

COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND
SUBSTANCE USE

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February 24, 2026
Start: 10:29 a.m.
Recess: 10:34 a.m.

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

B E F O R E: Tiffany Cabán, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shirley Aldebol
Joann Ariola
Simcha Felder
Linda Lee
Althea V. Stevens

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Farah N. Louis
Lynn C. Schulman

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mic check, mic check.

3 This is a mic check for the vote on Mental Health and
4 Substance Use. Today's date is February 24, 2026,
5 recorded by Walter Lewis in Hearing Room 1.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. Welcome
7 to the New York City Council Committee vote on Mental
8 Health and Substance Use.

9 At this time, we ask that you please
10 silence all electronics.

11 Chair, you may begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you. Good
13 morning, everyone. My name is Council Member Tiffany
14 Cabán, Chair of the New York City Council's Committee
15 on Mental Health and Substance Use. I'd like to
16 recognize that we are joined by Council Members on
17 Zoom, Council Member Ariola, Council Member Schulman.
18 Give me a moment because I am also on Zoom, so I want
19 to make sure I get everybody. Council Member Lee,
20 Council Member Stevens, Council Member Louis, Council
21 Member Aldebol, Council Member Felder.

22 Sarah, am I missing anybody?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL SUCHER: No.

24 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Okay. Great. Thank
25 you. Sarah's my in-person eyes and ears.

2 So, today, the Committee is going to
3 consider a vote on Proposed Introduction Number 291-
4 A, sponsored by Council Member Farah Louis, in
5 relation to requiring the Commissioner of Health and
6 Mental Hygiene to report on deaths by suicide that
7 occur in the city and suicide-related behavior among
8 youth. Suicide is a public health crisis that touches
9 every neighborhood and every family, yet too often we
10 lack clear data to understand who is most at risk.
11 So, this bill would require the Health Department to
12 regularly report on deaths by suicide in our city and
13 on suicide-related behaviors among youth. The reports
14 would include key demographic information, that's
15 age, race, gender, borough, and more, and for young
16 people, data on sexual orientation and gender
17 identity when available. And all of this would be
18 done with privacy and safety in mind. And by shining
19 a light on this issue with clear, accessible, and
20 accurate data, we can better inform policies, guide
21 interventions, and ultimately save lives.

22 And so before we begin the vote, I do
23 want to hand it over to Council Member Louis for a
24 brief statement.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you, Chair
3 Cabán, so much, and thank you for your leadership on
4 this Committee and for advocating and advancing this
5 bill forward.

6 I also want to acknowledge the
7 organizations that supported this bill, Samaritans of
8 NYC, Jed Foundation, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Five
9 Borough Veterans, and JCCI of Coney Island. I also
10 want to acknowledge the advocates, service providers,
11 clinicians, and families who shared their expertise
12 and lived experiences to strengthen the impact of
13 this bill.

14 I am proud to bring Intro. 291 forward as
15 it is voted out of this Committee today. This
16 legislation requires the Department of Health and
17 Mental Hygiene to publish a comprehensive annual
18 report on suicides in New York City. The limited
19 information we have in relation to suicides in our
20 city does not meet the needs of those working on the
21 front lines of prevention. By requiring detailed
22 disaggregated reporting by age, race, ethnicity,
23 gender, veteran status, method of suicide,
24 occupation, this bill gives us the tools we need to
25 understand how to deploy resources more effectively

2 to those in need. Suicides touch every corner of our
3 city. It affects young people navigating immense
4 pressure, older adults facing isolation, veterans
5 carrying unseen trauma, and individuals within
6 vulnerable and underserved communities who too often
7 fall into systematic gaps. Without clear and
8 accessible data, we cannot design policies that
9 respond with the urgency this crisis demands.

10 I'm grateful for you, Chair Cabán, for
11 your leadership, Speaker Menin, and my Colleagues for
12 moving this legislation forward, and I look forward
13 to continuing to work with the Administration and our
14 advocacy partners as this becomes law. Today's vote
15 represents a meaningful step forward addressing the
16 suicide epidemic with seriousness and care towards
17 building a mental health system that truly serves all
18 New Yorkers.

19 Thank you, Chair.

20 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you, Council
21 Member Louis.

22 And Clerk, we are ready to begin the
23 vote.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
25 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call

2 vote, Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse.
3 Proposed Introduction 291-A.

4 Chair Cabán.

5 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Lee.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Aye, and
8 congratulations, Farah.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Stevens.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Felder.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Aldebol.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ALDEBOL: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:

16 Hankerson.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKERSON: I vote aye, and
18 congratulations, Chair, on your first meeting. And
19 congratulations, Council Member Louis, for this
20 impactful legislation.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank

22 you.

23 With a vote of six in the affirmative,
24 zero in the negative, and no abstentions, item has
25 been adopted by the Committee.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Great. Thank you.

3 And with that, this meeting is adjourned.

4 [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date February 25, 2026