

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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December 8, 2021  
Start: 11:37 A.M.  
Recess: 11:50 A.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING VIRTUAL ROOM 1

B E F O R E: Chair Darma Diaz

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Darma Diaz  
Mark Treyger  
James Gennaro  
Helen Rosenthal  
Laurie Cumbo  
Ben Kallos  
Farah Louis

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

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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3 SGT. AT ARMS: PC recording started.

4 SGT. BIONDO: Recording to the cloud has  
5 begun and good morning and welcome to today's remote  
6 New York City Council vote for the Committee on Women  
7 and Gender Equity. At this time, would all panelist  
8 please turn in their video for verification purposes.  
9 Thank you for your cooperation, and Chair Diaz, we  
10 are ready to begin.

11 CHAIR DARMA DIAZ: Good morning. I am  
12 Council Member Darma Vanessa Diaz. My pronouns are  
13 she, her and hers, Chair of the Committee on Women  
14 and Gender and Equity. Today, the committee will  
15 vote on Council Member Mark Treyger's Proposed  
16 Introduction number 1085-B which is related to civil  
17 legal services for domestic survivors who are a party  
18 to a divorce proceeding. The committee will also  
19 vote on Council Member Carlina Rivera's Proposed  
20 Introduction number 2372-B which is creating a two-  
21 year look back window to gender motivated violence  
22 act, and extending its statute of limitations. Before  
23 we move on, I would like to welcome my colleague,  
24 from Brooklyn, the one and only Council Member Mark  
25 Treyger to say a few words on his Bill.

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK TREYGER: Well, thank  
3 you, the dynamic Chair, Council Member Darma Diaz.  
4 Thank you so much for your leadership and for making  
5 today possible and to all the members of the  
6 committee for your extraordinary work, your service,  
7 it is an honor to be with you all today. So, as  
8 mentioned, I am Council Member mark Treyger, and I'm  
9 very, very glad and happy to be here at the Committee  
10 on Women and Gender Equity, on the vote for my  
11 legislation, Introduction 1085-B, a local law in  
12 relation to civil legal services for domestic  
13 violence survivors who are party to a divorce  
14 proceeding. The Bill was introduced in August of  
15 2018. The world has changed a lot since then, but  
16 unfortunately, with the pandemic, we know domestic  
17 violence is only gotten worse. In May of 2018, the  
18 New York Times ran an article called, "Their Husbands  
19 Abuse Them, Shouldn't Divorce Be Easy?" This article  
20 gave an harrowing insight into the struggle so many  
21 women face when they seek a divorce. The pandemic  
22 impacted us quite a bit, but I'm very happy we're  
23 still getting this done here today because this is a  
24 good day now that we are one step closer towards  
25 passing this historic legislation. Because of this

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 Bill, victims and survivors of domestic violence can  
3 focus on their safety without having to worry about  
4 the cost of a contested divorce in a divorce. This  
5 Bill will offer civil legal services for domestic  
6 violence survivors who are a party to a divorce  
7 proceeding. Your safety shouldn't be determined by  
8 your income. No one should have to stay in an  
9 abusive marriage simply because they can't afford a  
10 divorce lawyer. As we know, domestic violence  
11 impacts all of our communities across the city. This  
12 is such an important Bill during a very important  
13 time and I'm so grateful to all of those who have  
14 worked with us to make this Bill a reality. Thank  
15 you so much, Chair and to members for your support  
16 and leadership.

17 CHAIR DARMA DIAZ: Thank you for your  
18 creativity with the Bill. It's been no secret. I've  
19 shared time and time again having been a survivor of  
20 domestic violence. Thank you. Thank you again for  
21 your creativity and for your group, the committee  
22 that put this together, the legal team; it's a must  
23 do. It's another common sense Bill, if I may say so  
24 myself. I mean, the absence of (inaudible), we are  
25 going to move forward with her Bill by vote today.

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 At our last hearing, it was overwhelming support for  
3 her Bill, and that's why we're choosing to move  
4 forward in her absence. She asked to be excused from  
5 this hearing. In closing, I'd like to acknowledge  
6 this will be the last time I'll be Chairing the  
7 committee as a Chair. I have been humble to conduct  
8 hearings that touched on very important topics that  
9 impacted women, LGBTQTI New Yorkers including, but  
10 not limited to equity, women's experience in the city  
11 jails, and the domestic and gender-based violence. I  
12 feel pretty successful. Thank you for all my  
13 colleagues for being supporters through my endeavor.  
14 As well as past legislation has supported women's  
15 right to abortion, especially given, that is going in  
16 the Supreme Court right now, and establishing an  
17 advisory committee on female (inaudible) mutilation  
18 and cutting, horrendous. It's been an honor and  
19 privilege to be assigned to the Women and Gender and  
20 Equity. Truthfully, humbling as a junior member to  
21 have been assigned to such as committee, humbles my  
22 heart, my daughter has enjoyed this moment as well  
23 knowing the personal sacrifice as my job and family,  
24 that I was honored by such a committee. Again, thank  
25 you (inaudible), thank you Laurie. Thank you, thank

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 you, thank you. I'm definitely honored. I'd like,  
3 before we go on to the vote, I'd like to thank my  
4 Chief of Staff, (inaudible) for your support and  
5 leadership, (inaudible), my Legislative Director,  
6 Brenda, who is not with us, she's out on maternity  
7 leave, thank you for the hand-holding from day one.  
8 Gloria Rivera, my Senior Policy Analysis, thank you.  
9 Even on vacation days, she was with me; all those  
10 Sundays meant the world me. (Inaudible) I apologize,  
11 not leaving you out. The buck stops with her. Thank  
12 you, again, and finally, as we move, I want to turn  
13 it over to Billy for a vote. Thank you for your  
14 patience with me, Billy.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Oh, of  
16 course. No problem. Good morning. William Martin,  
17 Committee Clerk, roll call vote, Committee on Women  
18 and Gender Equity, Proposed Introductions 1085B and  
19 2372B, both items are coupled. Chair Diaz.

20 CHAIR DARMA DIAZ: I.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
22 you. Cumbo.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LAURIE CUMBO: I want to  
24 just celebrate Chair Darma Diaz for your incredible  
25 work, for your enthusiasm, for your passion. While

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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3 your time as Chair has not been long, it has been  
4 very productive and very impactful, and it's been an  
5 honor to serve with you. I know this is also bitter  
6 sweet as we are all transitioning to, not all, but  
7 most of us, are transitioning to our next stage in  
8 life, and I really look forward to your next chapter  
9 and what it's going to bring, and I know it's going  
10 to be phenomenal because you bring so much passion to  
11 everything that you do. You've been a real stand-up  
12 Chairwoman and I just am excited to see what comes  
13 next. I vote I.

14 CHAIR DARMA DIAZ: Thank you.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
16 you. Kallos.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BEN KALLOS: I.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
19 you. Rosenthal.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HELEN ROSENTHAL: Well, of  
21 course I want to associate my name with Council  
22 Member Cumbo's comments. I definitely could not have  
23 said it better. So, thank you, Chair Diaz, and just  
24 huge congratulations to Chair Treyger. I remember  
25 the hearing we had when you were asking questions and  
noticing the fact that victims of domestic violence



1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 are not covered by getting a free lawyer as is the  
3 case in the right to counsel in housing court, and  
4 you just have taken this issue and ran with it and  
5 you know, what we'll be doing is adding into the work  
6 that her justice does by providing free lawyers  
7 where, I don't know, it's just going to be incredibly  
8 impactful. So, Council Member Treyger, thank you so  
9 much for this Bill. Congratulations to Council  
10 Member Rivera and with that I vote I.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
12 you. Louis.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FARAH LOUIS:  
14 Congratulations Council Member Treyger, and I vote I,  
15 thank you.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
17 you. Gennaro.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES GENNARO: Yes, I  
19 wish to speak on my vote. Okay, I'm just going to go  
20 and do it then, and so, yeah, I'm really going to  
21 miss Darma. It's been great sitting next to you and  
22 becoming your friend, and I look forward to our paths  
23 crossing again and once upon a time in 2013, I  
24 gabbled my hearing to a close, thinking that I'd  
25 never been back on the Council, and here I am. You

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 know, imagine that. I wish all good things for you  
3 and I'm going to miss you, and I look forward to  
4 interacting with you between now and the end of the  
5 session. I want to speak about Council Member  
6 Treyger's Bill. I wish to be put on as a sponsor of  
7 that. My parents got divorced in 1967 and the next  
8 year, my mother married someone who was an abuser.  
9 It didn't go on that long, but when my dad got that  
10 word that that was going on, he said, something is  
11 going to be truth in a month that ain't true now, is  
12 that this guy is going to be gone or something, let  
13 us say, okay, and a month later, he was out of my  
14 mother's life and I was 10 years old and for that  
15 month or so that it went on, I just had to take it,  
16 and so, I mean, I wasn't a victim, it was hard. So,  
17 didn't mean to turn this into a (inaudible), but this  
18 is what domestic violence does to people. It's the  
19 victim, it's kids, it's the ex-husband who has to  
20 come in and say, this stops or were going to go for a  
21 ride, you know, and my father was a World War II vet.  
22 Trust me when I say that would happen, you know. I'm  
23 not defending that. I'm just saying, that's how it  
24 was, you know, and so, with that, as I said, I'm

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1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 going to go on Mark's Bill. I love the Chair. I'm  
3 going miss Darma very much.

4 CHAIR DARMA DIAZ: I know where to find  
5 you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES GENNARO: Okay, very  
7 good, I'm for that, and with that, I proudly vote I  
8 and I dedicate my vote to, you know, a tribute to my  
9 late mom, who was a victim and my dad, my late dad  
10 who was a hero, so, there you have it. Thank you. I  
11 vote I.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
13 you, Council Member Gennaro. Thank you. By a vote  
14 of zero in the negative and no abstentions, all items  
15 have been adopted by the committee. Chair Diaz, you  
16 can close at your convenience.

17 CHAIR DARM DIAZ: Before closing, I want  
18 to make sure that I also get added to the Bill, the  
19 two Bills. I want to personally thank Council Member  
20 Gennaro for telling his story. It's intimate, it's  
21 real, and it's impactful. I'm sure, as you shared  
22 your story with me before, I get to sit next to him,  
23 pretty much, it was touching and it was personal and  
24 it's telling our stories. We assist those who are  
25 not able to tell their stories and we shine light.

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

12

2 Again, thank you. Thank you all for being part of my  
3 process and my journey. I love this. I could not  
4 have ended it a better way. This Bill is amazing.  
5 Thank you. (Crosstalk).

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: The  
7 final vote is six in the affirmative, zero in the  
8 negative, and no abstentions. Thank you, everybody.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HELEN ROSENTHAL: Chair  
10 Diaz?

11 CHAIR DARMA DIAZ: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HELEN ROSENTHAL: May I  
13 make a comment?

14 CHAIR DARMA DIAZ: Absolutely.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HELEN ROSENTHAL: Thank  
16 you, Council Member Gennaro, I admire you so much,  
17 and I just want to thank you.

18 (AUDIO ENDS HERE).

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date January 1, 2022