Cleaning Initiatives provide targeted cleaning to
10 high-need areas such as park perimeters and illegal
11 dumping hot spots. How does DSNY determine which
12 areas should be addressed by this initiative?

13 CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, our PCI resources
14 are deployed dynamically based off of our field
15 observations from our supervisors, 3-1-1 data,
16 anything that comes in from a Council Member or other
17 elected official, or through DSNY leadership. I'm
18 happy to announce as I stated in my testimony the
19 implementation of a new digitalized program that
20 we're using, the Cleaning Condition Log. Cleaning
21 Condition Log used to be done manually and would take
22 some time for us to process it and get to the actual
23 root cause of the issue. Now having this digitalized
24 system kind of centralizes everything and streamlines
25 all the information so we can get to it quicker.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

74

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Can you please speak to DSNY's role in the Mayor's Homeless Encampment Task Force?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Sure. Thank you. So, DSNY is a supporting agency when it comes to Homeless Enforcement Task Force. We are part of that task force along with NYPD and DHS. Typically, we would go in, DHS would offer services and then DSNY would be the supporting agency, just cleaning up whatever is left over after the fact. Whatever the client deems to be personal property is either taken with the client or vouched by NYPD. Whatever the client deems that they want to dispose of is what DSNY would clean up.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How many staff are dedicated to this task force?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: We use existing resources on that.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So it's not a specific... it's just on a case-by-case basis?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Yeah. We'll pull from various different existing resources to go on those operations.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

75

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What is the
approximate cost for DSNY's involvement in this task
force?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: That would be zero cost
if we're using... (CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Existing resources,
right?

Are DSNY staff permitted to issue a
notice of violation while performing task force
operations or are they present for cleanup purposes
only?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: We're present for
cleanup purposes. We do not issue summonses on these
on these operations.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: If permitted, what are
the most common violations cited during task force
operations?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: We do not issue
summonses on those.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: If seizure of personal
property occurs during task force operations... that's
already covered.

All right. Graffiti clean. When receiving
a graffiti service request, how does DSNY determine

which pieces are tolerable and perhaps enjoyable and
which must be removed?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, in order to remove
graffiti, we would require a waiver from the property
owner to do that, and we do not remove murals.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And it's always based
off of waivers from the property owners and what if
it's City property?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: City property, we would
go in and treat it as a... we would clean it, and
again, we would use discretion if it's a mural or
dedication.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, so there's no
standard of like what's tolerable or perhaps
enjoyable it's just whatever you feel today.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: We're not
art critics by design. It's not our job, but there
are of course programs for someone who would like to
create a mural on City-owned property.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Sanitation vehicles.
What does DSNY do to eliminate the occurrence of
trash juice and trash debris spilling from collection
trucks?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

77

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Thank you. It's a good question. Our trucks are equipped with a couple of different mitigation factors to keep that from happening. One would be a tailgate seal between the tailgate of the truck and the body of the truck, and another would be the hopper plug to catch any juices from coming out. Going back to 2007 when I was a garage supervisor, that was part of my responsibility, making sure that the hopper plugs were in and the tailgates were being maintained on a routine basis to ensure that the hopper juice wasn't being sprayed out from the side of the trucks.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Are DSNY Sanitation workers required to sweep glass and debris from the street that result from collections.

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Sanitation workers are required to sweep all and any debris that happens during collections operations, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Are all DSNY collection trucks equipped with a mechanism to collect juice that results from refuse and recycling collections?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Equipped to catch the juice. No, just the ones that I just spoke about.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

78

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What is the current status of the City's order on Sanitation trucks which can accommodate on-street containers. As we know, I think we have a shared goal here of containerizing trash citywide and, as we do that, the ramping up of these trucks is going to be very important so can you speak to that?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: Sure. Commissioner Goodman.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Absolutely. Thank you, Chief. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, the first 16 trucks, the ones in use in Community District 9 were built on an R and D clause in our existing truck contract. To go beyond that, we need to procure a full contract in order to do it, and that procurement is happening now. We're actually expecting the initial bids back later this month.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And for the record, when does that bid close?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: I believe it's September 23rd... (CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: (INAUDIBLE) next Tuesday, right?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Yes. It's
online in the City's procurement system.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Does DSNY still take
the position that there's no manufacturer in the U.S.
which can make these trucks.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: That was our
position, and we believe it was the case. It is no
longer the case because we created the market with
the M9 pilot.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is DSNY contracting
with a single manufacturer for these trucks?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: We're going
to review the bids as they come in.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How does the agency
anticipate changes in federal tariffs or other
similar conditions to affect the City's ability to
procure these trucks?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: It's really
too soon to say what components of a truck might be
tariff eligible or not, what manufacturers might be
domestic or international? It's obviously one of the
things that we'll have to be looking at.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

80

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And will the
applicants of these RFP, is there something in that
application that would require them to disclose that?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Well,
pricing is part of the contract.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. E-waste. At what
frequency do battery-related fires occur in
Sanitation trucks and at DSNY waste processing
facilities?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: It's a good question,
Chair. Thank you. Right now, it is trending
frequently.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How frequently?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, in trucks in 2024
there were 49, and in 2025 there were 39 truck fires
that were caused by lithium-ion batteries. That was
confirmed by FDNY. And in DSNY facilities, there were
four fires since 2022, but those were not confirmed
to be lithium-ion batteries. DSNY vendor facilities,
there have been fires every year. 2024, there's been
90, and 2025 to date there's 80.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: That is a scary
figure. What can we do to help prevent the rate of

these fires, and does the e-waste building program include lithium batteries?

CHIEF PENNOLINO: So, yes, lithium-ion batteries are part of e-waste. They can be disposed of properly through some of the outlets that I mentioned earlier through our safe disposal sites, and we also do a lot of messaging to the public as to how to properly dispose of these batteries. We urge people to dispose of them properly. A lot of times we find these batteries in my experience they're making it to the waste stream inadvertently. It's not very often that you will just see a battery on the curb. A lot of these batteries are internal pieces to other mechanisms, and that's how these things really happen.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is there any like legislation that you think the Council should be exploring together with DSNY to help bring down what we're seeing?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: We should definitely look at it together. I mean there is an existing EPR, extended producer responsibility, that covers certain kinds of e-waste. It was actually Council legislation that led to the increase in days

that the special waste drop-off sites are open so things like that that improve access in a revenue and cost neutral way are certainly things that we could look at together.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. This panel is excused.

CHIEF PITTS: Council Member, there's a follow-up on your request earlier about the West Side Highway. It was cleaned seven times in the last 12 months.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you.

I now open the hearing for public testimony.

I remind members of the public that this is a government proceeding and that decorum shall be observed at all times. As such, members of the public shall remain silent at all times.

The witness table is reserved for people who wish to testify. No video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony but may submit transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant-at-Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant-at-Arms and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you will have two minutes to speak on today's hearing topic: Street Cleanliness or any of the legislation on our agenda today.

If you have a written statement or additional written testimony you wish to submit for the record, please provide a copy of that testimony to the Sergeant-at-Arms. You may also email written testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours of this hearing. Audio and video recordings will not be accepted.

For our first panel, we're going to call up John Sheha, Josh Carrero, Eric Goldstein, and Jenille Scott.

If you hear your names, come on up.

Justin Wood, you can come up too, and Lacey.

All right, we'll start with Jenille.

JENILLE SCOTT: Hello. Okay. Hi. Good morning. My name is Jenille Scott, and I'm the Climate Director at Align. We are an organization that brings together labor, climate and community to

form a more stable New York and I'm here testifying on behalf of the Transform, Don't Trash Coalition as well, which is a coalition that's been working to fight and transform New York's commercial waste industry for over 10 years. So, today we just want to say thank you to Chair Abreu and the Members of the Sanitation Committee for the chance to testify today. I'm here to testify in strong opposition to Intro. 1349 because we believe this is a wholly unnecessary legislation and that, if passed, it would fully undermine Local Law 199, which is the commercial waste zone program. We oppose this bill for the following reasons. One, it would provide a broad exemption to health care facilities and other generators of medical waste by redefining the definition of commercial establishment and that would include any generator of regulated medical waste, and this is something as we've heard earlier is already excluded from the commercial waste zone program and already permits hospitals, nursing homes, and other generators of waste to contract with any specialized medical waste hauler of their choosing. Secondly, hospitals and health care facilities generate a massive amount of non-medical waste and so further

exempting them from the law doesn't incentivize them to reduce their waste and it further hinders the full benefits that we would see from the commercial waste zone program. Thirdly, exempting medical waste facilities undermines the extensive RFP process that DSNY has already undergone which vetted numerous haulers that were assigned various zones, and this process also ensured that the haulers had environmental and worker safety practices and that their quality of service was up to standard, and so that means that any facility could either choose a hauler that was not approved in this process or choose a hauler that received a different zone in a completely (TIMER CHIME) different area and so that would also not realize the benefits of the commercial waste zone program. I have just one more short paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You can finish.

JANILLE SCOTT: Thank you. And then lastly, something that we'd also like to note around the affordability notes that were mentioned earlier is that price was a key factor that was within the DSNY selection criteria and this was done in order to maximize the affordability for all businesses and

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

86

entities across New York City, and so the commercial waste zone program will definitely protect customers from unreasonable price increases in waste services by setting maximum prices and also permitting customers to negotiate those prices with the designated haulers that have been assigned a zone so they're able to choose a price that works for them or to negotiate a price that works better for them. So, thank you for the opportunity to raise our concerns, and we look forward to working with the Committee to create a higher standard for environmental safety and customer protection. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.

ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Good morning, Chair Abreu and Council. Thank you for holding this hearing. I'm Eric Goldstein, New York City Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council. NRDC strongly opposes Intro. 1349 which would exempt the broad category of waste generators hospitals, labs, doctors' and dentists' offices, veterinary offices, nursing homes from the City's landmark commercial waste zone statute. This bill would create a giant loophole in one of the most important solid waste

reform statutes passed by the Council in recent decades. It would be flatly inconsistent with Local Law 199 of 2019 to reduce unnecessary truck traffic and improve public safety. In enacting the commercial waste zone statute, the Council specifically considered how to deal with medical waste and which generators of what waste should be excluded from coverage under the law. The Council concluded that commercial waste covered by the waste zone statute would include trade waste which is all putrescible and non-putrescible waste from commercial establishments but not medical waste. However, when the Council excluded medical waste from the waste zone system, that's very different from excluding generators of medical waste as Intro. 1349 would do. Intro. 1349 is inconsistent with the objectives of the waste zone statute, would increase truck traffic, it would increase congestion, it would increase air pollution, and it would undercut the economic model of the waste zone statute which is premised on no more than three carters per zone to handle trade waste. NRDC urges the Council to send this ill-advised piece of legislation directly to the morgue, and we thank you for your attention.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I appreciate your
testimony, Eric, always.

Lacey.

LACEY TAUBER: Good morning to everyone.

Thank you for holding this hearing today. I'm here
representing Brooklyn Borough President Antonio
Reynoso who, as Chair of the City Council Sanitation
Committee from 2014 to 2021, created the commercial
waste zones program alongside DSNY. Today, he wants
to join DSNY labor unions, commercial carters, and
the advocates in expressing his strong opposition to
Intro. 1349. While Borough President Reynoso has
voiced continued frustration with DSNY's rollout of
the CWZ program, he remains committed to its full
implementation. When all 20 zones are active and
operating, the City will see a dramatic reduction in
truck traffic and associated emissions from the waste
industry, safer streets, improved worker protections,
and less waste going to landfills. These goals remain
as important, if not more so, as when the CWZ bill
became law in 2019. Yet, Intro. 1349 would
dramatically undermine these goals. This bill would
change the definition of commercial establishment in
the CWZ law with the intent of exempting any business

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

89

that generates medical waste from having to contract with a selected carter. This is simply not necessary. Medical waste is already exempted from the CWZ law due to its unique pickup and disposal regulations. It is true that medical facilities such as hospitals generate both medical and non-medical waste. However, it is not necessarily true that this means they must contract with more than one carter. Many carters within the CWZ program offer specialized medical waste services or have the ability through the program to subcontract with a hauler that can. Changing the definition of commercial establishment in the law is overly broad such that it would exempt thousands of businesses citywide from complying with CWZ. According to the State Department of Environmental Conservation, regulated businesses that generate medical waste include hospitals, clinical laboratories, veterinarians, funeral homes, nursing homes, home health providers, physicians' offices, research laboratories, pharmaceutical companies, colleges and universities, blood banks, company infirmaries, and correctional facilities. This (TIMER CHIME) bill would create a dangerous precedent for carving out businesses from complying with the CWZ

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

90

law unnecessarily, leading to more vehicle miles traveled, more greenhouse gas emissions, less oversight of worker safety and safe driving practices, and more waste in our landfills. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, Lacey.
Justin.

JUSTIN WOOD: Good morning. Thank you, Chair Abreu, thank you, Council, and thank you Members of the Committee for this opportunity to testify. I'm Justin Wood, Director of Policy at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. We're also a founding member of the Transform, Don't Trash New York City Coalition. In addition to all of the reasons, we oppose Intro. 1349 because it would undermine the promises of increased safety, increased worker protections, increased recycling, waste reduction, better investments in recycling facilities, cleaner trucks. I wanted to stress that this broad exemption for the health care industry which seems to be couched in a reasonable exemption for specialty hazardous medical waste, that's already exempt from Local Law 199 as we've established, and health care facilities like hospitals are actually

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

91

massive generators, probably among the biggest generators, in any waste zone and in our city of non-medical waste including plastics, huge amounts of food waste, huge amounts of paper, and other materials, construction and demolition waste. So, in excluding this entire industry from a law that's supposed to just now be implemented, and we're speeding up implementation, thank you, Chair Abreu, to your efforts, we'd be exempting some of the biggest producers of solid waste from a system that for the first time is going to require them to track how much waste they're producing, for the first time incentivize the haulers and customers to work together to reduce those waste streams and, of course, produce all of the benefits of increased safety, reduced vehicle miles traveled, reduced VMT. We've seen studies that show that about 85 percent of waste generated by hospitals is actually non-medical waste. I would also just say on a personal note, this is a huge industry, a huge employer in New York City. Most New Yorkers have experience as either patients or workers, and we can see there's a massive amount of low hanging fruit to reduce food waste, plastics, paper, and everything else that you see inside a

hospital so we hope our colleagues in the health care industry would actually see commercial waste zones as an opportunity to start tackling these big challenges and producing public health benefits of reduced waste together. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. This panel is excused.

Erin Piscopink, Andrew Dahl, Josh Haraf, and Josh Carrero. And if I butchered your name, my apologies.

If you haven't filled out a speaker card, you may do so now with the Sergeant-at-Arms if you would like to testify.

And I'll start from my left. You may begin.

ERIN PISCOPINK: Thank you. Good morning, Chair Abreu. My name is Erin Piscopink, and I'm testifying today on behalf of the New York City BID Association where I serve as the Association's Co-Chair. I'm also the Executive Director of the Soho Broadway Initiative in Manhattan. The BID Association proudly represents all the city's 77 BIDs. All of our BIDs are deeply concerned about compliance with the City's containerization mandate and note Intro. 1279,

which is being considered today. One of the core services offered by BIDs is supplemental sanitation. Our clean team seats the sidewalks to remove debris and change out the corner basket liners and, well, as you noted in your remarks earlier, the trash we manage doesn't magically repel rats, but it is different in that it's not trash generated by the BIDs, it's trash managed and, without our efforts, we would have a lot of overflow cans, which were a major topic of conversation today, attract more rats, filthy streets in our busiest corridors, and increase the need for City services. You've heard from us many times over the last years. We've grappled with the DSNY rule that changes how BIDs operate, barring us from leaving bags at the corners as we've done for decades. In that time, we've continually expressed that we're not against moving toward containerization, but rather impressed upon the Council and City agencies that there are challenges in operationalizing this at scale, particularly with funding. I want to thank you for your advocating for 5 million dollars in FY26 budget, which will allow more BIDs to become more compliant faster. The BID Association has and will continue to work in

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

94

partnership with City Council Members and Staff and
DSNY as we ensure timely use of these funds in broad
compliance with the mandate. As such, we're here
today to share a point of concern in our ability to
become compliant. Given the length of time it takes
to contract with the City for discretionary funds,
procure site, deploy, and operationalize these
containers, it's highly unlikely most BIDs will be in
full compliance when the mandate fully takes effect
in January. We take DSNY at their word and deeply
appreciate the flexibility that they're providing in
refraining from fining BIDs who are acting in good
faith to comply. We understand good faith to mean any
BID that's anywhere in the (TIMER CHIME) process
actively working toward compliance. Thank you.
However, this position is not codified, and we're
cognizant that a new mayoral administration with a
different understanding of compliance could take
office on January 1st, leaving BIDs open to incurring
fines as we keep the streets of New York clean and
move toward compliance. This Committee, DSNY, and
BIDs share the common goal of keeping our streets
clean and safe. Thank you for your time and
continuing support.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

95

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, and the
BIDs have been really great partners in our success
and in achieving the 5 million dollars for you all,
and we want to also make sure that DSNY is getting
the resources to the BIDs in real time to making sure
that you all are able to comply so I really
appreciate your testimony.

ANDREW DAHL: Thanks. Good morning,
Chairman Abreu. My name is Andrew Dahl, and I serve
as the Vice President of Emergency Preparedness and
Response at the Greater New York Hospital
Association. As you may know, we represent all public
and voluntary hospitals here in New York City, and
we're here to talk about Introduction 1349 and
support that legislation. Our hospitals navigate a
very complex system of over a dozen different waste
streams and patterns that exceed just the clear bag
waste as part of CWZ and that includes infectious
medical waste, controlled substances, radiological
and pharmaceutical waste, and so very complex. And as
many of these waste streams are already regulated
much like the large number of regulatory requirements
we have around sanitation and infection control to
safely deliver patient care, our systematic approach

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

96

as hospitals, we often use a single health care waste management service who understand those intricacies, can understand the different waste streams, and can responsibly dispose of all waste streams safely. In New York City, hospitals both large and small operate networks throughout the city and they traverse many different zones and that has some complications to it. And where the law really is responsive to the needs of the hospital is the additional contracting and management that's required which translates into increased costs for hospitals as it relates to waste streams. Hospitals are committed to the goals of the CWZ program, and this bill is not meant to undermine them. Hospitals have already made their waste management systems rather efficient, containerizing their clear bag waste and ensuring it is directly shipped to its final disposition correctly without any intermediary, and that supports the goals of reducing carbon emission and truck traffic. And these are especially important today as we're facing financial headwinds with the recent federal passing of the One Big Beautiful Act. And as my colleague, Elizabeth Winn, testified on Monday, New York State hospitals are facing over 8 billion dollars' worth of

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

97

cuts over the coming years and that's from lower health insurance reimbursements, Medicaid cuts, and increases in (TIMER CHIME) uncompensated care so we feel it's prudent here to find any cost savings that hospitals can find so we can better direct those limited resources to where it matters most, treating patients and the staffing to support all of that. Thank you very much for your time today.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony. Next.

JOSH HARAF: Good morning, Chair, and good morning, Committee. My name is Josh Haraf. I serve as the Market Vice President for Action Carting, subsidiary of Interstate Waste Services. I want to thank you for the opportunity to deliver testimony respectfully opposing the adoption of Introduction 1349, a bill which intends to exclude generator ready regulated medical waste from the commercial waste zones program. The historic passage of Local Law 199 ratified specific goals for New York City's commercial waste and recycling industry including a reduction in vehicle congestion and emissions, the standardization of safety focused operational practices, and an elevated commitment to customer

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

98

service through transparent rates and written service agreements. Intro. 1349 actively threatens the achievability of Local Law 199's key goals by introducing unnecessary exemptions for commercial businesses and a viable loophole for non-awarded haulers to continue operating without CWZ standards. The broad exemption of any generator of regulated medical waste from the CWZ program is an overcorrection to a non-existent problem. Per New York City's Administrative Code, regulated medical waste is already exempt from the CWZ program. This distinction affords generators of regulated medical waste the ability to contract a specialty hauler to properly manage the specific materials collection and disposal. However, entirely exempting these establishments from CWZ requirements neglects the volume of commercial refuse and recycling that they still produce. Hospitals, nursing homes, veterinary offices, blood banks, funeral homes, tattoo parlors, and several other businesses produce regulated medical waste. However, they also produce non-specialty waste and recycling. Medical waste collection companies can continue collecting these customers' medical material without Intro. 1349.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

99

However, this bill would allow commercial haulers without CWZ awards or standards to continue collecting non-medical commercial waste and recycling from these establishments, effectively contradicting Local Law 199's consolidation operations and customer service focused goals. Furthermore, this workaround for commercial (TIMER CHIME) businesses would irrevocably fracture the enforceability of the CWZ program. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.

JOSH CARRERO: Good afternoon, Chair and Committee. My name is Joshua Carrero. I'm the Business Manager of Local 108. I'm here in strong opposition to Intro. 1349. The commercial waste zone program has delivered real wins for Sanitation workers' safety, safer jobs, better wages, and stable career opportunities. We should be building on that progress and not creating loopholes to weaken it. Regular medical waste are already except for the law. Hospitals and nursing homes can already contract with specialized companies for that waste stream. What this bill does is go further and exempt the entire health care facility, even though most of their waste

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

100

is ordinary trash and recycling. An exemption would undermine the CWZ program by allowing big institutions to bypass safety and labor standards, undercutting worker gains, creating more truck traffic and emissions instead of efficient routes, stripping designated haulers of major customers and threatening their investments in cleaner trucks and better jobs. The Council already weighed this issue when it passed Local 199. The bill reopens that debate and risks undoing years of progress. I urge you to reject Intro. 1349 and keep CWZ strong for workers, communities, and for our environment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. This panel is excused.

I will now call on John Sheha from Teamsters 813. Are you here, John? And Christopher Leon Johnson.

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah, yeah, hello, Chair Abreu. My name is Christopher Leon Johnson, and I'm showing support to Intro. 1370 which is sponsored by Stevens, and the reason I support this bill because, why we have to submit this to a... it should be online. I think that this should be

worked online but, at the same time, the Sanitation Department should be working on protecting the people that report this stuff because there are people that don't take it lightly when it comes to being fined by any department, including OATH, and I'm fearing that people might get retaliated against with this bill if they start doing stuff online.

And another thing I want to show support is to Intro. 536-2024 hosted by Justin Brannan. I want to say this that I think that certain food stores like Pret A Manager and any big box store that do business with the City need to be able to start giving out food to the homeless (INAUDIBLE) food to the homeless directly instead of going through these non-profits like City Harvest and Food Bank of New York City. I believe that any person that's homeless. I believe the nearest store that's around here is Starbucks right outside city hall. They should be able to give out their bagels and any type of food that is perishable to the homeless after they close or after a certain time like lunch time. I support this bill 100 percent, and I have 30 seconds left. I believe that the BIDs need more support with the City Council and they shouldn't be scrutinized by the City

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

102

Council for trying to do their best to clean their area and clean their neighborhood because why do we give all this money to these non-profits like the Doe Fund and all these that only hire felons to do all the work instead of just giving money direct to the BIDs to do the work and they can hire the felon themselves. (TIMER CHIME) Thank you so much and enjoy your day.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Leon Johnson.

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: On Zoom, we have David Biderman.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

DAVID BIDERMAN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. My name is David Biderman. I'm testifying in opposition to Intro. 1349. I'm the President of Biderman Consulting and serve as the sole industry representative on the Department of Sanitation CWZ Task Force, and I provide safety training to commercial waste zone awardees on a regular basis, including as recently as last week in Brooklyn. The Department of Sanitation and others have testified

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

103

about how Intro. 1349 would undercut CWZ's efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled, truck traffic, and emissions. These are all valid reasons to oppose this misguided legislation. Let me focus on another one, safety. Intro. 1349 would interfere with one of the core goals of CWZ, which is improving worker safety for commercial waste collection employees and improving street safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other road users. Local Law 199 and the CWZ regulations issued by Sanitation include stringent new safety requirements including training, incident reporting, and telematics reporting. Why would this Committee even consider creating an exemption from the law that allows companies to evade these requirements which are today making New York City streets safer and have reduced accidents and fatalities involving the commercial solid waste industry. Sanitation is in the early stages of implementing CWZ, but one of its notable achievements already has been a substantial reduction in fatal collisions involving commercial garbage trucks operating in New York City. Prior to Local Law 199, there were five, six fatal accidents annually with several workers killed. There has not been a private

sector solid waste collection employee killed on a route in the five boroughs for several years. Knock wood. The race to the bottom to the extent that it ever existed is effectively over. CWZ awardees incur substantial costs to comply with the safety requirements embedded in Local Law 199. This Committee and the City Council should reject efforts to exclude companies that collect solid waste from medical waste generators (TIMER CHIME) from those obligations. As many have mentioned, this would create a huge loophole in CWZ, potentially exempting tens of thousands of customers from the program and, importantly, endangering...

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you for your testimony. Time has expired.

DAVID BIDERMAN: Solid waste collection workers as well as 8.5 million New Yorkers. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you.

Next on Zoom, we have Lew Dubuque.

LEW DUBUQUE: There we go. Sorry about that. There we go. Sorry about that. Good morning, Chair Abreu, Members of the Committee. My name is Lew Dubuque, and I'm here on behalf of the National Waste

and Recycling Association. Our members are the private haulers who make the commercial waste zone possible. Collectively, we service commercial customers across New York City, employing thousands of New Yorkers, investing millions of dollars to build safe, efficient, environmentally sound collection systems. We strongly oppose Introduction 1349. This bill would exempt generators of regulated medical waste from the commercial waste zone system. While we recognize that medical waste is highly regulated at the state and federal levels, carving out entire categories of customers undermines the very foundation of the CWZ framework. The City created the CWZ under Local Law 199 of 2019 to bring order, efficiency, and accountability to the collection of all commercial waste. NWRA members competed for contracts on the understanding that all commercial establishments in the zone would be covered. Every exemption chips away at that model, eroding fairness and threatening the financial viability of the system. Hospitals and health facilities generate not just medical waste but also large volumes of recyclables, organics, and regular refuse. By exempting them from the CWZ, this

legislation removes a significant customer base that helps support zone-wide operations and keeps rates stable for everyone else. That means fewer resources for recycling and organics diversion and higher costs for small businesses that remain inside the system. Perhaps most troubling, this bill would set a dangerous precedent. If one industry is allowed to opt out, others will surely follow. That would unravel the CWZ framework piece by piece, leaving us with a patchwork system that undermines the City's policy goals and destabilizes investments haulers have already made. In short, NWRA members have done (TIMER CHIME) everything DSNY and the City Council asked them. We competed, we invested, and we built operations around the promise of a fair comprehensive zone system. Introduction 1349 would break that promise. For these reasons, we urge the Council to reject this bill and instead continue working with DSNY, BIC, and industry stakeholders to strengthen, not weaken, the commercial waste zone program. Thank you for your opportunity to testify today.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.

We now have Charles Dippolito on Zoom.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

107

CHARLES DIPPOLITO, JR.: Thank you, Chair Abreu and Council Members, for the opportunity to speak on Intro. 1349. My name is Charles Dippolito, Jr., owner of Approved Storage and Waste Hauling, a commercial and medical waste carting business that was operating in New York City region since 1996. I've appeared before this Committee in the past to alert you to what I believe was a significant oversight in the CWZ program as it related to health care facilities, which is that the solid waste industry goes further than regulated waste categories and considers health care or institutional waste a special category. Intro. 1349 artfully recognizes that reality. Health care facilities can include hospitals, nursing facilities, and community clinics. Many generators such as Northwell and Montefiore are concerned about CWZ policy because they want to retain the single hauler for their vast network of hospitals, offices, and nursing homes, which in many cases span multiple boroughs. They're liable if contaminated or comingled waste arrives at a facility which is not permitted to handle institutional waste and they're comfortable with the subset of companies with the expertise to differentiate regular medical

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT

108

waste from institutional waste that has been
contaminated and, most urgently, they are getting hit
by devastating funding cuts and do not want to undo
the savings they've achieved by consolidating waste
operations. Through Council Member Dinowitz's
proposed legislation, you're providing flexibility to
the health care sector which includes small community
health centers, nursing facilities, in addition to
larger hospital campuses. You're also ensuring these
complicated waste streams are handled safely. I
strongly recommend Intro. 1349's passage and also
recommend that when it passes it takes effect
immediately to ensure health care facilities have
clarity as the CWZ program continues to roll out.
Thank you all.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your
testimony, Mr. Dippolito.

Seeing no one else in person or on Zoom
signed up to testify, this hearing is hereby
adjourned. [GAVEL]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date October 1, 2025