

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

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August 8, 2018  
Start: 1:35 p.m.  
Recess: 4:34 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Corey D. Johnson  
Speaker

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Adrienne Adams  
Diana Ayala  
Inez Barron  
Joseph Borelli  
Fernando Cabrera  
Andy Cohen  
Costa Constantinides  
Robert Cornegy  
Chaim Deutsch  
Daniel Dromm  
Mathieu Eugene  
Robert Holden  
Ben Kallos  
Andy L. King  
Peter A. Koo  
Karen Koslowitz  
Rory I. Lancman  
Brad S. Lander  
Stephen Levin

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Mark Levine  
Francisco Moya  
Bill Perkins  
Keith Powers  
Antonio Reynoso  
Donovan Richards  
Carlina Rivera  
Ydanis Rodriguez  
Debbie Rose  
Helen K. Rosenthal  
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.  
Ritchie Torres  
Mark S. Treyger  
Paul Vallone  
Kalman Yeger  
Steven Matteo  
Laurie A. Cumbo

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

Letitia James  
Public Advocate

William Lohier  
2018 Youth Poet Laureate

Rosalind Grush  
The Tank

Meghan Finn  
The Tank

Shaun J. Lee  
Reverend Mount Lebanon Baptist Church



1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Hello, ladies and  
3 gentlemen, we are going to begin the ceremonial  
4 portion of our program. We're so happy to have you,  
5 Council Member Dromm. Would you please join us? I  
6 am so pleased to be here today. I am Majority  
7 Leader, Laurie Cumbo, and I am pleased to have three  
8 incredible ceremonies that will be done today to  
9 present for outstanding work in our communities in  
10 New York City. Today, I am very proud to be standing  
11 here with Council Member Debbie Rose as we celebrate  
12 the New York City Youth Poet Laureate Program for its  
13 10 years of outstanding work raising the voices of  
14 our young people to foster greater civic engagement  
15 and to increase youth voter turnout. This is a  
16 critical voice in the process of voting throughout  
17 New York City, and it's critical that we do all that  
18 we can to engage that voice and to give it power  
19 throughout New York City. We are very proud here  
20 today. As our colleagues know, the New York City  
21 Poet Laureate Program is a voting theme spoken word  
22 poetry competition aimed at increasing youth voter  
23 turnout by educating New York City students about  
24 their power to decide the leadership and direction of  
25 the City. Can we have all the people that are

1 associated with today's proclamation please come  
2 forward? Center stage. So, as my colleagues know,  
3 we have a dynamic young man who is here with us  
4 today. He is a junior, about to be a senior at  
5 Stuyvesant High School, and-- that's right, give it  
6 up. [applause] And we are so proud to have him here  
7 today, William Lohier is a dynamic young person who  
8 is being celebrated today here at the New York City  
9 Council. And why we want you to be here today, as a  
10 student of Stuyvesant High School, the future is  
11 yours. As a member and winning member of the Poet  
12 Laureate Competition, we know that you have engaged  
13 so many young people into the art of voting, and we  
14 hope that through the power of your spoken word that  
15 so many young people across the City of New York will  
16 find a voice and understand their power, and we hope  
17 that one day you will find your power sitting in one  
18 of these seats here at the New York City Council.  
19 Okay? [applause] So, this isn't just by accident.  
20 This is because we are recruiting you to do dynamic  
21 and amazing things here in New York City. So, I am  
22 now going to turn it over to our clerk who is going  
23 to read the proclamation, and then I'm going to turn  
24 it over to Council Member Debbie Rose.  
25

COUNCIL CLERK: Council City of New York

Proclamation: The New York City Council is proud to pay tribute to the New York City Youth Poet Laureate Program for 10 years of outstanding work raising the voices of William Lohier and other young people to foster greater civic engagement and increase the voter turnout, and whereas, coordinated by NYC Votes and its partner, Urban Word, the New York City Youth Poet Laureate Program is a voter-themed spoken word poetry competition aimed at increasing youth voter turnout by educating New York City students about their power to decide the leadership and direction of the City. Since its inception in 2008, the New York City Youth Poet Laureate Program has reached more than 100,000 youth across the five boroughs, and whereas, by providing young people with a platform for creative expression, the New York City Youth Poet Laureate Program promotes critical thinking of self and by extension a critical analysis of one's roles in one's community and government. The program provides the platform for youth to voice their opinions about their elected representatives and community issues and through peer-to-peer engagement encourage those around them to become civically

1 engaged. And whereas, each year many talented  
2 individuals compete to become the carefully chosen  
3 New York City Youth Poet Laureate to serve as a  
4 prominent leader in the youth community, champion the  
5 voice of youth vote, perform and speak at events, and  
6 conduct peer-to-peer voter engagement activities. It  
7 is a great privilege to honor William Lohier for  
8 winning this year's competition and engaging his  
9 peers in these important responsibilities, and  
10 whereas currently in his sophomore year at Stuyvesant  
11 High School, William boasts a remarkable resume that  
12 includes leadership positions for the school's Black  
13 Students' League, as well as the Debate Team. A new  
14 member to Urban Word NYC's Youth Board, he's an  
15 incredible writer and performer. As the New York  
16 City Youth Poet Laureate, William now performs and  
17 speaks for his peers throughout the City encouraging  
18 voting and civic engagement, and whereas, William's  
19 poem "Voting in a Black Hole" exemplifies the bold  
20 voice of his generation, particularly as it ends  
21 with, "Vote, because our voices can break the laws of  
22 physics, because our songs can outweigh the gravity  
23 of any black hole, because our votes can look this  
24 city in the eye and tame it, and say you have looked  
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1  
2 at me as prey, but I am a carnivore, and I refuse to  
3 be swallowed today." Now, therefore be it known that  
4 the New York City Council is very proud to honor  
5 William Lohier and congratulates him on becoming the  
6 2018 New York City Youth Poet Laureate, and for  
7 mobilizing his peers toward greater civic engagement  
8 to determine the future of our city and our nation.  
9 Corey Johnson, Speaker for the entire Council; Laurie  
10 Cumbo, Council Member and Majority Leader; Deborah  
11 Rose, Council Member Staten Island; Margaret Chin,  
12 Council Member First District Manhattan; Council  
13 Member Brad Lander 39<sup>th</sup> District Brooklyn.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Wow. Wow.

15 William, you have turned the clerk into a poet. I  
16 have never heard the words spoken so profoundly and  
17 deeply before. You have very powerful words. I'm now  
18 going to turn it over to Council Member Debbie Rose.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you, Majority  
20 Leader. I am so excited to be here today. As the  
21 Youth Chair, it gives me great honor and privilege to  
22 always highlight and showcase what our young people  
23 are capable of and are doing when opportunity  
24 presents itself. So, I know-- I have some things I  
25 want to tell you not only about William, but I want



1 to tell you about the Youth Poet Laureate Program.  
2 So, please indulge me, because it's really important  
3 that we know who's supporting our young people and  
4 the obvious outcome. And so, today, William, who is  
5 the 2018 Youth Poet Laureate, is currently a  
6 sophomore at Stuyvesant High School-- oh, senior.  
7 Well, how did we demote him? Oh, you know what it  
8 was, he's young enough to be a sophomore, but he's a  
9 senior. And so he has a remarkable resume that  
10 includes leadership positions for both the Black  
11 Students' league, the Debate Team at Stuyvesant High,  
12 and a new member to Urban Word NYC's Youth Board.  
13 He's an incredible writer and performer and  
14 demonstrates outstanding skill and leadership. As a  
15 New York City Youth Poet Laureate, William performs  
16 and speaks for his peers throughout the City,  
17 encouraging voting and civic engagement. The New  
18 York City Youth Poet Laureate Program is celebrating  
19 its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. It is a voting themed  
20 spoken word poetry competition which merges art and  
21 civic engagement in order to energize and empower  
22 young voters and it led by NYC Votes and Urban Word  
23 USA. Since its inception, the program, the first of  
24 its kind has impacted over 300,000 New York City  
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1 youth. That deserves a big round of applause.  
2 [applause] And has been recreated in 41 cities  
3 throughout the country-- New York is a leader once  
4 again-- leading to the creation of the National Youth  
5 Poet Laureate Program in 2017. We have celebrated  
6 here at Mayoral Inaugurations, Federal Hall, and the  
7 Library of Congress, Kennedy Center, the Apollo  
8 Theater each poet laureate who has published a book  
9 of poems. By providing youth with a platform for  
10 creative expression, the Youth Poet Laureate Program  
11 promotes critical thinking of self, and by extension  
12 a critical analysis of one's role in one's community  
13 and government. The program provides the platform  
14 for youth to learn about elected officials-- did you  
15 learn anything about us?-- and community issues, and  
16 through peer-to-peer engagement encourage those  
17 around them to become civically engaged. So, William  
18 is our 2018 Youth Poet Laureate, and he serves as a  
19 leader of our city's youth community, a champion  
20 voice for the youth vote through community service,  
21 performing and speaking, and conducting peer-to-peer  
22 engagement activities. We want to thank William for  
23 his contributions to not only civic engagement, but  
24 engaging young people in positive activities and  
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1 leadership development. We are so proud to have you  
2 here today.

3 [applause]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you, and we  
5 would love to have some words from you in whatever  
6 capacity you'd like to share those words, but I think  
7 we all know what kind of words we're looking to hear.  
8 But I just want to say, in this climate on education,  
9 and we're talking about specialized high schools and  
10 who can and who does not attend our specialized high  
11 schools, you are certainly a beacon of hope and an  
12 inspiration for so many young people to know that  
13 Stuyvesant High School, Bronx High School of Science,  
14 Brooklyn Tech, La Guardia, and all of these schools  
15 are for all young people of all races and religion.  
16 So, you are our beacon and you are our symbol and we  
17 are so very proud of you, and there should be so very  
18 many more of you. So, continue to shine your light  
19 bright, and we are so proud of you.

20 WILLIAM LOHIER: I'd like to thank the  
21 City Council, of course, for this amazing  
22 proclamation. I would like to thank Urban Word, my  
23 family at Urban Word NYC, and of course, NYC Votes  
24 for always encouraging me and for helping me speak  
25

1 and lift my voice in spaces that mattered. And I'd  
2 like to thank all of you for being here, for clearly  
3 being invested in the future of our city. And before  
4 I read a short poem, I'd just like to say that there  
5 are nearly two million New Yorkers under the age of  
6 18. That's two million voices that do not have a say  
7 in who sits in this room, and those are two million  
8 people that every single decision that passes through  
9 this room has an effect on, and that ranges from  
10 decisions like the one made about the SHSAT,  
11 decisions about how we use/engage with  
12 transportation, how we are incarcerated, how we are  
13 policed, and these are decisions that all have an  
14 impact on us. So, I'd like to ask all of the City  
15 Council Members present to ask about us, to talk with  
16 us, to engage with us, because we have so, so much to  
17 say. [applause] And I was going to read a short  
18 poem about civic engagement, but it's very clear to  
19 me that every single person in this room knows  
20 everything that is at stake with all the decisions  
21 that pass through here. So, I'm going to read a  
22 short poem that I think, to me, encompasses part of  
23 the reason that I love New York City and part of the  
24 reasons-- and the reasons that I am proud to be a New  
25

1 Yorker. So, this poem is called "As the City Slept."  
2 I sit next to a homeless woman in Starbucks. She  
3 asks me how I'm doing. I say, alright. She says she  
4 got hit by a car in Brooklyn and needs two  
5 painkillers for this ache in leg that won't go away.  
6 There's thunder in her voice, roaring up through  
7 sidewalks, her breath, the City's breath. She asks me  
8 to watch her stuff, walks out with a cigarette, and I  
9 watch her unfurl. Stark against the plain air I see  
10 the city coalesce around her exhaling, its breath  
11 rumbling through subway tunnels as it lifts the  
12 wreckage from her hips, clears away shattered glass,  
13 raises her eyes once again towards the sky; built a  
14 skyscraper out of her body, gleaming, celestial. And  
15 they call us The City that Never Sleeps, but some  
16 nights I think I can hear it dreaming, in the grit of  
17 a brown girl's black teeth, and they forget the City  
18 grows tired sometimes. Forget a quarter of New  
19 Yorkers were slaves once. Forget segregation.  
20 Forget gentrification. Forget stop-and-frisk.  
21 Forget our names. Forget our blood in this concrete.  
22 Forget there are days that Lady Liberty, after  
23 working double shifts every day for years needs to  
24 blow out her torch and settle down to rest, and we  
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1  
2 become her dreams. Being hit by a car, having an  
3 ache in your leg that won't go away, and still caring  
4 about the boy sitting next to you, but come her  
5 dreamers. Every mother who must become an alchemist,  
6 magicing [sic] food stamps into meals, every dreamer  
7 is New York, is hustle, is standing above subway gate  
8 feeling the city hush around you allowing yourself to  
9 hope, and they call us The City that Never Sleeps.  
10 But sometimes you can tell the City sleeps because we  
11 only need step into the moonlight, and our bodies  
12 will become celestial, holy, and you can hear the  
13 city breath in and out and in. Thank you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Wow.

15 [applause]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Wow. I've never  
17 heard it so quiet in here before. This is powerful.  
18 You need to run for office right now.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [off mic] And that's  
20 not the one that won.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Wow, just don't  
22 run against me, but you need to run. In Brooklyn,  
23 alright, we'll talk. Brad Lander, watch out. Okay,  
24 so we are now going to take a photograph with this  
25 proclamation. Alright, thank you every one. We are

1  
2 n ow going to be joined with Council Member Ben  
3 Kallos who will be honoring The Tank. If everyone  
4 that is here with The Tank, if you could come on up.  
5 Wow, all of these amazing, cultural individuals.  
6 Good afternoon. I am so proud to be here with The  
7 Tank, and we are going to be honoring them for 15  
8 years of profound cultural contributions to New York  
9 City, and for the opportunities it has afforded  
10 thousands of original young artists. The Tank is a  
11 Manhattan-based multidisciplinary arts presenter and  
12 producer dedicated to removing economic barriers from  
13 the creation of new work by artists launching their  
14 careers and experimenting within their art form. It  
15 is also committed to upholding its mission in an  
16 environment that is inclusive, which is so important,  
17 and accessible to all people. So, I'm now going to  
18 turn the mic over to my colleague Council Member Ben  
19 Kallos who has brought this phenomenal group forward,  
20 and we are so happy to welcome you here, the voices  
21 of young people represented by women warriors today,  
22 and we're so happy to have you. If my colleagues  
23 could join me, that would be phenomenal. I'll now  
24 turn it over to Council Member Ben Kallos.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Good afternoon.

Finding affordable space in the City of New York is next to near impossible, whether it's housing or for performing arts. And so initially we have places like the public theater, but there's-- really hard to get into that, and it really doesn't serve as many New Yorkers as it could, and so many years back I met folks from the The Tank, which was this place that was welcoming all sorts of artists doing all sorts of things. At the time they were doing something called Laughing Liberally, because at the time more than-- a long time ago we elected somebody we were concerned about, and so that's what gave birth to Laughing Liberally and other acts that weren't going to find a place to perform. Most recently, this group has won pretty much more awards than almost any other theaters. Last time I was there I saw a puppet of Karl Marx, and it is an award-winning puppet show that they put together. Now, they found a permanent home after years, and so glad, and that home is on--

UNIDENTIFIED: 36<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And you can catch amazing shows there, and the shows are back-to-back, and they're pretty much 24/7, and it's a huge



1  
2 opportunity, and I think they've actually been in the  
3 Speaker's district for as long as anyone can  
4 remember. So, I'm just so glad, and we'll turn it  
5 over to the Clerk to read the proclamation.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Council City of New York  
7 Proclamation: The New York City Council is proud to  
8 honor The Tank for 15 years of profound cultural  
9 contributions to New York City and for the  
10 opportunities it has afforded thousands of original  
11 young artists, and whereas, founded in 2003, The Tank  
12 is a Manhattan-based multi-disciplinary arts  
13 presenter and producer dedicated to removing economic  
14 barriers from the creation of new work by artists  
15 launching their careers and experimenting within  
16 their art form. It is also committed to upholding  
17 its mission in an environment that is inclusive and  
18 accessible to all, and whereas, from the start, The  
19 Tank has provided a welcoming, creative,  
20 collaborative, and affordable environment for  
21 performing artists and presenters to engage in the  
22 pursuit of new ideas, delivering access to dynamic,  
23 cutting edge programming to the next generation of  
24 audiences for live performance and the work of  
25 emerging artists. Whether the artists are actors,

1 musicians, dancers, comedians, poets, film-makers, or  
2 artists of emerging media and other genres, they have  
3 all found an important home and creative hub, and  
4 whereas, The Tank has provided free performance  
5 space, as well as a suite of other resources  
6 including artist fees for tens of thousands of  
7 artists. It has also enabled thousands of artistic  
8 projects that would not have otherwise been possible,  
9 providing access to artistic resources and  
10 diversifying the voices and stories that can be heard  
11 in New York City, and whereas, The Tank is unique in  
12 its creative, collaborative approach by never  
13 charging artists to use the space, and always giving  
14 them a share of the box office. The Tank prides its  
15 participation and encourages talk-backs, trainings,  
16 and workshops around the performances. As a result,  
17 The Tank has presented an unrivaled number of new  
18 works across disciplines averaging 400 events a year,  
19 all in a setting that encourages collaboration and  
20 risk-taking over commercialism or competition. And  
21 whereas, like its presenters and producers, The  
22 Tank's audiences represent a broad cross-section of  
23 New Yorkers who are generally young, curious, and  
24 often new to the performing arts. Low-cost admission  
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1  
2 to all Tank events is a central tenant in its goal to  
3 attract the new generation of arts' patrons, and to  
4 inspire audience diversity on behalf of artists in  
5 the broader arts communities throughout the five  
6 boroughs. And whereas, The Tank has been tasked with  
7 challenges over the past 15 years, but has remained a  
8 resilient institution, never compromising the  
9 openness of its approach or the quality of its work.  
10 Today, thanks to the unwavering commitment of its co-  
11 artist directors Rosalind Grush and Meghan Finn, its  
12 staff, curators, board and advisory board, and many  
13 other supporters, The Tank remains a one-of-a-kind  
14 venue where emerging artists can find their voice,  
15 where community and risk-taking are valued over  
16 competition and exclusivity, and where the newest  
17 ideas are refined and developed into the next  
18 movement. Now, therefore be it known that the New  
19 York City Council is proud to honor The Tank in  
20 celebration of its 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for its  
21 extraordinary cultural contributions to New York  
22 City. Corey Johnson, Speaker for the entire Council;  
23 Laurie Cumbo, Council Member, Majority Leader; Ben  
24 Kallos, Council Member Fifth District, Manhattan.

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

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COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And just in case I get in any trouble for conflicts, I have one production credit in my life which was doing a Laughing Liberally show at The Tank called Pirates of the Bronx, the Curse of Pedro Espada in 2010, and literally, they will take any artist with any crazy idea. And we can turn it over to them to say a few words.

MEGHAN FINN: This is such an honor for us. We could not do the work that we do every single day without the support of the New York City Council and the Department of Cultural Affairs. The most valuable thing that we bring every day is the ability to say yes to thousands of artists every year who don't have a place to be doing their work. When we see the increasing difficulty of maintaining a performance or cultural space in New York City with the demands of real estate, we are at-- we are so pleased that every day we get to serve so many. This year we served over 2,000 artists, giving many of them their first opportunity to do their work from all of the five boroughs. I want to just allow my colleague, Rosalind Grush, to say a couple of words. There has been a quiet deterioration of press around

1 arts and culture in New York City as the focus of  
2 press-- hi guys-- has become increasingly political.  
3 There is less of an opportunity for cultural  
4 programming to rise above the fray, and that has been  
5 happening throughout the last couple of years, and so  
6 as that happens and has a profound effect on small to  
7 mid-sized arts organizations who really rely on the  
8 press to get the word out about what they do. So,  
9 that has been a struggle that we have seen. We  
10 continue to strategize ways around it and help these  
11 young artists who have a voice like the incredible  
12 artist we just saw, that need to be heard. These  
13 people that are just coming out and just getting to  
14 do their work, they really need to be seen if New  
15 York City is going to remain a cultural center. So,  
16 we applaud the work of the blueprint. We applaud  
17 the work that has been happening in New York City,  
18 and we'll just continue to do our part.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you. I want  
21 to thank you all for the credible work you've been  
22 doing over 15 years as artists and as women warriors  
23 taking this opportunity to let the press know exactly  
24 how you feel about the arts and getting the word out,  
25 never missing an opportunity, and we thank you for

1  
2 your 15 years of service, and we thank you Council  
3 Member Ben Kallos for bringing this extraordinary  
4 group to the forefront. Thank you so much, and we  
5 continue to support you. Thank you. Let's take a  
6 group photo. Can we have everyone from the  
7 incredible group, Teens Take Charge? And here's our  
8 Council Member Ritchie Torres from the Bronx.  
9 Everyone that's associated and presenting here with  
10 Teens Take Charge. This is youth day. The youth  
11 have taken over City Hall, and it's amazing and it's  
12 fantastic, and I hope with all of the press that we  
13 have here today, they will be able to showcase how  
14 dynamic and amazing our young people are, and they  
15 are taking over the city, and as our poet laureate  
16 said, it's over two million people that do not have a  
17 voice in City Hall, but they are getting a voice  
18 today. So, we are so pleased to have you all here  
19 today. Teens Take Charge had its launch event on  
20 April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017, just a year ago, at the Bronx  
21 Library Center with an initial group of only six  
22 students. It has grown to more than 60 students from  
23 different high schools across the City, dedicated to  
24 tackling school segregation and proposing policies  
25 that promote integration by engaging audiences of

1  
2 more than 300 people all in one year. We should be  
3 so lucky as Council Members, right? They are really  
4 doing great work, and I'm going to turn the  
5 microphone over to Council Member Ritchie Torres to  
6 say more about this fantastic group that he has  
7 brought forward and introduced to City Hall today.  
8 Council Member Ritchie Torres.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Thank you  
10 everyone. You know, as many of you might know, May  
11 2018 marks the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of one of the  
12 greatest decisions in American history, Brown vs.  
13 Board of Education, but five years ago during the  
14 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the UCLA project at-- the Civil  
15 Rights Project at UCLA found that New York City  
16 despite our reputation for cosmopolitanism and  
17 diversity has the most segregated school system in  
18 the country. And so it's an issue that had been--  
19 that had gone unresolved for decades, but for the  
20 first time the Department of Education has adopted a  
21 policy for diversifying classrooms. We need to be  
22 bolder, but those changes would not have been  
23 possible were it not for a student-led movement known  
24 as Teens Take Charge. And so the change is being  
25 driven not by the politicians, but primarily by the

1 students in front of you, and we want to recognize  
2 them for honoring the heritage of Brown vs. Board of  
3 education not only in word, but in deed. So, thank  
4 you. And are we going to read the proclamation?  
5

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Council City of New York  
7 Proclamation: In recognition of the student-led  
8 movement to integrate segregated students throughout  
9 New York City, the Council of the City of New York is  
10 proud to honor Teens Take Charge for leading the way  
11 for equitable education, and whereas, Teens Take  
12 Charge had its launch event on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at  
13 the Bronx Library Center with an initial group of six  
14 students. It has grown to more than 60 students from  
15 different high schools across the City dedicated to  
16 tracking school segregation and proposing policies  
17 that promote integration by engaging audiences of  
18 more than 300 people, and whereas, Teens Take  
19 Charge's mission is to build a student-led movement  
20 for educational equity in New York City. they have  
21 led four free events between students and policy-  
22 makers on topics of educational inequity, pressing  
23 issues in the New York City public school system,  
24 inequities in the high school admissions process, and  
25 the legacy of Brown V. Board of Education, and



1  
2       whereas, Teens Take Charge is designing a campaign  
3       around the enrollment equity proposal, and is working  
4       with the Department of Education to address issues of  
5       student involvement and student representation across  
6       the Department. Students plan to expand their  
7       student base, continue hosting community events that  
8       raise awareness through student testimony, and work  
9       closely with policy-makers on solving issues of  
10      segregation and inequity in our schools. And  
11      whereas, Teens Take Charge has impacted the  
12      conversation around desegregating schools and has  
13      paved the way for student leaders to be involved in  
14      bringing change to the school system. Now therefore  
15      be it known, the Council of the City of New York  
16      gratefully honors Teens Take Charge for their  
17      outstanding service and contributions to the  
18      community: Corey Johnson, Speaker for the entire  
19      Council; Laurie Cumbo, Council Member and Majority  
20      Leader; Ritchie Torres, Council Member 15<sup>th</sup> District,  
21      the Bronx.

22                   UNIDENTIFIED: First and foremost, I'd  
23      like to thank Council Member Torres, Council Member  
24      Lander, and Council Member Rosenthal, and every  
25      single elected official, Taylor Agen [sic] and every

1 adult who has helped us thus far. I think what  
2 really drives Teens Take Charge is the fact that an  
3 education is the civil and natural right of every  
4 single citizen of New York, and we have to make sure  
5 we improve the system, because we're stealing these  
6 kids' future. In the next 20 years, we're going to  
7 be the ones who are sitting in these seats and making  
8 the decisions that are going to be made. All these  
9 voting things are going to be the youth, and if we  
10 don't prepare our youth we're not going to have a  
11 strong future, and education is the way to prepare  
12 the youth. So, we have to make sure education system  
13 is equitable for all students regardless of their  
14 gender, race, socioeconomic status, or orientation so  
15 we can all thrive and make sure New York City is the  
16 greatest city in the world and will continue to be  
17 when we assume these leadership positions.

19 [applause]

20 UNIDENTIFIED: Quiet on the floor,  
21 please. Quiet on the floor, please. At this time,  
22 please place all electronic devices, all electronic  
23 devices to vibrate. At this time will all non-  
24 council employees, non-council employees, please  
25 leave the main floor of the chambers. If you do not

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

have a Council ID, you cannot be on the main floor of the chambers. Thank you. Madam Majority Leader, it's all yours.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Good afternoon, I'm Majority Leader, Laurie Cumbo, and I am now calling to order the Stated Meeting for today, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and we are now going to begin with roll call.

COUNCIL CLERK: Adams?

COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Present.

COUNCIL CLERK: Ampry-Samuel? Ayala? Barron?

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Present.

COUNCIL CLERK: Borelli? Brannan? Cabrera?

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Chin? Cohen?

COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Constantinides?

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cornegy?

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Present.

COUNCIL CLERK: Deutchsh? Diaz?

COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Present.

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

COUNCIL CLERK: Dromm?

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Espinal? Eugene?

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Gibson? Gjonaj?

COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Present.

COUNCIL CLERK: Grodenchik? Holden?

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Kallos?

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: King? Koo?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Present.

COUNCIL CLERK: Koslowitz?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Lancman?

COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Lander?

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Levin?

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Levine? Maisel?

Menchaca? Miller? Moya?

COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Present.

COUNCIL CLERK: Perkins?

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Present.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Powers? Reynoso?  
COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Present.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Richards? Rivera?  
COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Present.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Rodriguez?  
COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Presente.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Rose?  
COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Here.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Rosenthal?  
COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Present.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Salamanca?  
COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Present.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Torres?  
COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Present.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Treyger?  
COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Here.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Ulrich? Vallone? Van  
Bramer? Williams? Yeger?  
COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Here.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Matteo?  
COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Here.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Cumbo?  
COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Present.

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

COUNCIL CLERK: Speaker Johnson?

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Here.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: We have a quorum.

Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Roll call. We will now go into the invocation that will be delivered by Reverend Shaun J. Lee of Mount Lebanon Baptist Church located at 228 Decatur Street, Brooklyn New York, 11233, and please rise.

UNIDENTIFIED: All rise.

REVEREND LEE: Let us join in heart, mind and spirit as we go in prayer together. We thank you for this day, oh God, and are grateful for another opportunity to serve the people of this great city. We ask now that you endow this council with the attributes they need in making decisions that will affect the lives of so many. Give them wisdom so that their legislation will have long-term positive effects, helping them to choose what is right instead of what is expedient. Give them compassion, so the Council will have the disenfranchised and

1  
2 marginalized in mind, especially our children,  
3 seniors, and those who are disabled. Give them out-  
4 of-the-box thinking so they can develop creative ways  
5 to help those who need it the most. Give them  
6 integrity so that they will always work toward the  
7 greater good for all and not the selfish ambition and  
8 goals of the few. Give them courage so that they  
9 will not back down from doing what is right in your  
10 eyes, but to stand tall and firm. Give them strength  
11 so that they can manage the difficult burden that  
12 comes with such a great responsibility. Give them  
13 humility to help them remember their job is not one  
14 of overbearing power, but of service. Give them  
15 leadership so that they will know how to navigate the  
16 various road blocks they will encounter in creating a  
17 better city for all New Yorkers. And in a world  
18 where those in power seek to divide us, give this  
19 council a sense of unity and comradery. Remind them  
20 of the African proverb: When two elephants fight, it  
21 is the grass that gets trampled. Show not only this  
22 council, but the people of this city that our  
23 differences should not be used to make us combative  
24 toward one another, but our unity in the midst of our  
25 diversity is what makes this city so great. So bind

1 us together now, God, no matter what our  
2 socioeconomic background may be. Bind us together  
3 now, God, no matter what our sexual orientation or  
4 gender identity may be. Bind us together now, God,  
5 no matter what our religion, age, or color may be.  
6 Bind us together now, God, with cords that cannot be  
7 broken. This is our hope and this is our prayer.  
8 Amen.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: We will now have a  
11 motion to spread the invocation in full upon the  
12 record by Speaker-- by Council Member Cornegy.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I don't even  
14 know how to respond to that.

15 [laughter]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I'm stuck,  
17 Laurie. Thank you, Madam Majority Leader, for this  
18 opportunity to spread this above the entire Council.  
19 I would like to say that Reverend Shaun Lee is the  
20 epitome of all that is good of Bedford Stuyvesant.  
21 As a former resident and childhood prodigy from  
22 Brevoort Projects, he's a Moore [sp?] House man, went  
23 on to get a Master's Degree from Brooklyn College, a  
24 Master's from Princeton Theological Seminary, and  
25 most importantly a member of the most-- the greatest



1  
2 fraternity known to man, Omega Psi Fraternity  
3 Incorporated, Alpha Upsilon Chapter, better known as  
4 Brooklyn Omega. Reverend Lee has broken out of the  
5 traditional role that relegates clergy to its  
6 respective pulpits. As a member and leader in Metro  
7 IAF and EBC, he's led the way for affordable housing  
8 and not only Bedford Stuyvesant and Crowne Heights,  
9 but the entire City of New York. I'm proud to call  
10 him a friend, a leader, and like I said, a shining  
11 example of all that is good about Bedford Stuyvesant.  
12 Mount Lebanon Baptist Church is a beacon. It has  
13 remained that way for several decades. It's a  
14 pleasure to call him my friend and to spread this  
15 invocation-- I mean, to spread the invocation-- I'm  
16 still stuck on Laurie-- over today's Stated Meeting.  
17 Thank you, Reverend Lee.

18 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Madam Majority Leader,  
19 before you move on I want to second what Council  
20 Member Cornegy said about the pastor who has joined  
21 us here today, Reverend Shaun Lee. I'm really glad  
22 he's here. It's a nice, pleasant surprise, and I have  
23 had the opportunity to get to know him through his  
24 advocacy for New Yorkers who are in need of habitable  
25 and affordable housing across our entire city. So I

1  
2 am grateful for his work in the clergy community, but  
3 also his work beyond the clergy community and lifting  
4 up the most vulnerable in New York City. Thank you  
5 very much.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you, and I  
7 too want to thank you for being here and for your  
8 very timely and powerful prayer, and for the work and  
9 advocacy in the fight that you have organized and  
10 launched all throughout the City so that our seniors  
11 would have truly affordable housing, and I thank you,  
12 and all of the pastors who have joined together to  
13 recognize our most vulnerable in our housing  
14 population. So, I thank you for your work and your  
15 advocacy, and you have changed the lives of thousands  
16 of people already. Thank you so much. We will now  
17 have the adoption of minutes, and we will have that  
18 completed by Council Member Salamanca.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you,  
20 Majority Leader. I make a motion that the minutes of  
21 the Stated Meeting of June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and June 28<sup>th</sup>,  
22 2018 be adopted as printed.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you so much,  
24 Council Member Salamanca, and now we will go on to  
25 messages and papers from the Mayor.

1 CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING 35

2 COUNCIL CLERK: Excuse me. M83  
3 submitting Carl Weisbrod for appointment to the New  
4 York City Charter Revision Commission.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Received, ordered,  
6 printed, and filed.

7 COUNCIL CLERK: M84 through M88,  
8 submitting the names Jose Francisco, Janhavi  
9 Pakrashi, Susan Stetzer, Luisa Torres, and Curtis  
10 Walker to the Nightlife Advisory Board.

11 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Received, ordered,  
12 printed and filed.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Communication from  
14 City, County and Borough Offices.

15 COUNCIL CLERK: Pre-considered M89,  
16 Nathan N. Joseph, candidate for the Civilian  
17 Complaint Review Board.

18 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Rules, Privileges and  
19 Elections.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Petitions and  
21 communications?

22 COUNCIL CLERK: None.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Land Use Call-ups?

24 COUNCIL CLERK: M90 through M92, various  
25 applications.

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on a call-up vote, and at this time I would ask for a roll call vote on all items on today's Land Use Call-up Calendar.

COUNCIL CLERK: Adams?

COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I vote aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Ampry-Samuel.

COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I vote aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Ayala?

COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I vote aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Barron?

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Borelli?

COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Brannan?

COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cabrera?

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Chin? Cohen?

Constantinides?

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cornegy?

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY? I vote aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Deutsch?

1 CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING 37  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I'll do the  
3 same.  
4 COUNCIL CLERK: Cohen?  
5 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: [off mic] Aye.  
6 COUNCIL CLERK: Diaz?  
7 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: [off mic] Yes, I do  
8 [sic].  
9 COUNCIL CLERK: Dromm?  
10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.  
11 COUNCIL CLERK: Espinal?  
12 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Aye.  
13 COUNCIL CLERK: Eugene?  
14 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.  
15 COUNCIL CLERK: Gibson?  
16 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: I vote aye.  
17 COUNCIL CLERK: Gjonaj?  
18 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Aye.  
19 COUNCIL CLERK: Holden?  
20 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Aye.  
21 COUNCIL CLERK: Kallos?  
22 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.  
23 COUNCIL CLERK: King? Koo.  
24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I vote aye.  
25 COUNCIL CLERK: Koslowitz?

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I vote aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Lancman?  
COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Lander?  
COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Levin?  
COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Levine?  
COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Maisel?  
COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Menchaca?  
COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Miller? Moya?  
COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Perkins?  
COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Powers?  
COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS? Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Reynoso?  
COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Richards?  
COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Aye.  
COUNCIL CLERK: Rivera?

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Rodriguez?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Rose?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Rosenthal?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Salamanca?

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Torres?

COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Treyger?

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Ulrich?

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Williams? Yeger?

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Matteo?

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cumbo?

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Vote aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Speaker Johnson?

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Today's Land Use

Call-ups are adopted by a vote of 44 in the

1  
2 affirmative and 0 negative. And now we will have  
3 communication from Speaker Corey Johnson.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam  
5 Majority Leader. Good afternoon. First, I would  
6 like if we could have some quiet in the chambers. I'd  
7 like to--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [interposing] Quiet  
9 in the chambers.

10 SPEAKER JOHNSON: remember few New Yorkers  
11 who have passed away since our last meeting. First,  
12 Robert Martinez who worked with the NYPD at Police  
13 Headquarters and was tragically killed in an accident  
14 on the Gowanus Expressway. I want to extend my  
15 thoughts and prayers to Robert's family. I also  
16 would like to remember a 9/11 First Responder who  
17 passed away in recent weeks, Paul Johnson, who was  
18 with the NYPD Emergency Services Unit died from an  
19 illness related to his work at Ground Zero. For his  
20 tremendous sacrifice, I'd like to extend my thoughts  
21 and prayers to Paul's wife, his nine children and his  
22 19 grandchildren. Last, let us remember Wanda Rios,  
23 a security guard who was murdered while on duty in  
24 the Bronx last month. Ms. Rios was only 45 years  
25 old, and leaves behind a loving family, including her



1 spouse and her daughter. I offer them my thoughts and  
2 prayers, and if people could please rise so we could  
3 have a moment of silence for those we've lost.  
4

5 [moment of silence]

6 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you very much.

7 So, jumping into our docket for the day, the Council  
8 will vote on the following Finance items. First,  
9 we'll vote on Resolution 469, which I sponsored, that  
10 would support an additional borrowing by the Hudson  
11 Yards Infrastructure Corporation in an amount not to  
12 exceed 500 million dollars to complete the  
13 infrastructure projects in the Hudson Yards Financing  
14 District, including phase two of the project which  
15 includes the expansion of Hudson Boulevard and Park.  
16 The Resolution would also support an undertaking by  
17 the City to pay current interest subject to  
18 appropriation to the extent not paid from revenues of  
19 Hudson Yards Infrastructure Corporation on such  
20 Hudson Yards Infrastructure Corporation indebtedness.  
21 I want to thank the staff who was involved in this,  
22 Doctor Ray Majeski [sp?], Raju Mann [sp?], our Land  
23 Use Director, Rebecca Chaisson [sp?], our Chief  
24 Counsel for the Finance Committee, and Davis Winslow  
25 from the Finance Division. The Council will also

1  
2 vote on two Article XI property tax exemptions, 526  
3 West 158<sup>th</sup> Street, in Council Member Mark Levine's  
4 District. It's going to support the preservation of  
5 29 affordable housing units. 941 Rogers Place in  
6 Council Member Rafael Salamanca's district will  
7 support the preservation of 20 affordable housing  
8 units. Next, the Council will vote on the following  
9 Land Use items: East 14<sup>th</sup> Street in Irving Plaza in  
10 Manhattan. The Council will vote on an application  
11 by the New York City Economic Development Corporation  
12 and 14<sup>th</sup> at Irving, LLC to redevelop a city-owned  
13 cite with a 21-story technology-focused office and  
14 retail commercial building. The building will be  
15 home to a unique cluster of workforce development  
16 organizations which will help connect thousands of  
17 people each year with the skills and training they  
18 need to connect with jobs in the new economy. I want  
19 to congratulate Council Member Carlina Rivera for her  
20 work on this project, which has the opportunity to  
21 transform how we train New Yorkers for jobs of the  
22 future. Next, we're going to be voting on the Inwood  
23 rezoning in Upper Manhattan. The Council will vote  
24 on the Inwood rezoning and a neighborhood plan. The  
25 plan for Inwood will result in the investment of



1 funding for a new Immigrant Research and Performing  
2 Arts Center which will celebrate the immigrant  
3 history of the community and of our city while also  
4 providing much-needed performing arts venues for  
5 local community groups starved of such space in the  
6 neighborhood. Finally, the plan includes millions of  
7 dollars for new and improved public parks, waterfront  
8 open space, in addition to transportation, pedestrian  
9 safety, and infrastructure improvements. This  
10 application, of course, is in Council Member Ydanis  
11 Rodriguez's district. The East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street rezoning  
12 in Manhattan: The Council's approving with  
13 modifications an application submitted by 33<sup>rd</sup> Street  
14 Acquisition LLC, for a zoning map amendment and a  
15 zoning text amendment to facilitate a development of  
16 a 23-story mixed-use building, and this project is  
17 located in Council Member Carlina Rivera's district.  
18 1019 to 1029 Fulton Street: The Council will be  
19 voting on an application submitted by the New York  
20 City Department of Housing, Preservation and  
21 Development, and Fulton Star LLC to seek designation  
22 of an Urban Development Action Area Project, a UDAAP  
23 project, for project approval and disposition of a  
24 city-owned property at 1027 and 1029 Fulton Street in  
25

1  
2 Brooklyn. These actions will facilitate the  
3 development of an eight-story building with  
4 approximately 50 residential units and 6,100 square  
5 feet of ground floor commercial retail space to be  
6 constructed on the disposition area and six adjacent  
7 privately-owned lots. This project is located in  
8 Majority Leader Laurie Cumbo's district. North  
9 Conduit de-mapping in Queens: This is in Council  
10 Member Donovan Richards's district where the proposed  
11 de-mapping would allow the applicant to purchase a  
12 portion of the project area from the City to use on a  
13 permanent basis for permitted off-street accessory  
14 parking for the uses on the applicant's property  
15 adjacent to the de-mapping area. Balton Commons in  
16 Manhattan: The Council will vote on an application  
17 for the proposed Urban Development Action Area  
18 Designation, again a UDAAAP project, for project  
19 approval and disposition approval for the property  
20 located at 263 to 267 West 126<sup>th</sup> Street. This action  
21 will facilitate the development of a new seven-story  
22 mixed-use building that includes 36 affordable rental  
23 units, community facility space and retail space.  
24 This project is located in Council Member Bill  
25 Perkins's district. 40-31 82<sup>nd</sup> Street: This

1 application has been withdrawn by the applicant, and  
2 we will be voting on a motion to file. The Council  
3 is also voting on six sidewalk cafés today. I want  
4 to thank the Land Use staff who worked on all of  
5 these projects, Amy Levetan [sp?], Julie Luben [sp?],  
6 Jeff Yun [sp?], Liz Lee, George Sarkisian [sp?], and  
7 Brian Paul, as well as Raju Mann, our great Director  
8 of Land Use. Next on the agenda, the Council will  
9 vote on the following pieces of legislation. We'll  
10 vote on Introduction Number 1087 sponsored by Council  
11 Member Jumaane Williams, which will co-name Rogers  
12 Avenue between Farragut Road and Eastern Parkway as  
13 Jean Jacque Dessalines Boulevard. I want to thank the  
14 staff who worked on this, Chris Artori [sp?], Patrick  
15 Mulvahill [sp?], Kenneth Grace [sp?], Chima Obeceri  
16 [sp?], Teresa Nassir [sp?], and Megan Chan [sp?].  
17 The Council's also going to vote on Introduction  
18 965A, sponsored by Council Member Rafael Espinal,  
19 which will allow businesses selling tobacco products  
20 additional time to register for Tobacco Retail Dealer  
21 License and come into compliance with the law that  
22 the City Council passed last session that strengthens  
23 regulations on the sale of tobacco products and  
24 limits the number of stores selling these products.  
25

1 I want to thank the staff who worked on this, Rachel  
2 Cordero and Balkis Mirig [sp?]. Finally, the Council  
3 will vote on legislation to regulate the for-hire  
4 vehicle industry in New York City. This legislation  
5 has received a lot of attention over the past few  
6 weeks, and before we vote on these bills, I want to  
7 clarify a few things. Number one, we are not taking  
8 away any service that is currently being offered to  
9 New Yorkers who use at-based for-hire vehicle  
10 services. We are pausing the issuance of new  
11 licenses in an industry that has been allowed to  
12 proliferate without any appropriate check or any real  
13 regulatory framework. If anyone wants to put a new  
14 wheelchair-accessible vehicle on the road, they can  
15 do that. In fact, we encourage them to, because less  
16 than one percent of for-hire vehicle on the road are  
17 accessible to folks who are in wheelchairs. This is  
18 about careful deliberation. The Taxi and Limousine  
19 Commission is going to study this issue over the next  
20 12 months with quarterly data reports that are going  
21 to be given by the for-hire vehicle companies. This  
22 is about supporting and uplifting drivers in New York  
23 City, all drivers, yellow drivers, green drivers,  
24 livery drivers, Uber drivers, Lyft drivers, Juno  
25

1 drivers, Via drivers, and making sure that they are  
2 paid enough to support themselves and their families.  
3 We believe that these tragic suicides that we've seen  
4 in the city are because there has not been a real  
5 look in this industry to figure out how we regulate  
6 it in an appropriate way to make sure we're creating  
7 sound public policy. This is a plan that we came up  
8 with, and in my heart I believe this is the best path  
9 forward. Our goal has always been to protect  
10 drivers, bring fairness to the industry, and reduce  
11 congestion. Those have been the three guiding  
12 principles: protect all drivers, bring fairness and  
13 parity in regulation across the industry, and to do  
14 our best to reduce congestion. Two thousand new  
15 vehicles having been added to the road every single  
16 month. That's what this legislation does, this  
17 package of legislation does, and it represents the  
18 broad outlines of what we think our next steps should  
19 be as a city to help the industry. This package of  
20 bills is not punitive. This package of bills is  
21 thoughtful. It's careful. It's deliberative, and we  
22 have spent months working with all stakeholders  
23 involved to ensure that what we're doing is  
24 responsible and takes into consideration concerns  
25



1 from everyone in the entire industry. Introduction  
2 838C would add a new license for high-volume for-hire  
3 vehicle transportation services serving 10,000 trips  
4 a day, and Introduction 958A would remove the  
5 enhanced financial penalties for unauthorized street  
6 hails in the Hail Exclusionary Zone to bring them in  
7 line with penalties citywide. Both of these bills  
8 were sponsored by Council Member Ruben Diaz, Senior,  
9 who is the Chair of the For-Hire Committee in the  
10 City Council. Introduction 634B sponsored by Council  
11 Members Ruben Diaz, Senior and Council Member Ydanis  
12 Rodriguez would waive the licensing fees for  
13 accessible taxi cabs and for-hire vehicles in order  
14 to promote their use, getting more accessible  
15 vehicles on the road. Introduction 144B, sponsored  
16 by Council Member Stephen Levin, would require the  
17 Taxi and Limousine Commission to study and decide  
18 whether to adopt vehicle utilization standards or  
19 regulations on the number of for-hire vehicle  
20 licenses in the City. During this 12-month study  
21 period there would be a pause in the issuance of new  
22 for-hire vehicle licenses with an exemption, again,  
23 for wheelchair accessible vehicles. Furthermore, the  
24 TLC would be able to issue licenses during this 12-

1 month period if they determine that there is  
2 geographic need for neighborhoods that need these  
3 vehicles to meet the demand and there would not be a  
4 substantial impact on congestion if those licenses  
5 were issued. And lastly, Introduction 890B,  
6 sponsored by Council Member Brad Lander, would  
7 require the Taxi and Limousine Commission to set  
8 minimum payments for for-hire vehicle drivers for  
9 trips dispatched by high-volume for-hire vehicle  
10 services. The TLC would also be required to study  
11 payments for other for-hire vehicle trips and to  
12 study whether or not they should set minimum rates of  
13 fare. I am really proud of this package of bills. I  
14 believe we're going to uplift many, many workers in  
15 New York City who have not been able to make ends  
16 meet, who have fallen behind, who have had to deal  
17 with predatory leasing companies who have been  
18 exploited in just trying to make ends meet to support  
19 themselves and their families, and that's what  
20 Council Member Lander's bill does today. I'm very,  
21 very proud of his leadership on this. I'm proud of  
22 Council Member Levin, of Chair Diaz, of Council  
23 Member Rodriguez, and of all the folks who worked on  
24 this. The staff worked tremendously on this. I want  
25

1  
2 to thank them: Malik Nassir Adeen [sp?], James  
3 DiGiovani [sp?], Emily Rooney [sp?], Johnathan  
4 Masserano [sp?], Rick Arbello [sp?], Nell Beakman  
5 [sp?], and Teresa Nassir [sp?], as well as Laura Popa  
6 [sp?] who has spent months and months and months  
7 working on this package of legislation. We have  
8 talked to every stakeholder involved multiple times.  
9 We have been thoughtful, careful, deliberative, and  
10 we know what we're doing today is going to hopefully  
11 create the groundwork for a sound, fair regulatory  
12 framework that doesn't exist right now and we think  
13 will hopefully figure out some of the upheaval in the  
14 industry and move our city forward in a dynamic  
15 industry that is changing all the time. That  
16 concludes our very slow agenda for today's Stated  
17 Meeting, and I look forward to proceeding with  
18 today's votes. Thank you very much, Madam Majority  
19 Leader, and I see our Public Advocate has joined us.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you,  
21 Speaker, and we will now have discussion of General  
22 Orders. Seeing none, we will now have report of  
23 Special Committees.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: None.  
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SPEAKER JOHNSON: Madam Majority Leader,  
I believe that Council Member Rodriguez wants to  
speak on the Inwood rezoning as part of the time that  
we just passed. So, if we could move back to that so  
the Council Member could speak on the rezoning in his  
district.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And Council Member  
Rodriguez, before you do that, I want to thank you  
all for the opportunity to preside over today's  
Stated Meeting. Following Council Member Ydanis  
Rodriguez's statement, we will be rejoined by Public  
Advocate Letitia James, and she has eclipsed me in  
this process, and I'm proud to turn over her seat  
back to her. Thank you, and we'll now turn it over  
to Council Member Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.  
First of all, I would like to say that the life-  
threatening images that I received similar to the one  
used by ICE doesn't reflect the majority of the great  
members of my community that I have here, showing  
their point of view--

UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing][off mic]

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: on this  
proposal.

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UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing][protesting]

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member,  
you can continue.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So, as I said,  
I know that the life-threatening message that I  
received similar to one used by ICE doesn't reflect  
the voice of the members of my community, including  
those that are using their constitutional rights has  
expressed in their point of view in favor or against  
it. [speaking Spanish]

UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing][protesting]

SPEAKER JOHNSON: If folks could please  
let the Council Member speak on this.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [speaking  
Spanish]

UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing][protesting]

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I'm very  
fortunate to be a Council Member representing the  
hard-working in Northern Manhattan. Everyone that  
has been part of this process has made this rezoning  
better as we are ready to vote this plan.

UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing][shouting]

SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, Sergeant, if--

UNIDENTIFIED: [interposing][shouting]

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SPEAKER JOHNSON: Folks, folks--

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

Quiet.

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Folks, folks, either we can let the Council Member finish with you all sitting up there, or to be able to proceed with today's votes and have a full hearing, we will have to clear the balcony if you do not allow him to speak the rest of his time. So, that choice is up to you. If you continue to speak out, I'm going to ask the Sergeants to clear the balcony so that we can have votes today. So that is up to you. So, Council Member, if you want to continue to proceed.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: In the three-year process of the rezoning, having been attended Town Hall and have met with community leader about the false and legitimate concerns about the rezoning, I heard loud and clear that the rezoning was too broad and could threaten the character of our neighborhood. For that reason we decide to take the U out of the rezoning. Our districts and hard-working families have driven [sic] for decades despite the neglected and lack of investment by the various Administration. Fewer than a thousand

1  
2 affordable units have been built in the last 10  
3 years. With this plan, we will create, preserve and  
4 protect over 5,000 affordable units, including the  
5 development of 2,600 units on public and private  
6 sites. Among other investments, we will bring over  
7 50 million in STEM [sic] and robotic programming and  
8 capital to George Washington High School and Luperon  
9 High School and a new P-Tech [sic] school with  
10 partnership with CUNY. We are building 100 percent  
11 affordable housing, development of critical public  
12 sites including DOT bridges, repair facilities, and  
13 [inaudible] with a plan to do the same thing to  
14 similar site in our community. We are bringing to  
15 our district the first in the nation Immigrant  
16 Research Center of Performance Arts space to be run  
17 by new public library and leading community. Again,  
18 I believe that anyone that has the opportunity, the  
19 right to express themselves, but when anyone posts  
20 any messages similar to the ICE's is unacceptable.  
21 Gracias.

22 UNIDENTIFIED: [protesting]

23 SPEAKER JOHNSON: So,--

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

25 Quiet. Quiet in the balcony, please.

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UNIDENTIFIED: [protesting]

SPEAKER JOHNSON: So, Sergeant, if you could please-- Sergeant, Director, could you please clear the balcony. Okay, if we could please have quiet in the chambers.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the chambers, please. Everyone have their seats. Quiet in the chambers. Now,--

SPEAKER JOHNSON: [interposing] Madam Public Advocate, I believe that the sponsors of the for-hire vehicle piece of legislation want to speak.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Now continuing with General Order Discussion beginning with Council Member Diaz. Quiet in the chambers. Council Member Diaz, your microphone.

COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Thank you, Madam Chair Lady. Ladies and gentleman, today I'm honored to be the Chair of a newly-formed committee. The drivers in the City of New York, taxi drivers, have suffered too much. They have been used by everyone. They have been used by the insurance company, by the union, by the bases, by the leasing company, by everyone. So, it is about time that we do something. But the Bible said that where is no vision, that



1  
2 people would perish. This City Council, this new  
3 City Council hired a man with a vision, a vision for  
4 the future, a vision for the City of New York, that's  
5 our Speaker Corey Johnson. He created a new  
6 committee and empowered me to be the Chair of that  
7 committee with the intention to report to him our  
8 finding of our solution or proposal. This committee  
9 have been working since January for the last seven  
10 months. My counsel, my brother, my friend, my  
11 counsel Christopher Lee [sp?] have been working day  
12 and night, a part time worker that works more than a  
13 full-time worker, and I would like to thank the  
14 Speaker Council Corey Johnson for allowing me to be  
15 the Chair of this committee, the Speaker's Chief of  
16 Staff, Jason Goldman-- he's been very helpful-- the  
17 members of the For-Hire Vehicle Committee. We have  
18 to thank Counsel [inaudible] and Louis Cholea [sp?]  
19 Brown. They were always there. I would like to  
20 thank Mr. Ed [sic] Figueroa [sp?] and the 32BJ union  
21 member for their support, the Metropolitan Taxi Cab  
22 Board of Trade, [inaudible] on the New York Taxi  
23 Workers' Alliance. And ladies and Gentleman, this  
24 is-- today, we can make history. One of my bills,  
25 838B, is a bill to regulate Uber. You have to make a

1 [inaudible] regulating Uber and copying Uber.  
2 Copying Uber for one year, regulating Uber is  
3 [inaudible] have no time. So, one of my bills,  
4 again, 838B is to regulate Uber, and if that bill is  
5 approved by you, my colleagues, New York City, New  
6 York City will make history being the first city in  
7 the nation to regulate Uber. So, and the bills that  
8 Lander's submitting-- Council Member Lander, thank  
9 you very much for your support. Council Member  
10 Levine for their support of the, you know, the desire  
11 to work together to help the drivers and all those  
12 that been helping, that been helping us. Again, I'm  
13 saying that these five bills that we are submitting  
14 today for your consideration, Council Members, and  
15 Madam Chair Lady, are all in favor of the drivers.  
16 We have nothing to fear. We have nothing to worry.  
17 There have been scary tactics saying that our  
18 committee will suffer. Ladies and Gentleman, let me  
19 tell you something, there's not-- there's no  
20 suffering. Our community of drivers, the livery, and  
21 those livery drivers are being fined. They are  
22 being-- they are fined when they pick up in our  
23 community. So, they are prohibited to pick up in our  
24 community, the liberty [sic] drive by immigrant,

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2 Hispanic, and black minority communities. So, they  
3 are in our community. They do not pick in our  
4 community because they will be fined. But Uber could  
5 take that same taxi driver and that same livery and  
6 use it, and they could pick, because they work for  
7 Uber. But on their own they cannot pick. This is  
8 injustice. We're trying to leverage the playground  
9 for everyone, and I appreciate the Speaker. I  
10 already-- he [inaudible]. Mr. Speaker, I'm a player  
11 [sic]. I know when to shut up and when to speak. So  
12 thank you very much for your support, and ladies and  
13 gentleman, I hope that you will vote yes on all these  
14 five bills. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the  
16 chambers, please. Council Member Lander?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I think Council  
18 Member Levin is ahead of me.

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member  
20 Levin?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you, Madam  
22 Public Advocate. Thank you very much. Thank you,  
23 Council Member Lander. Thank you, Public Advocate. I  
24 want to take this opportunity to especially thank  
25 Speaker Johnson for his commitment to this

1  
2 legislation in ensuring that this legislation is--  
3 was crafted in a fair manner, a manner that took-- in  
4 a manner that took all sides and all perspectives  
5 into account, and so I greatly appreciate his  
6 leadership here. I want to thank our Chair, Chair  
7 Ruben Diaz, Senior, for taking on this issue with  
8 such passion since its arrival here at the Council,  
9 and I think his support for this legislation, but  
10 also for the entire package is totally instrumental.  
11 So, thank you, Chair Diaz. Today, the Council has a  
12 historic opportunity to pass a legislative package  
13 that will bring much-needed oversight and  
14 accountability to the ride share vehicle industry.  
15 The fact of the matter is that the taxi industry has  
16 capped the number of licensed vehicles allowed on the  
17 road for over 70 years when it comes to yellow cabs,  
18 yet, we have not done the same for other for-hire  
19 vehicles, and as a result since the app hail  
20 revolution, we have seen companies grow exponentially  
21 without any long-term citywide plan in place to  
22 address it. And as a result, the number of licensed  
23 vehicles in New York City has almost doubled since  
24 2014, even 2015. So, when we think about the last

1  
2 time we were discussing legislation on this matter  
3 back in 2015, there were roughly--

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

5 Excuse me, Council Member. Sergeant at Arms, there's  
6 someone apparently on the steps that's talking  
7 loudly. Would you please refrain or take your  
8 conversation outside? We are still in session.  
9 Thank you. Apologize, Council Member.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Even when we were  
11 last discussing this issue in 2015, the number of  
12 for-hire vehicles on our streets has almost doubled  
13 since that time. The market is, in fact,  
14 oversaturated, and as a result drivers are struggling  
15 to make ends meet. So, Intro. 144 accomplishes  
16 several goals. First, it addresses the need to make  
17 pay more equitable for all drivers by pressing the  
18 pause button on the number of licensed for-hire  
19 vehicles, otherwise known as FHV's, on our streets.  
20 The one-year cap maintains our current level and  
21 prevents greater saturation of the market. I hear  
22 from drivers all across the industries who say that  
23 they're driving around for longer, having a harder  
24 time getting rides and earning less income. I just  
25 want to actually read from an op-ed in the daily news

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2 yesterday from a driver named Kitiyan Sumasa [sp?]  
3 who wrote, "I've been a professional driver serving  
4 New York City for 14 years. In 2014 I switched from  
5 driving a yellow cab to Uber. At that time, with  
6 fewer cars and higher fares, you could make good  
7 money. I could take care of my family. I made up to  
8 1,900 dollars a week working eight to nine-hour  
9 shifts six days a week. Then, in 2015, they started  
10 piling on the cars, and in 2016 they lowered the  
11 fares. Now, there just are not enough fares to go  
12 around. I work seven days a week and even driving  
13 for 12, 13, or 14 hours a day I rarely break a  
14 thousand dollars a week, and that's before expenses.  
15 I pay for my car, gas, and vehicle maintenance all  
16 out-of-pocket." In fact, a study recently came out  
17 last month by James Parrot [sp?] and Michael Reich  
18 [sp?] showed that those expenses add up to about  
19 \$20,295 every single year. So, out of a-- if he's  
20 making 1,000 dollars before-- so that's 52,000  
21 dollars a year, subtract 20,295 dollars a year from  
22 that. He's barely breaking 30,000 dollars a year,  
23 and as we all know, it's virtually impossible to  
24 support a family here in New York City on that type  
25 of salary. Secondly, the bill helps us accomplish

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2 our public policy goals around transportation  
3 accessibility and congestion. Over 2,000 vehicles  
4 are added to the road every month while the rate of  
5 traffic in Manhattan slowed by more than 17 percent  
6 in 2016 alone. This is just not sustainable. The  
7 bill does, however, include an exemption for  
8 accessible vehicles incentivizing companies to speed  
9 up their commitment to making vehicle transportation  
10 more accessible to disabled riders across New York  
11 City. Lastly, the bill starts us on a path to a  
12 reasonable, responsible, and sustainable long-term  
13 solution for both drivers and riders alike. During  
14 the one-year pause, the TLC will work with the  
15 Department of Transportation to study vehicle  
16 utilization rates, access to service in different  
17 geographic areas around the city, driver income, and  
18 traffic congestion so that we can enact adaptive,  
19 forward-thinking regulatory system that balances the  
20 need for rider access with our goals of maintaining a  
21 living wage through fair transit system. We are long  
22 overdue for regulation of the for-hire vehicle  
23 industry, and I'm proud of the steps we're taking  
24 here today. With the passage of today's bills, New  
25 York will be the first major city in the US to set a

1 limit on ride sharing vehicles. You know, I do want  
2 to also acknowledge that I've heard from a lot of New  
3 Yorkers and colleagues across the board on the  
4 longstanding discrimination that people of color have  
5 felt across New York City from taxi drivers and the  
6 fact that at-base hail services have really filled a  
7 void in making sure that people are not discriminated  
8 against, that that has had a significant impact, and  
9 we do not take that issue lightly. We take it very  
10 seriously. We need to redouble our efforts,  
11 consistently commit ourselves to root out  
12 discrimination every single time we see it. We can  
13 in no way countenance it or allow it to continue, and  
14 the commitment here from this Council to address that  
15 issue is ongoing and very serious, and I just want to  
16 acknowledge that issue is legitimate. It is real,  
17 and as Council Member Lander has said, you know, as a  
18 white man myself, I don't have to suffer the  
19 indignity of having cars pass me by as I put out my  
20 hand for a hail, but it is very serious issue, and we  
21 do not-- and we take it very seriously, and I want to  
22 acknowledge that. With that said, I want to thank  
23 the many drivers, advocates, and community leaders  
24 who have generously contributed their time and  
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1  
2 expertise to make sure that this bill brings real  
3 solutions to New York transportation system. I want  
4 to thank the Speaker for his incredible leadership on  
5 this issue along with Laura Popa and council staff,  
6 James Giovanni [sp?], Johnathan Messerano [sp?],  
7 Emily Rooney [sp?], Rick Arbella [sp?], Chima Obeceri  
8 [sp?], and John Basill [sp?], as well as Malik  
9 Nasiradeen [sp?], and Nell Beakman [sp?] from the  
10 Legislative Drafting Unit. I want to acknowledge TLC  
11 Chair Meera Joshi, Jeff Lynch from City Legislation  
12 on the Mayor's side as well as the Taxi Worker  
13 Alliance, Bhairavi Desai, her entire organization,  
14 the IDG which has brought a needed voice to this  
15 conversation as well, and all of the stakeholders,  
16 Josh Gold from Uber who has been readily available at  
17 each and every incidence where we've reached out to  
18 him for input, as well as other companies and  
19 individuals that have been affected by this. SO, I  
20 want to thank everybody for their time. I want to  
21 thank my colleagues for the support. Even-- and my  
22 colleagues that are not supportive of this measure,  
23 thank you so much for your consideration and for your  
24 very important feedback. And with that, I encourage  
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1  
2 my colleagues to vote aye. Thank you very much for  
3 the courtesy. Thank you.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.  
5 Council Member Rivera?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you so  
7 much. I want to thank-- thank you for letting me  
8 speak today about some very important Land Use  
9 decisions for my decisions for my district that we're  
10 going to be voting on today. So, after seven months  
11 of intense negotiations with City Hall, I'm voting  
12 yes today for a tech hub at Union Square that  
13 achieves the two most important goals our community  
14 needed from this rezoning. This tech hub will bring  
15 true community benefits, tech education, and  
16 workforce development services that will finally give  
17 women, people of color, and low income New Yorkers  
18 access to an industry that has unfairly kept them out  
19 for far too long. And of course, we have also  
20 achieved crucial protections for the neighborhood  
21 that I have lived in my entire life and seen change  
22 so much over the last 15 years. These protections  
23 include key land markings, a commencement of  
24 establishing a protective zoning measure in  
25 neighborhoods south of 14<sup>th</sup> Street that will regulate

1 commercial development and further resources and  
2 commitments from HPD, LPC and the Mayor's Office that  
3 will have a lasting positive impact on the  
4 preservation of affordable housing and historical  
5 housing alike. I believe these protections for the  
6 neighborhood are the first in a string of victories  
7 that allow us to develop sensible zoning for livable  
8 streets, establish land marking of precious  
9 historical sites, and ensure the small businesses we  
10 cherish prosper, and not just for my district, but I  
11 hope we as a council can have a better process for  
12 community-based planning that really does look at  
13 things holistically going forward. I'm also proud to  
14 be delivering more affordable housing we desperately  
15 need-- so, the Kips Bay Neighborhood of District Two.  
16 The project we are approving today on East 33<sup>rd</sup>  
17 Street has a potential to bring up to 40 affordable  
18 units with protections in place for the tenants from  
19 the previous buildings on site. These Land Use  
20 decisions are the most important I've made in my  
21 eight months as an elected official. I, of course,  
22 have to thank all of the advocates that kept pushing  
23 me to make this project better. To my neighborhood  
24 partners who helped me drive home the fact that the  
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1  
2 history and character of our community is a priority,  
3 thank you, this is your win. I could not have gotten  
4 here without my staff, and I have to thank my interns  
5 who have been an indispensable part of my team and  
6 are going back to school soon, that's Chelsea,  
7 Sierra, Elizabeth, Izzy, Joseph, Ryan, Bennie, and  
8 Maranisa [sp?]. Yes, they all fit in about 1,500  
9 square feet in the lower east side. And then I also  
10 have to thank the amazing Council Land Use team,  
11 especially Raju Mann, Julie Luben, and Liz Lee.  
12 Thank you, of course, for the leadership of the  
13 Speaker on projects like this, always standing by his  
14 members, and Jason Goldman for his unending patience,  
15 and to the Mayor's team, especially Jeff Lynch and  
16 Ama Tegani [sp?]. And last, but certainly not least,  
17 a very special thank you to my Chief of Staff, Pedro  
18 Carillo [sp?], who has been working with me on this  
19 project since day one. Thanks again to everyone who  
20 supports the work that went into these results, and I  
21 ask all of my colleagues to stand with me today.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: That concludes  
23 discussion of General Orders. Report of Special  
24 Committees?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Madam--

2 COUNCIL CLERK: None.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Madam Public  
4 Advocate?

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Reports of  
6 Standing Committees?

7 SPEAKER JOHNSON: I believe Council  
8 Member Lander wanted to speak on his bill as part of  
9 the for-hire vehicle package.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member  
11 Lander?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you, Madam  
13 Public Advocate. I apologize. I was just letting  
14 Council Member Levin go first. Thank you. I'll be  
15 brief, hopefully. I want to just add my voice. I'm  
16 proud to be part of this package of for-hire vehicle  
17 legislation that the Speaker and Chair Diaz and  
18 Council Member Levin have crafted together. It has  
19 really been a thoughtful and data-driven process with  
20 a great deal of listening to stakeholders with a goal  
21 of getting the balance right between plummeting  
22 driver pay, growing congestion, the need for  
23 dramatically expanded access for people with  
24 disabilities while continuing to provide high-quality  
25 service to New Yorkers who need it, and we don't take

1 that lightly. We know that app-based FHV service has  
2 been a real game-changer for many families, for  
3 people in the outer boroughs, for people of color who  
4 couldn't get a cab before, it has made a difference,  
5 and we've got a package that's going to keep  
6 providing that service, but also attend to some very  
7 real other issues, and the one that my legislation  
8 890B focuses on is that issue of driver pay. Two-  
9 thirds of app-based FHV drivers are full-time folks.  
10 These are folks who are trying to earn a living,  
11 overwhelmingly immigrants and people of color, 85  
12 percent of whom are not earning a living wage, 40  
13 percent of whom earn so little that they qualify for  
14 Medicaid despite driving 10, 12, 15 hours a day.  
15 890B will make New York City the first city in the  
16 country to mandate a living wage for Uber and Lyft  
17 drivers. They will have to earn \$17.22 an hour based  
18 on this thorough study commissioned by the Taxi and  
19 Limousine Commission, the equivalent of 15 dollars an  
20 hour for independent contractors. It means a  
21 significant increase of likely 5,000 dollars a year  
22 for folks struggling to pay their rent and feed their  
23 families while they work hard to provide  
24 transportation services to folks in New York City.  
25

1 the Commission looked at what the impact would be as  
2 a result of this regulation, an additional 12 to 15  
3 seconds that you might have to wait to get that Uber  
4 or Lyft, and I would just submit to you, boy, 12  
5 seconds is long enough to wait to lift tens of  
6 thousands of hard-working New Yorkers out of poverty.  
7 I won't repeat all the thank yous that Council Member  
8 Levin and others said. I would like to add a thank  
9 you to my Policy Director Annie Levers [sp?] who  
10 worked very hard on this package. It's an honor to  
11 be part of it. It really does get the balance right,  
12 and I hope my colleagues will join us in voting yes.  
13 Thank you.

14  
15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: That concludes  
16 Discussion of General Orders. Report of Special  
17 Committees?

18 COUNCIL CLERK: None.

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Reports on  
20 Standing Committees?

21 COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee  
22 on Consumer Affairs and Business Licensing, Intro.  
23 965A, licenses for the sale of cigarettes.

24 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Amended and coupled on  
25 General Orders.

1 CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING 72

2 COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee on

3 Finance Pre-considered Reso. 469 Hudson Yards.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General

5 Orders.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK: Pre-considered Reso.

7 472 Transparency Resolution.

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General

9 Orders.

10 COUNCIL CLERK: Pre-considered LUs 173

11 and Reso. 481 and LU 174 and Reso. 482, various

12 applications.

13 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General

14 Orders.

15 COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee on

16 For-hire Vehicles Intro. 144B, 634B, 838C, 890B, and

17 958A for-hire vehicle drivers.

18 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Amended and coupled on

19 General Orders.

20 COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee

21 on Land Use LUs 135 and 136.

22 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Approved with

23 modifications and referred to the City Planning

24 Commission pursuant to Rule 11.70B of the Rules of

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

the Council in Section 197D of the New York City Charter.

COUNCIL CLERK: LU 137 and Reso 483, disposition of three city-owned properties.

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General Orders.

COUNCIL CLERK: LU 138, waterfront access Harlem River.

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Approved with modifications and referred to the City Planning Commission pursuant to rule 11.70B of the rules of the Council in Section 197D of the New York City Charter.

COUNCIL CLERK: LU 139 and Reso. 484 through LU 141 and Reso. 486, various applications.

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General Orders.

COUNCIL CLERK: LU 142 and Reso. 487 sidewalk café.

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled to be filed pursuant to letter of withdrawal.

COUNCIL CLERK: LU 144 and Reso. 488 through LU 147 and Reso. 491, special permit and zoning amendments.

1 CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING 74

2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General  
3 Orders.

4 COUNCIL CLERK: LU 148.

5 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Approved with  
6 modifications and referred to the City Planning  
7 Commission pursuant to rule 11.70B of the rules of  
8 the Council and Section 197D of the New York City  
9 Charter.

10 COUNCIL CLERK: LU 149 and Reso. 492  
11 through LU 156 and Reso. 495, various applications.

12 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General  
13 Orders.

14 COUNCIL CLERK: LU 166 and Reso. 496 and  
15 LU 167 and Reso. 497, zoning amendments.

16 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled to be filed  
17 pursuant of letter withdrawal.

18 COUNCIL CLERK: LU 169 and Reso. 498,  
19 sidewalk café.

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Motion to disapprove.

21 COUNCIL CLERK: LU 170 and Reso. 499,  
22 sidewalk café.

23 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General  
24 Orders.

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1 CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING 75

2 COUNCIL CLERK: LU 171 and Reso. 500 and  
3 LU 172 and Reso. 501, sidewalk café.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General  
5 Orders.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee  
7 on Parks and Recreation, Pre-considered Intro. 1087,  
8 Jean Jacque Dessalines Boulevard.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled to General  
10 Orders.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee  
12 on Rules, Privileges and Elections, M77 and Reso. 502  
13 approving the appointment of Doctor Mitchell Katz,  
14 New York City Board of Health.

15 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled to General  
16 Orders.

17 COUNCIL CLERK: Pre-considered M89 and  
18 Reso. 503, approving the designation of Nathan N.  
19 Joseph, Civilian Complaint Review Board.

20 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled to General  
21 Orders.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: General Order Calendar,  
23 Intro. 720.

24 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Laid over.

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2 COUNCIL CLERK: LU 135 and Reso. 504  
3 through LU 148 and Reso. 507.

4 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled to General  
5 Orders.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Resolution appointing  
7 various persons, Commission of Deeds.

8 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Coupled on General  
9 Orders, and at this time I will ask for a roll call  
10 vote on all of the items on today's General Order  
11 Calendar.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the  
13 Chambers, please, as we take a roll call vote.

14 COUNCIL CLERK: Adams?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Permission to  
16 explain my vote?

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you, Madam  
19 Public Advocate. Intro. 144B moved me greatly as I  
20 have a large percentage of for-hire vehicles and  
21 drivers in my district of Southeast Queens. I'd like  
22 to thank my colleagues who took the lead on this  
23 package of legislation, and I would like to share an  
24 excerpt from my August 1<sup>st</sup>, New York Times Op-ed:  
25 Professional Drivers, more than 90 percent of whom

1  
2 are immigrants of color once earned a middle class  
3 living but now face eviction, bankruptcy, and even  
4 hunger. In the last year, six of them have committed  
5 suicide. There is no doubt that New Yorkers benefit  
6 from for-hire vehicles, especially those in parts of  
7 the City like my district in Southeast Queens where  
8 regular taxis are few. The cap will allow the City  
9 time to study how many cars we really need to meet  
10 consumer demand while maintaining full-time driver  
11 incomes. App drivers and those working in the  
12 traditional yellow cab industry are largely one in  
13 the same. Drivers go back and forth between the  
14 sectors as they struggle to earn a living, and our  
15 solutions must address the crisis for all drivers.  
16 While the Council works toward economic fairness in  
17 the industry, it will continue to organize to stop  
18 discrimination by drivers. Last week, under the  
19 leadership of Council Member Donovan Richards, it  
20 created the Office of Inclusion at the Taxi and  
21 Limousine Commission which will examine accusations  
22 of bias by drivers to combat bias against black  
23 passengers, in particular. I hope the City Council  
24 will take up legislation to require all licensed for-  
25 hire and yellow cab drivers to participate in civil

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2 rights and racial justice training. Economic and  
3 racial justice must go hand-in-hand, and the  
4 legislation to regulate the app dispatch sector will  
5 help us to achieve both. With this, I vote aye on  
6 all.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

8 COUNCIL CLERK: Ampry-Samuel?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Aye on all.

10 COUNCIL CLERK: Ayala?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Aye on all.

12 COUNCIL CLERK: Barron?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Permission to  
14 explain my vote?

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. First  
17 I want to say, you know, my sympathy goes out to  
18 those drivers who have taken their life, and  
19 certainly it brings-- highlights the situation at the  
20 extremities to which they went to bring our attention  
21 to that. I think that the package of bills in the  
22 main is a good one, and I'm voting for the package  
23 with exception of 144B. In my community, from the  
24 time that I was little many years ago, we did not see  
25 yellow cabs unless we were coming from the airport

1  
2 and you got a yellow taxi to bring you home. So from  
3 that need, the ingenuity and the resourcefulness of  
4 people led to the cabs that you could call. You put  
5 in a call, they would come and pick you up. And now  
6 it has expanded to where we have the app hails and  
7 people get service in that way. This industry that  
8 has expanded has provided a great service, and I  
9 think that perhaps if a study had been done prior to  
10 the legislation, we would see what it is in fact we  
11 needed to do to bring some equity to the situation.  
12 I think that my community will be hindered, suffer,  
13 and not have services that they need with this, so  
14 I'm voting against 144B. And also I'm voting against  
15 135 through 140 Land Use and 149 and 150 Land Use.  
16 Here too, I think that as we talk about affordable  
17 housing and where we have 50 percent or more of the  
18 housing that will be coming in at market rate, we are  
19 not addressing the issue of homelessness and people  
20 who need housing, which is a larger majority of the  
21 city than those who can afford to pay the market  
22 rate. So for those reasons, I'm voting no on those  
23 bills. Thank you.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

25 COUNCIL CLERK: Borelli?

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Aye on all  
except M89, 144, and 890.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Brannan?

COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Permission to  
explain my vote?

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: On 144B, my  
colleagues and I would never vote in favor of any  
measure that we believe would negatively affect  
communities of color or people in the outer boroughs,  
and that's why there's a very important piece of this  
legislation, that if it turns out we were wrong, we  
can fix it immediately. I'm a fan of disruptive  
technology. I'm a fan of Uber. I use Uber. No  
one's trying to kill Uber. We're just trying to get  
a handle on this industry and make sure that there's  
some equity here and some fairness, and I vote aye on  
all.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cabrera?

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Permission to  
explain my vote?

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.



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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I want to congratulate Council Members Diaz, Lander, and Levine for this combination of bills that are going to alleviate a problem that we find often in my district where we have a lot of driver. Nowadays we have drivers that are making on average on \$32,000 a year. A friend of mine who goes to my church working seven days a week, 10 hours a day. He's 68 years old, and he's struggling, and we need to do something, and I'm glad that the combination of all these bills, because not one of these bills can do it alone. So, I want to thank the sponsors and all those who are going to be voting on these bills. I'll be voting aye on all with exception of Intro. 958. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cohen?

COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: I am voting no on Pre-considered Intro. 1087, and aye on all other items on General Orders.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Constantinides?

COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye on all.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cornegy?

1 CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING 82

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye on all  
3 except 144.

4 COUNCIL CLERK: Deutsch?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye on all.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Diaz?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Aye on all [sic].

8 COUNCIL CLERK: Dromm.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

10 COUNCIL CLERK: Espinal?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Aye.

12 COUNCIL CLERK: Eugene?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye on all.

14 COUNCIL CLERK: Gibson?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Permission to  
16 briefly explain my vote?

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you, Madam  
19 Public Advocate, and good afternoon to all my  
20 colleagues. I certainly want to extend my  
21 congratulations to our colleagues who have introduced  
22 very important bills on this day, Council Member  
23 Rivera on the tech hub project in her district, and  
24 certainly the for-hire vehicle legislation, and the  
25 package that's been led by our Chair, Council Member

1 Diaz, Council Member Lander, Council Member Levin. I  
2 want to acknowledge the hard work of the staff that  
3 really made today happen, recognizing that every bill  
4 is not perfect. We do have to find a way to find  
5 common ground and achieve a real balance knowing that  
6 these issues are very sensitive and very delicate and  
7 we certainly want to approach it form the right way.  
8 And certainly, as a Council Member in the West Bronx  
9 representing hundreds of residents and constituents  
10 that are Uber drivers that also work for bases and  
11 other options, it's heartbreaking to know that many  
12 of them are receiving less than minimum wage and  
13 they're struggling to survive. It's unacceptable in  
14 the greatest city, and I do know that these bills, a  
15 lot of work has really been done to get us to this  
16 place, and once the bills are passed and codified,  
17 that doesn't mean our work stops. It means that  
18 every stakeholder remains in the conversation and we  
19 still have a voice, but we truly believe at the end  
20 of the day that this package is the best package put  
21 forth with a lot of input, a lot of detail. We know  
22 everyone will not be happy, but truly we are  
23 protecting workers and giving them options and making  
24 sure that they can actually live and take care of  
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1  
2 themselves and their families. So, I want to  
3 recognize my colleagues for leading today's package,  
4 and certainly want to recognize Council Member  
5 Rodriguez, knowing that it was not easy to come to a  
6 rezoning at this juncture, but I want to congratulate  
7 you and your team on coming up with the most balanced  
8 rezoning that you could archive for your district.  
9 And with that I will be voting aye on all. Thank  
10 you.

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

12 COUNCIL CLERK: Gjonaj?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Permission to  
14 explain my vote?

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I had the honor  
17 and privilege of serving on the TLC for a number of  
18 years before I ran for office. On 144B, we've  
19 already experienced the lack of service in the outer  
20 boroughs. It was during TLC's regulation that  
21 allowed it to happen, and I'm not sure when we  
22 decided to put a freeze or a cap or a pause on  
23 something to do a study. Typically, we perform  
24 studies, and that'll determine the course of action  
25 that we should take. Based on those reasons and my

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2 experience as well as the experience that I had last  
3 night as I returned with family from vacation, I  
4 don't have Uber, I don't have the app, but my son  
5 said, "I'll take care of this Dad," and he summoned  
6 an Uber from the airport that would take us home. I  
7 enjoyed my conversation with a young man from India  
8 who is in his senior year of a university who was an  
9 Uber driver part-time because of his internship, his  
10 paid internship had ended, and this was the only  
11 means that he can find the money necessary to meet  
12 ends. We're not realizing those that are relying on  
13 Uber as a part-time job or as an additional source of  
14 income. A freeze or a pause or a cap without a study  
15 that would determine clearly what we should focus on  
16 and what corrective measures are needed has been  
17 sidelined. We're also not taking into consideration  
18 of families that rely on the earned income from those  
19 part-timers just so they can pay their car payments  
20 and their insurance payments, because without that  
21 extra income they wouldn't have the luxury and the  
22 privilege of owning a car in New York City. For  
23 those reasons and many more and the comments that I  
24 received from my constituents, I vote no on 144B and  
25 aye on the rest. Thank you.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

3 COUNCIL CLERK: Holden?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: I vote aye on all  
5 except voting no on Intro. 1087.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Kallos?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Permission to  
8 explain my vote?

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Council Member  
11 Ben Kallos, and I don't own a car. Like 80 percent  
12 of New Yorkers I use whatever I can get to get where  
13 I'm going whether that's the subway, which sometimes  
14 isn't running, or the buses which sometimes aren't  
15 running, and cabs which sometimes just aren't there,  
16 or e-hail, which sometimes has surges or other  
17 reasons that that might not be there, or Citi Bike  
18 where the dock might be empty, or sadly more often  
19 than not, just getting up and walking wherever I may  
20 go, however many miles it may be, and I'm a free and  
21 open-source software developer and I support  
22 innovation, and I have always supported parts of  
23 these legislative packages that would improve pay and  
24 conditions for drivers, because that is our role, and  
25 as many of you know, I was initially opposed to

1 placing moratorium for new for-hire vehicles. I want  
2 to say I really appreciate our Speaker, Corey  
3 Johnson, who really took the time to meet with me on  
4 this issue, and talk about the broad exemption for  
5 new accessible vehicles, which we were just not  
6 seeing in the for-hire vehicle industry, and I think  
7 he made an excellent point that the Council giveth  
8 and can taketh away, and we are commissioning a  
9 study. We are closely reviewing the Taxi and  
10 Limousine Commission's quarterly reports to ensure we  
11 remain on track without harming existing services. I  
12 trust the study will be informative, and I honestly  
13 believe that utilization standard may be the best  
14 approach. I'm also a little concerned because it's  
15 four years later, and in 2014 I introduced  
16 Introduction 574 which said why do we need a middle  
17 man? Why do need a medallion owner? Why do we need  
18 Ubers or other folks when we could just let anyone  
19 use a universal e-hail app to just put out their app  
20 just like you raise your hand for a cab, and have  
21 everyone compete for your ride? Everybody wins. The  
22 drivers win. The passengers win, and I think that  
23 would be a great way to move forward. For all of  
24 those reasons I vote aye on all.  
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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Koo?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I vote aye on all.

COUNCIL CLERK: Koslowitz?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: May I please  
be excused to explain my vote?

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I do not  
drive. I have never driven, and I depend on Uber and  
all the app dispatch cars. Let me tell you, in 2015  
Uber did a campaign, nice picture of me [laughter],  
very angry, and said that Council Member Koslowitz  
had the war on Uber, will kill 10,000 jobs. I'm so  
powerful. But when in 2015 when the City first  
considered reforms, Uber waged a campaign that sent  
out to all my constituents and Uber lies, really  
lies, because today estimates vary, but generally  
agree that in 2015 there were between 15,000 and  
18,000 app dispatched cars roaming the City. Today,  
there are approximately 110,000 with Uber accounting  
for a little over 75,000 of them. The result: Much  
greater congestion in and around our city, increased  
pollution, and a whole class of workers being  
exploited. And with over 75,000 Uber vehicles, simply



1  
2 put, there are too many drivers riding around without  
3 passengers. Yesterday, coming into the City from  
4 Queens I counted at least 20 Ubers, and out of the 20  
5 Ubers that I counted, five of them had passengers.  
6 The others were empty. So, drivers end up making  
7 less than the minimum wage while Uber's corporate  
8 profits steadily rise. They're worth 70.5 billion  
9 dollars. That's a lot of money. The Council has a  
10 duty to all New Yorkers to make sense out of this  
11 out-of-control situation. The proposed bills try to  
12 do just that without reducing the current number of  
13 Uber cars available to the public. You can send all  
14 the mail you want. My office received 3,800 phone  
15 calls from people telling me to vote no. Well, to  
16 Uber and all the other cars, I vote yes on all  
17 General Coupled orders.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. Quiet  
19 in the chambers.

20 COUNCIL CLERK: Lancman?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Aye.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Lander?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye on all.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: Levin?  
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2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Permission to  
3 explain my vote. So, first I just want to say thank  
4 you, Karen, for your vote and for your words today,  
5 and in 2015, you know, never to mess with Karen  
6 Koslowitz, that's clear. I just want to also thank  
7 my colleague Adrienne Adams for her very good words  
8 as well on this legislation and for a very thoughtful  
9 op-ed in the New York Times last week. And then just  
10 speak very quickly about the point brought up by  
11 Council Member Brannan, that that's true that there's  
12 language in this legislation that allows for the TLC  
13 if they see in a geographic area that there's a drop  
14 in service or a need for service and it won't add to  
15 congestion in that geographic area, they have the  
16 authority under this legislation to add new licenses  
17 for those geographic areas. So, I just wanted to  
18 make sure that that is clear that that's written into  
19 the legislation, and the TLC has the ability to  
20 respond to that. So, again, I want to thank all of  
21 my colleagues on their support, and with that, I vote  
22 aye on all. Thank you.

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: Levine?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: I vote aye.

2 COUNCIL CLERK: Maisel?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

4 COUNCIL CLERK: Menchaca?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I vote aye on

6 all.

7 COUNCIL CLERK: Moya?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye on all.

9 COUNCIL CLERK: Perkins?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Aye on all.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Powers?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Permission to

13 explain my vote?

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you. I

16 represent Midtown Manhattan which has been for years,

17 but certainly now, crippled by congestion, and I

18 think many of us know there are a lot of contributing

19 factors to congestion, whether it is street closures

20 and events or other things, buildings going up, but

21 certainly the explosion of for-hire vehicles in the

22 last years is a contributing factor. I think that is

23 undeniable. And what measure we can talk about, we

24 can debate how much, but certainly when you walk

25 through my district every single day you see T plates

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2 everywhere, and I acknowledge I have a lot of people  
3 who take advantage of the service and enjoy it and  
4 use it, but even their commutes are getting slower  
5 and slower. As-- I remember this debate in 2015,  
6 although I wasn't here, and I remember the debate  
7 back and forth, but since 2015 the rate of vehicles  
8 and the explosion of vehicles has only I think ma-- I  
9 think, made his problem worse, and I think this is a  
10 time to take a pause and look at the contributing  
11 factors including the rampant and explosion of growth  
12 in the for-hire vehicle industry. To me, some of the  
13 things we're looking at like wages and utilization of  
14 the vehicles are really key to getting to this  
15 problem, making sure that certainly drivers are  
16 making enough money and are making a living wage here  
17 in the city, but certainly also making sure that  
18 those vehicles are being used efficiently every  
19 single day and that they're not-- that they're  
20 occupied and they are being efficient in the road. I  
21 think this is a step in the right direction. I  
22 wasn't a victim of the mailers in 2015, but I do  
23 remember this debate well, and I think this is a  
24 right time to take a moment and take a breather and  
25 to think about it. And certainly, as others said, it

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2 doesn't take vehicles off the road. It doesn't say  
3 that you can't still have vehicles and services, but  
4 certainly in my conversations with the Speaker and  
5 all the staff here, they're very sensitive to the  
6 smaller businesses that might get hurt or impacted by  
7 it to any reflection in consumer behavior that might  
8 impact the consumers, and certainly any other things  
9 that might be stresses in this, and in all the  
10 conversations I had with them, I felt confident that  
11 they were very attentive to those needs, and that we  
12 would continue to look at them as we move forward. I  
13 will say that I know and I have the confidence here  
14 in this body and in the TLC that as we look at the  
15 impact, as we look at utilization, wages, the amount  
16 of vehicles, certainly if there's an impact that we  
17 believe is positive, we will continue to have a  
18 discussion, revisit it. We will look at the pause,  
19 the utilization, everything else to make sure that we  
20 get this right, and I ask this body to commit to  
21 that, to make sure that we continue to evaluate and  
22 make sure we get this right in the future. I have  
23 confidence we will. I do have confidence that the  
24 TLC will get this right. I have confidence that our  
25 Speaker and the Chairs of the Committee's will

1  
2 continue to look at this and get this right, but  
3 certainly I believe we have to do something now to  
4 make sure that we don't keep contributing to a  
5 problem and we actually have a way forward, and we  
6 take time to do that. I'll just end by saying I want  
7 to say thank you to the Speaker for being thoughtful  
8 when he talked to me and he talked to other members  
9 about what the impacts might be in our districts and  
10 explained and also listened to what the impact might  
11 be. I want to thank and congratulate Council Member  
12 Levin and Lander and Diaz and all the others and  
13 certainly the staff of all those respective staffs--  
14 staff of those respective members who worked very  
15 hard on this and put a lot of effort into this. I  
16 will say, it may not be perfect. We have a lot of  
17 work to do around congestion. I think we should pass  
18 congestion pricing in Albany. [applause] You can  
19 applaud to that. I think we need congestion pricing.  
20 I think we need to look at the streets that are  
21 occupied by new construction and many other factors,  
22 but we certainly shouldn't abdicate our  
23 responsibility to do something here today because of  
24 those factors. So I am voting aye on all, and I  
25 thank the staff. I thank Laura Popa. I think Chris

1  
2 Lin [sp?]. I thank all the staff of all the  
3 different members. Thank you to the Speaker for  
4 being thoughtful, and I do know that he's committed  
5 and all of us commit to keep looking at this in the  
6 future and to do something if we feel like it's  
7 headed in the wrong direction. Thank you.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

9 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Madam Public Advocate,  
10 I just want to interject and say one thing. I know  
11 that when we had to clear the balcony there were  
12 folks who were not involved in the protest and the  
13 disruption who had to leave today, and some of those  
14 folks who are not able to be in the chambers right  
15 now are our loved ones and family members of drivers  
16 who took their own lives over the last seven months.  
17 They were here. They showed up today. They came  
18 here to watch this vote which is, I'm sure, a very  
19 emotional day for these family members. And so I  
20 know that they are watching this on TV now, so I want  
21 to thank them for their courage for being here, and  
22 apologize that they're not able to be in the chambers  
23 with us right now as the vote happens, and you know,  
24 our heart really goes out to all of them and the  
25 enormous amount of pain they've experienced since

1  
2 losing a loved one suddenly and tragically, and I  
3 wanted to note that, that they came here and they  
4 were in the balcony, but they're no longer able to be  
5 in the room with us, but I want to thank them for  
6 being here today. Thank you.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you, Mr.  
8 Speaker.

9 COUNCIL CLERK: Reynoso?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Permission to  
11 explain my vote?

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: First, I want to  
14 say that I also ride Uber and Lyft and unlike Karen  
15 in 2015, I did get a mailer, Karen. My mailer said,  
16 "Thank you, Antonio Reynoso," and it had a really  
17 nice picture of me, actually. So, obviously, I'm a  
18 big fan of app-based hails, but what we hear and what  
19 we see today is truly what I consider a balance and a  
20 fair push for legislation and regulation. It is a  
21 one-year pause. It is not a pause forever. There  
22 are places in the legislation that speak to allowing  
23 TLC to make changes should they see negative things  
24 happen. I think that we are a city that actually  
25 needs these hails and these app-based hails and cabs.



1 I want to make sure we can take advantage of that. I  
2 do think the-- the reason I was opposed to it last  
3 time was because we need to make sure that we can  
4 provide services to black and brown people in the  
5 outer boroughs, but I don't think that putting a cab  
6 on over 80,000 licenses is going to stop that from  
7 happening in my district. I feel very confident  
8 we're going to figure this out. I'll be very  
9 vigilant to make sure the TLC follows through on any  
10 errors that we might have caused here today, and I'm  
11 looking forward to seeing in one year the study be  
12 completed and us finally getting to regulate an  
13 industry that truly needed to be regulated. So,  
14 again, I want to thank everyone including the  
15 sponsors, but especially Council Member Corey Johnson  
16 who I really believe thought-- was very thoughtful  
17 about this process, and as a previous supporter and  
18 still a supporter, I'm still going to vote aye on  
19 all. Thank you.

20  
21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Richards?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Permission to  
24 explain my vote?

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Today's vote  
3 marks a critical step in reigning in an industry that  
4 for far too long has dictated the rules of the game  
5 to legislative bodies across the country. Today, I'm  
6 proud to be part of a body led by Speaker Johnson  
7 that is sending a message to billion dollar companies  
8 that have aggressively waged a public campaign  
9 against raising standards for their own drivers and  
10 regulations that would reign in the oversaturation of  
11 their cars on our city streets that have added to an  
12 ever-growing congestion problem. In New York City,  
13 there should be one set of rules for everyone, and no  
14 corporation should feel that they are entitled to a  
15 monopoly at the expense of people's lives.  
16 Furthermore, let's be clear that the Council is not  
17 taking away service today, as my constituents have  
18 emailed me. We are-- we look forward to ensuring  
19 that the TLC address the service gaps and underserved  
20 areas if this issue arises while also adding to the  
21 severe lack of accessible taxis for people with  
22 disabilities, and as the sponsor said, there are  
23 certainly-- there's certainly flexibility in these  
24 bills. With that being said, I'm going to vote yes  
25 on all the bills before us today, including the

1  
2 moratorium. However, as we move to provide a  
3 lifeline to the taxi industry, we must also recognize  
4 the pain they have caused communities of color with  
5 ride refusals. Yes, bias indeed is what fueled  
6 communities of color to download apps like Lyft and  
7 Uber, because they don't leave us with our hands  
8 flapping out in the wind stranded on street corners  
9 across our city. I look forward to further  
10 conversations with the TLC and hopefully swift  
11 passage of Intro 1079, which we're introducing today  
12 to codify an Office of Inclusion within the TLC.  
13 This bill is a step in the right direction in my  
14 opinion, but let's be clear, there's no legislation  
15 that will serve as a cure-all for decades of denied  
16 rides and bias. At the end of the day, we're all  
17 just trying to get to work and get home to our  
18 families and friends, and everyone deserves to be  
19 treated with the same respect no matter who they are  
20 or where they are going. I want to thank Speaker  
21 Johnson and certainly the Mayor for their commitment  
22 to this, and with that again, I vote aye on all  
23 bills.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.  
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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

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SPEAKER JOHNSON: Madam Public Advocate,  
I was remiss in my comments earlier today. Council  
Member Richards played a very important role in this  
process, even though none of the bills he was the  
prime sponsor of, he was very thoughtful in trying to  
address a very serious issue that has affected our  
city for far too long, and he stepped up and got  
involved to try to bring some resources and some real  
enforcement moving forward to ensure that people who  
are victims of discrimination don't have to suffer  
those indignities, and hopefully we can't prevent  
those moving forward, and I was remiss in not  
thanking him earlier. So I want to thank you,  
Council Member Richards.

COUNCIL CLERK: Rivera?

COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I proudly vote  
aye on all. Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Rodriguez?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Permission to  
explain my vote?

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [speaking  
Spanish] What we are doing today is leveling the  
playing field to the taxi industry so that those

1  
2 15,000 yellow taxi medallion owners, including the  
3 6,000 individual medallion owners, are able to know  
4 that they can-- that they get support from the  
5 Council. Those livery taxi company that they should  
6 be able to know that we are here to support them, and  
7 for the rest of the industry to know that there's  
8 opportunity for everyone to do well here. In the  
9 other hand, when it come to the Inwood rezoning, I  
10 want to thank Chairman Salamanca and Moya for all  
11 their support. Everyone here that has been working  
12 with all the Land Use team, George, Raju, and James,  
13 the great advisory team that I have, Professor Peña-  
14 Mora, Barbara, Yvonne [sic], Charlie, and all the  
15 members of the Northern Manhattan Agenda, especially  
16 also I have to thank my family for being there in  
17 this difficult manner that someone that handled  
18 rezoning in nine years, I believe that this rezoning  
19 was necessary in order to preserve our community as a  
20 working class community. Finally, big thanks to  
21 Speaker Johnson and the Chief of Staff Jason Goldman,  
22 without their support and their trust, I could tell  
23 you that I would not be voting for this rezoning. It  
24 is taking their word that I'm using to be able to  
25 know that with the support of Mayor de Blasio and

2 their team, assisting little [inaudible] there,  
3 including capital to senior center, capital to build  
4 a new campus at the George Washington High School,  
5 that I hope that working with our team and this  
6 administration we will be able to fulfil the  
7 commitment that we made. With that, I vote aye.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

9 COUNCIL CLERK: Rose?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Permission to  
11 explain my vote?

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I say ditto to  
14 Council Member Richards' remarks, and with that I  
15 vote aye on all.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

17 COUNCIL CLERK: Rosenthal?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Permission to  
19 explain my vote?

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: On whole, the  
22 for-hire vehicle package of legislation is thoughtful  
23 and it's a good one. I do think it's important to  
24 note that if we could count on the MTA and they  
25 actually addressed the serious problems of transit

1  
2 deserts, then we would not be in this situation, and  
3 further I would add, I believe we could do so within  
4 the amount of spending that they spend today. Their  
5 problem is one of mismanagement and spending of  
6 resource they don't have to spend and could be  
7 directed to fixing the MTA today. But with that in  
8 mind, I want to make two points about the moratorium.  
9 The first is that the moratorium exempts wheelchair  
10 accessible vehicles, this is a smart safety valve,  
11 and more importantly it is such a powerful incentive  
12 to finally start adding accessible vehicles to the  
13 road. I implore Uber and others to take advantage of  
14 this opportunity. I also want to make clear that we  
15 will be watching the TLC very closely to make sure  
16 they are focused on the needs of all New Yorkers in  
17 all boroughs. Racism has meant that communities of  
18 color have been denied access to taxis for far too  
19 often and for far too long. For all its faults of  
20 the business model on these app-based companies,  
21 blowing that open has been incredibly a positive  
22 factor. This legislation requires the TLC to suspend  
23 the moratorium in specific communities if they see it  
24 negatively affecting availability and we will hold  
25 them to it. With permission, just another half a

1 minute. I do vote no on Intro. 958 with respect.  
2  
3 Illegal street hails remain a tremendous problem in  
4 Manhattan, and even in the context of this package, I  
5 can't support reducing the fines for them. I also  
6 ask to be signed onto Intro. 634-B. Finally, I want  
7 to take a moment to congratulate my stated neighbor,  
8 Council Member Rivera, not just on the tech hub, but  
9 on the inclusionary housing project on 33<sup>rd</sup> Street.  
10 And to Council Member Rodriguez, for pushing hard and  
11 making the best deal possible for his community.  
12 Lastly, I want to thank my phenomenal intern, Lucy  
13 Miriam [sp?], whose last week is this week and who  
14 will be sorely missed. So, I vote aye on all, except  
15 for 958, and I thank you for that.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

17 COUNCIL CLERK: Salamanca?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Permission to  
19 explain my vote?

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: First, I want  
22 to congratulate my colleagues, Council Member  
23 Rodriguez and Rivera-- I'm not the talker-- on their  
24 Land Use projects that we're voting on today. The  
25 Inwood rezoning is not perfect. No rezoning is, but



1  
2 there's a lot of big wins that should not be  
3 overlooked or lost in the conversation. This  
4 rezoning will create and preserve thousands of deeply  
5 affordable units, grant more equitable access to the  
6 waterfront and green spaces, and inject millions into  
7 STEM programs, schools, and cultural institutions.  
8 The reality is that we need to get more apartments  
9 online so that the thousands of New Yorkers  
10 struggling to live in a city where wages aren't  
11 increasing nearly as fast as rents are rising can  
12 have a place to live without fear of displacement,  
13 and this rezoning takes a step in that direction. As  
14 I said at the Land Use Committee last week, I am  
15 disappointed that the Administration was not able to  
16 deliver on including specific labor language and  
17 worker protections through the sponsor review  
18 process. For future rezonings and Land Use  
19 application, responsible contractor language and  
20 worker safety protection must be an integral  
21 component. On the tech hub vote today, I  
22 congratulate Council Member Rivera for her leadership  
23 and vision on the project. We as a city need to  
24 prepare our workforce and create qualified pipeline  
25 of talent prepared to take on these new tech jobs

1 while encouraging innovation. And finally, I would  
2 like to thank the Land Use staff for their tireless  
3 work, and I vote aye on all.

4 COUNCIL CLERK: Torres?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Permission to  
6 explain my vote?

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Thank you, Madam  
9 Public Advocate. No longer will the City of New York  
10 stand by idly while unfettered growth in the for-hire  
11 sector causes ever-worsening traffic congestion,  
12 ever-rising environmental degradation, and ever-  
13 deepening human suffering, including a string of  
14 suicides, as well as improving accessibility, equity  
15 and mobility, labor standards and environmental  
16 standards. The law will modernize the City's  
17 outdated framework for regulating for-hire vehicles,  
18 a framework that had been rendered obsolete by the  
19 disruptive growth of high-volume for-hire services,  
20 especially Uber. Even though the legislative package  
21 includes a freeze on new for-hire vehicle licenses  
22 contained within it are two broad exceptions. The  
23 first is an exemption for wheelchair accessible  
24 vehicles. What critics call a "cap" could just as  
25

1 easily be seen as a requirement for accessibility.  
2  
3 The second is an exemption for vehicles in  
4 underserved neighborhoods to be determined by TLC.  
5 As Council Member Reynoso noted earlier, those of us  
6 who are committed to geographically and racially  
7 equitable access to services must be vigilant to hold  
8 TLC accountable for ensuring sufficient service in  
9 the outer boroughs and keeping with the Council's  
10 intent. Setting a vehicle utilization standard will  
11 create for the first time an incentive for companies  
12 like Uber to be efficient in their use of road space  
13 to relocate their vehicles from congested areas like  
14 the Central Business District to the outer boroughs  
15 where the need is far more pronounced. I am  
16 confident that a vehicle utilization standard is a  
17 game-changer. If set correctly and carefully, it  
18 will lead to a balanced fleet of for-hire vehicles  
19 and a balanced distribution of those for-hire  
20 vehicles throughout the City, and I am equally  
21 confident that a standard for minimum pay will end  
22 once and for all a savage race to the bottom in the  
23 livelihood of drivers struggling mightily to survive.  
24 Speaker Corey Johnson, Council Members Diaz, Lander,  
25 and Levin deserve immense credit for spearheading a

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2 comprehensive reform that will achieve a better  
3 balance between supply and demand, between the  
4 incomes of workers and the profits of corporations  
5 between the public good and private interests. With  
6 that said, I proudly vote aye on all.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

8 COUNCIL CLERK: Treyger?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Permission to  
10 explain my vote?

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you,  
13 Public Advocate. I first want to thank Speaker  
14 Johnson and his Chief of Staff Jason Goldman, also  
15 Laura Popa, for being very accessible, responsive to  
16 a number of my questions in regards to this package  
17 of bills. There-- some of my colleagues mentioned  
18 before about studies. There have been previous  
19 studies on the impact for-hire vehicles have had on  
20 New York City. What makes, I believe, this approach  
21 unique is that at the conclusion of this study/pause  
22 period, there will be a set of recommendations and  
23 regulations made, and I believe that this City  
24 Council reserves the right to use its oversight power  
25 if the regulations go too far or don't go far enough.

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2 That's a part of our job and responsibility, and TLC  
3 has a job and a responsibility. So I believe that  
4 the Speaker and the bill sponsors found the right  
5 balance to make sure that there is no sacred cow that  
6 industries need to understand that there is need for  
7 sensible regulations in place. The numbers of for-  
8 hire vehicles have skyrocketed. We understand there  
9 are transportation needs, but there are also other  
10 issues baked into these bills with regards to labor  
11 standards. So, I think that the Speaker and the  
12 bills have found the right balance. And with regards  
13 to the taxi industry, we also need more from them as  
14 well. As my colleagues noted, there have been  
15 documented cases of denial of service to people of  
16 color, and denial of services to people in the outer  
17 boroughs. That's got to change. That must change.  
18 We expect better from all stakeholders in this  
19 conversation. So, with that, I vote aye on all with  
20 the exception of Intro. 958A. Thank you.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Ulrich?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Madam Public

24 Advocate, may I be briefly excused to explain my  
25 vote?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Alright, thank you very much. My colleagues, I represent the great borough of Queens, and I represent many neighborhoods which have been called by many "transportation deserts." We don't have the luxury that some of my other colleagues have of having multiple subway lines beneath our feet and adequate bus service. In fact, we don't have adequate public transportation in so many parts of my district and in so many other neighborhoods throughout the outer boroughs. That is why I am voting against Intro. 144B, because I think that by putting the one-year moratorium on new for-hire vehicle licenses, we're going to be leaving thousands of New Yorkers stranded who rely on Uber, who rely on Lyft, who rely on it to get to school, to get to work, to get from point A to point B, because our public transportation system and the MTA has failed them. Unfortunately, the yellow cabs in New York City, it's a very nostalgic thing, but it is a declining industry with an outdated business model, and by placing the cap on new licenses for for-hire vehicles, that would be the equivalent of the City Council deciding that we're going to put a cap on

1  
2 Netflix subscription because we're worried about  
3 Blockbusters that are closing. Technology changes.  
4 Society changes. The economy changes. This is a  
5 free market and we have to be able to move with the  
6 market. The fact that we're now capping for one year  
7 instead of waiting for this study to come back, we're  
8 also going to be limiting thousands of New Yorkers  
9 from bringing in extra income that they work hard for  
10 that they need to sustain themselves and to support  
11 their families. And so I am voting against 144B.  
12 I'm voting in favor of the other pieces of  
13 legislation that are included in this package,  
14 because I think they have-- they strike the right  
15 balance, but 144B, I think does a disservice to the  
16 thousands of New Yorkers in the outer boroughs who  
17 rely on these app-based transportation alternatives,  
18 and also is going to hurt financially a lot of New  
19 Yorkers who are simply struggling to make ends meet.  
20 Thank you very much.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Williams?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: May I be  
24 excused to explain my vote?

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you,  
3 Madam Public Advocate. I am a user of the platforms,  
4 Lyft in particular. My brother has driven for,  
5 albeit not in this state. I also have got a yellow  
6 cab suspended for not picking me up, primarily  
7 because I was black, for about six months. So, I do  
8 want to always just admonish the yellow cab service  
9 for not providing the service needed in all five  
10 boroughs, and also not picking people up because of  
11 their race. Yet, and still, I believe the City  
12 Government has failed the drivers and their industry,  
13 and this year-long cap while we figure it out, for it  
14 [sic] is very valuable. I have not seen any evidence  
15 to suggest that prices would go up for users or that  
16 this will hurt certain areas. It seems to me if  
17 there's 80 to 100,000 people on the streets now and  
18 we have a cap for a year, and only 40 percent of the  
19 cars are full at any time, there won't be dereliction  
20 of service. People might just get more money if  
21 they're a driver because they'd be able to pick up  
22 more folks. I am glad that the Council is not  
23 intending to take away service from the outer  
24 boroughs. We've given TLC the power to address the  
25 cap if New Yorkers do begin to lose their service.



1  
2 And if I am here, hopefully I won't be, but if I am,  
3 I plan to hold them accountable so that all  
4 communities have access. I do want to thank all the  
5 civil rights group who raised issues such as NAN and  
6 NAACP about the concerns I have raised, and I'm glad  
7 that it has led to Office of Inclusion. But just for  
8 the Netflix and Blockbuster comparison, it's rather  
9 if the government had specifically told Blockbuster  
10 you have to do all of these hoops to survive, and  
11 then allowed Netflix in without any of those hoops.  
12 And so right now, I believe we are just balancing it.  
13 I think everyone agreed there should be something  
14 done. The best way to do that is this pause. I  
15 think one year will not harm anyone. Lastly, I do  
16 want to say thank you to Council Member Rodriguez,  
17 because I know this is very hard, and he did do a lot  
18 of work. Unfortunately, I came in expecting to vote  
19 no on this. I still can't support it, because I  
20 think we are not doing as much as we should be for  
21 affordable housing. That has been my mantra. We  
22 have failed when it comes to MIH. I hope like this  
23 Uber cap, this body will reopen MIH, because it's not  
24 producing what it should be. However, I am--  
25 everyone knows I encourage protests, so I have no

1  
2 problem with that, but I did see a picture that  
3 disturbed me, which was a death threat sent to my  
4 colleague of someone cutting someone's throat. I  
5 believe that is too far. If someone has received  
6 unsavory mail, I know how uncomfortable that is. So,  
7 I want to change what I was going to vote to no to an  
8 abstention, and hopefully just to send a notice that  
9 we need to have better ways of communicating. That  
10 way is off limits as far as I'm concerned. So, with  
11 that I'll be voting aye on all the rest.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

13 COUNCIL CLERK: Yeger?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Madam President,  
15 may I be excused to explain my vote?

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you. The e-  
18 hail industry, it's what they call it now, for-hire  
19 vehicle as what we've called it here, I think most  
20 members here in the Council, most New Yorkers  
21 recognize that they've provided a valuable service.  
22 They still provide a valuable service. The district  
23 I represent I can get from my home to the City by  
24 subway in 45 minutes. I do that often. If I want to  
25 go from my house to my district office, I can take an

1  
2 hour city bus ride, or I can drive there and be there  
3 in about 10-12 minutes. So, to the notion that  
4 perhaps we don't need these or we want to cap them or  
5 we want to drive them out of existence, I think  
6 that's a falsehood. It's just not true. What we're  
7 doing here is a moratorium, as some of my colleagues  
8 have called it. I think it's a valid term. In every  
9 civilized society we have to have regulation. It's  
10 what we do here, and every industry needs regulation.  
11 If you open up a restaurant, it needs to be  
12 regulated. This is an industry that currently  
13 doesn't have regulation. It doesn't mean they're  
14 bad. It just means that they have to be regulated.  
15 So that's what we're doing. Now, I would have  
16 preferred that the language in 144, instead of an  
17 optional "may" with respect to section E where the  
18 Taxi and Limousine Commission "may" issue additional  
19 licenses upon a determination that outer borough  
20 services being hurt, I would prefer that it be  
21 "shall." But I also know that as Mr. Speaker  
22 indicated when we spoke earlier today, and as many of  
23 my colleagues did and as the Administration has  
24 indicated that the TLC is aware of the concerns of  
25 this Council, and I think the purpose and the intent

1 of this bill is obviously, as Mr. Speaker indicated,  
2 not to diminish service to New Yorkers. It's not.  
3 It's to simply set up a regulatory system which we're  
4 asking all participants to abide by. The-- with  
5 respect to 890-- just another couple seconds, Madam  
6 President. With respect to 890B, the intent I agree  
7 with. Unfortunately, it is my position, and I'm  
8 think I'm right, and if I'm wrong, I'm wrong, but I  
9 do not believe that this august body has the legal  
10 authority to institute a minimum wage. It doesn't.  
11 Otherwise, we'd have done it for other industries.  
12 We'd have done it for dishwashers and car washers and  
13 everything else that we could have done it for but we  
14 didn't, and as some of my colleagues, including the  
15 sponsor, indicated, we're talking about people who  
16 are essentially on the IRS Internal Revenue code  
17 self-employed. Under New York State Labor Law  
18 they're self-employed. To set a scheme of a minimum  
19 wage for people who are self-employed I do not  
20 believe is in the purview of the Council. That is  
21 something that is reserved for the state on the pre-  
22 emption. And on 890B, I must vote no. So, Madam Ad-  
23 - Madam President, I vote aye on all with the  
24 exception of 890B. With respect to my colleagues who  
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worked very hard on these bills, I appreciate all of their work. This Council has worked very hard on those bills. I also vote no on Resolution 472 and Introduction 1087. Thank you very much, Madam President.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Matteo?

COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you. For me, it's simple, we need more transportation option on Staten Island, not less. I can't vote in good conscience to cap a service that has brought a much-needed service and transportation option to Staten Island. So, with that, I'm voting no on 144B, no on 890B. I'm also voting no on Pre-considered 1087 and M89, accompanying Reso. 503.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

COUNCIL CLERK: Cumbo?

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Permission to explain my vote?

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you. It has been an incredible experience today to hear all of the different perspectives today on app-based transportation alternatives throughout the City of

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2 New York. I think as a body we have a responsibility  
3 and a huge responsibility to communicate information  
4 accurately to our constituents, and from what I'm  
5 hearing and from what I'm hearing from my colleagues,  
6 but also constituents, is that somehow we think that  
7 after today Uber is no longer going to be available  
8 in our communities or that our constituents are now  
9 going to be stranded in some way or that they're not  
10 going to get service. Well, the reality is, Uber as  
11 you know it is going to be Uber as you know it. The  
12 same services that you have always had are going to  
13 be the same services that you're going to have during  
14 this time that we're looking to review, many of these  
15 app-based services. So, for everyone at home, for  
16 everyone that's looking and listening, you are not  
17 going to be stranded. Uber is not going away. App-  
18 based opportunities are not going to be taken away  
19 from us as a community. So, I just want people to be  
20 clear on that, because we may have all types of  
21 reasons why we may take the positions that we take,  
22 but Uber and many of these other app-based programs  
23 are not going to be taken away. We are simply going  
24 to look at how to better regulate it, how to better  
25 make sure that it's appropriate, and this protects

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2 the drivers and their families, because if we allow  
3 it to grow in the way that it is, they're going to  
4 continue not to be paid in a way that they can  
5 support their families and to continue to grow in the  
6 City of New York. I also want to commend Council  
7 Member Ydanis Rodriguez. It takes a commendable  
8 amount of courage to come forward and to bring  
9 forward resources to your community, and to be faced  
10 with the level of apprehension, of disrespect, of  
11 people coming forward and calling you all types of  
12 inappropriate names has got to be very difficult when  
13 you're looking to do nothing more than to bring  
14 incredible resources to a community that has gone  
15 underserved for decades. So, I commend you. I  
16 appreciate you. I know that this took a tremendous  
17 amount of courage, because you come from the  
18 communities, you come from the barrios [sic], you come  
19 from neighborhoods that understand what it means not  
20 to have, and you've done a tremendous amount of work  
21 that will be appreciated in decades to come. So, I  
22 proudly support you, and I vote aye on all. Thank  
23 you.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

25 COUNCIL CLERK: Speaker Johnson?

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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you. I vote aye,  
3 of course, on all, but I want to just read one thing  
4 before we finish the voting today. This comes from  
5 the Committee Report on the bills that we're voting  
6 on in the for-hire vehicle package. And in the  
7 Committee Report it says, and this is again to the  
8 families who are here today, some of whom traveled  
9 great distances: The effect of app-based service has  
10 been felt by the traditional for-hire vehicle  
11 sector." If folks could be quiet for a second. "On  
12 February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Doug Shifter [sp?] A livery  
13 driver committed suicide outside of City Hall. Hours  
14 before the incident Mr. Shifter wrote about his  
15 experience as a driver indicating that he had to work  
16 more than 100 hours a week to make ends meet. Mr.  
17 Shifter blamed Mayors for allowing a proliferation of  
18 vehicles on the street and blamed the TLC for fines  
19 that it imposed. This incident uncovered the  
20 previous death of another TLC worker-- TLC driver,  
21 Danello Corpron [sp?] Castillo who took his life on  
22 December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, two months earlier after a TLC  
23 hearing where he was facing the possibility of having  
24 his licensed revoked. After the death of Mr.  
25 Shifter, there were several deaths of other TLC



1 drivers, suicides. On March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Nikinair  
2 [sp?] Ochesor [sp?], a medallion owner and driver,  
3 took his life reportedly because of the debt that he  
4 was facing. Subsequently, Alfredo Perez, a livery  
5 driver, took his own life, though little is known  
6 why. We think it is because of the debt that he was  
7 facing. In May of 2018, just a few months ago, Hu  
8 Meng Chau [sp?], Kenny Chau [sp?], a medallion owner,  
9 committed suicide while also facing financial  
10 trouble, and in June of 2018, Abdul Solei [sp?], a  
11 taxi driver also committed suicide. There has been a  
12 real human impact, a real human impact for us not  
13 figuring out how to deal with a regulatory framework  
14 that would allow the for-hire vehicle industry to  
15 exist and grow to meet demand while at the exact same  
16 time ensuring that all workers, all drivers in New  
17 York City are able to make ends meet, and that we are  
18 not abdicating our responsibility by figuring out  
19 ways to protect them. We're doing this for many,  
20 many reasons here today because it is the right thing  
21 to do, but also we do it remembering these  
22 individuals whose lives were tragically cut short.  
23 And with that, I vote aye on all.

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2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All items on  
3 today's General Order Calendar were adopted by a vote  
4 of 45 in the affirmative, 0 negative, and 0  
5 abstentions with the exception of Intro. 144B, which  
6 was adopted by a vote of 39 in the affirmative, 6 in  
7 the negative, and 0 abstentions, and Land Use 135  
8 through 140 and accompanying resolutions, which was  
9 adopted by a vote of 43 in the affirmative, 1  
10 negative and 1 abstention, and Land Use 149 and  
11 Resolution 492 which was adopted by a vote of 43 in  
12 the affirmative, 1 negative, and 1 abstention, and LU  
13 150 and Resolution 493 which was adopted by a vote of  
14 43 in the affirmative, 1 negative, and 1 abstention,  
15 and M89 and Resolution 503 which was adopted by a  
16 vote of 43 in the affirmative, 2 negative, and 0  
17 abstentions, and Intro. 958A which was adopted by a  
18 vote of 42 in the affirmative, 3 negative, and 0  
19 abstentions, and Intro. 1087 which was adopted by a  
20 vote of 41 in the affirmative, 4 negative, and 0  
21 abstentions, and Intro. 890B which was adopted by a  
22 vote of 42 in the affirmative, 3 negative, and 0  
23 abstentions, and Resolution 472 which was adopted by  
24 a vote of 44 in the affirmative, 1 negative, and 0  
25 abstentions. Introduction and reading of bills?

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2 SPEAKER JOHNSON: All bills are referred  
3 to committee as indicated on the agenda.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: There are no  
5 resolutions. We'll immediately go into General  
6 Discussion. There is a revised Land Use Call-up  
7 vote, 45 in the affirmative, 0 negative. The first  
8 General Discussion will begin with Council Member  
9 Kallos.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Good afternoon.  
11 It's nice to back from taking a full paternity leave,  
12 and I hope we can get this for all of our City  
13 employees and that folks who have access to it will  
14 take it. Introduction 1,064 will help New York  
15 City's effort to end childhood obesity by replacing  
16 soda and other unhealthy drinks as the default  
17 beverage when ordering children's meals at fast food  
18 establishments in New York City. According to Health  
19 Department data, roughly half of children in New York  
20 City are not at a healthy weight, and 20 to 25  
21 percent are obese. We know that consumption habit  
22 are formed early and we can make a big reduction in  
23 obesity if children grew up with healthier options.  
24 Instead of soda, this legislation calls for default  
25 beverage to be either water, low-fat milk, or 100

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2 percent juice. Recently polling showed that 87  
3 percent of New Yorkers support making healthy drinks  
4 the default for children with 81 percent saying they  
5 would be more likely to take their children to a  
6 place that has healthier beverages as a default. I  
7 want to thank the American Heart Association for  
8 their work on this legislation, their partnership to  
9 help our kids learn better eating habits, and I  
10 encourage my colleagues to sign on. Thank you.

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the  
12 Chambers. We're still in session. Council Member  
13 Dromm?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very  
15 much. I'd just like to give a big shout-out to my  
16 intern Karen Nowokoski [sp?]. She's from the Cardozo  
17 Law School. She's been working with me in my office  
18 since June, and I just want to publicly say thank you  
19 to her for all that's she's done for my office.  
20 Thank you very much.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.  
22 Council Member Koo?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you. Today,  
24 I'm introducing legislation that would develop a  
25 cigarette butt receptacle and recycling program for

1  
2 the City of New York. This bill would develop a  
3 pilot program of five locations in the City. The  
4 litter from smoking is a problem, and use of  
5 recycling receptacles and the appropriate signage  
6 that would provide for the collection and recycling  
7 of cigarette butts. Cigarette butts litter our  
8 streets. They are harmful to wildlife. They pollute  
9 our water ways, and they're a detriments to our  
10 quality of life. Establishing a recycling program  
11 will only improve the cleanliness of our streets, but  
12 you will create a culture of consciousness in our  
13 city. The days of just flicking your cigarette butt  
14 in the streets are long gone. New Yorkers care about  
15 their environments, and this is another way we can  
16 make the impact on an age-old public nuisance. I  
17 would like to thank Council Members Lander,  
18 Koslowitz, and Salamanca for co-sponsoring this  
19 effort, and I ask my colleagues to join us today in  
20 supporting the legislation. I also like to welcome a  
21 great youth advocacy organization from my district to  
22 the chambers today, the Korean American Civics  
23 Empowerment. Welcome to Angel Kim, Diana Kim who are  
24 doing great work to motivate our area's young people  
25 to get involved in their communities and to teach

1                   them about civic engagement. Finally, I'd like to  
2                   welcome three of my office summer interns, Grace Ren  
3                   [sp?], Wesley Chau [sp?], and Cathy Shaw [sp?]. they  
4                   have done tremendous work in my office these last  
5                   months working with our local senior centers, helping  
6                   with constituent services, and learning the inner  
7                   workings of local government. Thank you for all your  
8                   great work. Thank you.

9                   PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

10                  Council Member Barron?

11                  COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Madam  
12                  Public Advocate. First, I want to make an  
13                  announcement. This Sunday we'll be celebrating my  
14                  mom's 96<sup>th</sup> birthday, and--

15                  [applause]

16                  COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I'll be sending  
17                  everybody an announcement. If you're available,  
18                  you're welcome to come. It'll be at her church.  
19                  Secondly, I want to acknowledge the passing of  
20                  Elizabeth Ramos who was an advocate for those persons  
21                  with disabilities. She was a resident at Starveck  
22                  [sic] City. There was a power outage and during that  
23                  time, although perhaps not related, she did pass. We  
24                  wanted to make acknowledgement of that. She was well-

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2 known to those in the disability or special needs  
3 community as an advocate in that regard. And  
4 finally, in July 2016, off-duty officer Wayne Isaacs  
5 shot and killed unarmed Delron Small. He said he had  
6 been threatened and punched. However, the video  
7 showed another story. Last week, off-duty sergeant  
8 Richard Blake shot unarmed Tayvonn Santana [sp?]  
9 twice in the head. Sergeant Blake said that he was  
10 being robbed. However, the video showed different  
11 story. Sergeant Blake and Tayvonn who were known to  
12 each other had an encounter and exchanged words, and  
13 Sergeant Blake fired twice hitting him in the head,  
14 and while Tayvonn laid on the ground, Sergeant  
15 Richard Blake dropped an object, supposedly a box  
16 cutter, next to the body while it was laying on the  
17 ground. Fortunately, Tayvonn survived. He has a  
18 shattered jaw and he does have a bullet lodged in him  
19 that cannot be removed. We're calling for Sergeant  
20 Blake to be fired. We're calling for an indictment.  
21 We're calling for a trial, and based on the findings  
22 of that trial, we're calling for him to be sent to  
23 jail, no other kinds of shenanigans taking place.  
24 And we're told that present at the time of this  
25 incident, Sergeant Blake was on disciplinary action.

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2 As a result of disciplinary action he was on  
3 probation, even though he was a sergeant. The  
4 conditions that the findings had placed him on  
5 probation, and we believe if that's the case he  
6 doesn't have the entitlements of anything other than  
7 a rookie, and he can be fired, and the family and the  
8 community are calling for him to be fired and other  
9 actions to be taken. Thank you.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member  
11 Levin?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you, Madam  
13 Public Advocate. I just want to acknowledge, I was  
14 remiss earlier in not acknowledging my staff on my  
15 Council staff who worked very hard on this  
16 legislation, Elizabeth Adams, Johnathan Bouche [sp?],  
17 and Edward Paulino [sp?], and Rami Medal [sp?], my  
18 former Chief of Staff who worked on this legislation  
19 back in 2015. I also want to acknowledge my four  
20 incredible interns this summer, Iqueen [sp?] Smart,  
21 Laura Ann Simpson [sp?], Shamus Hubbard [sp?], and  
22 Shannon Ong [sp?]. I wish them all well in their  
23 endeavors this coming school year. And with that,  
24 have a great rest of the summer everybody.



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2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.  
3 Council Member Williams?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.  
5 First, I do want to just call up the name of Bill  
6 Howard who passed away today-- I'm sorry, this week.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Sunday.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: He was a staff  
9 member to Shirley Chisolm and [inaudible] member and  
10 President the WEATICA [sic], the Western Native  
11 American Carnival Association [sic]. He will be  
12 sorely missed. He was a wealth of knowledge and a  
13 great advocate for black and Caribbean history. I  
14 also just want to thank everyone who was supportive  
15 of me during the trial with Ravi Ragbir [sp?] and me  
16 standing in front of [inaudible] to protect him. He  
17 called me and said I'm sorry that you got found  
18 guilty of one of those counts, and I said, I am not  
19 because you are still here. Unlike one of the  
20 articles I saw, this was not to try to start or  
21 encourage any kind of revolution, so to speak. It  
22 was to show that we have to get out of our comfort  
23 zone. I think I achieved that, and also of course  
24 achieved Ravi still being here. I do want to say  
25 thank you to my interns, Olo Oladentin [sp?],

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Keeshawn George [sp?], Zinay Willoughby [sp?], Jalil Rush [sp?], Jaday Glasgow [sp?], and Hung Jung Chao [sp?]. I think Zinay is still here. So thank you so much. And lastly, I'd like to say to anyone who can hear me and who has debt with a foreclosure with a student loan or their failed business, you are quite eligible and appropriate for you to run for office. As a matter of fact, I think you should run, because you know what normal New Yorkers are going through. Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member  
Treyger.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you, Public Advocate. I'm very proud today to introduce Intro. 1085, which would require the Office of the Civil Justice Coordinator to establish programs to provide victims of domestic violence with free full legal representation, which includes the payment of all filing fees in divorce proceedings. Your safety shouldn't be determined by your income. No one should ever have to stay in an abusive marriage just because they can't afford a lawyer. All victims of domestic violence should have free full legal representation during divorce proceedings. We know

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2 the cost of a divorce can be prohibitive, especially  
3 if someone has an abusive partner who is controlling  
4 the finances or if someone has an uncertain  
5 immigration status. It's time for our city to step  
6 up and make sure we're doing everything possible to  
7 help victims of domestic violence. And I also note  
8 that I was inspired to act after reading a powerful  
9 article in the New York Times, and I want to thank  
10 our hard-working excellent journalists who really do  
11 have the power to shape good, effective, public  
12 policy. Thank you very much.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member  
14 Yeger?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Madam  
16 President. I'll be brief in recognition of the clock  
17 and the empty room. Today I'm introducing  
18 Introduction 1088. I think this is the sort of  
19 common sense legislation that our council has become  
20 known for. It's to protect our streets, our  
21 neighborhoods from the unruly construction of  
22 utilities, subcontractors, of just anybody who feels  
23 they're going to take a shovel and start hammering  
24 away at our streets. This bill will require that  
25 anybody working at a job site that digs in the street

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2 must have on their person a permit, not it's at the  
3 office, not it's in a trailer down the block, not my  
4 guy's going to get to me, you just stick around, and  
5 that they have to product it for a police officers or  
6 any authorized employee of the City of New York upon  
7 request, upon demand. Common sense, right? Right  
8 now, that's not the way it works. I have seen this  
9 in my own community. I see a job site. I know they  
10 don't have the right to close the street. They have  
11 their cones their unmanned, and I go up, I ask for  
12 the foreman. Well, he's not here. Well, who's next  
13 in charge? Well, that other guys is. Do you have a  
14 permit? Yeah, somebody else has a permit. In the  
15 meantime, I've already checked, there's no permit to  
16 close the street. This will make it a crime to not  
17 have that permit on you. If you do not have a  
18 permit, you're digging in the street. If not in your  
19 pocket, you get handcuffs on you. You get dragged  
20 down to the precinct. That's going to make our  
21 streets open up again, and it's also going to make  
22 utilities pay attention to the law. right now, they  
23 can simply jackhammer away whenever they feel like,  
24 and if they decide that they, you know, maybe perhaps  
25 keeping one lane open is too much work; they throw

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down a couple of cones at the corner; call it a day,  
and shut down a street. And congestion-- in  
congested neighborhoods this could literally become  
the end of traffic-- or the beginning of traffic, the  
end of moving around. So, this bill will require  
construction companies, utility companies,  
contractors, everybody who's going to take a  
jackhammer to our streets to be a little more  
respectful of our communities, and I urge you all.  
Thank you very much, colleagues, for remaining to  
sign on to Introduction 1088.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Mr. Speaker to  
close.

SPEAKER JOHNSON: Thank you all for being  
here today. Have a nice rest of the summer. This  
Stated Meeting is now adjourned.

[gavel]

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CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date August 19, 2018