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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

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November 17, 2021
Start: 12:10 a.m.
Recess: 5:44 p.m.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING - VIRTUAL ROOM 2

B E F O R E: James F. Gennaro,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Darma V. Diaz
Stephen T. Levin
Carlos Menchaca
Eric A. Ulrich

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A P P E A R A N C E S

- Ben Furnas
Director of the Mayor's Office of Climate and Sustainability
- Anthony Fiore
Deputy Commissioner and Chief Energy Management Officer at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services
- Gina Bocra
Chief Sustainability Officer at the Department of Buildings
- Emily Gallagher
Member of the State Assembly
- Dale Bryk
Regional Plan Association
- Chris Halfnight
Director of Policy at Urban Green Council
- Donna De Costanzo
Eastern Regional Director for the Climate & Clean Energy Program at the NRDC
- Samantha Wilt
NRDC
- Santos Rodriguez
Testifying on behalf of Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York
- Charlie Samboy
Director of Government Affairs at the New York Building Congress
- Phil Skalaski
Senior Vice President of Engineering and Energy Services at the Durst Organization
- Demos Demopoulous
Secretary Treasurer and Executive Officer of Teamsters Local 553

1 COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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

3 Sonal Jessel
4 Director of Policy at WE ACT for Environmental
Justice

5 Annie Carforo
6 Climate Justice Organizer at WE ACT for
Environmental Justice

7 Lonnie Portis
8 Environmental Policy and Advocacy Coordinator at
WE ACT for Environmental Justice

9 Pete Sikora
10 New York Communities for Change

11 Rachel Rivera
New York Communities for Change

12 Zachary Steinberg
13 Real Estate Board of New York

14 Josephine Zurica
American Council of Engineering Companies

15 Sara Bayer
16 Associate Principal and Director of
Sustainability at Magnusson Architecture and
Planning

17 Mark Ginsberg
18 FAIA, an Architect with Curtis & Ginsberg
Architects in lower Manhattan

19 Ben Prosky
20 Executive Director of the American Institute of
Architects

21 Daniel Zarrilli
22 Special Advisor for Climate and Sustainability at
Columbia University

23 Keith Leonard Kinch
24 General Manager and Co-founder of BlocPower

25 Sadiya Hogue
Chairperson of the Board of Directors for NYPIRG

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

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Meg Ahearn
NYPIRG's Program Director

Rocco Lacertosa
Chief Executive Officer of the New York State
Energy Coalition, NYSEC

Michael Trunzo
Shenker Russo & Clark, representing the National
Biodiesel Board

Corey Letcher
Energy Consumers Council in New York

Diana Sweeney
New York City Energy Consumers Council

John Rice
President and Principal of Legacy Engineers

Wendy Hijos
New York Executive Director for the Consumer
Energy Alliance

Lauren Moss
Senior Vice President of the Center for Active
Design

Eric Weltman
Brooklyn-Based Senior Organizer with Food and
Water Watch

Jon Pope
General Contractor

AJ Pires
President of Alloy Development

Amy Turner
Senior Fellow at the Sabin Center for Climate
Change Law at Columbia Law School

Leah Stokes
Associate Professor

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION 5
A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

April McIver
Executive Director of the Plumbing Foundation

George Bassolino III
New York City Master Plumbers Council and a
licensed Master Plumber

Artie Klock
Director of Trade Education at Plumber's Local
One

Arthur Goldstein

Bob Wyman
Geothermal Expert

Zachary Fink
ZBS Geothermal and the Association for Affordable
Energy

John Rath
New York GEO

Bill Nowak
New York Geothermal

Rachael Grace
Director of Strategic Policy Initiatives at
Rewiring America

Amar Shah
Manager at the Rocky Mountain Institute

Patrick Boyle
Director of Policy for NYSAFAH

Atalia Howe
Assistant Vice President of Initiatives and
Impact Investing at the Community Preservation
Corporation

Eric Liftin
Architect from MESH

Ismael Diaz-Tolentino
Environmental Justice Coordinator at Puente

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

- Patrick Houston
New York Communities for Change
- Edith Kantrowitz
United for Action
- Kim Fraczek
Director of Sane Energy Project
- Lee Ziesche
Community Engagement Coordinator for Sane Energy Project
- Karen Arpino
Northeast Hearth Patio and BBQ Association
- Moira McComas
Policy Analyst at the Supportive Housing Network for New York
- Hillary Aidun
Attorney at Earth Justice
- Lisa DiCaprio
Professor of Social Sciences in the Division of Applied Undergraduate Studies in NYU's School of Professional Studies
- Anne Pernick
SAFE Cities and Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Community Manager at Stand.earth
- Emma Urofsky
Studying Sustainable Development and I'm a member of WE ACT for Environmental Justice
- Dorian Fulvio
Lifelong New Yorker, a retired public servant and an active member of 350 NYC
- Monica Weiss
Member of 350 NYC
- Candee Kane
Member of 350 NYC

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

7

- Jane Selden
Retired New York City Community College
Instructor and a Member of 350 NYC
- Ann Logan
- Ross Pinkerton
Physics Teacher in Manhattan
- Sabrina Maharaj
Student at BMCC, Borough of Manhattan Community
College in Manhattan NY
- Miles McManus
Resident of Manhattan
- Delia Kulukundis
Resident of Long Island City
- Stuart Waldman
Retired Children's Book Publisher
- Samantha Galanti
Full-Time College Student and
successfully completed training in the Climate
Reality Leadership Corps
- Ken Schles
Volunteer with Food and Water Watch
- Matthew Lipschik
Member and Volunteer with Food & Water Watch
- Hody Nemes
Co-Founder and Leader of Jewish Climate Action
Network NYC
- Natalie Cronin
Mom and Daycare Provider
- Amber Ruther
Alliance for a Green Economy, AGREE
- Marie Pierre
Co-Chair of the Brownsville Chapter of the New
York Communities for Change

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Georgi Page
Volunteer with 350 Brooklyn

A Wilson

Harry P. Johnson
Vice Chair for Flatbush Chapter of New York
Communities for Change

Rebecca Duvall
Resident of Brooklyn

Nina Grigoriev
Resident of Bay Ridge Brooklyn

Donna Gill
Member of WE ACT

1 COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION 9

2 SERGEANT LUGO: PC recording started.

3 SERGEANT JONES: Cloud started.

4 SERGEANT PEREZ: Backup is rolling. Just give
5 one second to confirm that this training is working
6 properly. Yeah, we're good.

7 SERGEANT LUGO: Alrighty, thank you. Good
8 afternoon everyone. Welcome to today's Remote New
9 York City Council Hearing of the Committee on
10 Environmental Protection. At this time, would all
11 panelists please turn on your videos. To minimize
12 disruption, please place electronic devices to
13 vibrate or silent. If you wish to submit testimony,
14 you may do so at testimony@council.nyc.gov. Again,
15 that's testimony@council.nyc.gov.

16 Thank you for your cooperation. Chair, we are
17 ready to begin.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Sergeant. Good
19 afternoon, I am Jim Gennaro, Chair of the
20 Environmental Protection Committee. Today we will be
21 holding an oversight hearing on Buildings
22 Electrification. We'll also hear three bills and I'm
23 going to pretty much dispense with most substance my
24 opening statement because I'm very eager to hear from
25 the witnesses. And uhm, I had discussions with a lot

1
2 of people who are you know stakeholders in this
3 process. I am going to be you know keeping my
4 questions to a minimum for the sake of you know
5 getting through all the witnesses.

6 I will have ample opportunity to you know talk to
7 stakeholders as this process goes along. Please rest
8 assure that this bill is what will at least you know
9 2317 is my full time job now. Every word of
10 testimony that is submitted, I will read personally.
11 For 13 years, I was the Policy Analyst to the
12 Environmental Protection Committee and I Chaired it
13 for 12 years once upon a time. Now, I'm back. I'm
14 grateful to be back and uhm, so if I don't ask you a
15 lot of questions about your testimony or no
16 questions, it does not mean that I'm not interested.
17 It just means that I want to hear from everyone and
18 get everybody on the record.

19 We've got to do some things like you know limit
20 you know testimony to two minutes. I don't
21 ordinarily do that but with you know more than 100
22 witnesses, it is necessary to do that if we want to
23 get done by midnight.

24 And I'm going to - with regard to 2317, we are
25 joined by my good colleague Council Member Ampry-

2 Samuel. She will be recognized momentarily to give
3 an opening statement on her bill and talk about that.
4 It's my understanding that the other sponsors are not
5 here for their bill's. So, let me just say a little
6 something about their bills.

7 Uhm, Intro. 2091, will amend previously enacted
8 local laws to the study of building electrification
9 in New York City. This legislation would require
10 that the building electrification study consider
11 regulatory barriers to building electrification or
12 lack of both, customer awareness and workforce
13 familiarity with electrification costs for property
14 owners. And timeframes for electrification
15 consistent with state and local greenhouse gas
16 reduction goals. That is Intro. 2091 that is
17 sponsored by Council Member Kallos.

18 The next 2196, which is sponsored by Council
19 Member Louis. 2196 would require an agency or office
20 designated by the Mayor to conduct a study of the
21 health impact of gas stoves. To make a
22 recommendation as to whether it would be appropriate
23 to create a phase out policy of gas stoves. This
24 Local Law would take effect immediately if passed.
25 And uhm, uh, with that, as I said before, I want to

2 limit what I have to say both in my opening statement
3 and in my questions. I want to spare, with regard to
4 that. I would urge my colleagues - well, there is
5 only one colleague on the Zoom right now to be spare
6 with questions as well, so we can get as many
7 witnesses in and have them not wait so long. And in
8 terms of the run of show here, Sergeant and the
9 Committee Counsel, am I free to bring on Council
10 Member Ampry-Samuel for her opening statement or is
11 there other housekeeping stuff we need to do now?

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Just a little introduction.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL; So, I'm Samara Swanson,
15 Counsel of the Environmental Protection Committee.
16 Welcome to the hearing on Environmental Protection.
17 Before we begin, I want to remind everyone that you
18 will on mute until you are called on testify when you
19 will be unmuted by the host. I will be calling on
20 panelists to testify. Please be aware that there
21 could be a delay in muting and unmuting, so please be
22 patient.

23 Please listen for your name to be called. I will
24 be periodically announcing who the next panelist will
25 be. We will begin with testimony from the

2 Administration, which will be followed by testimony
3 from members of the public. During the hearing, if
4 Council Members would like to ask a question, please
5 use the Zoom raise hand function and I will call on
6 you in order.

7 We will be limiting Council Member questions to
8 five minutes, including responses. I will call on
9 you when it is your turn to speak. During the
10 hearing, if Council Members would like to ask a
11 question, please use the Zoom raise hand function and
12 I will call on you in the order that you raised your
13 hand. Thank you and now I will hand off to Chair
14 Gennaro and he can also hand off to Council Member
15 Alicka Ampry-Samuel.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Samara. I thank
17 you for your good work over the years. You were
18 Counsel to the Committee in my previous tenure at the
19 Council and your good work continues and you just
20 reminded me that I am you know remiss in not doing
21 something that's very important, which is thanking a
22 really terrific Committee Staff who had done such
23 great work in getting us to this big day. We just
24 heard from Samara Swanson, we have Policy Analyst
25 Nadia Johnson, Ricky Chawla and Financial Analyst

2 Jonathan Seltzer. And finally, last but not least by
3 any means, my own terrific Legislative Director
4 [INAUDIBLE 7:02] for all of their hard work. I
5 appreciate it very much.

6 And with that said, it is my great honor and
7 privilege to bring on the prime sponsor of 2317. It
8 has been a real delight working with her on this bill
9 and just as a colleague in general. And we're going
10 to miss her once she goes to HUD and does great
11 things on the national stage. And I thank her so
12 much for the sponsorship of this bill and uhm, with
13 that send up, how about that you know Alicka, it was
14 pretty good right?

15 So, uhm, so it is my pleasure to recognize
16 Council Member Ampry-Samuel who will give her opening
17 statement on her bill.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: It's been an
19 absolute joy Chair Gennaro to work with you just over
20 the past couple of months. I appreciate your
21 leadership and I do recognize your years of hard work
22 around the environmental protection.

23 So, thank you, thank you, thank you for all you
24 have done and I look forward to working with you in
25 the days to come.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Alicka.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, I do also just
4 want to thank you for having this hearing and uhm,
5 for the ability to discuss Intro. 2317. Commonly
6 referred to as the Gas Ban Bill and I thank you for
7 giving me the opportunity to address the Committee
8 today.

9 The 41st Council District, which I represent
10 encompasses Brownsville, Ocean Hill, parts of East
11 Flatbush, Crown Heights and Bed Stuey. In my
12 communities and communities like mine have
13 astronomically high levels of respiratory diseases
14 and poor health outcomes. Many of which are directly
15 related to climate justice and injustices. This
16 legislation Intro. 2317 would effectively prohibit
17 the use of gas operated heating systems in new
18 construction or gut renovations across New York City.
19 The city has set a goal to be carbon free by 2050 and
20 this bill codifies and creates the parameters to
21 ensure we meet that goal.

22 Ironically, the most effective communities are
23 usually left out of conversations about climate
24 change although our residents are literally paying

2 for the effects with their health and sometimes their
3 lives.

4 The illustration that I often use; you all have
5 heard me talk about this time and time again, is when
6 other parts of our city were converting to clean
7 energy buses, that all diesel buses were not taken
8 out of service. They were sent to other depots like
9 the East New York Depot which services the bus lines
10 that run through my district. It's ironic because
11 our residents contend with some of the highest rates
12 of respiratory issues that are directly related to
13 environmental factors.

14 The stakes for our residents are very high and
15 I'm proud to represent their interests in that of the
16 entire city as we look forward to eliminating
17 aggressive reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
18 Simple. As the experts have and will continue to
19 testify, when space and water heating appliance such
20 as furnaces and boilers burn gas or oil to produce
21 heat, they emit several dangerous pollutants. We can
22 make a major dent in these emissions in our
23 atmosphere by prohibiting natural gas hookups in new
24 buildings and gut renovations.

2 Although other locations have already realized
3 the goal. As New York City goes, the rest of the
4 country follows. So, I look forward to today's
5 discussion. I look forward to the attention that
6 will be placed on this issue and again Chair, thank
7 you for recognizing this pivotal moment in history.
8 So, on behalf of the advocates and friends that have
9 worked tirelessly with me to move this bill, we
10 appreciate you and today's the day to have this
11 discussion that we've been waiting for for so long.

12 So, thank you everyone and again, I look forward
13 to the discussion.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Council Member
15 for your very gracious opening statement and your
16 kind remarks and your tireless advocacy on this bill.
17 It has really been terrific and uhm, thank you for
18 that and uh, I think I am clear to call on the
19 Administration, right?

20 But before I do that, just a word that the people
21 who will be testifying you know uhm, these bills
22 consist of words in our page. And uhm, you know the
23 best kind of testimony which really helps us the most
24 to fashion the best bill is testimony that goes you
25

2 know directly to the worrying or you know essence of
3 the bill.

4 So, you see the bills; so, you know if you had
5 you know your druthers, you know the best testimony
6 is what would you do to you know add words to the
7 bill? To take words away from the bill? Change
8 words that are in the bill? This is what really
9 helps us. Sometimes you know philosophical
10 discussions are great about how are planet is ailing
11 and like, we all get that but this is a you know,
12 legislative hearing and we want to focus, we want to
13 laser focus on you know 2317 and the other bill, so
14 try to be very succinct in giving us your best
15 testimony that you know directly effects the wording
16 of the bill if you are in a position to do that. And
17 with that said, it's my privilege to call the
18 Administration. I guess that's uh, I guess Samara,
19 you as the uhm, what's the proper term of art that
20 you're going to be playing here?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I'm going to administer the
22 oath.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: No, no, no but in terms of
24 your role here today. Like, you're the what do you
25 call the role.

1 COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION 19
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I'm the Moderator.

3 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: The Moderator, correct.
4 Okay, yeah, Moderator, so you as Moderator, you know
5 please uh do your thing. Bring on the
6 Administration, you know swear them in and let's get
7 this thing going. Thank you very much Samara, I
8 appreciate it.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, okay and now, I would
10 like to deliver the oath to the Administration. So,
11 I will call on them each individually to record your
12 answers to be followed by your testimony. So, please
13 raise your right hands. I don't see - I see a Gina
14 but I don't see Anthony Fiore or Ben Furnas.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh.

16 C I'm here Samara.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I'm looking for Anthony Fiore
18 or Ben Furnas.

19 BEN FURNAS: I'm here as well.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: He's here. Uhm, Anthony's
21 here.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: He's here?

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I see Ben. I see Anthony.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, please raise your right
25 hand. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the

2 whole truth and nothing but the truth before this
3 Committee and to respond honestly to Council Member
4 questions?

5 ANTHONY FIORE: I do.

6 BEN FURNAS: I do.

7 GINA BOCRA: I do.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, thank you. And now,
9 let's hear your testimony.

10 BEN FURNAS: Thank you so much Samara and thank
11 you Chair Gennaro for holding this hearing and it's
12 been really a delight to work with you in the run up
13 to this conversation.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ben.

15 BEN FURNAS: Good afternoon everyone. My name is
16 Ben Furnas and I am the Director of the Mayor's
17 Office of Climate and Sustainability. I am joined
18 today by Anthony Fiore, the Deputy Commissioner and
19 Chief Energy Management Officer at the Department of
20 Citywide Administrative Services and Gina Bocra, the
21 Chief Sustainability Officer at the Department of
22 Buildings.

23 I want to thank Chair Gennaro and members of the
24 Committee for this opportunity to testify on building
25 electrification and Introductions 2317, 2196, and

1
2 2091. A recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel
3 on Climate Change found that unless there are
4 immediate and large-scale reductions in greenhouse
5 gas emissions, the world will continue to see
6 increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme
7 weather events and heat waves that would imperil
8 global agriculture and health. New Yorkers are
9 already too familiar with the serious consequences of
10 extreme weather, most recently managing the impacts
11 of Tropical Storm Henri and Hurricane Ida.

12 As world leaders convened in Glasgow for the U.N.
13 climate change negotiations over the past weeks, it's
14 become clear that cities are leading the way in the
15 fight against climate change. The federal
16 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is providing
17 support for major new investments in decarbonization
18 and that, and the Big Build Back Better Act signal
19 that cities will be critical in our country's work
20 against climate change.

21 Cities are taking ambitious action to confront
22 the climate crisis and build a green and just world,
23 and New York City is leading the charge. Together
24 with the Council, we have taken bold action to cut
25 greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors as fast as

2 possible, including requiring buildings to undergo
3 retrofits, transitioning to renewable electricity,
4 accelerating the shift to cleaner modes of
5 transportation, and creating green jobs. But there
6 is more we can do and we must take every opportunity
7 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for our city and
8 for our planet.

9 New York City is committed to achieving carbon
10 neutrality by 2050. The fossil fuels used to heat,
11 cool, and power our buildings are responsible for
12 nearly 70 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in New
13 York City. They also emit a wide range of air
14 pollutants that harm the health of New Yorkers,
15 especially our most vulnerable. New York City has
16 already been a global leader in building emission
17 reductions, notably through the passage and
18 implementation of the Climate Mobilization Act and
19 its centerpiece, Local Law 97, which places targets
20 on greenhouse gas emissions from existing large
21 buildings. With the legislation being proposed here
22 today, we can lead again.

23 The next generation of buildings is electric.
24 Setting ambitious targets for new buildings to be
25 built without reliance on fossil fuels presents an

1
2 opportunity for us to shape the future of our city
3 and lead the world in developing the high-efficiency,
4 electric buildings of the future. To meet our
5 carbon-neutrality goals, improve air quality, and
6 create a city that is cleaner and greener, it is time
7 for new buildings to be built without on-site
8 combustion of fossil fuels. Gas or oil heating
9 systems lock buildings into fossil fuel
10 infrastructure for years to come and those are years
11 that we do not have to waste.

12 All electric buildings are a solution to
13 improving the climate and the health of our
14 residents. Buildings with efficient electric heating
15 and cooling have existed for decades and are
16 currently being built all over the world, including
17 in New York City. The technology is reliable and
18 functional, even in very cold weather. Cold climate
19 air source heat pumps, the best available technology
20 to provide high quality heating and cooling provide
21 clean electric interior comfort well-suited to New
22 York's weather. These systems offer efficient
23 cooling, heating from temperatures below -10°F and
24 operate at more than double the efficiency of
25 resistance or gas systems.

2 These benefits to New Yorkers come with a
3 reasonable price tag. The cost to construct a new all
4 electric building is relatively similar to that of
5 constructing a new building that heats with gas, and
6 because the building can be designed climate-friendly
7 from the beginning, they avoid costly retrofits down
8 the line as we race towards carbon neutrality. The
9 International Energy Agency reports that globally,
10 almost 180 million heat pumps were used in 2020, and
11 that to reach net zero emissions, heat pump use will
12 need to increase significantly.

13 The IEA has also noted the importance of setting
14 a date certain when new buildings will be electric
15 buildings in order to keep the world on what they
16 describe as the "narrow but achievable" path to
17 carbon neutrality by mid-century. Electrifying
18 buildings to cut greenhouse gas emissions is also in
19 line with recommendations by the New York State's
20 Climate Action Council.

21 In 2021, the city conducted a study entitled,
22 Pathways to Carbon Neutral NYC, in partnership with
23 our utilities Con Edison and National Grid. This
24 study found that electrifying heating and domestic
25 hot water systems can provide immediate emissions

2 benefits in efficient buildings, even with today's
3 grid, and that these buildings get greener as the
4 grid gets cleaner.

5 In 2019, thanks to the work of advocates and our
6 partners at the state level, New York State passed
7 the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.
8 The CLCPA committed us to 100 percent zero-emission
9 electricity by 2040. And even today, before the
10 projected increase in renewable electricity, a
11 building drawing electricity from the grid creates
12 lower greenhouse gas emissions and less air pollution
13 than one burning fossil fuels on-site for heat.

14 Now, this change is needed but we are here to
15 help. We are committed to working with building
16 owners to provide them with the support they need to
17 shift away from fossil fuels. We have already
18 launched a number of programs providing personalized,
19 technical assistance and connecting building owners
20 and operators with financing.

21 The NYC Accelerator program is a \$33 million
22 commitment to support a rapid transition toward
23 decarbonizing our city's buildings, including
24 electrification and other alternative technologies to
25 reduce emissions from existing building system. As

2 part of this citywide effort, the Accelerator has
3 expanded its training and technical assistance
4 offerings to support high-performance new
5 construction electric buildings that will set a new
6 precedent for the future of our homes, schools, and
7 offices. We're also ready to support these changes
8 with financing.

9 Property Assessed Clean Energy financing gives
10 building owners access to loans with no upfront
11 capital with payments that are tied to the property
12 tax bill. I'm very pleased to share today that
13 starting in January, thanks to legislation passed by
14 the City Council, PACE financing will be available
15 for new construction of electric buildings. We
16 believe this shift will continue to grow the electric
17 building industry in New York, support the next
18 generation of high-efficiency buildings without
19 fossil fuels on site, and would help developers and
20 builders comply with Introduction 2317.

21 Now, I'll speak briefly about each of the bills
22 that are being heard today. Intro. 2317. We are
23 excited to testify today on Introduction 2317. This
24 bill represents a major shift in how new buildings
25 will use energy and provide heating and cooling, and

2 we support this critical climate action. We are
3 looking forward to working with the Council and all
4 of the stakeholders here today to ensure that the
5 bill is as ambitious as possible, while still being
6 achievable for builders and developers throughout the
7 city.

8 Introduction 2091, this would require a study to
9 determine the feasibility of electrifying existing
10 buildings. The NYC Accelerator does a lot of work to
11 assist existing buildings in efforts to electrify and
12 reduce the carbon emissions. We would like to
13 continue to work with buildings to eliminate, as much
14 as possible, their fossil fuels on site. The bill as
15 currently drafted adds this study to the Long-Term
16 Energy Plan. We believe this is a critically
17 important topic that warrants detailed study,
18 however, the Long-Term Energy Plan is well underway,
19 so we are happy to discuss with the Council an
20 alternative mechanism to get this work done.

21 Introduction 2196 would require a study on the
22 health impacts of gas stoves and a recommendation as
23 to whether it would be appropriate to phase-out gas
24 stoves. Robust research exists on the health impacts
25 of gas stoves and we support reproducing a report on

2 this existing research both at the national and local
3 level and inclusive of any equity implications to
4 inform policy recommendations and implementation in
5 residential settings.

6 To conclude, we really look forward to working
7 with the Council on leading the way on this critical
8 issue. Thank you so much for holding this hearing
9 Chair. It's lovely to see so many people so
10 passionate about this issue at this hearing today and
11 now, I'm happy to answer any questions.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ben. Your
13 testimony is most appreciated. We've been talking
14 all along on this bill and so, uhm, I'm going to
15 forego questioning for the sake of my colleagues who
16 may have questions and also to get to our host of you
17 know people that want to testify. Staff is just
18 letting me know that uh, we have other Council
19 Members on the Zoom. Members of the Committee.
20 Council Member Darma Diaz is with us, we thank her
21 for being here. Council Member Menchaca is here and
22 Council Member Stephen Levin. All of the members of
23 the Environmental Protection Committee are here as
24 well and so, I thank them for their attendance. And
25 I guess I will pose one question and I'm sorry to

1 kind of uh I'm giving myself a little you know
2 latitude because it's a little off topic. Shame on
3 me.
4

5 When I passed the first you know greenhouse gas
6 reduction bill, you know New York City Climate
7 Protection Act of uh you know 2008. That mandated a
8 30 percent reduction in city generated greenhouse
9 gases in the city sector. That would be city
10 building, city fleets, you know city facilities like
11 implants and other things. A you know 30 percent
12 greenhouse gas reduction by 2017. That was not
13 realized and then two years after that fell on and
14 you know Local Law 97 was passed. That deadline in
15 2017 was changed from 2017 to 2025 with a 40 percent
16 reduction.

17 This is one of the frustrating things about you
18 know passing good bills and making sure that they
19 make their way down the cracks. And so, because
20 we're talking about climate reduction, it sort of
21 points out that sometimes we pass bills and you know
22 they are difficult to achieve and you know, the
23 administration itself - this administration and the
24 previous administration has had difficult in meeting
25 that mandate.

2 So, where are we now and how are we looking for
3 40 percent by 2025 because we missed the 2017? And
4 this will be the only question I ask all day. It's a
5 little bit off topic. I'm giving myself a little bit
6 of you know latitude here to ask that because you
7 know, the private sector is being asked to do
8 something here and the city hasn't lived up to what
9 it was supposed to do. And so, I think it's
10 important to tell people where we are on the city
11 reducing its own greenhouse gases. And so, how are
12 we doing? Like are we on path for uhm, on target for
13 40 percent by 2025? And you know, you can give a
14 brief reply because I don't want to take too much
15 time.

16 BEN FURNAS: Yeah, thanks so much Chair and
17 thanks for both passing that really crucial piece of
18 legislation and holding us all accountable. I think
19 we share the same goal of reducing emissions as
20 quickly as possible.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I didn't put it in as a
22 goal, it was a mandate. I fought to get that
23 mandate. Everybody wanted a goal. Bloomberg wanted
24 a goal; the Council wanted a goal. I wanted a
25

1 mandate; we got a mandate. Mandate is supposed to be
2 mandate so what do we got?
3

4 BEN FURNAS: So, we've been investing billions of
5 dollars to retrofit the city's municipal buildings to
6 electrify the city's vehicle fleet and we're
7 currently seeking to build two new transmission lines
8 that would bring clean and renewable electricity in
9 order to power city government operations. At this
10 point, we're on path to hit that 40 percent reduction
11 by 2025. And I'd also love to have Anthony Fiore
12 whose joining me from the Department of Citywide
13 Administrative Services to add any additional
14 contacts that he thinks it warrants but we share the
15 goal and we're on track to meet that emissions
16 target.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, thank you Ben.
18 Anthony.

19 ANTHONY FIORE: Thank you Chairman. I also would
20 mirror Ben's comments about thanking you for that
21 initial legislation so long ago and I think it was
22 really innovative and first of its kind.

23 So, let me just speak to the last kind of full
24 year of emission reductions that we have pre-pandemic
25 that's 2019. The investments that the city has made

2 in its buildings has reduced those emissions 23
3 percent. That's compared to 18 percent in the
4 private sector, so I do believe those investments
5 have paid off. We are leading the way here. With
6 that said, there's much, much more to do and we look
7 forward to continuing a great relationship with you
8 in getting us there.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. I thank you
10 Anthony, I do appreciate that. And now, I'll give an
11 opportunity to any of my colleagues who are on the
12 Zoom to ask questions of the Administration. So,
13 Samara, they're supposed to raise their hand and
14 you're supposed to handle that right? Does anybody
15 have questions for the Administration?

16 Oh, am I muted? No, I'm good, I'm on right?
17 Okay, Samara, am I to conclude that no one has
18 questions for the Administration? Uh, I see Council
19 Member Levin has his hand up. Uh, I recognize
20 Council Member Levin. Steve, you're muted.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Hi, I'm unmuted
22 right now.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I had my hand
25 raised before Steve. Hey Steve.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry,
3 I didn't - hey, I'll tell you what. Uhm, why don't
4 we do this. Uh, Samara, like rather than me being
5 the shot caller on who has their hand up, like you
6 know you're going to take care of that, okay Samara?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yeah, so Levin - Ampy-Samuel
8 and then Levin.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay. Okay, it is my
10 privilege to recognize Council Member Ampy-Samuel.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you, thank
12 you, thank you. So, I just have two questions. Uhm,
13 one, does the city work with the utilities to
14 understand if electrification supply can meet demand
15 if more buildings go electric and clearly, I'm asking
16 that questions because we're constantly hearing that
17 we don't have enough energy sources to even do this.
18 And so I would like to speak on the work that the
19 city is doing with the utility companies to talk
20 about the energy supply.

21 And my second question is, you mentioned
22 financing options, can you provide a little more
23 detail about what's available come January and how?

24 BEN FURNAS: Sure, yeah, thank so much for both
25 of those questions Council Member. So, first on the

1 utility point. The city and Con Edison work really
2 closely to ensure that the grid is reliable and
3 resilient and we do that via direct conversations and
4 also as part of Con Edison's rate cases where they
5 plan their investments to accommodate the shift.
6

7 You know based on our conversations with them, I
8 believe they are testifying today, so I don't want to
9 speak for them but you know we have a very high level
10 of confidence that this type of shift towards
11 electric heating, towards the types of deep carbon
12 emission reductions are possible and consistent with
13 the types of investment plans.

14 I mentioned the pathways to carbon neutrality
15 study that we conducted in partnership with Con
16 Edison and National Grid and that sort of showed the
17 way that with thoughtful and strategic investments
18 the building electrification is possible and the
19 addition of new buildings that are electric buildings
20 is well within the capacity of our systems.

21 So, one additional point I would make is you know
22 all new electric buildings that are highly efficient,
23 because electric heat pumps tend to be more efficient
24 than conventional air conditioning. As you know, we
25 have what's called a summer peaking system. Meaning

2 you know our grid uses the most electricity during
3 the summer time when everyone is running their air
4 conditioners.

5 Heat pump systems are more efficient than
6 conventional air conditioning. Meaning that if a
7 building is built all electric with a heat pump that
8 provides heating and cooling, they actually create
9 less strain during those summer months than they
10 otherwise would. And so, that's just another piece
11 of information that gives us a level of confidence
12 here.

13 As to your second point, the new type of
14 financing available is called property assessed clean
15 energy financing. This is a program that was
16 authorized by the state and authorized by the City
17 Council and it allows developers to take out a loan
18 with no money down in order to provide financing for
19 that addit- any additional costs that might come from
20 building an all-electric building and pay those costs
21 back on their property tax bill.

22 So, it means that the financing is less expensive
23 than it otherwise would be and it means that if they
24 sell the building, that loan travels with the
25

2 building rather than with the owner and making the
3 terms much more appealing.

4 You know, as I mentioned, we think the costs at
5 this point are about comparable between an all-
6 electric building and a fossil fuel building but to
7 the extent that there is any serving differential, we
8 stand ready to provide this category of financing to
9 help folks ease those costs.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you. Thank
11 you Chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Council Member
13 Ampry-Samuel. Uhm, so Samara, like I should
14 recognize Steve or you should recognize him. I'll
15 recognize him.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Levin has his
17 hand up.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: So, uhm, if you could call on
20 him.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, I recognize my good
22 friend Stephen Levin.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

24

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much Chair.
3 Thank you very much Council Member Ampry-Samuel. I
4 feel recognized, so thank you.

5 My question is so just to – I think I heard you
6 correctly Mr. Furnas that uhm, so the Administration
7 fully supports the legislation sponsored by Council
8 Member Ampry-Samuel 2319?

9 BEN FURNAS: Uh, yeah, we support the notion of
10 creating a date certain after which all buildings
11 will be electric buildings. We want to work together
12 with the Council and all the stakeholders here today
13 to set – to determine what that timeline ought to be.
14 We want it to be aggressive but also achievable and
15 we're looking forward to all the testimony here today
16 to correct that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay. I mean, as we all
18 know, uhm, you know myself, Council Member Ampry-
19 Samuel, you know we're leaving at the end of the year
20 and so, this is a bill that it's a new term. The
21 bill would have to be reintroduced. It would have to
22 be uhm, uh, you know it would have to be reheard,
23 redrafted, the whole you know everything like that.
24 So, if it were not to pass in the next six weeks.
25 So, is there a commitment from the Administration to

2 work to pass this legislation by our deadline which
3 is like really just a month from now?

4 BEN FURNAS: Thanks Council Member, the answer is
5 yes. You know we think there's been an enormous
6 amount of thought that has gone into this from a
7 library of stakeholders and we're really ready to
8 roll our sleeves up to get this done this year.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, can you talk a
10 little bit about what uhm, what the administration is
11 doing beyond electrification for new construction and
12 what the Administration is doing around renewables
13 and incentivizing retrofitting un renewables. Large
14 scale renewables, the solar farms and uhm and how
15 uhm, we're seeking to move to outfit our aging
16 housing stock. A lot of it is retrofitting, so
17 what's the strategy, the long-term ten year strategy
18 for moving our building stock if its currently based
19 on you know fossil fuels moving it over to
20 renewables.

21 BEN FURNAS: Yeah, thanks so much for that
22 Council Member. So, I would describe this as a sort
23 of two pronged strategy. The first as you identified
24 is about dramatically reducing the amount of fossil
25 fuels that are used in our existing buildings

1 including the efficiency of those buildings and you
2 know we do that both through the NYC Accelerator
3 program which provides a high quality personalized
4 technical assistance to buildings to help them bring
5 – come into compliance with Local Law 97 our really
6 ambitious carbon emission targets for existing
7 buildings. And we provide technical assistance for
8 buildings that are subject to those laws and also a
9 broader universe of buildings. Their efficiency in
10 proving tenant comfort, reducing their energy costs
11 and cleaning up their building systems.
12

13 The other half of that as you mentioned, is even
14 as we're shifting away from fossil fuels, we also
15 want to be making sure that our grid is as clean as
16 possible and that means embracing every form of clean
17 and renewable electricity that we can be bringing
18 into New York City.

19 So, you know we've been working in close
20 partnership with New York State to advance two brand-
21 new transmission lines that would be directly
22 connected into New York City to provide over 2500
23 megawatts of clean and renewable electricity from
24 wind and solar and hydropower that come from Points
25 North. We're also working with the state and the

2 federal government to accelerate offshore wind, which
3 will provide another major source of clean and
4 renewable electricity.

5 All this even as we want to you know be
6 dramatically expanding solar on the roofs across the
7 five boroughs, you know another really important
8 piece of the Climate Mobilization Act was this
9 requirement that new buildings should take a hard
10 look at putting solar on their roofs. And we've also
11 been launching a new program called Electrify NYC,
12 which provides support for one to four family
13 homeowners who are interested in putting solar on
14 their roofs and shifting to electric systems for
15 their work.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: What kind of support does
17 that take the form in?

18 BEN FURNAS: It's personalized technical
19 assistance to provide everything that you would need
20 to put that on your roof. We connect those with
21 contractors and also with technical support and
22 financing that's available from the utilities -

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: And my last question is,
25 is there any reason and I apologize Chair.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please make it brief.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Very brief, last question.

4 Is there any reason why a new building should have or
5 would need to have gas as a heating or cooling
6 source?

7 BEN FURNAS: So, you know I think for the
8 overwhelming majority of new buildings, sort of
9 typical residential, typical office buildings, we
10 think that they're really cost competitive electric
11 options available. Now, for some types of industrial
12 facilities, things that are much harder to electrify,
13 processes of fire, very high amounts of heat. We
14 think that there's other low carbon technologies that
15 are available to help produce some of that but
16 electrification might not be the choice right now.
17 And I know the Council has had some thoughtful
18 potential exceptions for particular treatments that
19 they are looking to include in this bill and we think
20 those are thoughtful options too.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ben.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much Chair.
23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you,
25 thank you Steve. Uh, Samara, any other Council

2 Members wishing to be heard or can I proceed with the
3 next witness?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I believe you can - I believe
5 you can proceed to the next witness. I think Gina
6 wants to testify. Gina Bocra.

7 GINA BOCRA: Thank you Samara. The Department of
8 Buildings does not have separate testimony but I
9 appreciate it.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay well then, it's just for
11 questions.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, uh, thank you Gina.
13 I want to thank you and all the members of the
14 Administration who have been our partners thus far
15 and will continue and so, thank you very much. And
16 as we spoke yesterday, you are going to have people
17 stay for the duration of the hearing to listen to
18 every word of the testify correct?

19 BEN FURNAS: That's right.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, great, great and I'll
21 be talking to you really soon, I am sure. And I'm
22 going to call our next witness. This is a member of
23 the State Assembly, Emily Gallagher. I know her by
24 reputation. I know that she is you know deeply

2 involved in the issue of building electrification.

3 Many people know that she is the next witness.

4 You know being that she is an elected official, I
5 am not going to put her on the clock but I hope that
6 she will be economical in her testimony. And with
7 that said, it is my privilege to call on member of
8 the Assembly Emily Gallagher.

9 EMILY GALLAGHER: Thank you so much Chair. I am
10 really grateful to be a part of this hearing and I've
11 taken into account your words about being economical.
12 And so, I am going to not read my beautiful poetry
13 about uhm, the climate crisis. I will skip that. I
14 know we all know that.

15 So, at the state level, we've responded to
16 threats of the climate crisis so far with goals.
17 Uhm, but we really need so much action to be
18 happening and I'm really grateful for Intro. 2317
19 because I think this really sets the tone for the
20 rest of the state and if New York City can lead on
21 electrifying all of our buildings as well as the
22 other Intro.'s that we've been hearing about, we will
23 be really able to move off the grid and there are
24 other - there's other smaller cities in the state
25 that have done this already. Ithaca New York has

2 been working on this and they've actually seen a
3 decrease in costs for their uhm, their developments.
4 And it has been a very successful program.

5 So, I am really excited to see what this - what
6 innovation this will bring to our city and I think
7 our city is really in a leadership role here. If we
8 can pass this bill to electrify buildings at New York
9 City's level of government, it's going to demonstrate
10 to the entire state and the entire country that this
11 is absolutely achievable. So, we absolutely need to
12 pass this act.

13 Over 70 percent of greenhouse gases and emissions
14 are coming from buildings. They are the result of
15 the use of natural gas as an energy source and
16 they're also a major cause of indoor air pollution.
17 And uhm, the air quality in my district is very low
18 in Greenpoint and Williamsburg. We have very high
19 rates of asthma, that is exacerbated by the indoor
20 air quality of outdated systems. But with all of the
21 new building that's happening in my district and
22 across the city, we actually have a really big
23 opportunity to not just improve our life here on
24 earth in terms of the waterfront and climate. The

2 climate catastrophe that we're facing but also, for
3 personal health.

4 So, I am absolutely in favor of this. I strongly
5 urge the New York City Council to pass this Intro.
6 and I will be following at the state level to pass it
7 across the state. I think this is one of the most
8 important things we can do in the next two years and
9 I am really excited to see New York City be the first
10 major city in the country to do this.

11 So, I think that concludes my thoughts. Uhm,
12 just know that I am waiting for you all to do this,
13 so that I can really pack the punch at the state
14 level and convince everyone that this is the clearest
15 way forward. So, thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Miss
17 Gallagher and you know please give my regards to my
18 environmental mentor Steve Englebright.

19 EMILY GALLAGHER: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You know whom I go back
21 with to 1975, when I was in my teens and he was in
22 his 20's. Uhm, that's how it all started and the
23 rest his history. Thank you very much for being
24 here. I've been told by staff not to call on people
25 who want to question and not to call you know

2 subsequent witnesses because Samara is supposed to do
3 that.

4 So, I'll ask Samara if any members from the
5 Council have any questions for the Assembly Member
6 and uh, if not to call the next witness. And so,
7 thank you again. Thank you again Miss Gallagher, I
8 appreciate it and good to see you.

9 EMILY GALLAGHER: Yes, yes, I look forward to it.

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, you bet.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see any hands raised.
12 So, I believe I can call the next witness, which is
13 Dale Bryk from the Regional Plan Association.

14 DALE BRYK: Hi, thank you so much. Can we
15 actually have Chris Halfnight first because my
16 testimony is going to key off of his and he is going
17 to go through the specific legislative language as
18 you requested Chair? And thank you so much for the
19 opportunity.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, uh, uhm, I will state
21 Samara that I don't have any problem with that. I
22 don't have any objection.

23 DALE BRYK: Thank you so much.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No problem.

25 DALE BRYK: We're trying to consolidate.

2 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Great thank you. Good
3 afternoon Chair Gennaro and Committee Members. Thank
4 you so much for holding this hearing today. I'm
5 Chris Halfnight, I'm Director of Policy at Urban
6 Green Council. We're an environmental nonprofit
7 working to reduce the carbon footprint of buildings.

8 As Dale mentioned my testimony today is aligned
9 with the Environmental groups who follow, namely RPA
10 and RDC and NYLCV and AEA. Uhm, and with the Chairs
11 permission, I'm going to take just an extra minute of
12 my colleagues time to quickly hit on a few of our
13 recommendations.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, first of all, I don't
15 see the clock running. Uhm, is the clock running?
16 Samara, is the -

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, the clock is running.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, the clock is running.
19 I'm really not a fan of like one witness yielding
20 time to another. And so, I'll give you a few more
21 seconds on the clock but you know the standard is
22 like a few minutes per witness and so, let's do that.
23 So, put a couple seconds back on the clock and you
24 know because once I start making exceptions, it gets
25 to be a whole thing.

2 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Understood, I'll move quickly.

3 So, Urban Green is dedicated to an ambitious,
4 equitable and affordable transition for New York City
5 buildings from fossil fuels to clean electricity.

6 I'd like to frame my testimony with four key facts.

7 First, boilers, furnaces and hot water heaters emit
8 more carbon in New York City than all uses of
9 electricity, accounting for 40 percent of citywide
10 emissions. These systems are our primary climate
11 challenge.

12 Second, heat pumps are so efficient that they
13 save carbon today, even with New York City's dirty
14 electricity grid. Third, research well released in
15 December shows our is ready . We have room to grow
16 building electrification now. And fourth, the
17 additional upfront cost to build all-electric in New
18 York City is small. About two percent right now for
19 multifamily buildings.

20 That's why Urban Green supports Intro. 2317 and
21 we recommend some important changes and I'm going to
22 quickly focus on two. First, we recommend phasing in
23 the requirements starting with buildings up to seven
24 stories in two years and then adding buildings with
25 eight or more stories in five years. We recommend

1
2 this approach because electrification is easier in
3 lower rise buildings and it's ready to go. Above
4 seven stories, system design becomes more complex and
5 the biggest challenge is domestic hot water systems
6 in the large residential buildings. There are
7 limited equipment options on the market today and
8 there's minimal industry experience designing and
9 installing efficient all electric hot water systems
10 to meet the needs in those buildings.

11 So, an ambitious but reasonable phase in will
12 yield a better result. Equally important, this
13 phased approach allows time for planned updates to
14 tighten the energy code. That's how we can ensure
15 the new construction is not just all electric but
16 also highly efficient, which means lower utility
17 costs and increased affordability.

18 My second point today is that electrification is
19 much more challenging for existing -

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, uh, what I'll do is
22 I'll give him a few more seconds cause I ate up some
23 of his time. So, please carry on briefly Chris.

24 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Thank you very much Chair. For
25 major renovations to be included, the law - we

2 recommend that the law have a clearly defined and
3 high threshold where renovations represents similar
4 electrification opportunities to new construction.

5 And if major renovations are not included, we
6 urge consideration of how city government can lead by
7 example with an electrification requirement for major
8 renovations of city owned property.

9 In our written testimony, we also recommend
10 lowering the Co2 emissions limit to address fuel
11 building. Adding electrification ready requirements
12 and adding more detail to make exceptions in the law
13 limited and justified.

14 Thank you very much for the opportunity to
15 comment. I'm available to answer any questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, thank you and you know
17 for sure I will uhm, you know read in detail your
18 full written testimony. That goes for all witnesses.
19 Uh, I do have a question with regard uhm, you
20 mentioned fuel blends. Can you expand upon that a
21 little bit?

22 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Certainly. So, the bill
23 currently sets a carbon emissions limit on
24 combustion. And that limit is just below the carbon
25 dioxide release from combusting natural gas. Which

2 means zero emissions fuel like hydrogen blended with
3 natural gas, even just a very, very small amount of
4 blending would push the emissions below that limit
5 and unintentionally, unlock the ability to install
6 fossil fuel equipment in a building. Because
7 technically you could combust blended fuel in that
8 equipment and not exceed the emissions limit.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And you are — and you favor
10 that or you don't favor that?

11 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Uh, I think NRDC is going to
12 speak more directly to that.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

14 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: But we are in favor of being
15 cautious because there are a lot of unanswered
16 questions about renewable fuels or blended fuels and
17 we think that taking that step should be very — be
18 done with eyes wide open. And right now, it's sort
19 of an — from our view, an unintended consequence of
20 the current structure.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, but you know something
22 meets the standard or it doesn't, right? And so, if
23 we're doing this via — and the reason we're doing it
24 via standard because people essentially have a right
25 to hook up to a gas. You know because that's a power

2 given to people from the state, so you know we're
3 doing this tricky BTU standard that we're you know
4 all out to do. And uhm, so, would you propose that
5 there be some study of that or you know, like how
6 would we handle that in your opinion?

7 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Absolutely, I think it's a very
8 important issue to look at going forward. Uhm, our
9 perspective right now is that we shouldn't open that
10 door until it is better examined and we're certain
11 that that's a direction we want to go for new
12 construction, in terms of enabling fossil fuel
13 equipment.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, uh, uh, to be
15 continued and I know you said that NRDC is going to
16 talk about that right?

17 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Absolutely.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, so uhm, uh, thank you
19 Chris. Samara, are there any other you know Council
20 Members that wish to ask Chris a question?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see any hands raised.

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, well, let's call our
23 next witness.

24

25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Well, the next witness is
3 uhm, Dale Bryk unless she doesn't want to testify
4 now.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: I'm sorry, Council Member
6 Ampry-Samuels has a question.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, okay. Okay, Council
8 Member Ampry-Samuels has a question.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUELS: I think it's a
10 placement of my hand in my picture box. But just
11 real quick, everything that you just stated Chris, is
12 that inside of your testimony along with the
13 recommendations that were made?

14 CHRIS HALFNIGHT: Yes, it is very much so. It's
15 expanded in the testimony.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Okay, alright,
17 thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Council Member.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Alright, now Dale Bryk.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 DALE BRYK: Thank you so much and apologies for
22 that. Hi, I'm Dale Bryk, thank you so much Chair and
23 Committee for the opportunity, speaking on behalf of
24 Regional Plan Association. RPA is an independent
25 organization that does research and analysis to

2 inform good public policies such as the policy you're
3 developing right here.

4 So, our goal as I think you've heard from many
5 already and hopefully from everyone here is that we
6 have to be ambitious. We have to meet our climate
7 goals. We have to be pragmatic or it's not going to
8 work and we have to center equity and make sure that
9 we're making sure low income and affordable housing
10 is at the front of the line, not the back as we
11 decarbonize our building sector.

12 And we endorse all of the uhm, the adjustments
13 that Chris just went through and you'll see the
14 details on that in all of our testimony as we hand it
15 in and we think that with those changes, this bill is
16 going to deliver on those goals that I just mentioned
17 being ambitious pragmatic and equitable.

18 I want to just touch on some of the context here
19 because I think it relates to the questions including
20 the one you were just discussing. And that is the
21 State Law that the Assembly Member and others have
22 mentioned. We have climate legislation at the state
23 level that requires that the electric grid is cleaned
24 up. That we get to 70 percent renewables and 100
25 percent carbon free electricity. And we will ensure

1 that that electricity is there and available to serve
2 the heating needs of buildings in the city and
3 throughout the state.

4
5 So, there's been a lot of - I've heard a lot of
6 push back in conversations from stakeholders that we
7 should wait until we finish decarbonizing the
8 electric sector before we even really take bold
9 action on buildings and we absolutely cannot do that.
10 If we do that, we will then have to retrofit all the
11 buildings later. We will have all these costs and a
12 continued expanded gas distribution system and those
13 will be stranded assets that customers will have to
14 pay for. So, we feel very strongly that we need to
15 do in tandem the building sector -

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 DALE BRYK: And the tower sector. Thanks very
18 much.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Dale.
20 Always a pleasure to see you. Uh, you know we'll be
21 continuing our conversation as we go forward. I'll
22 ask Samara if anyone has questions for Dale and then
23 if not, we'll move forward.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see any hands up at
25 the present time.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Dale and if you
3 can call our next witness, please?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Donna De
5 Costanzo from NRDC.

6 DONNA DE COSTANZO: I think I'm unmuted. Okay,
7 good afternoon Chair Gennaro, Council Member Ampry-
8 Samuels and members of the Environmental Protection
9 Committee. My name is Donna De Costanzo and I am
10 Eastern Regional Director for the Climate & Clean
11 Energy Program at the NRDC. An environmental
12 organization that has been advocating for clean
13 energy policies and programs in New York for more
14 than 50 years. And we really want to thank the
15 Council for its leadership here, and especially thank
16 Chair Gennaro for his years of dedication and
17 longstanding legacy on these issues.

18 Efficient electrification of building systems is
19 the best, cheapest way to deliver the health climate
20 and jobs benefits of the net zero green energy
21 economy to all New Yorkers but we need to do this in
22 a way that is as ambitious as feasible. Prioritizes
23 disadvantaged communities and improves affordability.
24 NRDC strongly supports Intro. 2317 and moving it
25 forward as soon as possible and supports the

1
2 recommendations of Urban Green Council as well as
3 detailed earlier.

4 To reach the goal of equitably decarbonizing New
5 York City's building sector, we'd like to highlight
6 just a few important points. So, first new buildings
7 are of course easiest and cheapest to make all
8 electric and highly efficient. We shouldn't be
9 putting dirty fossil fueled systems that last decades
10 into our new buildings. The more gas infrastructure
11 we build now, the longer all gas customers will be
12 saddled with the expense of stranded assets. And I
13 just want to highlight the importance of continuing
14 to prioritize energy efficiency in addition to
15 electrification. It saves people money on their
16 utility bills, increases grid resilience and makes it
17 easier and cheaper to meet additional power needs and
18 meet our renewables targets.

19 Now, going to low carbon fuels, which was
20 mentioned earlier. So called renewable natural gas
21 or biomethane, which has been put forth as a building
22 decarbonization solution, various contacts is a dead
23 end solution for buildings. There isn't enough of it
24 now or expected for the future. It's too expensive
25 and we need to use what little there is sparingly and

2 strategically, for hard to electrify sectors, not
3 buildings. In addition, most importantly, it also
4 produces the exact same toxic air pollution as fossil
5 gas.

6 Similarly, boosterism for green hydrogen in
7 buildings is diverting attention -

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 DONNA DE COSTANZO: From electrification. We
10 need all new pipes to distribute it and new equipment
11 to burn it and it's also a risky solution to
12 decarbonize buildings relative to prove it and
13 readily available high efficiency electric heat
14 pumps.

15 So, happy to provide additional information on
16 these points specifically on these issues and just
17 really appreciate the opportunity to testify today.
18 And look forward to working with the Council to
19 advance this policy.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Donna. I gave
21 you a couple more seconds because you served for many
22 years in the Council, as my counsel you know to the
23 Committee on Environmental Protection. You serve
24 with great distinction and you've gone on to you know
25 to become a you know national leader on environmental

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2 issues with NRDC. I'm very grateful you know to see
3 you and to have the benefit of your views and for all
4 of the you know interaction that's gone on between
5 you and you know my staff and the staff at that the
6 Council. So, a privilege to be here with you today.
7 I don't have any questions because we're going to
8 talk you know down the road.

9 Samara, any questions for our Counsel alumna,
10 right? Did I say that right alumna or whatever? Our
11 Counsel Donna, anyone have a question for her?

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see any hands raised.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, so with that, we'll
14 thank Donna once again and I look forward to speaking
15 with her and call our next witness.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Samantha
17 Wilt from NRDC.

18 SAMANTHA WILT: So, sorry Chair and members.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Samantha Wilt?

21 SAMANTHA WILT: I'm so sorry Samara, Donna
22 testified. We just didn't know who was going to be
23 available. So, I proceed my time. Thanks.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh okay, thank you
25 Samantha.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, you're proceeding your
3 time. The next witness is Carlos Castell Croke from
4 the New York League of Conversation Voters.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

6 CARLOS CASTELL CROKE: Hi, good afternoon. Hi,
7 my name is Carlos Castell Croke, I am the Associate
8 for New York City Programs at the New York League of
9 Conservation Voters. I'd like to thank Chair Gennaro
10 and Council Member Ampry-Samuel for the opportunity
11 to testify today.

12 Buildings are the number one source of emissions
13 in New York City, which is why building emissions
14 have been such an important policy issue over the
15 past decade. However, we have only seen building
16 emissions decrease 18 percent from the year 2005 to
17 2019, meaning that we are not on pace to meet any of
18 our citywide emission reduction goals. New York City
19 must implement ambitious legislation and programs to
20 fight climate change, and a bill like Intro. 2317
21 will help us get there by requiring a phase out of
22 the use of fossil fuels.

23 This legislation is important because building
24 electrification will not only reduce emissions and
25 fight climate change directly, but will also create

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2 tens of thousands of clean, green jobs. An
3 overwhelming majority of clean energy jobs in New
4 York are in the building sector, mostly due to
5 policies and programs like this that focus on clean
6 electricity and energy efficiency. We can rapidly
7 increase the number of green jobs with policies that
8 scale efficiency and electrification. Building
9 electrification will also let us utilize local
10 renewables for fuel and keep our energy dollars in
11 New York State's economy.

12 However, building electrification will not be an
13 easy task. It will require thoughtful and pragmatic
14 policy that considers multiple different variables
15 including the rate of technological advancement and
16 lead times needed to implement a new way to build
17 buildings. Therefore we agree with our colleagues at
18 Urban Green Council and RDC and RPA with the
19 following list of recommendations for Intro. 2317.
20 Which I am not going to read but Chris said them all.

21 We also support the passage of Intro.'s 2091 and
22 2196 to help us study the feasibility of electrifying
23 existing buildings in order to further decarbonize
24 and to study the health impacts of gas stoves so we
25 can fully understand how important electrification

2 may be not only to climate change but to public
3 health. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Carlos.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Carlos.
6 Are there any questions for Carlos?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I'm not seeing any hands up.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, well, let me thank
9 Carlos and the League of Conservation Voters. I have
10 a you know long standing relationship with that good
11 organization. And then actually we have people kind
12 of broken up into panels and so, that kind of
13 concludes our first panel and uh, Samara - and so,
14 the next four witnesses would constitute the next
15 panel so to speak. I don't want to read out all
16 their names but Samara will take care of that. But
17 with that said, I yield to Samara who will call the
18 first witness of the next panel which consists of
19 four witnesses.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, so the next witness is
21 Santos Rodriguez from the Building and Construction
22 Trades Council of Greater New York.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

24 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much Chair.
25 Thank you Council Members. Good afternoon, I am

2 Santos Rodriguez, I am here to testify on behalf of
3 Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and
4 Construction Trades Council of Greater New York and
5 vicinity in opposition to Intro. 2317.

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, uh, uh, Santos, okay, I
7 just wanted to make sure the clock was started. It
8 just started. Please continue.

9 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: Okay, the Building and
10 Construction Trades Council is an organization of
11 local building and construction trades unions that
12 are affiliated with 15 international unions in the
13 North America Building Trades Union. Our local union
14 affiliates represent approximately 100,000
15 construction workers. The Building Trades mission is
16 to raise the standard of living for all workers to
17 advocate for safe work conditions and to collect the
18 advanced working conditions for our affiliates as
19 well as all workers in New York City.

20 We agree that climate change is real and that we
21 must act to reduce carbon emissions. However, we
22 must pay attention to details to ensure that we are
23 acting prudently and not just acting so that we can
24 make headlines. We need a policy that will
25 successfully transition us to renewable power

1
2 economy. Intro. 2317 will not successfully
3 accomplish its intended goals in our city under the
4 timeline proposed in the bill. Pardon the phrase,
5 but you can't simply flip a switch.

6 This transition simply won't happen overnight
7 just because we want to. We are opposing Intro. 2317
8 because the existing buildings that would be impacted
9 by Intro. 2317 are not designed to convert to high
10 performance electric systems. Additionally, high
11 performance electric power systems are not fully
12 proven in large buildings. Aside from difficulties,
13 this bill imposes on buildings operations. It should
14 also be noted that electric power grid in our city is
15 already stretched and stressed. Our city is no
16 stranger to power outages and such an occurrence
17 would have an even greater impact in electric
18 buildings and a multi-day power outage would render
19 those residents uninhabitable.

20 Similarly, it does not appear that anyone has
21 considered -

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

23 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: The policy will have on the
24 cost.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, uh, please finish your
3 sentence Santos.

4 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Will have a cost
5 on electricity. This bill will impose significant
6 cost increase on the residents of an all-electric
7 building. For this reason, it must be prudent that
8 we're charting the cost of our future. We need
9 bigger bridges to get from where we are to where we
10 want to be. We need a just transition. We oppose
11 2317 because it is bad policy.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you, thank you and
14 also, I've been - thank you Santos. I've been
15 notified by central staff that the best way to
16 proceed regarding questioning would be to wait for
17 all of the members of the panel to testify and then
18 we can visit the panel with questions. This came in
19 Samara from uh, yeah, it came in from central staff
20 to me.

21 So, why don't we follow that protocol. Let me
22 just - I'm also you know central staff is feeding me
23 information. Uhm, I think I've just been texted that
24 Council Member Ulrich is here as well. I hope that
25 is the case. I'm happy to recognize him and uh, so

2 we will - I'll do what I'm told and I'll follow the
3 protocol of having the four witnesses from this panel
4 each give their statements and then uh, you know
5 Council Members can question uhm, whomever they wish
6 in this four person panel and we'll keep that
7 protocol for successive panels.

8 Uhm, this is coming right from staff to me
9 Samara, so I guess we're going to do that, okay?

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: We're figuring this as we
12 go along. We're one happy bunch of people trying to
13 figure it out. And so, I thank you Santos and then
14 we'll have the three other witnesses from this panel
15 and once we get to the end of the panel, we'll open
16 up the panel for a question from members. Thank you
17 Samara.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, the next witness is
19 Charlie Samboy from the Building Congress.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 CHARLIE SAMBOY: Good afternoon Chair Gennaro.
22 We have a much larger submission, which we will
23 submit online for your reading. To be brief, we
24 support the intent of the bill to enhance the air
25 quality that we breathe. However, we do not believe

2 that this bill has been written in the manner that
3 explicitly accomplishes that objective and could have
4 tremendous consequences on our building industry.

5 First, this Intro. seems to ignore the status and
6 complexity of bringing the entire energy grid onto a
7 source that is much cleaner than fossil fuels. Much
8 of New York City currently relies on burning of
9 fossil fuels and requiring that new or modified
10 buildings convert to electric in the timeline that
11 the bill calls for. Simply, will divert the burning
12 of fossil fuels further upstream. Early this year,
13 the governor announced two projects that will bring
14 18 million megawatts of energy down to New York.
15 However, those projects are not slated to come online
16 until 2025 and 2027 for each of those.

17 Secondly, the bill may have unintended
18 consequences given the broad application to new
19 buildings and existing buildings that may go under –
20 that may undergo renovations. Without an appropriate
21 phase in area for different building types and sizes,
22 we think the existing energy grid will be taxed and
23 will not provide for readily available technologies
24 or cost effective methods to be implemented. We
25 believe a sound approach would be mandating for

2 smaller, single or multifamily buildings of a certain
3 size and then scaling that to much larger and complex
4 buildings over time.

5 Lastly, we support a greener city. We support
6 resiliency efforts; however, we continue to believe
7 that this bill as written does not provide us with
8 enough direction to be able to accomplish its stated
9 goals.

10 Again, we will submit testimony for your reading
11 at a later point and time.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Mr. Samboy.
13 Please stay on until the end of the panel and we will
14 come back for questions if anybody has any for you.
15 Samara, next up.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Philip
17 Skalaski from Durst Organization and the New York
18 Energy Consumers Council.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

20 PHILIP SKOLASKI: Hi, thank you Chair and
21 Committee Members. I am Phil Skalaski, I'm the
22 Senior Vice President of Engineering and Energy
23 Services at the Durst Organization and the Co-
24 President of New York Energy Consumers Council.

2 I'm supportive of the bill; however, I believe
3 that significant changes are needed. Local Law 3217
4 should provide for hybrid heating options and an
5 exemption for cooking gas in residential units. Heat
6 pumps can keep buildings reliably only at milder
7 outdoor air temperatures above 32 degrees Fahrenheit
8 in modestly humid weather.

9 When paired with natural gas condensing boiler
10 systems, which can provide efficient heating at low
11 outdoor air temperatures, a hybridized heating system
12 would result in a more favorable solution that is
13 economical, reliable and sustainable. A limited use
14 of backup boilers would not only add significant
15 amounts of greenhouse gas - I'm sorry, would not add
16 significant amounts of greenhouse gas and would
17 reduce pressure on the electric grid during winter
18 peaks.

19 It would also allow for important redundancy for
20 providing heat in the case of electrical outages. We
21 believe market drivers including Local Law 97
22 penalties will serve to curb the use of natural gas
23 and we are open to exploring how usage limits can be
24 set and regulated. There should also be an exemption
25 for cooking gas in apartments for the following four

2 reasons: Carbon impact of gas cooking is minimal.
3 Very little energy is involved in cooking with gas
4 and until the grid becomes greener, electric cooking
5 will increase carbon. And four, the electric cooking
6 systems available today are lacking and will further
7 increase carbon.

8 Based on case study of 560,000 gross square foot
9 multifamily residential building, the carbon impact
10 of gas cooking is minimal at only 40 tons per year,
11 which equates to approximately seven and a half
12 percent of the buildings total energy usage.
13 Electrifying cooking will result in an additional 24
14 tons of carbon per year. This increase would remain
15 a carbon penalty until the grid becomes 40 percent
16 cleaner than 2024 -

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

18 PHILIP SKOLASKI: Carbon coefficients. Uh, just
19 real quick. The electric cooking systems are not the
20 same as heat pumps. They use resistance electric
21 heating and they don't have the same efficiencies as
22 heat pumps. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you Mr.
24 Skalaski. Uhm, please stay on for questions.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Demos
3 Demopoulous.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Demopoulous.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Demopoulous.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

7 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: Thank you very much. You did
8 very well. Uh, I want to thank you and good
9 afternoon Chairman Gennaro, Committee Members,
10 Council Members, and Assembly Members and everyone
11 else in the audience.

12 I'm here to speak in opposition to the bill as
13 written Intro. 2317. My name is Demos Demopoulous,
14 I'm Secretary Treasurer and Executive Officer of
15 Teamsters Local 553 and Secretary Treasurer of
16 Teamsters Joint Council 16. Representing 120,000
17 Teamsters throughout the City of New York.

18 Intro. 2317 as it stands now and if passed, will
19 have a harmful effect on working families and in
20 industry that is made up mostly of small or medium
21 sized family owned businesses. Who have been serving
22 customers in the five boroughs and providing good
23 union jobs with excellent pay, pension and medical
24 benefits for their families.

2 Since 2012, the industry has been working hard to
3 reengineer its fuel and make heating oil cleaner by
4 blending biodiesel, which is a drop in fuel that can
5 replace conventional heating fuel without expensive
6 changes to customers heating systems.

7 We have helped the industry and any environment
8 by lobbying in the past to lower the sulfur content
9 in heating oil. And now, with blending of biodiesel
10 will further the goal of using a cleaner fuel and
11 protect the environment.

12 We urge you to consider this and not pass this
13 Intro. 2317 legislation and protect Teamster families
14 and I just want to add because Chairman Gennaro may
15 mention, back in 2008, we were instrumental in
16 working with him to lower the sulfur content not only
17 at the city level but also at the state level and we
18 achieved that along with the industry. So, thank you
19 for that Chairman Gennaro.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Demos.
21 Yeah, I remember when we reduced the sulfur and you
22 know number four fuel and it was uhm and all the work
23 we've done together on biofuels. It's been great and
24 yeah, and so uh, you know what? Samara, I've got a
25 question, so I'm going to address my question to Mr.

2 Skalaski of the Durst organization. Uhm, you know,
3 Philip, you there? I want to make sure Philip is
4 there.

5 PHILIP SKALASKI: I'm here, yup.

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, we've heard testimony
7 you know earlier in the hearing about the efficiency
8 of like the new breed of you know heat pumps so to
9 speak. We heard Ben Furnas and the Mayor's office of
10 somebody you know talk about them being you know
11 working and you know in below zero temperatures and
12 you, you know indicated in your testimony that below
13 32 degrees, uhm, there's a real efficiency drop off.
14 If you could speak to that.

15 PHILIP SKALASKI: Sure. So, heat pumps are
16 essentially using outside air to pull the heat out of
17 the air and push it into the building right, so -

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Right, yeah, so what you
19 have - it's what you have, so if you have zero degree
20 air, you're trying to take heat out of zero degree
21 air. You know like there is heat in the air above
22 absolute zero of course but it just becomes harder to
23 get at. I think that's your point, right?

24 PHILIP SKALASKI: It becomes a lot harder and if
25 you look at the efficiency curves of heat pumps, as

2 you get lower temperatures in humid climates, you
3 start freezing the outside condenser. And then the
4 outside condenser has to be defrosted and it uses a
5 defrost method to actually defrost that which uses
6 even more energy.

7 So, your efficiency numbers go way down when you
8 get to very cold outdoor air temperatures. Uhm, so
9 again, very high efficiency above certain outdoor
10 temperatures but as you get colder, yes, they still
11 work. They do work below zero. They are capable of
12 working but they get very inefficient at that point.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Let me ask you this, you
14 know, you're with the Durst Organization, I don't
15 know how far flung the you know the Durst
16 Organization has buildings and what cities they have
17 them in or whatever but you know, perhaps you're
18 aware or maybe you have knowledge of you know other
19 cities that have you know our climate pretty much.
20 And are these systems being installed in large
21 quantities in the cities that you know roughly have
22 you know New York City's temperatures? I'm not
23 talking about Chicago that's really cold. I'm not
24 talking about you know Washington DC which is a
25 little warmer but places that are about uh, you know

1
2 our - our, the temperatures that we have in the
3 winter here in New York. There are presumably other
4 cities where you may know whether or not there is a
5 deployment of you know heat pumps.

6 PHILIP SKALASKI: I can't speak to buildings
7 outside of the Durst Organization. We're more
8 tristate area and New York City centric.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Right.

10 PHILIP SKALASKI: But that said, yes, heat pumps
11 are much easier to deploy in southern you know,
12 southern areas less you know, where we don't get into
13 you know multiple freezing days at a time below 32
14 degrees. It does get deployed but uhm, yeah, I can't
15 speak for the other climates but again, the COPs of
16 heat pumps go way down when you get below a certain
17 temperature. You need to look at the efficiency
18 curves of these issues and these units and until the
19 grid is completely green, it doesn't make sense right
20 now in some cases.

21 I'm not saying on you know warmer temperatures
22 and that's why I'm looking at a hybridized option.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Gennaro, Ampry-Samuels
25 has a question.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh sure, yeah.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Ampry-Samuels
4 has a question.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, I mean I'm just
6 finishing up my questions and then we'll get to her,
7 okay.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, okay, so let me just
10 kind of finish up here. Uh, and also Mr. Skalaski,
11 you're - you know you mentioned a lot about uh, uh,
12 you know cooking systems and like a tonnage of carbon
13 that goes up. You know, this is all in your written
14 testimony I would presume?

15 PHILIP SKALASKI: It is, yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, so we'll be taking a
17 close look at that. Also, you know because you're in
18 the industry, you deal with a lot of entities you
19 know, trade associations and what not. Are you
20 familiar with any trade association that represents
21 heat pumps? Is there a trade association that
22 represents that industry? I'm kind of wondering why
23 they're not here. I mean, if I were them, I would be
24 here.

2 PHILIP SKALASKI: There are many manufacturers
3 out there that represent heat pumps. There are - uh,
4 I don't know about trade associations.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: There is a trade association
6 and they're here.

7 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh, they're here. Okay,
8 very good. Okay, so I look forward to that and then
9 I have my final - and Santos had to go but I do have
10 a question for uh, Demos. Uhm, Demos, it is my
11 understanding you know based on conversations with
12 staff that uhm, that you know you testified against
13 the bill upright. It's my understanding by talking
14 with the Mayor's Office and talking with staff that
15 uh, that bioheat blends you know greater than you
16 know 20 percent. Greater than B20, you know B30
17 would meet the current standard in the bill and if we
18 were to have uhm, you know bioheat because it does at
19 higher blends B20, B30 you know meet the standard.
20 You know what would that do to your - you know if
21 that were the case, you know what would that do to
22 your perception of this bill if bioheat were to be
23 included?

24 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: As far as we're concerned, it
25 would be a great improvement.

1 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

2 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: Mr. Chairman, also I think
3 someone earlier; forgive me, I forgot his name,
4 testified to some degree that if biofuel was
5 introduced, it would meet the requirements if I'm not
6 mistaken.
7

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You know certainly one of
9 the things that uhm, you know is going to be a you
10 know a debate that you know ranges between now and
11 when we come to closure on this, is you know what we
12 do with fuels like bioheat and you know so called
13 sustainable natural gas and so, you know that is
14 going to be a topic for sure. But uhm, I just want
15 to let you know that with bioheat, we've come a long
16 way with New York City on bioheat and uhm, we will
17 continue that discussion.

18 And with that Samara -

19 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: May I add one more thing?

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Sure.

21 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: Okay, so what was just
22 discussed about the heat pump not being efficient
23 enough in colder temperatures, you may recall that
24 when gas interruptible were put into a lot of the
25 buildings. Where the building was supplied with heat

1
2 and hot water by gas but in a certain temperature,
3 the oil was kicked in because the gas was unable to
4 supply the heat and hot water needed in the lower
5 temperatures.

6 So, I think when the gentleman was speaking about
7 that, was pretty much the same idea.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

9 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: So, temperatures and when
10 that happened a few winters back, where it got
11 severely cold for a stretch of time, the oil
12 companies were unable to make the deliveries to get
13 to the buildings in time because a lot of the Super's
14 didn't rely on having the oil tank full in case there
15 was severe weather. They let them go down because
16 they were just relying on the gas but when they
17 needed the oil, they turned the switch on and it
18 wasn't there.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Right.

20 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: So, everybody was calling at
21 once, so the industry handled it. We got the job
22 done but if we're in a severe stretch of cold
23 weather, it could be a problem for many tenants.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Demos, I
25 appreciate that.

2 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And I want to thank all the
4 members of this panel. Samara, so am I going to
5 recognize Council Member Ampry-Samuels? Should I do
6 that now?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, please recognize Council
8 Member Ampry-Samuels.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Council Member Ampry-
10 Samuels, thank you for your patience. Uh, the floor
11 is yours.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUELS: Thank you. At
14 this point, my sole is burning right now, right? And
15 I just want to go just, just - Demos, you just said
16 you know you talked about folks you know with heat
17 and you know being cold and you know I represent the
18 highest concentration in the public housing in north
19 America and my residents are always cold, right?

20 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: And so, if we're
22 having this conversation, I'm trying to figure out -
23 I keep hearing a no and like opposition to the bill
24 and it's easy to say no, right? The hard part is
25 coming up with how do we get to a yes? What are the

2 solutions that are accurate and factual and I'm just
3 saying that because I represent a district right now
4 and if you heard in my open testimony, you know we're
5 suffering here, we're dying. And so, to just talk
6 about jobs being you know like the detrimental impact
7 or unintended consequences related to jobs. I'm
8 talking about, you know how do I represent
9 communities that are dying because of unintended
10 consequences or intended consequences of diesel buses
11 being sent to Brownsville in East New York, right?
12 We don't have a good history in this city of showing
13 up for people that don't have a true voice.

14 And so, with my bill, I am trying to hear and
15 listen for suggestions on how do we get to a yes,
16 right? That's what I'm looking for. Not the you
17 know and thank you Santos you know for your testimony
18 but you know I heard opposition. I heard you know
19 climate change is real but you know the transition is
20 off, the timeline is off. Okay but what part of the
21 bill and the transition would make sense for you to
22 agree to it, right?

23 So, that's where I'm coming from with this
24 conversation and then, you know Chair, I again
25 appreciate the hearing itself but I would love to see

2 a balance in who's testifying because that's also
3 helpful in being able to kind of go back and forth in
4 having a discussion as to one person said this and
5 well, this is my suggestion to what that person just
6 said. It's just helpful to have that type of
7 dialogue.

8 And one last thing. Heat pumps work in New York
9 City. I'm working with organizations that are
10 testifying today right. They work in New York City.
11 They're working on heat pumps across the State of New
12 York. We're having conversations about the pumps
13 right here in Brownsville with the Nehemiah Homes and
14 so to say that they are not and that they don't work
15 is just inaccurate.

16 And so, I'm going to just end that there because
17 there was a lot that was said with this panel and
18 again, it just kicked up my blood and uhm, I just
19 want to have a real conversation about how do we get
20 to a yes?

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I'm going to jump in first
22 Demos. Uh, uh, first of all Council Member, we went
23 through great lengths with staff to make sure that
24 there were - and I'm not going to worry about the
25 clock right now. That there were you know that there

1
 2 were you know panels in favor and panels that either
 3 had issues or were in opposition and this is part of
 4 the back and forth. And you'll see that as we roll
 5 through the hearing, uhm, that's the approach that
 6 we're taking. We have people that are you know in
 7 strongly support of. People who are against and
 8 people who have issues where if it were tweaked, it
 9 would be better. And I'm just trying to you know
 10 listen to information. I went back to Demos and
 11 said, hey, you know like, you were at a no and if bio
 12 was part of the equation, where would you be? He
 13 said that would be better.

14 And so, this is I think part of the you know,
 15 dynamic that we're trying to do here. You know,
 16 people have their opinions.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUELS: That was the point
 18 of my statement right now. Everyone has their
 19 opinions, so I just wanted to - I wanted to put it
 20 into context because you know settle with something
 21 but I wanted to put it in context you know where I'm
 22 coming from to just put that out there, so that
 23 hopefully the next panel - again, this is not my
 24 Committee but just hoping that the next panel will
 25 have a balance, so that we're doing this -

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, well, I mean, yeah,
3 no, I mean, what we do is we normally panel like-
4 minded you know people who sort of like coming from
5 the same orbit. And so, we have like - so, the first
6 panel was very pro. You know this panel was not so
7 pro let us say and then like the next panel, they're
8 going to knock your socks off, trust me. You know
9 what I mean?

10 And so, you're going to be feeling great about
11 yourself.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I'm here for all.
13 I'm here for it all.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I just wanted to
16 jump in there.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, no, this is why, this
18 is why everyone you know likes working with you. You
19 know and so, you know you just come right out with it
20 and you know it's just it's wide open throttle. And
21 so, that's great and I'll give Demos the last word on
22 this and then we can proceed to the next panel, which
23 you're going to love Council Member.

24 DEMOS DEMOPOULOUS: Yeah. Listen Chairman again,
25 I want to thank you because yes, the introduction of

1
2 the - or the more of use of biodiesel fuel will be
3 cleaner. Will be requirements and as far as the
4 buses go with diesel fuel, exhaust, that's a
5 maintenance issue.

6 A lot of these companies and maybe even the city
7 itself, don't maintain the buses, these lenses as
8 much as they should that would eliminate all that
9 smoking and all that diesel. There's all kinds of
10 things they could do but certainly besides
11 maintenance, the burning of the cleaner fuel will
12 also do it and I guarantee you that.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, thank you, thank you.
14 Okay, I think we're good to move onto the next panel.
15 Is that okay Council Member, are we good?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: It's your show.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: No, I'm just you know,
18 you're the sponsor. I want to work with you. I'm
19 like your client, you know what I mean. I'm like -
20 you know, I'm trying to bring all perspectives in and
21 like these people signed up. That's how it works.
22 And so, thank you very much.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Go to the next
24 panel.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, yeah, next panel.

3 Okay, Samara.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, the next panel starts
5 with Zackary Steinberg from the Real Estate Board of
6 New York and he will be followed by -

7 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait a
8 minute, wait a minute. I think you're missing the
9 fourth panel that starts with WE ACT for
10 Environmental Justice.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, sorry. The fourth panel,
12 excuse me. The fourth panel starts with Sonal Jessel
13 from WE ACT and also Annie Carforo from WE ACT and
14 then we have Lonnie Portis from WE ACT. Then we have
15 Pete Sikora and Rachel Rivera from New York
16 Communities for Change.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And you know, let me just
18 jump in for a second. Uh, for just like a point of
19 order regarding Pete and Rachel. You know I read the
20 testimony that came in from Pete and uhm, he is kind
21 of like sharing his testimony with Rachel. They're
22 kind of like doing it together. So, we're going to
23 make a little accommodation for the last two
24 witnesses on this panel. So, like the two of them
25 will have four minutes combined. They're kind of

2 teaming up on their thing. It's almost like a play.
3 They have two different you know he starts, then she
4 goes and he starts, it's all part of the same
5 testimony.

6 So, we have a total of five witnesses and the
7 last two are sort of coupled so to speak. So, Pete
8 and Rachel will be kind of – they're doing a four
9 minute thing between them, okay and I want to
10 accommodate that, okay?

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Alright.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And so, with that said, let
13 us commence.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Alright, Sonal Jessel.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts.

16 SONAL JESSEL: Thank you. Good afternoon, Chair
17 Gennaro. Thank you for the opportunity to testify
18 regarding Introduction 2317. And thank you Council
19 Member Ampry-Samuel for your championship of this
20 bill.

21 My name is Sonal, I'm the Director of Policy at
22 WE ACT for Environmental Justice. Over the past 32
23 years, WE ACT has been combating environmental racism
24 in Northern Manhattan. I am here as a co-leader of
25 the GasFreeNYC Coalition. We are championing

2 Introduction 2317 because we believe it is important
3 to prevent future indoor and outdoor pollution that
4 hurts our health.

5 Building pollution contributes greatly to poor
6 air quality in New York City. It is communities of
7 color that have older, under maintained buildings
8 that are energy inefficient, leading to more exposure
9 to air pollutants that hurt our health. Higher rates
10 of buildings in communities of color and importantly,
11 public schools are even still using dirty fuel oil.

12 That must stop immediately. Introduction 2317
13 focuses mainly on limiting natural gas emissions. The
14 use of natural gas emits dangerous air pollutants
15 such as NOX, that directly leads to respiratory and
16 cardiovascular diseases. A 2020 report found that
17 children are at the increased risk of illness from
18 gas stove pollution and their increased risk is at 42
19 percent.

20 We need to see the bill reduces emission limit to
21 25 metric tons of carbon, includes major gut
22 renovations, speeds up the timeline, and reduces
23 exemptions such as for commercial kitchens.

24 Commercial kitchens are a major source of
25

2 neighborhood air pollution, one of the top source in
3 New York City.

4 I want to underscore that reducing greenhouse gas
5 emissions does not mean losing sight of the other co-
6 pollutants that consistently plague communities
7 across the city. So far, no testimonies have even
8 touched on local air quality as a motivation for the
9 bill. The comments promoting hydrogen blending,
10 biofuels, and stating gas stoves are zero emissions
11 is doing just that. NOX pollution from natural gas,
12 from stoves as well as SO2, PM2.5, and other
13 pollutants from energy sources, have direct
14 respiratory impacts and that needs to be centralized.

15 Additionally, we need to see leadership from our
16 city. City-owned buildings should be first in line
17 for decarbonizing and electrifying. We must not see
18 big buildings such as public schools, get new gas
19 infrastructure, starting now. They must not be
20 exempted in this bill and even the biggest schools
21 right now in New York City are getting new gas
22 infrastructure and they are all in communities of
23 color. And that is directly related to local air
24 pollution and health impacts.

2 I'd also like to quickly rebut some of the points
3 by public testimonials stating that the grid isn't
4 ready and that heat pump technology doesn't work in
5 New York City and point to the Mayor's Office
6 statements at the beginning that say exactly the
7 opposite. So, thank you very much for your time.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much. I
9 appreciate your testimony and like we did with
10 previous panels; we'll wait for these; we'll wait for
11 the end of this panel and then we'll revisit the
12 entire panel with questions. Thank you very much and
13 uh, Samara, please call the next witness on this
14 panel. Samara.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Annie
16 Carforo from WE ACT for Environmental Justice.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

18 ANNIE CARFORO: Good afternoon Chairman Gennaro.
19 Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My
20 name is Annie Carforo and I'm the Climate Justice
21 Organizer at WE ACT for Environmental Justice. And
22 I'm going to continue our testimony as part of the
23 Gas Free NYC Coalition in support of Introduction
24 2317. Which as someone mentioned will address local
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air pollution that disproportionately harms communities of color.

A 2021 study confirmed that racial ethnic minorities in the United States are exposed to higher PM2.5 pollution associated with residential gas combustion. And in certain instances facing 32 percent higher exposure. This has led to disparate health outcomes for communities of color which experience higher rates of respiratory diseases like asthma. We must improve air quality in more vulnerable communities, especially as summer months continue to break record highs and trigger dangerous respiratory responses that lead to hospitalization and premature death. There's an opportunity here to ensure that neighborhoods like Inwood, Jerome Avenue, East New York, East Harlem, that are hit first and worst by air pollution and climate change. See development that is all electric and improves the air quality for the residents who call these places home.

In the absence of global and national leadership, after the COP 26 climate summit. Local governments with global influence like New York City can lead by example for cities around the world. That is why we

2 must pass Intro. 2317 and accelerate its
3 implementation timeline to one year after enactment.

4 A delayed timeline will lock in decades of new
5 fossil fuel infrastructure which we simply cannot
6 afford. In order to further strengthen Intro. 2317,
7 we must also lower the threshold of the air pollution
8 limit and the bill from 50 kilograms of Co2 per BTU
9 to 25 kilograms. This will prevent the use of
10 biomethane and hydrogen blends and eliminate any
11 possible loopholes in the law. We must also include
12 a clear definition for gut renovations.

13 Additional recommendations put forth by the Gas
14 Free NYC Coalition will be included in my submitted
15 written testimony, along with other partner
16 organizations. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much. Thank
18 you very much and we'll come back for questions.

19 Samara.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Lonnie
21 Portis from WE ACT for Environmental Justice.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 LONNIE PORTIS: Hi, I first want to thank Chair
24 Gennaro for his leadership and dedication to
25 electrifying New York City school buses and now for

2 the opportunity to testify on the matter of building
3 electrification.

4 I am Lonnie Portis, the Environmental Policy and
5 Advocacy Coordinator at WE ACT and routinely analyze
6 New York City policies and programs for equity and
7 climate justice and support a group of community
8 members mobilized around environmental issues in
9 Northern Manhattan.

10 The bills being heard today Intro. 2317, Intro.
11 2091 and Intro. 2196 all move us forward in the right
12 direction, toward the equitable implementation of
13 Local Law 97 and mitigating the negative
14 environmental health hazards caused by the use of
15 fossil fuel energy. My colleagues and Gas Free NYC
16 Coalition members have already testified on the need
17 to pass 2317.

18 I want to add that the city needs an actionable
19 plan for the city's existing buildings and homes.
20 And this is why we support of Intro. 2091, mandating
21 a comprehensive and holistic study of building
22 electrification. The data and recommendations that
23 would come from the study will be essential in
24 accelerating the equitable implementation of Local
25

1
2 Law 97 with the emission reduction goals of 80
3 percent by 2050.

4 We do recommend that the scope of this be widened
5 to include opportunities for and pathways to
6 equitable electrification. Moreover, Intro. 2196's
7 study of the negative health impacts of gas stoves
8 will acknowledge, on public record, the harms and
9 dangers associated with cooking with fossil fuels.
10 And catalyze a plan to further protect the health and
11 safety of New Yorkers. Electrifying gas appliances
12 would address the 42 percent increased risk of
13 children experiencing asthma symptoms associated with
14 gas stoves. Such indoor pollution disproportionately
15 affects communities of color and low-income
16 households with similar across the city.

17 This study needs to be broken down by race and
18 neighborhood to ensure environmental justice in
19 making recommendations. It is important to highlight
20 and recognize the importance of electrifying
21 buildings and homes but also remember that these
22 efforts will happen simultaneously with a transition
23 to clean, renewable energy production, electrical
24 grid modernization and expansion of community solar.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

2 LONNIE PORTIS: WE ACT for Environmental Justice
3 supports 2317, 2091 and 2196. Thank you again, Chair
4 Gennaro and the Environmental Protection Committee.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Lonnie, we'll
6 come back with questions. Appreciate it and we had a
7 good time with that bus thing, that was a lot of fun,
8 yeah.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Pete
10 Sikora and he is going to be sharing with Rachel
11 Rivera.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 PETE SIKORA: Thank you very much for having us.
14 My name is Pete Sikora, I'm with New York -

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I just want to make sure
16 for the Sergeant to set the clock at four minutes
17 because Pete's going to be sharing his testimony with
18 another witness. That's as per my reading of his
19 testimony that I got last night. And so, uhm, so
20 we're going to do four minutes for you both combined,
21 okay Pete?

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes Chair.

23 PETE SIKORA: Thanks very much Chairman Gennaro
24 and thanks for holding this hearing. My name is Pete
25 Sikora, I'm with New York Communities for Change and

2 I'm with Rachel Rivera, whose also one of our member
3 leaders.

4 NYCC is part of the Gas Free NYC Campaign and we
5 are not funded by the fossil fuel industry or the
6 real estate industry unlike some of the entities that
7 you've heard from before. We are here to pass - to
8 urge you to pass Intro. 2317 before the end of the
9 year and strengthen it, so that it takes effect in
10 one year on all building types. We also urge you to
11 include gut renovations to find us all at one, which
12 is major alterations.

13 Intro. 2317 fights climate change and creates
14 clean energy jobs and there's no time to waste here
15 in the climate crisis as you've heard. The bill
16 fights both inequality and climate change at the same
17 time. New York City faces an existential threat and
18 there's no time to delay. So, we appreciate your
19 strong focus on this.

20 I want to echo the administration's testimony
21 about the real world here, which is in contrast to
22 what I saw from the industry, which is complete this
23 right here. All lies, all lies. Our testimony
24 includes links to almost 80 building -
25

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I'm going to urge you to -
3 I would urge you to focus on the veracity of your own
4 testimony.

5 PETE SIKORA: Yeah, well, we're butting what they
6 just said, which is a whole bunch of misleading,
7 outright, untrue statements. I could go through them
8 one by one but frankly, it's like playing whack em
9 all. None of it makes sense and the administration
10 laid out the practicality and affordability of this
11 legislation as well as its feasibility and we agree
12 with them. This should get done right now.

13 And Rachel Rivera's story, illustrates why that's
14 the case but before we do that because I'm a little
15 worried about technical difficulties here. I want to
16 again point out that in the real world, heat pumps
17 are working and we've supplied you with lists of
18 almost 80 building projects that are either passive
19 house or fossil free that are large. You're going to
20 hear from a lot of experts after us, including
21 Columbia University, Alloy, the Architects, Block
22 Power and on and on and on with individual experts
23 who are actually doing this work in the real world.
24 So, we urge you to follow their advice. Pass this
25 bill right now.

1
2 And now, I'll ask Rachel to speak about her
3 experience, which illustrates why this is so
4 necessary.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Pete.

6 RACHEL RIVERA: Hi, my name is Rachel Rivera. I
7 live in Brownsville. My family lost everything due
8 to Hurricane Sandy. Then, my family also lost
9 everything in Puerto Rico due to Hurricane Maria.

10 During Sandy, I was home at Bed Stuey, which was
11 in a red area, a red zone. I heard a cracking noise,
12 I went to my daughters room, took her out of the bed
13 because I got scared. As soon as I took her out of
14 the bed, my ceiling caved in. I lived on the last
15 floor, so the whole roof and my ceiling caved in onto
16 her bed. We lost everything.

17 Uh, at the time, my daughter was only six-years-
18 old. Uh, we fled into the night with nothing. We
19 were in the shelter system, which was like an
20 evacuation center for people that was victims to
21 Hurricane Sandy. Uhm, months later, Hurricane Maria
22 hit, we lost everything in Puerto Rico. The family
23 that I had living in Puerto Rico. I also lost family
24 member, a family friend because he drown. They found
25 him after the flood water was receding.

2 To this day, me and my daughter suffer PTSD from
3 the storms. When Hurricane Ida or Irene, Ida, hit
4 New York again, we suffered PTSD. My daughter now is
5 15 going on 16 and she was scared to the point that
6 she came out saying, "mommy, are we going to survive
7 this one or are we going to perish like everyone
8 else?"

9 So, I am one of the victims that lived in it and
10 I want to also thank you for passing the Local Law
11 97. I'm so sorry for my background noise. I'm
12 running outside. I have to run to my daughter's
13 school, so please excuse my background noise. But
14 again, thank you for passing the law 97.

15 Now it's time to pass this bill 2317. Again,
16 thank you and please do not waste time on passing
17 these laws because it reflects on our future on like
18 people like myself and my daughter and my kids.
19 Thank you again.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you very
21 much and uhm, and no problem about the background
22 noise. And I have some comments for the panel.
23 First, with Ms. Jessel, I thank you for you know
24 bringing out the issue of local air quality. You
25 know, I knew back in 2008 when I was passing the you

1 know New York City Climate Protection Act and
2 reducing you know Co2 in the city. There is no way
3 to reduce Co2 without reducing NOX, SOX, PM10, PM2.5,
4 carbon monoxide, you know ground level ozone. All of
5 the other so called you know criteria air pollutants.
6 It is one of the main reasons why I passed that bill
7 in the first place because by regulating Co2, it gave
8 me the ability to regulate the criteria air
9 pollutants, essentially through the back door.
10

11 And so, that is an important point that you made
12 and I do appreciate that. Ms. Carforo, your
13 testimony was very pointed and very specific about
14 language and changes that we ought to do and I think
15 you know that kind of specificity is a model for the
16 sort of testimony that we are you know looking for.

17 Lonnie, a great friend, thank you also for being
18 very specific and Pete and Rachel, I certainly
19 appreciate and admire you know your passion, your you
20 know perseverance on making sure that we you know do
21 get a good bill done before the end of the year and
22 this is why I am doing this bill completely full-time
23 now until the end of the year.

24 So, I didn't have actual questions, I just wanted
25 to make you know comments about your testimony and

2 that it is uh, uh, certainly you know much
3 appreciated and we'll continue this dialogue with WE
4 ACT and with New York Communities for Change as we go
5 down the road.

6 And with that Samara, does anyone else have any
7 questions for this panel?

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Not right now.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, uhm, if I could
10 Samara, we've been here awhile, I did a two minute
11 recess and I will be back inside of two minutes and
12 then we'll call the next panel. In the meantime, you
13 can call the names of the next panel, just to get
14 them ready and I promise to be back within 120
15 seconds in order to you know continue, okay. I just
16 need a brief recess.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. The next panel is
18 Zachary Steinberg from the Real Estate Board of New
19 York, Josephine from the American Council of
20 Engineering Companies, Sara Bayer from the Magnusson
21 Architecture and Planning, Mark Ginsberg from AIA I
22 guess. Those are the next witnesses to testify.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay Samara, I am back.
24 Thank you everybody for the recess. Sorry to impose.

2 Are we all keyed up? Samara, is the next panel ready
3 to go?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, the next panel is ready
5 to go. I called them and they were – right again,
6 Zachary Steinberg from the Real Estate Board of New
7 York, Josephine Zurica from American Council of
8 Engineering Companies, Sara Bayer from Magnusson
9 Architecture and Planning, and Mark Ginsberg from
10 AIA.

11 ZACHARY STEINBERG: Should I begin?

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Is Zachary ready to go
13 Sergeant?

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, the clock is ready to go,
15 you can begin.

16 ZACHARY STEINBERG: Thank you for the opportunity
17 to testify at today's hearing. REBNY supports the
18 goals of Intro. 2317 but believes that changes are
19 needed for the proposal to succeed. This is the case
20 because policies around building electrification and
21 the elimination of onsite fossil fuel combustion add
22 tradeoffs and raise many critical issues that need to
23 be balanced.

24 These include the ability of the electricity
25 system including generation transmission and

1
2 distribution to provide reliable low emission power
3 to buildings. Efficiently securing emissions
4 reductions and allocating costs that result in the
5 higher cost of electricity. Unfortunately, the
6 current proposal raises significant concerns on each
7 of these points. Those are explained in our written
8 testimony. We think these risks can be mitigated by
9 thoughtful improvements to the bill. These
10 improvements include the following: A phased in
11 effective date that better accounts for the cost and
12 effectiveness of efficient electric-based systems,
13 the realities of the electricity system, and the
14 city's need to grow our housing supply.

15 REBNY believes an appropriate phase in would be
16 2025 for buildings under three stories and single
17 family homes, 2027 for all buildings under ten
18 stores, and 2030 for buildings over ten stories. This
19 has numerous advantages. First, in requiring smaller
20 buildings to go first, it reflects the reality that
21 heat pump technology is already cost-competitive and
22 proven in these buildings.

23 As electric heat pump systems are less proven and
24 more costly for taller buildings, and particularly
25 for domestic hot water and shared dryers, this phase

2 in would give time to ensure product manufacturers
3 provide high quality cost competitive systems for
4 these buildings. This would help to avoid buildings
5 utilizing inefficient electric systems, like electric
6 resistance heating that would quickly overburden the
7 grid if used widely. REBNY believes that this
8 suggested timeline will allow for more efficient and
9 reliable heat pumps to become more readily available
10 for large scale buildings.

11 Second, it would align better with other aspects
12 of State and City policy, like the Energy Code and
13 Local Law 97 and it would give more time for onsite
14 storage systems, like batteries which are finally on
15 the verge of being approved to be used in buildings.

16 Finally, this phase in approach allows for
17 electrification to better align with the greening of
18 the grid, which as we talked about previously in this
19 hearing will allow for a much more holistic approach
20 to eliminating fossil fuel emissions.

21 We also would support the imposition of an
22 electric ready -

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please finish your
25 sentence.

2 ZACHARY STEINBERG: We also would support the
3 imposition of an electric ready requirement on
4 buildings constructed prior to the full effective
5 date of the law, to ensure that those built in the
6 interim could be more easily converted over to
7 electric systems. And we would encourage a focus on
8 new construction, rather than major renovations of
9 existing buildings, given the many challenges that
10 arise from trying to do this.

11 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you,
12 thank you. I appreciate your testimony Zach. Please
13 stay on and we'll do questions at the end of the
14 panel. Samara.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Josephine Zurica.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

17 JOSEPHINE ZURICA: Thank you Chair Gennaro and
18 members of the Committee. My name is Josephine
19 Zurica, I am a Principal at Dagher Engineering, and
20 Chair of ACEC New York's Energy Code Committee, on
21 whose behalf I am appearing today.

22 I'd like to start by saying that ACEC New York
23 supports the goals of Intro. 2317 but we do have
24 recommendations for improving the bill.

1
2 We're in agreement that the bill should apply to
3 new buildings; however, the intent of the bill as it
4 relates to existing buildings needs to be clearly
5 defined. It should reference an excepted definition
6 from building and/or energy codes to define the
7 applicability of the law. Depending on the
8 applicability of the bill, the level of challenges
9 and recommended timeline for application to existing
10 buildings should be revisited. We support Intro.
11 2091 as a measure to study the challenges of
12 electrifying existing buildings.

13 In addition, we propose a phase in for the bill.
14 We are concerned that the absence of a phase-in could
15 result in many buildings using electric resistance
16 heating rather than heat pumps, which would tax the
17 grid and result in an increase in short-term
18 emissions and operating costs. An appropriate phase-
19 in we believe, would be for new construction for
20 buildings three stories or less, residential two
21 years from the enactment of the bill and a later
22 date, no sooner than 2027, for all other buildings.

23 In addition, we recommend that within two years
24 of enactment, all new construction should be
25 constructed to be electrification ready. Meaning

1
2 that the building has been built in such a way that
3 the conversion to all electric can be done without
4 major changes to the building.

5 We also recommend that the city should commission
6 a study by an independent third party to evaluate
7 preparedness of the electrical transmission and
8 distribution infrastructure and whether it can
9 support electrified buildings stock increases the
10 bill will cause. The study should analyze any
11 infrastructure investments that are needed along with
12 the costs of such investments.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Josephine. Did
15 that complete your statement? I can give you one
16 more sentence, if you had one more sentence to go.

17 JOSEPHINE ZURICA: No, yup, I'm good. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, thank you. Samara.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Sara
20 Bayer from Magnusson Architecture and Planning.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

22 SARA BAYER: Thank you for allowing me to speak
23 in full support of Intro. 2317. My name is Sara
24 Bayer, I'm an Associate Principal and Director of
25 Sustainability at Magnusson Architecture and

2 Planning. We focus on affordable, supportive, and
3 senior housing in the greater New York city area.

4 We are the architects for three new buildings
5 currently in construction that are all electric, and
6 another eight all electric new buildings that are in
7 design. This represents a total of 1,500 units, for
8 both private and non-profit developers. Many of our
9 affordable and supportive housing renovations are
10 also converting their old combustion systems for
11 heating, stoves, and hot water, to heat pump and all
12 electric systems.

13 The vast majority of our recently completed
14 projects have all electric heating and cooling
15 systems. Often heat pump systems do not cost much
16 more than unhealthy and inefficient combustion
17 equipment and has a coefficient of performance many
18 times greater than fossil fuel equipment will ever
19 have because it does not generate heat, heat pumps
20 move heat around. We typically pair heat pump
21 systems with a building enclosure that is slightly
22 more energy efficient than current code, which
23 greatly reduces owners operating costs and therefore
24 from a more realistic life cycle perspective, is the
25 wiser choice economically.

2 It is important to note that the refrigerant in
3 these systems must be managed properly to ensure
4 their high global warming potential of them are not
5 inadvertently released. If we empower building
6 owners and operators with the right tools this can be
7 done.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much for
9 your statement. We certainly appreciate that. Stay
10 on for questions. Samara, next witness.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Mark
12 Ginsberg.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

14 MARK GINSBERG: Thank you for allowing me to
15 speak in strong support of Intro. 2317, banning
16 fossil fuels in new construction. My name is Mark
17 Ginsberg, FAIA, an Architect with Curtis & Ginsberg
18 Architects in lower Manhattan, a member of the
19 American Institute of Architects, and a former
20 President of the AIA New York Chapter.

21 My practice's major area of focus is affordable,
22 sustainable housing in New York. Climate change is
23 the existential issue of our times. Some have said
24 that electrification will add cost to affordable
25 housing. It will add a little capital cost but

2 significantly lower operating costs over the life of
3 the building. We have completed four multi-family
4 Passive House projects, with two more in construction
5 and a number more in design. These buildings reduce
6 energy consumption 50 to 70 percent below a code
7 compliant building, meeting the city's objective of
8 80 percent carbon reduction by 2050 now.

9 More importantly, our first two all-electric
10 buildings are two months away from completion, and we
11 have five more in design in three boroughs for
12 private developers and not-for-profits. If we are
13 doing this now, I see no reason why others cannot.
14 These buildings will have a much lower carbon
15 footprint when they open, and in 2040, when the state
16 has mandated a clean grid, they will be net neutral.
17 I would add that this legislation follows in the
18 footsteps of 60 localities in California and the City
19 of Seattle.

20 This legislation is a cost-effective and
21 straightforward way to move us towards the low carbon
22 future we need to get to as fast as possible. Thank
23 you.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much. I
25 appreciate all the testimony of this panel. I found

1
2 it very specific and very helpful and I would urge
3 everyone on this panel to make sure that we have your
4 full statement in writing, so that we continue to
5 ponder that. And there will be ongoing discussions
6 between our staff and everyone on this panel and all
7 of the panels.

8 And so, I know that the Sergeant or someone had
9 said at the outset for people who want to submit
10 their testimony, uhm, why don't we repeat that again
11 for the purposes of making sure that people submit us
12 their written statements. Whoever said that I think
13 it was the Sergeant who came on in the beginning of
14 the testimony.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, so, you can send your
16 testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov. We have a
17 slide up on the Zoom, so anybody can see it.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, thank you Sergeant
19 and with that, I thank this panel very much and I
20 want to ask Samara if there are any questions for
21 this panel from any Council Members who are in
22 attendance?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I do not see any hands up
24 presently. No hands up.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, I certainly do once
3 again appreciate this good panel of you know
4 dedicated experts and we're ready for the next panel
5 Samara.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel starts with
7 Ben Prosky of AIA and then Darrel Zarrilli -

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Dan. Dan, Dan Zarrilli.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uh, Dan, Daniel Zarrilli of
10 Columbia and then Keith Leonard Kinch of BlocPower
11 and then Sadiya Hogue of NYPIRG, and then Meg Ahearn
12 of NYPIRG.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, thank you.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Starting with Ben Prosky.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

16 BEN PROSKY: Ben Prosky, who is Executive
17 Director of the American Institute of Architects.
18 And you have heard from some of our members. We
19 represent public and private sector architects, who
20 are passionate about building a more sustainably
21 city.

22 AIA New York strongly supports overall Intro.
23 2317, which would stop new and retrofitted buildings
24 from being powered by fossil fuels. Architects, as
25 you've heard, have been designing fossil-fuel-free

1 buildings in Europe, East Asia, and many other parts
2 of the country for years. Even in our own city, we
3 just heard some examples, ranging from new
4 construction, high-rises in Brooklyn to even NYCHA's
5 electrification program for existing buildings.
6

7 Yet, many public and private building owners in
8 the city remain insistent on continuing fossil fuel
9 use. A mandate is needed to move our city towards
10 the electrification of buildings. Eliminating fossil
11 fuel use in buildings and transitioning to electric
12 power would have many positive effects. Since most
13 of New York City's carbon emissions originate from
14 buildings, cleaner power would mitigate climate
15 change and improve air quality. Electric power
16 provided by renewable sources such as wind, solar,
17 and geothermal is also more reliable. A few years
18 ago, our state's utility companies instituted a gas
19 moratorium, illustrating how limited supply of fossil
20 fuels can be manipulated against the public's
21 interest.

22 Lastly, fossil fuels are incredibly dangerous.
23 Too many New Yorkers have been killed or permanently
24 injured from gas fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.
25 Gas puts architects, tradespeople, firefighters, and

2 others at risk, and the threat of the risk becomes
3 greater in violent storms that increasingly disrupt
4 our city's gas lines.

5 So, while this bill would cover many buildings in
6 the city, most existing buildings will not be
7 impacted by these requirements. Additional action
8 should be taken by the City Council and the DOB to
9 mandate replacement of outdated and hazardous
10 equipment -

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 BEN PROSKY: And adoption of safe carbon free
13 technology across the city. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much for
15 your testimony, your statement. Please stay on and
16 we'll have questions at the end of the panel.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Daniel Zarrilli.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 DANIEL ZARRILLI: Good afternoon. It's really a
20 pleasure to be here. I'd like to thank Chair Gennaro
21 and all the members of the Environmental Protection
22 Committee for this opportunity to testify in support
23 of Intro. 2317.

24 My name is Daniel Zarrilli, I am the Special
25 Advisor for Climate and Sustainability at Columbia

1 University. Much has already been said about the
2 climate crisis that has already arrived on our
3 doorstep. In fact, at Columbia, we have led the way
4 in understanding this crisis. It was our Scientists
5 at the Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory that first
6 coined the term 'global warming' based on the
7 observations they recorded.
8

9 Now, we are marshalling all of our capabilities
10 to address this challenge. Last year, we made an
11 extraordinary commitment to confronting the climate
12 crisis, creating a world-leading Columbia Climate
13 School, the first new school at the university in 25
14 years. Our commitment to this crisis shows up in our
15 labs and our classrooms, and we are walking the talk
16 on our campuses as well.

17 The university in recent years has dramatically
18 decreased its greenhouse gas emissions through
19 ongoing investments in renewable energy, building
20 retrofits, electric vehicles, shifts in commuter
21 behavior, and composting of organic materials. And
22 building on prior work, Columbia released in April
23 of this year our Plan2030, which is our roadmap to
24 achieve net zero emissions by 2050 or sooner.
25

2 Most relevant to this hearing, just this past
3 September, coinciding with Climate Week, Columbia
4 University announced that it will no longer install
5 new fossil fuel connections in any new construction,
6 refresh, or renovation projects on our campuses. To
7 support this transition, we are already in the
8 process of evaluating how to fully electrify our
9 campus by replacing the onsite combustion of fossil
10 fuels with clean, renewable energy sources. This
11 work may sound challenging, yes, but it's feasible
12 and it's necessary.

13 By ending the expansion of fossil fuel
14 infrastructure on our campuses and pursuing
15 electrification, we are taking the necessary steps to
16 align the university with the goals of the Paris
17 Agreement and the city, to clean the air in our
18 surrounding communities, and the world's addiction to
19 fossil fuels. All part of our commitment to
20 empowering the next generation of climate leaders on
21 our campus.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

23 DANIEL ZARRILLI: So, we applaud the City Council
24 and Council Member Ampry-Samuel for taking on this
25 important challenge and putting forward Intro 2317.

2 It's feasible, it's necessary, and this is how the
3 city is going to achieve the its goals and avoid the
4 worst consequences of our climate crisis. Thanks
5 again for the chance to testify.

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Dan, appreciate
7 that and we'll come back with comments and questions.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Keith
9 Leonard Kinch of BlocPower.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

11 KEITH LEONARD KINCH: Good afternoon. My name is
12 Keith Kinch. I am the General Manager and Co-founder
13 of BlocPower. I'm in support of Intro. 2317.

14 BlocPower is a clean-tech start-up based out of
15 Brooklyn that makes buildings energy efficient
16 utilizing software to analyze, finance, and lower
17 costs for building owners. Last week, it was
18 announced that BlocPower will be helping the city
19 Ithaca remove every building off fossil fuels. As we
20 think about where we are now in this city, we've
21 still got health and economic crisis, the question we
22 have to ask ourselves is how do we plan to move New
23 York City forward? How do we make sure we move
24 forward health wise and economic wise?

1
2 And quite simply, the answer is not putting gas
3 in the buildings. The issue is around first health,
4 health across the board for all New Yorkers but more
5 importantly health for New Yorkers in low to moderate
6 income communities, especially children and those
7 seniors that have asthma or other issues with their
8 air quality. When we think about this conversation
9 about why we're moving from one type of entry to
10 another, it's not new. There was a time long ago
11 where people argued over wood chips over oil. People
12 like putting their hands over the fire but not using
13 oil and it worked. And you know what we did? We
14 made billions of dollars in investment in oil and we
15 came up with wood chips. Then we had the same
16 conversation a couple days later, gas to oil. How
17 would it work? How would we put gas into a building
18 like oil, we like to see oil go in the building. You
19 know what we did? We made billions of dollars of
20 investment and we built gas lines and pipelines and
21 now we have gas and oil in our buildings. Now, we're
22 having the same conversation with all electricity.
23 The answer is still the same. We need to make
24 billions of dollars of investments, private and
25

1 public sector to make sure our grid is renewable and
2 to make sure the air is clean in our buildings.

3
4 Now, this isn't an idea that was made up
5 yesterday. The idea of pumps not working is not
6 real. Right now, as I am talking to you, BlocPower
7 is installing heat pumps in Brooklyn, Queens,
8 Manhattan, the Bronx. For those who are in Queens,
9 Council Member Gennaro and others, there's a
10 veteran's post in Queens that is currently working to
11 install heat pumps in their building. I'm pretty
12 sure we don't tell our veterans, hey, we don't want
13 you to have clean air. Please have natural gas all
14 the time you serve this country and move forward.
15 And we can set up a visit for you to see that.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 KEITH LEONARD KINCH: And my last point is that -
18 and my last point is very briefly.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Make your last point
20 please, please, please.

21 KEITH LEONARD KINCH: I thank you for your time
22 sir. I think to the other panelists points, you've
23 done a great job in your entire career even before
24 the Council on work like this, so I'm happy that you
25

2 took time to do this and happy that you work with
3 Council Member Ampry-Samuels. I appreciate it.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh, of course, of course,
5 thank you.

6 KEITH LEONARD KINCH: You're welcome.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Sadiya
8 Hogue from NYPIRG.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

10 SADIYA HOGUE: Good afternoon. My name is Sadiya
11 Hoque, and I am the Chairperson of the Board of
12 Directors for NYPIRG and a CUNY Brooklyn College
13 student studying biology and biochemistry. Thank you
14 Committee Chair Gennaro for the opportunity to
15 testify.

16 The need to pass Intro. 2317 is urgent. We
17 already seen extreme weather in New York City from
18 climate change. Reports regularly come out warning
19 that if we don't take immediate and dramatic climate
20 action things will only get worse.

21 Yet, the Glasgow Climate Summit has ended with
22 reviews including weak and falling far short of what
23 scientists say is needed. New York City's leadership
24 on climate change can shape U.S. policy. And now it
25 must, we're depending our futures on it. The policy

2 decisions made by the New York City Council now will
3 impact my future more than my parent's, or yours.

4 Intro. 2317 will combat climate change, cut deadly
5 air pollution, reduce gas explosions, and promote
6 environmental justice. Burning fossil fuels for heat
7 and hot water in New York City buildings contributes
8 to poor air quality and over 1,000 premature deaths
9 every year, particularly among communities of color.

10 By stopping new gas infrastructure from being
11 built, Intro. 2317 will prevent millions of metric
12 tons of climate pollution from heating the climate
13 and making people sick. Shifting New York City's
14 buildings away from fossil fuels will also reduce the
15 risks of deadly gas explosions. Gas explosions in
16 the Bronx, Harlem and the East Village over the past
17 few years have been deadly, destroying whole
18 buildings and displacing dozens of families.

19 We believe the bill can be made stronger in two
20 specific ways. This bill has a two year enactment
21 for new buildings and gut renovations. We believe
22 that's too slow and enactment should be changed to
23 one year after passage. We also urge you to amend
24 the bill so that it clearly covers gut renovations

2 just like with new buildings, that's the best moment
3 to go fossil free.

4 The fact that the world's leaders are falling
5 short on climate action is even more reason for New
6 York City to lead the charge. Please pass Intro. 2317
7 without delay.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 SADIYA HOGUE: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much. I
11 appreciate your testimony.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: New York Public Interest
13 Research Group.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Meg? Meg?

15 MEG AHEARN: I'm on mute. Oh hi. Thank you. Hi
16 everyone, my name is Megan Ahearn I'm NYPIRG's
17 Program Director. And just to follow up on Sadiya's
18 testimony, I just want to underline two points.
19 Which are the specific changes we think need to be
20 made to the bill before passage.

21 Just to move from a two year after passage
22 enactment to one year and uhm, sorry - I just lost my
23 place for a moment. Uhm, there we go.

24 So, uhm, as we're hearing today there are already
25 - we think it's practical and possible and affordable

1
2 to move from two years to one year because as we're
3 hearing today from expert after expert, there are
4 already fossil free buildings and projects in New
5 York City of all sizes and types. From skyscrapers
6 to low-income housing being developed in built all-
7 electric.

8 And NYSERDA is showing through their bids that
9 construction costs, counting subsidies for projects
10 have now effectively equalized costs. And thanks to
11 high energy efficiency in these new projects, people
12 pay lower utility bills. Uhm, we also urge you to
13 amend the bill, so that it clearly covers gut
14 renovations rather than uhm, the definition that's
15 currently in the bill for major renovations. This is
16 the perfect time to go gas free when everything but
17 the shells and joists are replaced, just like as for
18 new buildings. And there's a longer list of changes
19 to the bill that we think would be really smart to
20 make in our written testimony, which we're submitting
21 now.

22 I just want to also underline that the cost of
23 not passing Intro. 2317, what are they? Super Storm
24 Sandy caused \$19 billion in damages to New York City
25 and damaged over 300,000 housing units from flooding.

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

3 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please finish your
4 sentence, please.

5 MEG AHEARN: Sorry. Uhm, thank you and after
6 Hurricane Ida, the MTA alone estimated \$100 million
7 in damages from the storm. Deterring air quality is
8 resulting in most costly emergency room visits,
9 illnesses and deaths and heat and frequent severe
10 weather will increase demands placed on the city's
11 infrastructure from damage to our mass transit system
12 to sewage overflows from increased precipitation.

13 So, please pass Intro. 2317 without delay.

14 Thanks so much.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you.
16 Regarding this good panel, I you know long work with
17 NYPIRG for you know many, many years and you know Dan
18 and I go way back. I want to you know thank Dan for
19 his partnership over the years. You know early in
20 Mayor Bloomberg's tenure; you created the you know
21 New York City panel on climate change for a limited
22 scope of work that was going to look at city
23 infrastructure. It came in through existence, did
24 its job, went out of existence. And I thought it was
25 wise to kind of bring that you know panel back to put

1
2 that in law and to widen its scope from just city
3 infrastructure to communities across the city that
4 were suffering from you know climate injustice. And
5 you know, Dan was a big part of us figuring out what
6 the New York City on climate change was going to be
7 in that bill and so, I want to take this opportunity
8 to give a public shout out to Dan for you know all he
9 did for the city when he was working and all of his
10 partnership with me.

11 And you know, regarding everyone else on the
12 panel, Ben, Dan, Keith, Sadiya and Meg, I appreciate
13 your testimony and as Meg just said, she is going to
14 be you know submitting her testimony in writing and I
15 hope everyone else does that. And with that said, I
16 am grateful that this panel has shared the benefit of
17 its good views with us. And I'm ready for the next
18 panel if there are no questions Samara.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see any questions.
20 So, the next panel is Rocco Lacertosa from the New
21 York State Energy Coalition and Michael Trunzo from
22 the National Biodiesel Board.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I've got Floyd Vergara and
24 Steven Dodge of the National Biodiesel Board as well.
25 Are they not testifying?

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: They are not testifying.

3 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, fine, okay, let's do
4 it.

5 ROCCO LACERTOSA: Thank you Chairman Gennaro and
6 the rest of the Committee Members for the opportunity
7 to testify before you today.

8 My name is Rocco J. Lacertosa and I serve as the
9 Chief Executive Officer of the New York State Energy
10 Coalition, NYSEC. NYSEC serves as the voice of the
11 renewable biodiesel and heating oil industry in New
12 York City and Long Island. Today, I would like to
13 focus my testimony on Intro. 2317, sponsored by
14 Council Member Ampry-Samuel. Since 2012, NYSEC has
15 worked tirelessly with our state and local partners
16 to ensure a cleaner and more renewable liquid fuel
17 was being used in buildings throughout New York City
18 and state.

19 Beginning with the Bloomberg Administration, we
20 have worked to phase out 30 fuels in New York City
21 with the goal of having all heating oil at a B20 or
22 20 percent or higher level by 2034. In order to
23 achieve this goal, the biofuel industry has invested
24 tens of millions of dollars in infrastructure in New
25 York to ensure that there's a larger and more

1
2 accessible supply of biodiesel for New York
3 customers.

4 Next year will mark ten years since we set out to
5 create a cleaner and more sustainable heating fuel
6 and I'm pleased to say that those efforts have
7 resulted in the removal of millions of gallons of
8 petroleum from the market or the equivalent of over
9 500,000 cars being taken off the road.

10 It is this success that makes us excited for the
11 future of biofuel in New York and the reasons some of
12 our members have strived beyond the B20 target. In
13 fact, some of our members have recently begun
14 supplying B50 to their customers. With regard to
15 Intro. 2317, we are deeply concerned about the
16 potential impact this legislation could have, not
17 only on the biofuel industry in New York City but the
18 city's fuel diversity.

19 Again, let me say that again. The city's fuel
20 diversity. What worries us more, however, is the
21 chilling effect that this will have on the biofuel
22 industry and the signal it sends about the value of
23 future investment. We are committed to getting to
24 higher blends of biodiesel. We cannot do this
25 without future investment. We look forward to

2 discussing this further with the Council. Thank you
3 for your time today.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And our next
5 witness is -

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Rocco.

7 ROCCO LACERTOSA: You're welcome.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Michael Trunzo of the
9 National Biodiesel Board.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

11 MICHAEL TRUNZO: Good afternoon. I'm Michael
12 Trunzo. Can you hear me okay?

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, I got you.

14 MICHAEL TRUNZO: Okay, Michael Trunzo with
15 Shenker Russo & Clark. Our firm represents the
16 National Biodiesel Board. The trade association of
17 domestic producers of biodiesel, renewable diesel and
18 sustainable aviation fuel.

19 The National Biodiesel Board joins the City
20 Council in their efforts to reduce carbon emissions
21 and phase out the use of fossil fuels. Dating back
22 to 2010, we've worked with the City Council in
23 passing statutes to implement the replacement of
24 heating oil with 20 percent biodiesel blends by 2034.
25 This year, we successfully worked with the state

2 legislature to move that 20 percent blending level
3 statewide by 2030 four years earlier. That bill is
4 awaiting Governor Hochul's signature.

5 New York State consumes one billions gallons of
6 heating annually. These laws will result in the
7 displacement of 200 million gallons of heating oil
8 used in the state. Our goal is to replace 500
9 million gallons by 2035 with the B50 requirement and
10 all one billion gallons by 2050 with 100 percent
11 biodiesel renewable diesel. The full lifecycle
12 analysis will show a 73 to 80 percent reduction in
13 greenhouse gas emissions when using biomass based
14 diesel versus petroleum diesel. These carbon savings
15 are immediate and provide health benefits that will
16 lower cancer rates and instances of asthma. Our
17 testimony will include a study with those findings.

18 Relative to Intro. 2317 does not take into
19 consideration a full life cycle analysis but only
20 tailpipe stack emissions. We would suggest that the
21 bill be amended to include the word fossil before
22 carbon dioxide in the sentence amidst 50 kilograms or
23 more of carbon dioxide. This will allow the use of
24 clean burning biodiesel and renewable diesel to
25

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2 continue to help contribute to the lowering of fossil
3 emissions in the state.

4 Our testimony will not dissuade you from the goal
5 of electrification -

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

7 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please finish your
8 sentence.

9 MICHAEL TRUNZO: Yup, our testimony is not to
10 dissuade you from the goal of electrification but to
11 speak to the immediate savings on how biodiesel and
12 renewable diesel can help achieve carbon reduction
13 goals with little or no cost to consumers, nor the
14 need for new appliances in their homes. Thank you
15 very much.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you to you both. I
17 have a long history with you know trying to advance
18 you know biodiesel and - or you know bioheat in New
19 York City, just as the administration has done with
20 you know biodiesel in its fleets and heavy duty
21 vehicles and uhm, you know the cleaner savings that
22 have been able to you know realized in New York City
23 should be dually noted. And I look forward to that
24 whole lifecycle analysis that you are discussing that
25 of course would relate to you know the enemy so to

2 speak is when we have you know transferred uh, you
3 know carbon that was deep in the earth and made a net
4 transfer of carbon you know to the atmosphere of
5 fossil fuels.

6 But when you're dealing with a bio product, a
7 plant basically, you know during its lifecycle it
8 will pick up Co2 and then if it is you know combusted
9 or just left to decompose that Co2 will return to the
10 atmosphere. So, not all Co2 is created equal. I
11 think that's what you're getting at with that
12 lifecycle analysis. We look forward to that and we
13 look forward to an ongoing conversation with the
14 National Biodiesel Board nationally and with Rocco
15 and his partners locally as we move forward.

16 And so, that concludes my comments for this panel
17 and if there are no questions for this panel, we can
18 move on to the next panel.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel begins with
20 Corey Letcher from the New York Energy Consumer
21 Council. Corey.

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Why don't we call the whole
23 panel okay.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay and Diana Sweeney from
25 the New York City Energy Consumers Council, John Rice

1 COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION 132
2 from the New York City Energy Consumers Council,
3 Wendy Hijos from Consumers Energy Alliance and Lauren
4 Moss from the New York Energy Consumers Council.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Samara.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

7 COREY LETCHER: Alright, so good afternoon.
8 Thank you for having us for this hearing today.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

10 COREY LETCHER: My name is Corey Letcher from the
11 Energy Consumers Council in New York. We are
12 supportive of the bill and the spirit. We believe
13 there is some significant changes we would like to
14 recommend. One of the concerns that we have is the
15 impact this legislation is going to have on the
16 current electric grid as it states today with the
17 phase out of gas and other fossil fuels that this
18 bill aims to achieve. Electric options are going to
19 be needed to replace these fuels.

20 This in turn will increase the demand and the
21 stress on the current electric grid. Given these
22 implications to the electric grid, we would like to
23 propose that the utilities, namely locally here
24 Consolidated Edison should be directed to
25 commissioner study by an independent third party to

2 evaluate the current procured ness of the electrical
3 transmission and distribution infrastructure
4 throughout the impacted service territory, so that we
5 can determine whether the grid can currently support
6 electrified building stock under the specified
7 timeline that is outlined by the bill.

8 This study should analyze whether there are any
9 additional infrastructure investments that are needed
10 along with the cost of such investments and how these
11 costs will be allocated. This study should also be
12 made publicly available for review and public
13 comment. The necessary infrastructure upgrade
14 project timeline should also be made public so that
15 it can assist with proper planning by developers.

16 The effective timing of the fossil fuel ban
17 should track the timing of the completion of such
18 infrastructure projects. This is aligned with Intro.
19 Number 2091, which calls for the assessment of
20 possible timeframes for the electrification of
21 existing buildings of various types and sizes. This
22 is a study that we will propose should include the
23 impact of newly developed electrified building stock.

24 Thank you Chairperson Gennaro and Committee Members

1
2 for giving me this opportunity to testify and for
3 addressing this important issue.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you very
5 much.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Diana Sweeney.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

8 DIANA SWEENEY: Good afternoon. Hi, I'm Diana
9 Sweeney, President of Energy Watch and also the
10 Executive Director of the New York Energy Consumers
11 Council.

12 We are supportive of the bill; however, we do
13 recommend the following six amendments to the bill.
14 One, with regard to the bill applying to buildings
15 underlying renovations, there should be clarity as to
16 what type of renovations would trigger compliance
17 with the bill. The clarity is needed because of
18 small renovations that are unrelated to systems that
19 consume fossil fuels would trigger compliance. That
20 could present an economic hardship to many buildings.
21 We propose if the bill would apply to buildings that
22 undergo renovations that have a value of over 50
23 percent of the property value.

24 Second, we believe there should be language added
25 to allow for an exemption in the event consolidated

1 Edison cannot cost effectively provide electrical
2 service to a new building. Third, with regard to the
3 undo hardship exemption, there should be an
4 explicitly defined process with guidelines in order
5 to claim this exemption. Fourth, New York City owned
6 buildings should also be included in the bill as
7 required to comply to lead by example. Fifth, stand
8 by generators used for curtailment activities, which
9 bolster the grid resiliency should be exempted.
10

11 And finally, nothing should prevent a newly
12 constructed building from connecting to a district
13 heating and/or cooling system including Con Edison's
14 District steam utility. Part of the bill prohibited
15 emissions are those due to combustion with "within a
16 building." When a building utilizes the district
17 steam system combustion is offsite. We would like to
18 clarify that a building will have the option to
19 utilize district steam as a thermal energy source.
20 Thank you Chairperson Gennaro and Committee Members
21 for giving us this opportunity to testify and for
22 addressing this important issue. We are very willing
23 to work with you further to further finalize the
24 bill.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you.
3 Thank you very much, I appreciate that.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panelist is John
5 Rice from the New York City Energy Consumers Council.

6 JOHN RICE: Good afternoon everyone. Chair
7 Gennaro, Councilman Ampry-Samuel and Moderator
8 Samara. I am John Rice, I am the President and
9 Principal of Legacy Engineers, New York City's free
10 mere Black owned consulting engineering firm. I'm a
11 Board Member of the Urban Green Council I'm a member
12 of the Energy Consumers Council.

13 Part of this question may have been answered
14 earlier. I believe I heard that when Councilman
15 Ampry-Samuel spoke, that she said this legislation
16 was for new buildings and gut renovations. I am here
17 in favor of; we're supportive of the bill and we're
18 here in favor of a phase in approach, similar to what
19 Chris Halfnight presented earlier in his testimony.

20 The most efficient technologies for buildings
21 today are heat pump units, air source heat pump
22 units, which require significant roof space. For
23 existing high-rise buildings, due to the limitation
24 of the building footprint, the roof setbacks are
25 typically not large enough to accommodate the

1
2 necessary equipment on the roof. Therefore, without
3 a phase in, many buildings are opting to go just with
4 strict electric resistant heat rather than heat
5 pumps, which would actually increase emissions, given
6 the inefficiencies of those systems.

7 Thus, we would propose a phase in approach over
8 time based on the square footage and/or the building
9 height to provide more time for products to come
10 online that can meet the needs of all segments of the
11 building stock. As an example for buildings that are
12 50,000 square feet, three feet or less a two year
13 phase in for buildings that are 500 square feet. Ten
14 stories or less, five years and for buildings that
15 are – and all other buildings, an eight year phase in
16 approach. I thank you for your time today.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Wendy
19 Hijos from the Consumers Energy Alliance.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 WENDY HIJOS: Thank you. Good day Chief Gennaro
22 and Members of the Environmental Protection
23 Committee. My name is Wendy Hijos and I'm the New
24 York Executive Director for the Consumer Energy
25

2 Alliance. I appreciate the opportunity to share our
3 comments today.

4 Founded in 2006, CEA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit
5 organization with more than 350 member companies and
6 more than 550,000 individuals in our nationwide
7 network. Our mission is to help ensure American
8 families and businesses have access to reliable,
9 affordable, and environmentally sound resources. We
10 believe in an environmentally sustainable energy
11 future that includes both traditional and renewable
12 resources that create the energy mix to meet the
13 needs of our nation's families, businesses,
14 environment, and economy. We support U.S. energy in
15 all forms so we can continue to meet our climate
16 expectations, continue progress toward net-zero, and
17 maintain our energy security while keeping the cost
18 and reliability needs of families and businesses in
19 mind.

20 As the Committee considers its legislative agenda
21 today, it is important to highlight New York's
22 incredible environmental progress while natural gas
23 use and infrastructure have expanded across the
24 state. According to state data, total emissions from
25 the electricity generation sector fell 42 percent,

1 while natural gas use for power generation increased
2 more than 150 percent from 1990 to 2015.

3 Additionally, the Department of Energy reports that
4 New York's energy-related carbon dioxide emissions
5 decreased a remarkable 18 percent from 1990 to 2018.

6 CEA is concerned about the harmful economic
7 impacts that the suite of bills being considered
8 today could have on working families, small
9 businesses, and those struggling to get by,
10 especially with today's inflationary environment and
11 soaring energy prices. The latest Department of
12 Energy Winter Outlook projects with 30 percent
13 increases in natural gas prices, 54 percent spikes
14 for propane, 43 percent surge for home heating oil,
15 and winter gas heating bills could be \$746 and \$1,268
16 for electric heating.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please finish your sentence
19 please.

20 WENDY HIJOS: CEA recently issued a Heat or Eat
21 Report that found that consumers would pay over \$13.6
22 billion in additional higher winter energy costs as a
23 result. I do have a few more sentences. It will
24 probably take me about 15 more seconds to finish.
25

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please be brief.

3 WENDY HIJOS: Okay. These excessively high and
4 unnecessary costs have real-life impacts for those
5 living at or near the poverty line, and in September
6 of this year, the New York City region's unemployment
7 rate was twice the national average. This is why CEA
8 shares its concerns with the suite of bills being
9 considered because they could potentially lead to
10 higher energy costs and reduce consumer choices.
11 Thank you so much for your time.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you very
13 much.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Lauren
15 Moss of the New York Energy Consumers Council.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

17 LAUREN MOSS: Good afternoon. I am currently the
18 Senior Vice President of the Center for Active Design
19 and also Board Member of the New York Energy Consumer
20 Council.

21 We are supportive of the spirit of the bill;
22 however, I believe that significant changes are
23 needed. A case study was performed on an existing
24 NYCC members multi-tenanted residential building to
25 review the impacts of eliminating natural gas

2 combustion if the legislation had been implemented as
3 it currently is written at the time that the land was
4 developed.

5 The study was performed on a recently constructed
6 560,000 square foot multi-family residential building
7 built in 2019. It currently has a natural gas fire
8 condensing hydronic heating system. The findings,
9 which are rough estimates are summarized below: The
10 installation of electrified heating systems would
11 have resulted in an increase in first costs of about
12 \$4.5 million or \$8 a square foot; Annual operating
13 costs would increase by \$75,000; the loss in annual
14 revenue of \$120,000 consisting of \$100,000 in loss
15 rent from a reduction in views associated with the
16 exterior mechanical equipment placed on roof
17 setbacks, as well as \$20,000 in loss amenity fees due
18 to reduction in outdoor terrace amenity space.

19 And the initial carbon savings from electrifying
20 the heating systems vary between 250 and 300 tons of
21 carbon per year, depending on whether E-Grid or Local
22 Law 97 coefficients are used.

23 The impact on the cost of new development of a
24 large building further supports the NYCC's position
25 that large buildings, over 500,000 square feet should

2 be phased in over eight years following completion of
3 necessary infrastructure upgrades. This will allow
4 time for new technologies to enter the market, which
5 would make the cost of development more feasible.

6 This will also avoid many buildings installing
7 electric residence heating rather than heat pumps,
8 which would actually increase emissions given the
9 inefficiencies of these systems.

10 Thank you Chairperson Gennaro and Committee
11 Members for giving me this opportunity to testify and
12 for addressing these important issues.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Lauren
14 and I thank this entire panel. As I'm urging all
15 panels you know, make sure that we have all of your
16 testimony in writing. This is what I do for fun
17 every testimony and then I make little lines and
18 circles and then I bother staff and this is what I
19 do.

20 Yeah, you know, it's my life. What can I tell
21 you? And so, uhm, make sure we have all that. I
22 would like to thank this panel again for giving very
23 specific testimony on what you know you would do to
24 make revisions to the bill.

2 This is always the kind of specificity that we're
3 looking for. I ask that you send this along. And I
4 want to make sure from the Sergeant that I will have
5 the ability to actually watch the hearing again?
6 Will I have that ability Sergeant? Can I have a tape
7 of this?

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, once it's applied to the
9 Council website, you can watch it there.

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, I would ask my
11 Legislative Director to be in touch with the Council
12 and that will be available because I will be watching
13 this again as well as looking through all the
14 testimony.

15 So, I thank this panel and if there are no
16 questions, uhm, we can move onto the next panel. Are
17 there any other questions for this panel Samara?

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see any Councilperson
19 questions or any other questions.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, now, let me just jump
21 in right now for the sake of balance. You know the
22 next panel to testify was going to be panel number
23 nine. We're going to you know with my apologies, go
24 to panel number ten first for the sake of sort of
25 balance. You know we've had a couple panels in a row

1 that have had a certain perspective and so, I think
2 for the sake of balance, we're going to do panel ten
3 and then follow that with panel nine. My apologies
4 to panel nine as I was talking to Council Member
5 Ampry-Samuel before, it's very important that
6 balance. Some people think this way. Some people
7 think the other way. And so, we're going to you know
8 put panel ten before panel nine, okay? You got that
9 Samara?
10

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: So, we'll do that.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panel ten, Eric Weltman of
14 Food and Water Watch, Jon Pope General Contractor, AJ
15 Pires President of Alloy , Amy Turner of Columbia
16 University Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, and
17 Leah Stokes of the University of California at Santa
18 Barbara.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

20 ERIC WELTMAN: My name is Eric Weltman, and I'm a
21 Brooklyn-Based Senior Organizer with Food and Water
22 Watch, a member of the GasFreeNYC Coalition.

23 On behalf of Food and Water Watch's nearly
24 100,000 supporters in New York City, we urge the City
25 Council to pass Intro. 2317 now. Seven years ago,

1
2 New York declared a ban on fracking, striking a blow
3 against the fossil fuel industry. It was a necessary
4 measure to protect our water, communities, and
5 environment from this dangerous drilling process.
6 And Chairman Gennaro, you played an important role in
7 that effort, for which we are grateful.

8 Since then, we've continued the fight to move New
9 York off fossil fuels, with Governor Hochul taking a
10 major step forward by blocking fracked gas power
11 plants in Queens and the Hudson Valley. Now New York
12 City must continue to lead the way by banning gas
13 hookups in new construction and gut renovations.
14 This policy is folks, this policy is bold, practical,
15 and necessary. The evidence on the ground is clear.
16 We have the technology, and we have the skills to use
17 it. Now, we just need the Council's leadership.

18 Of course, ExxonMobil is scared of this
19 legislation. And they should be. What happens in
20 New York doesn't stay in New York. We fully expect
21 that New York's leadership, your leadership, will be
22 emulated and let's be clear, we need it to be. The
23 stakes could not be any higher. Hurricane Ida was
24 another tragic reminder that the painful impacts of
25 climate change are already hitting home. More

2 extreme weather events supercharged by climate
3 change, as well as deadly heat waves, will continue
4 to devastate our communities. Any delay, any delay
5 in moving off fossil fuels means more death and
6 destruction.

7 To be blunt folks, delay equals death. New York
8 City would reap a multitude of benefits from Intro.
9 2317. Good green jobs, cleaner air, and improved
10 public safety. Firefighters and other first
11 responders are on the frontlines of disasters –

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

13 ERIC WELTMAN: Caused by gas in our buildings or
14 made even more deadly and dangerous by its presence.
15 Google New York City gas explosions and you'll know
16 what I mean.

17 Finally, finally, we join New York Communities
18 for Change and other allies in the GasFreeNYC
19 campaign in calling for Intro. 2317 to be
20 strengthened. Let me just quickly note for example –

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please conclude, please
22 conclude.

23 ERIC WELTMAN: In just one year and by amending
24 the bill so that it clarifies the definition of gut
25

2 renovations. Thank you and again, we urge you to
3 pass this bill without further delay.

4 CHAIREPRSON GENNARO: Thank you Eric, appreciate
5 that.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next one is Jon Pope,
7 General Contractor.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

9 JON POPE: Hi everybody, my name is Jon Pop. How
10 are you all today? Thank you for having this
11 hearing. I am here to be in full support of 2317.
12 I'm probably the illusive, small business owners,
13 general contractor here and I do not build entire
14 buildings but I do do all one gut renovations with
15 some regularity and I'm here in full support of this.
16 While we have these buildings opened up, let's get
17 them sealed up and let's get them electrified.

18 I don't see the logic in the cart before the
19 horse. I think that as we go forward, we have to do
20 quite a few things simultaneously. So, waiting for
21 the grid to do this, you know we're just going to end
22 up like many have said before you know with a bunch
23 of stranded assets and that's unfortunate. I heard
24 an earlier speaker talk about pinning the threshold
25 for getting to this bill for the gut renovations at

2 50 percent of the cost and I don't think that's
3 feasible. Because I think it's going to be a lot of
4 hocus pocus and I think we should clearly define what
5 gut renovation is. I'm ready to go. My guys are
6 ready to go. And I thank you very much for your
7 time.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you for
9 your spirited testimony. I appreciate that and we
10 love to hear from small business owners.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness AJ Pires,
12 President of Alloy.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

14 AJ PIRES: Thank you Chair Gennaro and the
15 Committee for holding this important hearing today
16 and for Council Member Ampry-Samuel and others for
17 sponsoring this bill.

18 My name is AJ Pires and I'm the President of
19 Alloy Development, an architecture and development
20 company based in Brooklyn. I'm here today as a
21 licensed architect and an owner of a real estate
22 development company to express my strong support for
23 banning new natural gas connections in New York.

24 Designing and building fossil fuel free buildings
25 in New York is possible today and cost effective.

1 My company, Alloy Development, is building the first
2 all-electric skyscraper in New York City at 100
3 Flatbush in Downtown Brooklyn. The building will be
4 44-stories tall and contain 440 units of market rate
5 and affordable housing and retail. It will rely on
6 off-the-shelf technologies that are widely available
7 to heat and cool the building and provide hot water.
8 These include water source heat pumps, electric
9 boilers and hot water heaters, induction cooktops and
10 heat pump dryers. And will do so to similar costs as
11 a conventional buildings.
12

13 When its operational in 2024, it will be 20
14 percent more efficient than a conventional new
15 building, and by 2030, we're relying on the
16 electrical grid's transition to renewable energy. It
17 will be 200 percent more efficient. It will have
18 superior indoor air quality, an air-tight building
19 envelope, and most-importantly, it will be future
20 proofed, that is designed to operate in the carbon-
21 free future we must start planning to live within.

22 Installing a natural gas system today is a bit
23 like installing copper telephone lines. The reality
24 is like steam and fuel before gas infrastructure is
25 now approaching the end of its useful life. Banning

2 new natural gas connections will not only
3 significantly reduce carbon emissions and improve air
4 quality, it will also make New York a leader in
5 sustainable development nationally and
6 internationally. There are many problems related to
7 the climate that we don't yet have solutions for.
8 How to make low-carbon steel or low-carbon jet fuel.
9 This is not one of those problems. The technologies
10 and the knowledge exist today to prepare our
11 buildings for a carbon-free future. All we need now
12 is the political will to do it.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. I appreciate
14 your testimony, please stay on. We have one Council
15 Member that has raised his hand for questions. So,
16 we'll be posing questions to the Council - to the
17 panel when the panel is completed and I ask Samara to
18 call the next witness in this panel.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Amy
20 Turner from Columbia University Sabin Center for
21 Climate Change Law.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 AMY TURNER: Hi, thank you to Chair Gennaro and
24 to the Council for allowing me to participate in
25 today's hearing.

2 My name is Amy Turner. I am the Senior Fellow at
3 the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia
4 Law School. I research city decarbonization law and
5 policy and I advise cities across the country on
6 building decarbonization and building electrification
7 policies.

8 I am here today to testify in support of Intro.
9 2317 and specifically, I'm here to talk about the
10 city's legal authority to enact Intro. 2317 and in
11 particular to do so right away. So, as you know
12 Local Laws in New York City have to have some form of
13 authority to back them up. And in this instance, in
14 the instance of 2317, New York City has ample police
15 powers delegated by New York States Municipal Home
16 Rule Law, specifically the authority to govern in
17 relation to the public health and welfare and for
18 the protection of the city's physical and visual
19 environment.

20 New York City, like other municipalities in the
21 State, is permitted by the New York State Air
22 Pollution Control law to enact local laws relating to
23 air pollution so long as they meet or exceed minimum
24 state requirements as Intro. 2317 does.

1
2 And finally, of course, New York City has
3 building code authority and so, while there are
4 sufficient – while there is sufficient authority for
5 the city to enact Intro. 2317 through its home rule
6 powers, police powers and air pollution control
7 authority, the building code authority buttresses
8 that authority and provides a statutory home for
9 Intro. 2317's requirements.

10 I have a bit more in my written testimony about
11 why this law is not preempted. I trust that the
12 Chair will read it, given his enthusiasm for reading
13 testimony. What I want to say is that while New York
14 City has the legal authority to require new building
15 electrification and it has the authority to do so
16 today. There is no reason why the city cannot
17 require that new building permit applications meet
18 Intro. 2317's requirements as soon as it is enacted.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

20 AMY TURNER: The city will be behind if it does
21 not enact this law right away. More than 50 all-
22 electric building requirements of various kinds are
23 already in effect today in the U.S. So, if there is
24 a long time horizon for implementation of this law,
25 New York City will be showing that it is a follower

2 and not a leader on building decarbonization. Thank
3 you very much.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you very
5 much for your testimony.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And the next witness is Leah
7 Stokes from the University of California at Santa
8 Barbara.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

10 LEAH STOKES: Hi, my name is Dr. Leah Stokes and
11 I'm an Associate Professor. I specialize in energy
12 and climate policy and I am a former resident of New
13 York City and an alumni of Columbia University.

14 New York City has a really big chance right now
15 to join with over 50 other cities across the country
16 who have taken bold steps to stop installing new gas
17 in buildings. 2317 being discussed today would be a
18 landmark change that would deliver big public health
19 and climate benefits while creating jobs in the city.
20 I urge you to listen to the expert from WE ACT, New
21 York Communities for Change, Columbia University and
22 others who have spoken today. They have told you,
23 get this bill done. Make it apply to gut renovations
24 and make it come into effect as soon as possible.

2 The good news is that building electrification
3 will tackle climate change, create jobs and deliver
4 public health benefits. Scientific research has
5 shown that we cannot build any new fossil fuel
6 infrastructure and limit warming to 1.5 degrees.
7 That includes putting new gas in buildings and we
8 don't have to do it anymore. We have heat pumps. We
9 have induction stoves.

10 New York City already has a clean enough grid
11 that electrification does cut carbon pollution.
12 Anybody who has testified today and I've heard
13 several people do it who has said otherwise, is being
14 factually inaccurate. I am an energy policy expert
15 and I looked it up myself today. If you put in an
16 electric stove or an electric heat pump, it has a
17 lower carbon footprint today with the electricity mix
18 in New York City today.

19 In addition, other factually inaccurate
20 statements that have been made have been around how
21 heat pumps are not possible in New York City. This
22 is just not true. Numerous buildings across the city
23 are already being electrified by companies like
24 BlocPower, which is creating good paying jobs and
25

1 training New Yorkers and you're going to hear people
2 talk about that.

3
4 So, that is factually inaccurate. Scientists
5 have also told us that burning fossil gas in homes is
6 really bad for health. It increases the risk of
7 asthma by 42 percent and even when gas appliances are
8 turned off, they are still leaking including
9 carcinogens.

10 So, I'd just like to close by saying that Council
11 Member Ampry-Samuel is right. These health impacts
12 are a matter of -

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

14 LEAH STOKES: Life and death for New Yorkers and
15 they are hitting communities of color the hardest.
16 So, it's time for New York City to ban gas in
17 buildings. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you. I
19 thank this panel and I know that I see Council Member
20 Levin has his hand raised and with the approval of
21 the Moderator, I will recognize Council Member Levin.
22 Is that okay Samara? Unless someone else raised his
23 hand before Steve.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, please recognize Steve.
25

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, it is my pleasure to
3 recognize Council Member Levin.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you. Thank you very
5 Chair. My first question is for AJ. You know I was
6 the Council Member who approved that project that
7 you're speaking of in my district.

8 AJ PIRES: I remember.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yup, right and uhm, you
10 know we had - Alloy as a developer, you guys want to
11 make a profit, right? You guys are looking to have a
12 you know - you're not a non-for-profit. You're a
13 for-profit company, so you have every interest in
14 trying to make a cost effective development, is that
15 correct?

16 AJ PIRES: That's correct, sure.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: And so, to make an all-
18 electric building or development as you said, is uh,
19 I forget what the density is on 80 Flatbush but it's
20 a dense development site. You see that as a cost
21 effective way to go?

22 AJ PIRES: So, the business cases is multifold.
23 Uhm, so, there is a minor upfront cost premium and I
24 would agree with Chris Halfnight sensibility, it's
25 about one to two percent. You're saving costs on

1
2 somethings. There's no incoming gas line. There is
3 no gas infrastructure but you're paying a little bit
4 more for an increased [INAUDIBLE 2:56:02] room and
5 additional equipment.

6 The long-term benefit is on the operating savings
7 of the building from an energy uses standpoint, as
8 compared to a traditionally designed building. Some
9 of the results are policy-based which is complying
10 with Local Law 97 and the benefits of that and if
11 there is to be a cap and trade program, the
12 additional benefit of that.

13 This building as designed, would need not just
14 the 20/30 - 24 rule but the 20/30 rule upon opening.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Hmm, hmm.

16 AJ PIRES: The other though is a uhm, is a long-
17 term value priority relative to sustainability, which
18 is we believe that the users and occupants of the
19 building are desirous of a place that's from you know
20 looking to lower its carbon impact. And that renters
21 when given the choice of renting across the street or
22 here will choose to rent in a building that is all
23 electric. Much like most people use their purchasing
24 power to choose one piece of clothing or another or
25 one type of food over another.

2 And we believe long-term that uhm, it's those
3 discretion of values that will be rewarding and bring
4 the other piece of the economic benefit of the
5 project.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay. Are you running
7 into practical problems around you know issues around
8 heat pumps or effectiveness around the technology
9 that's available now or do you think - you mentioned
10 this in your testimony but that you believe that you
11 have the - there's no technological limitations in
12 front of you right now that you see as kind of deal
13 breakers for pursuing this with this development?

14 AJ PIRES: We don't and we're under construction
15 with the technology. Some of the testimony today
16 spoke about heat pumps, but they were air sourced
17 heat pumps. We're using water source heat pump.
18 There's also ground source heat pumps. I would also
19 question the ability of the statement that air source
20 heat pumps don't work below a certain temperature.
21 They work in very low temperatures.

22 Some of that problem has to do with what the
23 design goal is and what the efficiency, air tightness
24 of the building is. So, if you are in a leaky
25 building and you're trying to get to 80 degrees when

1
2 it's eight degrees outside, it is going to be
3 incredibly difficult to achieve that with an air
4 sourced heat pump.

5 If you have an energy efficient building that's
6 designed to a passive house standard and you're
7 looking to get to 72 degrees, you can do that. So,
8 there's truth to a certain extent across the spectrum
9 there but we have an engineered system that works and
10 we are building.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: And again, you said it,
12 this is a skyscraper. This is a big building. I
13 mean it was - all you have to do is ask the neighbors
14 and they would tell you that this is a big building
15 on Flatbush Avenue. So, you know, this is not, this
16 is not some three story building or something like
17 that. What's the square footage of the building?

18 AJ PIRES: It's about 400,000 square feet. It's
19 44 stories, a little under 500 feet tall. 440
20 apartments.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay. Okay, well, I'm
22 hopeful that uhm, that your testimony as a developer
23 who is building a building right now in New York City
24 uhm, will be instructive for other you know other
25

2 developers in the field who are examining their
3 options right now.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you.

6 AJ PIRES: Really appreciate the questions Steve.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yup, you got it.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Council Member
9 Levin and uh, thank you - oops. AJ right? Am I
10 talking to AJ right?

11 AJ PIRES: Yup.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, thank you for your
13 answer to the Council Member and for your compelling
14 testimony about what you've been able to do with your
15 building.

16 I have one other comment for this panel. Eric
17 Weltman, I well remember the fracking wars and what
18 we went through with the you know New York City
19 drinking water supply water shed and how we carried
20 that through to the whole state and like the
21 documentary that was made about that. That was a
22 huge thing that you played a major role in and I
23 certainly appreciate your partnership on that. And I
24 applaud the rest of the members of this panel for
25 your good testimony. I look forward to getting it in

1 COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION 161
2 writing and also having the opportunity to rewatch it

3 in video. And with that said, I'll ask Samara to
4 call the next panel, formerly known as panel nine.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, panel nine, the
6 plumbing panel. April McIver from the Plumbing
7 Foundation, George Bassolino III from the Master
8 Plumber's Council, Artie Klock from the Director of
9 Trade Education at UA Local Union Number One and
10 Arthur Goldstein of the Master Plumbers Council.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

12 APRIL MCIVER: Great, thank you. Good afternoon,
13 thank you Chairman and Committee Members. My name is
14 April McIver, I am the Executive Director of the
15 Plumbing Foundation. Given time constraints, I am
16 going to get right into my testimony on 2317. No one
17 can deny the vulnerability of our climate and the
18 need to take drastic measures to reduce carbon
19 emissions.

20 We, the Plumbing Foundation are absolutely
21 supportive of methods to reduce the carbon emissions.
22 And we also urge the Council to take a step back and
23 consider the larger picture. I strongly urge you to
24 read my entire written testimony which has already
25

1
2 been submitted but I to want to briefly mention some
3 of the main points.

4 While the summary of this bill insists that it
5 applied in new buildings and major alterations and I
6 know that was said several times today. The text is
7 extremely vague and placement of section two in the
8 construction code, can be interrupted to mean it's
9 actually applicable to a much broader universe of
10 buildings. Not just doing gut renovations, so
11 clarifications there would defiantly need to be made.

12 In addition, the effective date of two years when
13 passage does not make a ton of sense in terms of the
14 timeline of the emissions goals in the New York City
15 Climate Mobilization Act and the New York State
16 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act,
17 especially given that the plan to meet those
18 emissions targets is still being determined. I was
19 happy to hear from the city that you know they're
20 working on it but that's very much the status as far
21 as I am aware.

22 And finally, there hasn't been a full study done.
23 There is another bill on the agenda today 2091 that
24 would be a very necessary step before passing 2317.

2 And we confidently predict that such impact studies
3 would result in revisions to this bill.

4 You can reference two reports from California in
5 my full written testimony that I think are of great
6 relevance in terms of the cost of gas bans and
7 electrification.

8 So, rather the Plumbing Foundation suggests a
9 commonsense approach which must include wide
10 encompassing industry and all stakeholder
11 involvement. So, that means all of us. All of here
12 today. I'm actually excited to see how many people
13 you know are here to speak about the bill.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 APRIL MCIVER: Pros and cons. Can I finish my
16 sentence?

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes April, by all means.

18 APRIL MCIVER: Great, so, it's two other points
19 are just diversify, meaning sources an incremental
20 approach to phasing out carbon emitting energy
21 sources, as well as educational campaigns in that
22 explaining the facts, science and data behind the
23 diversified approach.

24

25

2 So, we look forward to continuing this
3 conversation with the Council and all stakeholders.
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you April.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: George Bassolino III.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

8 GEORGE BASSOLINO III: Okay, good afternoon. My
9 name is George Bassolino and I represent the New York
10 City Master Plumbers Council and I'm also a New York
11 City licensed Master Plumber.

12 Besides protecting the health of the nation,
13 licensed master plumbers have been at the forefront
14 of reducing carbon emissions for decades. The clean
15 air we breathe today is due in part to our work
16 replacing dirty fossil fuels with cleaner reliable
17 natural gas. As few as 30 short years ago, New York
18 City is still installing brand new qualified boilers
19 in our schools. Today, they've been replaced with
20 modern equipment burning natural gas.

21 On a daily basis, licensed Master Plumber's
22 replace existing appliance with new, more efficient
23 appliances continuing to further New York City's
24 carbon footprint. The vehicles we drive today are 99

1
2 percent more efficient than when I started in this
3 business.

4 The point being here is we're making measurable
5 progress and doing so in a responsible manner and our
6 work is benefiting both the environment and the
7 consumer. Nobody denies climate change is real and
8 must be addressed immediately. At some point, the
9 use of fossil fuels must be eliminated but as
10 written, this bill is not only going to prohibit the
11 utilization of natural gas and new construction and
12 major renovations but as April pointed out, it would
13 also not allow for repairs, replacements or upgrade
14 work.

15 If this is an act of pride to the establishment
16 of requisite infrastructure and electrical generation
17 of capacity, the carbon released in the atmosphere is
18 going to quadruple immediately. Decreasing
19 electrical and retrofit costs, we're going to pose an
20 economic burden on New York City's most vulnerable
21 residents. The possibility of short-term brown and
22 blackouts is going to increase during the summer
23 months. Some reports are calculated across the
24 banning natural gas for \$25,000 per household. Who
25 is going to cover this cost?

2 Many New York City businesses have been unable to
3 pay rent during the pandemic and are struggling to
4 survive. [INAUDIBLE 3:05:55]. Will they survive?
5 New York City needs solutions that allow continued
6 growth and development while maintaining a high
7 standard of living and quality of life. Our economy
8 and daily life depend on reliable energy generation
9 and distribution delivered at a price we can afford.
10 New York City's depending on you -

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 GEORGE BASSOLINO III: Realistic ways that are
13 compatible with reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
14 Thank you for your time.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you George.
16 Appreciate your testimony. Please stay on until we
17 finish the panel.

18 GEORGE BASSOLINO III: Thank you.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Artie
20 Klock Director of Trade Education at Local Union One.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

22 ARTIE KLOCK: Good afternoon Mr. Gennaro, members
23 of the Committee. My name is Arthur Klock, I'm
24 Director of Trade Education at Plumber's Local One.
25 I have an intimate knowledge of the fuel gas

2 infrastructure in New York City having worked in the
3 plumbing industry for over 35 years.

4 The last few years have made clear that climate
5 change is most certainly real. Nobody is disputing
6 that. Our union is committed to the development and
7 utilization of renewable sources of energy to reduce
8 our carbon footprint. Making the transition from
9 fossil fuels to low carbon sources of energy is the
10 overarching goal. Achieving that goal must be done
11 in a carefully planned and well thought out approach,
12 so that we avoid the hardship, expenses and regrets
13 of unintended consequences. We are, our union,
14 supports legislation that establishes a comprehensive
15 carbon pricing system to ensure that New York
16 achieves the goals set in the Climate Leadership and
17 Protection Act.

18 A careful reading of this Intro. shows that the
19 gas consuming buildings will be considered to be
20 operating illegally if the Intro. becomes law.
21 Building and home owners will perhaps be given a
22 hardship waiver perhaps but for how long, it isn't
23 explained and it isn't clear. How they get the
24 waiver, how long they would have the waiver. Is
25 there some kind of grandfathering status? None of

1
2 that is explained in this Intro. It simply makes the
3 burning of fossil fuel illegal and therefore the
4 person who is owning that building that burns the
5 fossil fuel now owns an illegal building.

6 Who's going to pay to scrap the water heaters,
7 the clothes dryers, the boilers, the furnaces, and
8 replace them with electrical alternatives. And how
9 much rewiring is the building going to need? It
10 isn't clear and it isn't explained to anybody who's
11 looking at this.

12 Once it becomes law and the buildings are then
13 burning gas illegally, they are going to face
14 enforcement under as yet unwritten rules by the New
15 York City Department of Buildings.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 ARTIE KLOCK: The rules aren't part of the law.
18 They come after the law and we're likely to face more
19 unintended consequences for the working class in this
20 city when those people find themselves burying the
21 cost of prematurely replaced gas equipment and pay
22 for rewiring in buildings where this occurs. That
23 they try to get a permit from DOB and they're told,
24 okay, now, I'll rip out all your gas equipment.

2 I think these things need to be clarified much
3 more before we move ahead with this. So, as written,
4 we oppose it. We think it needs more clarification.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Artie. Thank you
6 Artie and yeah, but hold on, we'll come back when we
7 finish the panel. Appreciate your statement.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And the final witness for
9 this panel is Arthur Goldstein of the Master
10 Plumber's Council.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

12 ARTHUR GOLDSTEIN: So, I'm going to pass other
13 than to say I applaud the Chairman Gennaro's passion
14 for this issue going back to if I'm correct, when we
15 were both staff at the City Council. We had the same
16 passion, so I'm going to pass. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Arthur. That was
18 more than 30 years ago and God Bless that we both
19 still look the same, imagine that you know.

20 Yes, April, please rest assure that I will read
21 you know your good testimony and everyone who has put
22 forward testimony on this panel. You know everyone
23 made points that must be further probed and for this
24 reason, I will tell this panel as I've told all the
25 others, make sure we get all this testimony in

2 writing. I'm sure that Arthur will make sure that
3 that happens. And it will get my full attention and
4 I look forward to discussing these matters with
5 Arthur and this good panel in the future weeks.

6 So, thank you, I appreciate that and thank you
7 for – we kind of jumped over you in order for balance
8 and thanks for being good sports about that. Okay,
9 so I just want to recognize your patience and working
10 with me in this quest for what I call balance. So,
11 thank you to this panel. And if there are no
12 questions for this panel, we should move onto the
13 next one.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel Bob Wyman a
15 Geothermal Expert, Zachary Fink of ZBS Geothermal and
16 the Association for Affordable Energy.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, I don't know if we
18 have anybody signed up for the – I mean, I got this
19 list with a question mark after the Association for
20 Affordable Energy. I think staff had been apprised
21 that they would be signing up. We'll see when we
22 call them if they reveal themselves. So, why don't
23 we start with Mr. Wyman and go from there.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

2 BOB WYMAN: Good afternoon, my name is Bob Wyman.

3 My comments were focused on Intro. 2091. I'm an
4 Independent Advocate of Beneficial Electrification,
5 particularly focused on encouraging geothermal heat
6 pumps for space and water heating. Working with
7 Google, I inspired and Co-Founded Dandelion Energy,
8 now one of the largest providers of geothermal heat
9 pumps in the USA. I'm also a party to the rate cases
10 of both Con Ed and National Grid as well as many
11 other utilities in New York State.

12 I will not repeat the benefits of electrification
13 mentioned by others. Today, I want to point out that
14 the alternative to beneficial electrification, which
15 is continued investment in gas infrastructure will
16 financially ruin us for gas rate payers. While the
17 bill calls for an assessment of the cost of
18 electrification, it should also require an assessment
19 of the cost of not electrifying. Let me explain why.

20 We must recognize that through the way that
21 utilities will cover their costs, continue the
22 expansion of or investment in gas infrastructure will
23 inevitably result in a very dramatic increase in the
24 delivered price of gas. We will see a death spiral
25 for gas that will inevitably impose high costs on the

1
2 low and moderate income rate payers who are likely to
3 be the last ones to abandon gas. Even if the gas
4 commodity magically becomes free, gas will still
5 become accessibly expensive.

6 The problem is simple, the cost of providing gas
7 service are largely fixed and independent of the
8 quantity of the gas which is sold. It costs the same
9 amount to finance a gas pipe whether it is used to
10 full capacity or abandoned as a stranded asset. Once
11 gas infrastructure investment is made, its costs
12 recovered over periods as long as 85 years.

13 In the past, given a growing demand for gas, it
14 has been possible to spread infrastructure costs over
15 an increasingly large number of units of gas sold.
16 However, because the CLCPA Local Law 97 other laws
17 and regulations require that we reduce the quantity
18 of gas sold. Those fixed asset costs will be spread
19 over an increasingly declining volume of sales. The
20 result is a mathematically inevitable cost increase.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

22 BOB WYMAN: Because - we need to say, because the
23 cost -

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please finish your sentence
25 of course.

2 BEN WYMAN: Okay, because the cost of providing
3 gas service will remain fixed, even as the demand for
4 gas declines, the price of gas – the pre-unit price
5 of gas will increase in proportion to the reduction
6 and demand for gas.

7 And just one example here –

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please conclude. There is
9 only so much give I can extend.

10 BOB WYMAN: Okay, just if we do reduce
11 consumption by 85 percent as required by the law,
12 that means that the cost of gas delivery must go up
13 at least seven times. Essentially, we cannot afford
14 not to electrify. We can't afford to have people
15 remain on gas. It's time to move on to the second
16 grade electrification of our city.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And next witness is Zachary
19 Fink of ZBF Geothermal.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 ZACHARY FINK: Hi, I'm Zachary Fink, I'm the
22 President of ZBF Geothermal and a Board Member with
23 the New York Geothermal Energy Organization.

24 As a family, I'm a third generation in HVAC. My
25 grandfather started his business as an oil delivery

1
2 company to convert people from coal to oil. And now,
3 I'm working on electrifying some of the same homes
4 and businesses. In New York City, we have four
5 operational multifamily buildings with Geothermal,
6 each at least seven stories. And we have dozens of
7 projects in various stages of design and construction
8 and representing over 3,500 apartments. Over three
9 million square feet of space, ranging from affordable
10 housing to market rate buildings, to our office
11 buildings and buildings as high as 36 stories.

12 Geothermal heat systems do not use the outdoor
13 air. So, the concerns about what happens for heat
14 output and a polar vortex or when it's zero degrees
15 outside, are not a concern. The ground temperature
16 in New York City is constant. Geothermal systems
17 also reduce environmental noise, eliminating the need
18 for condensers, dry coolers and cooling towers on the
19 roofs.

20 Others have mentioned the higher operational
21 costs, so I just want to address that for a second.
22 One of the first large scale geothermal projects we
23 did in New York City was pass an affordable housing
24 project in Far Rockaway. That project has air
25 conditioning costs for the tenants of under \$10 a

1 month, which increases the affordability, increases
2 the indoor air quality for the residents that in-
3 affordable housing in New York wouldn't necessarily
4 otherwise run air conditioning, the cost of the
5 affordability concern.
6

7 And then the other big thing that was mentioned
8 was domestic hot water not necessarily being ready
9 for prime time. Since we've started large scale
10 geothermal designs in New York City in 2017. I know
11 of at least a dozen new products that have come to
12 the markets. Uhm, including - and these are new to
13 the New York City market, not new to the market as a
14 whole. And a lot of those were driven the cost of
15 Local Law 97. So, the phase timing would allow
16 additional products to come out as well.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you very
19 much for your testimony and uhm, uh, Samara, let's
20 see if the Association for Affordable Energy around.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see them. Is anyone
22 representing the Association for Affordable Energy?

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, why don't we uh - let
24 me just give my comments for this panel. I was the
25 one that you know did my best to get the ball rolling

2 on you know geothermal back with I guess it was John
3 Rhyner who worked for Peter Grossman I think.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That's right.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And that was a long time
6 ago to do like a geothermal map, so I certainly
7 applaud you know the most renewable of all renewable
8 and speaking as a geologist, I'm a little you know,
9 I'm a little partial and biased. You know with
10 regard to my affinity for geothermal and I thank
11 these two witnesses for uhm, you know giving this
12 broader audience you know the benefit of this you
13 know technology that I would like to see you know
14 multiply you know many fold in New York City and make
15 sure that you send us both your uh, testimony in full
16 so that we can get benefit. So, we can get the most
17 benefit from it.

18 Thank you. Thank you very much for your
19 statements today. Group twelve.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Group Twelve. John Rath of
21 New York GEO. This is the Statewide Geothermal
22 Organization. Bill Nowak of New York Geothermal,
23 Rachael Grace Rewiring America, Amar Shah Rocky
24 Mountain Institute and New York Passive House.

25 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Samara.

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

3 JOHN RATH: Thank you Chair Gennaro. I've been
4 itching for over an hour to answer the question of
5 Council Member Ampry-Samuel about how do we get the
6 yes. And also answer your question about whether
7 there's a trade organization involved. And so, I
8 would be one of those people from the trade
9 organization, New York Geothermal Organization. We
10 represent designers, installers, drillers,
11 manufacturers and education people responsible for
12 the installation of energy saving ground source heat
13 pumps. And I'm pleased to know that you're an expert
14 in that, so it's good to hear.

15 As you heard Mr. Fink say, we already have real
16 life examples of healthier and cost competitive
17 buildings in New York City that don't use fossil
18 fuels for space heating. And they don't use them for
19 cooling or hot water heating. We already have
20 contractors that are providing excellent wages for
21 ground source heat pump work in New York City and our
22 members have unfortunately lost cost competitive
23 projects simply because developers do not understand
24 and are not familiar with heat pumps.

2 So, this Number 2317 will send a much needed
3 market signal because frankly education isn't going
4 to be enough. And in closing, I just want to let you
5 know that the New York GEO members support Intro.
6 2317 and our members are able and willing to move New
7 York City to a cleaner, healthier and electrified
8 environment. Thank you very much.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you John.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker is Bill
11 Nowak.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 BILL NOWAK: Thank you Chair Gennaro and Counsel
14 Swanston. Regarding bill 2019, the building
15 electrification study, New York GEO completely
16 supports this bill and would be very interested in
17 providing input on GEO Thermals value in electrifying
18 heating without adding to peak demand and stressing
19 the grid.

20 It was good to hear Director Furnas's enthusiasm
21 for the efficiency of air source heat pumps. He'll
22 be even more impressed with the performance of ground
23 source heat pumps, which are significantly more
24 efficient than air source, especially on the coldest
25

2 and the hottest days of the year when the grid is
3 most vulnerable.

4 This goes directly to Council Member Ampry-
5 Samuels earlier question and the points others have
6 raised about the electricity supply. Regarding 2317,
7 the writing on the wall needs to be clear for
8 everyone to see. New York's construction and housing
9 markets need clear signals on how and when it will be
10 necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

11 There's currently too little awareness as new
12 buildings are going up and old buildings being
13 rehabbed that fossil fuel heating is approaching
14 obsolescence and may need to be replaced as
15 significant costs sooner rather than later.

16 The clearest way to send a message is to
17 establish a strong timetable for the transition.
18 Without distinct writing on the wall, it's not clear
19 that any amount of cost cutting or education will jar
20 the market out of doing things the way it's always
21 been done. The market is currently comfortable with
22 fossil fuel heating and needs a strong signal to move
23 that comfort in another direction.

24 We also face an enormous challenge transforming
25 the HVAC industry itself, to one that's working to

2 meet our climate challenges. A clear set of end
3 dates will be very helpful in turning the attention
4 of HVAC stakeholders to the transition to fossil fuel
5 free heating. New York State has more than adequate
6 supply of contractors capable of installing heat
7 pumps with the small amount of training. What is
8 needed is the market signal.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 BILL NOWAK: It's important to think of the jobs
11 that will be created and geothermal heat pumps take
12 more labor to install than fossil fuel systems. We
13 urge our friends in the labor movement to look at the
14 big picture, embrace the necessary change and start
15 accessing the tens of thousands of jobs that will be
16 created. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Bill. Uh,
18 Samara?

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, the next person on
21 this panel, please.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Amar Shah from the Rocky
23 Mountain Institute.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: What happened to Rachael?
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uh — oh, Rachael Grace from
3 Rewiring America. Excuse me.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 RACHAEL GRACE: Thank you. Thank you Chair
6 Gennaro, the Environmental Protection Committee and
7 distinguished members of the New York City Council
8 for your time today and for considering 2317.

9 My name is Rachael Grace and I am the Director of
10 Strategic Policy Initiatives at Rewiring America. We
11 are a nonprofit dedicated to widespread
12 electrification as a way to achieve emissions
13 reductions, create jobs and reduce monthly energy
14 bills. We are here today in strong support of Intro.
15 2317 as an ambitious but practical way to advance the
16 city's climate goals.

17 Approximately 75 percent of New York City's
18 greenhouse gas emissions stem from the energy use in
19 buildings. Then over half of these emissions come
20 from heating these largely powered by natural gas.

21 In 2019, natural gas accounted for 62 percent of
22 energy use in mid to large size multifamily
23 buildings. Also, in 2019, New York City awarded over
24 24,000 new housing building permits. The majority of
25 which were for large buildings with over 50 units.

2 All of these are going to need heating. At this pace
3 by 2030, New York may have awarded 240,000 permits
4 for new residential buildings alone. There is simply
5 no way for the City of New York to meet its
6 commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050 without doing
7 all it can to minimize if not eliminate emissions
8 originated by these projects.

9 To meet NYC's targets, buildings will need to
10 make the switch from gas infrastructure to electric
11 infrastructure. This is clear. Intro. 2317 gives
12 the city an advantage, an opportunity to stop the
13 cycle of infrastructure replacement before it begins.
14 The appliances, the heating and cooling systems will
15 not need to be replaced with efficient electric
16 versions in the years to come because they will
17 already have them installed. This allows the City of
18 New York to focus its attention on helping New
19 Yorkers electrify existing buildings. Getting us on
20 a path to a carbon neutral 2050.

21 In sum passing 2317, is essential for the City of
22 New York to reach its climate goals. Buildings
23 strive New York's greenhouse gas emissions led by its
24 heating needs. We have the technologies commercially
25

2 available today to electrify and we urge the Council
3 to advance Intro. 2317. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you
5 Rachael. Uh, Samara, I think now we're going to Amar
6 Shah, are we not? Samara?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Amar Shah from the Rocky
8 Mountain Institute.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

10 AMAR SHAH: Good afternoon. My name is Amar
11 Shah, and I'm a Manager at the Rocky Mountain
12 Institute. An independent, nonprofit focused on a
13 just, prosperous, and zero-carbon energy transition
14 globally.

15 I join today to testify in support of Intro.
16 2317, and to urge the Council to pass the bill this
17 year. New York City needs to stop digging its
18 climate hole and stop deepening its reliance on
19 fossil fuels in buildings. I also want to lift up
20 the revisions proposed by Urban Green Council in
21 written testimony, which are specific, ambitious, and
22 feasible in implementation. And these changes can be
23 accomplished this year.

24 Three themes that I hit on this live testimony.
25 First, as noted earlier, reliance on gas in buildings

2 is not just a climate issue but a public health one.

3 A recent study out of Harvard Chan School of Public
4 Health, found that New York is the worst state in the
5 country for premature deaths stemming from air
6 pollution from buildings. It's not just oil, gas use
7 was a lead culprit in the study.

8 Second, continued new construction with gas is
9 expensive and risky for New York City. Every
10 building built with fossil fuels today will very
11 likely need to be retrofitted at higher cost down the
12 road. To make matters worse, downstate ratepayers are
13 currently subsidizing the addition of new buildings
14 to the gas system, by an estimated \$120 million per
15 year, according to research by New York GEO. One
16 more year \$120 million more of rate payer spending on
17 gas build out that may not even be used for its full
18 youth of life.

19 Third, in contrast, new all-electric buildings
20 are cost-effective. Research from RMI, NYSERDA,
21 and others has shown that developers can build all-
22 electric and save money doing it. These cost savings
23 will only increase as the market develops.

24 In conclusion, with more than 100 million square
25 feet of projected building area growth this decade,

1 Intro. 2317 is an opportunity for New York City to
2 claim a leadership -

3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please conclude.

5 AMAR SHAH: Spur the market and have a
6 significant climate and health impact. We encourage
7 this body to act today. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you very
9 much.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We have the - the next guest
11 is New York Passive House. I don't know if anyone's
12 here from New York Passive House. Do we have any one
13 here from New York Passive House?

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, why don't we save
15 that and if the representative is around, they can
16 testify later but let's not hold things up.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Then if there is any more
19 people that want to testify, I actually uh, have a
20 question for uhm, uh, for - well, I guess Mr. Rath
21 and Mr. Nowak, regarding you know the difference
22 between you know using Geothermal you know versus air
23 for deep pumps. And you know with the consistent you
24 know temperature that we find below the earth. You
25

1 know just in terms of you know relative efficiency.

2 So, there's that on top of - there are probably areas
3 in the city - this was the whole thrust behind my
4 quest you know years ago to do a full you know
5 geothermal map for New York City where it could be
6 best utilized. Because I'm sure that utility
7 companies and other entities who have wires under the
8 ground are you know - sometimes can impede the
9 deployment of geothermal.
10

11 So, that's like the second part of my question.
12 Sort of like the first part is like relative
13 efficiency of you know cold weather. You know, in
14 very cold weather, heating versus - is that uhm in
15 areas of the city that you know geothermal cannot be
16 well utilized because of red tape and other
17 impediments to deploying the technology. I hope
18 that makes sense.

19 BILL NOWAK: Of course.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And that's for uhm, for
21 John or Bill, whoever wants to take that on.

22 BILL NOWAK: Thank you very much for that
23 question Mr. Chair and that's an extremely important
24 point. You know air source heat pumps at relatively
25 mild temperatures can be fairly efficient. But

2 ground source heat pumps, because they rely on the
3 temperature underground, which is constant year
4 round, are much more efficient on the coldest and
5 hottest days of the year. And this is really going
6 to play out. A number of people brought up the point
7 about you know the grid and the impact of
8 electrification on the grid. If you're dealing with
9 an air source heat pump and it get down to a co-
10 efficient of one or one and a half on the coldest
11 days of the year, that will be problematic for the
12 grid.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, when you say co-
14 efficient of one or one and a half, like that does
15 that mean?

16 BILL NOWAK: That means essentially the same as
17 electric resistance heat. That you're getting 100
18 percent of what you're putting out into the
19 electrically into the heating system. Whereas with
20 geothermal, on that same day, you'll be at 300 to 400
21 percent. For every unit of electricity, you're
22 putting in, you're going to be getting three or four
23 units of heat.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Right.
25

2 BILL NOWAK: And this really makes a difference
3 when we come to those coldest days. It is going to
4 be important that we utilize air source heat pumps.
5 But wherever possible, we should be working with
6 ground source heat pumps because of that dampening
7 effect on peak demand.

8 You know, you mentioned the areas of the city
9 where geothermal might not work because you can't
10 drill through a subway tunnel or a water tunnel. And
11 those are the places that if we electrify, it's going
12 to be air source heat pumps or possibly water source
13 using some of the heated water that's flowing through
14 the city's subways and being wasted in many
15 circumstances.

16 But you know, we really need to focus as much as
17 we can on ground source and make that the go to
18 technology supplemented by air source where it works
19 out better in more limited circumstances. That would
20 be really important advice and really important
21 information for this panel to take, particularly as
22 you consider the electrification study built.

23 We have a presentation that we've been giving to
24 the Public Services Commission and to the governor's
25

1 office on this that we would be more than happy to
2 take you through at some point.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Sure, I would direct staff
5 to make sure that that connection is made and that I
6 do get the benefit of – it's Bill, right? I'm
7 talking to Bill right?

8 BILL NOWAK: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, and I get the benefit
10 of that presentation. Is this something I want to
11 pardon the pun, kind of like drill down on, because I
12 think this is you know very important. So, I thank
13 you for that you know clarification and I, you know
14 urge all members of the panel, all panels to send all
15 the good testimony that you've given in writing, so I
16 could study it further. And I really appreciate this
17 panel being here today talking about geothermal and
18 Bill, you particularly for shedding light on the
19 question that I posed.

20 BILL NOWAK: Thank you so much.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, thank you. And now
22 going forward Samara, I mean I don't know if these
23 are folks with various affiliations and are not
24 actually paneled together like, so to speak. So,
25

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2 should we do one at a time on these or how should we
3 proceed.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure, why not?

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Patrick Boyle from NYSFAH.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

8 PATRICK BOYLE: I'm muted. Hi, can you hear me?

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, gotcha.

10 PATRICK BOYLE: Thanks so much. My name is
11 Patrick Boyle, I'm the Director of Policy for
12 NYSFAH. We're the trade association for the
13 affordable housing industry in New York State. We
14 almost 400 members, developers, architects,
15 engineers, builders, lenders of affordable housing.
16 Some of which I've testified already in support of
17 2317. I want to thank the Chair and the other
18 members of the Committee for the opportunity to
19 submit this testimony and read it. I won't read it
20 work for word in the interest of time. I'll just
21 sort of go through.

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah.

23 PATRICK BOYLE: And tell you that the affordable
24 housing industry is very supportive of this.
25 Specifically, Intro. 2317 you know really as an

1 industry association, we've pushed our members to be
2 very aggressive about meeting climate goals. We were
3 supportive of previous climate mandates at the city
4 and state level. A lot of our members are very
5 aggressive with respect to meeting enterprise green
6 community standards, passive house, solar energy,
7 green roofing and a lot of electrification projects.
8 A few of the members that have spoken and testified
9 already have participated in a lot of those fully
10 electric buildings. The NYSAFAH members have
11 contributed to give affordable housing portfolio.

12 So, we're supportive of it. We appreciate the
13 Council making it a priority. We do echo sort of two
14 comments that a number of previous speakers today
15 touched on. Greater clarity is needed in the
16 legislation on what is exactly is meant by the
17 rehabilitations. The definition in there now doesn't
18 conform to the exact DOB code. We understand it to
19 mean sort of major all one renovations but that needs
20 to be sort of more explicit. And number two, as has
21 been said sort of repeatedly, heat and hot water are
22 sort of very different in terms of what's available
23 out there now.
24

2 So, we support the phase in as it exists in this
3 bill with respect to heat. We recommend a five year
4 phase in with respect to electric hot water. Thank
5 you for your time.

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Mr.
7 Boyle. Everyone is I'm sure you know very familiar
8 with the good work of NYSFAFH and we appreciate all
9 that you do for affordable housing and making that
10 available and also, trying to you know be very much a
11 part of between moving and making sure that that will
12 not sacrificing uhm, environmental advancement you
13 know at the expense of affordable housing. We can do
14 both at the same time and no one has been a better
15 exemplar of that than NYSFAFH.

16 So, thank you for being here today. I look
17 forward to reviewing your full testimony in writing.

18 PATRICK BOYLE: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Atalia
21 Howe from the Community Preservation Corporation.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 ATALIA HOWE: Thank you, Chair Gennaro and other
24 distinguished members of the New York City Council,
25 for the opportunity to speak today. My name is

2 Atalia Howe, I am the Assistant Vice President of
3 Initiatives and Impact Investing at the Community
4 Preservation Corporation, we're an affordable housing
5 and community revitalization finance company.

6 Over our 47-year history, CPC has deployed nearly
7 \$12 billion for affordable housing and community
8 development, leading to the creation and preservation
9 of nearly 220,000 units of residential housing. CPC
10 supports the intent of Intro. 2317 and shares the
11 desire to significantly reduce the city's greenhouse
12 gas emissions. Whole building electrification
13 represents an important step towards reaching the
14 city and state's established climate goals.

15 However, there are two main areas of concern.
16 The first is that while electric solutions exist and
17 are reaching cost parity with conventional building
18 systems, large buildings are complex and appropriate
19 solutions for large loads are not yet widely
20 available. As such, we stand with our affordable
21 housing industry partners and recommend the Council
22 adopt a five-year phase in period for large buildings
23 to electrify domestic hot water systems.

24 Our second main concern is that the bill
25 references major renovations, however, it is not

1 defined and should be clarified in the bill text. In
2 the event that the Council decides to include major
3 renovations based on an unambiguous and reasonable
4 definition in the legislation, CPC has outlined the
5 following issues for consideration: Adequate
6 Infrastructure and adequate resources. The task of
7 electrifying the city's building stock will require
8 additional capital to cover the incremental costs
9 associated with the systems improvements. Owners of
10 small buildings and others who operate on thin
11 margins and lack the requisite financial and
12 technical resources, including many owners of rent
13 regulated properties and unsubsidized affordable
14 multifamily, will be particularly effected by a law
15 like this and stable to comply. The Council must
16 make it financially feasible for building owners to
17 retrofit their properties, something that is a clear
18 precedent in our city's past.

19
20 When New York City needed to revamp its housing
21 stock in 1955, the Council cleared the J-51 tax
22 abatement to offset costs and encourage building
23 owners to renovate their properties. It worked.
24 Electrification of the building stock –

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

2 ATALIA HOWE: Particularly the existing building
3 stock is no different. City Council should look to
4 the early success of J-51 as a blueprint and
5 recognize that it will not be enough to mandate
6 electrification, particularly in existing buildings.

7 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ms. Howe for your
8 compelling testimony and I look forward to getting
9 that in writing and you made several points that are
10 you know will get my full attention. So, thank you
11 for that.

12 ATALIA HOWE: Thank you.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next witness is Eric
14 Liftin of MESH Architectures.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

16 ERIC LIFTIN: Hi, I'm Eric Liftin of MESH
17 Architectures. I'm the architect and our firm is
18 based in Brooklyn. At MESH we have been capping gas
19 lines and converting cooking and heating over to
20 electricity for several years, with great results.

21 This year, so far, we've completed two all-
22 electric row houses. We're doing a new six-story
23 building on Union Street, which is nearly complete,
24 we will have no gas in it. Our heating and cooling
25 will be done by electric heat pumps, we will heat our

1
2 water with heat pumps, and our cooking will be done
3 on amazing induction cooktops. These systems work
4 very well and are not particularly expensive. We
5 will also have solar panels on the roof as well by
6 the way.

7 The key thing to keep in mind is that today's
8 buildings are different from old buildings. Our
9 buildings are insulated and air sealed. They don't
10 need as much heat as buildings of the past. Burning
11 fuel in our buildings is an obsolete practice. It
12 requires exhaust flues and a steady supply of oxygen,
13 which greatly detract from a building's energy
14 efficiency. The old model of air leaking in and out
15 of the building while a huge furnace blasts heat into
16 it is long over.

17 Today's heat pumps are incredibly efficient and
18 effective. Cooking on induction stovetops is much
19 safer, easier to maintain, more reliable than gas,
20 and is a pleasure to cook on. Going all-electric is
21 very easy to do, it doesn't cost too much, it's
22 healthier, and it prepares a building that will be
23 around for many decades to use increasingly
24 sustainably produced electric power. The bill should
25 prohibit all combustion in new buildings and in

2 renovations that replace heating systems and have an
3 opportunity to modernize insulation. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much for
5 your good testimony and for all the work that you're
6 doing to show how this can be done. I look forward
7 to your reading your remarks, which I hope that you
8 will send along to us and all your good works. Thank
9 you.

10 ERIC LIFTIN: Thank you very much.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Jim, the next
12 testimony is from Ismael Diaz Tolentino from El
13 Puente.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

15 ISMAEL DIAZ TOLENTINO: Hello. Thank you for the
16 opportunity. My name is Ismael Diaz-Tolentino and I
17 am the Environmental Justice Coordinator at Puente.
18 El Puente is human rights institution that promotes
19 leadership for peace and justice through the holistic
20 engagement of the community and the arts, education,
21 scientific research and environmental action.

22 We operate mainly in Williamsburg and Bushwick to
23 low-income communities of colors that have been
24 historically vulnerable to environmental injustices
25 with poor air quality being one of the most

1
2 dangerous. Several sources contribute to poor air
3 quality in our areas, including the traffic from the
4 BQE, the Williamsburg Bridge, [INAUDIBLE 3:44:32] and
5 traffic associated with solid waste facilities.

6 As we already know a space and water heating
7 appliance such as furnaces and boilers burning gas or
8 oil to produce heat and emit several dangerous
9 pollutants. This includes a notorious dangerous fine
10 particulate matter PM-2.25 and others like oxide of
11 nitrogen and sulfur. This polluted air takes a toll
12 in our neighborhood and as a consequence the raise of
13 asthma and asthma related hospitalizations are double
14 across Brooklyn.

15 Additionally, 6.3 percent of the population in
16 our communities have reported having asthma. A
17 percentage twice as high that raised for New York
18 City respectively. This environmental injustice is
19 compounded by high levels of poverty, unemployment
20 and the lack of access to adequate healthcare and for
21 long time residents. And our communities cannot be
22 burdened with any further infrastructure that
23 comprises the health of the residents and we need to
24 come together to prevent gas infrastructure, that
25

2 does not support the city nor a state commitment to
3 transition to clean energy.

4 And then gas use in new constructions would avoid
5 large increases in air pollution. From thousands of
6 newly constructed or gut renovated buildings each
7 year which would reduce mortality and other health
8 effects such as asthma and other respiratory issues
9 in our communities. For our communities to be truly
10 healthy and sustainable, there is the need to
11 prioritize these policy changes and create clean jobs
12 while doing it. Our communities in Williamsburg and
13 Bushwick are in support of this bill because it will
14 translate into improve air quality -

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

16 ISMAEL DIAZ TOLENTINO: Better health for our
17 residents. Thank you very much.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much for
19 being a crusader and for you know doing all that you
20 do for your local community and I appreciate your
21 presence here today and your patience. From now on,
22 I'm going to start thanking everyone for their
23 patience, we're many hours into the hearing. And I
24 appreciate you and everyone who testified
25 subsequently. Please give us your testimony in

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2 writing, so we can give it the deep dive that we need
3 to do on it. Thank you very much for being here.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chairman Gennaro, we are
5 going to be switching Moderators now. And we will be
6 switching over to Irene. Irene Brovsky(SP?).

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, good afternoon.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Will transition at four.
9 Alright Irene.

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: She is going to take over for
12 me.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, but I think everyone
14 should give Samara a round of applause for being here
15 so far, how about that.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much Samara.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Thank you.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: My name is Irene Brovsky.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Irene, I left off at Patrick
20 Houston from New York Communities for Change.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much again
22 Samara and our next panelist is Patrick Houston from
23 New York Communities for Change. Patrick.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

25

2 PATRICK HOUSTON: Okay, there it is, thank you.

3 And yes Houston, Houston like the city. Thank you.

4 My name is Patrick Houston. Thank you for holding

5 this hearing. Thank you for this opportunity to

6 testify today. I'm testifying my own behalf as a

7 younger person concerned about the climate emergency

8 but also, on behalf of New York Communities for

9 Change with whom I work.

10 I urge the New York City Council to strengthen

11 then pass Introduction 2317, this year, to fight

12 climate change. The temperatures of our city, the

13 water levels surrounding it, the frequency of flash

14 floods and subway shutdowns, are all implicated by

15 the action we do or do not take today. I know

16 anecdotes don't answer all of the technical questions

17 in the bill. They can however, put the cost of

18 delaying or decreasing the impact of the bill into

19 context. And we heard several short-sided efforts to

20 do so today.

21 So, thus I'll share. In 2012, my AmeriCorps

22 National Civilian Community Corp. team and I were

23 called to assist with Hurricane Sandy response. I

24 remember seeing the devastation. It was surreal.

25 Boats strewn across roads, blocks in from the

2 beachfront, shattered houses with backyards visible
3 from front yards after flood waters tore through
4 first floors. I remember recording families'
5 material losses which seemed endless, spoiled
6 medications, totaled vehicles, lost pets, inundated
7 basements and first floors.

8 Further, disrupted school years for many kids and
9 families, displacement, depleted family savings.
10 This all rocked families and communities all while
11 NGOs, state and federal agencies scrambled to
12 respond. Chaos by not taking big climate action now,
13 we leave open the floodgates to more of this chaos.
14 Let's do everything in our power to avoid this
15 future. And that means passing the strongest version
16 of Intro. 2317. On that note, we urge at least two
17 major -

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

19 PATRICK HOUSTON: Adjustments in the bill. I'll
20 just finish with just two major adjustments. One,
21 shorten the timeline to one year for implementation.
22 Two, Amend the language to more clearly ensure that
23 gut renovations are included. And further changes
24 have been included in my written testimony, which has
25 been submitted. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Patrick. I look
3 forward to that - uh, your written testimony and I'm
4 happy that you have submitted that. Thank you for
5 being a crusader and all that you do. I appreciate
6 your patience and your good testimony.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And our next panelist is Kim
8 Fraczek from Sane Energy Project.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Kim Fraczek?

11 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, if I could jump in, I
12 have on my list Leroy Johnson and Ashton Stuart
13 before Kim but I don't know if they're here. I mean,
14 I'm just going off my list.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yeah, currently I do not seem
16 them on the list.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If they join us again, we'll
19 definitely call their names. Let's go to the next
20 panelist. Edith Kantrowitz.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

22 EDITH KANTROWITZ: Hi, my name is Edith
23 Kantrowitz, I'm with United for Action, a grassroots
24 organization fighting climate change and I'm also
25 affiliated with New York City Friends at Clearwater.

1
2 I would like to add my voice those who have
3 thanked the Committee for having this hearing and
4 those who have urged in the strongest way possible
5 that we passed Intro. 2317 in this session, this year
6 and without delay. Because climate change is not
7 delaying. We can see it – I see it right outside my
8 window. I don't see the Antarctic melting, I don't
9 see the Artic melting, but what I do see is a tree
10 that is green.

11 And every other year at this time, it already
12 turned yellow, bright yellow and so, we see that even
13 the natural cycles of our trees in New York City has
14 been disrupted, okay. I would like to also endorse
15 the two changes that have been suggested by many of
16 the other speakers that we should move from a two
17 year implementation framework to a one year
18 implementation and that we should clarify the
19 language around gut renovations to make sure that
20 that renovations are included.

21 In addition to the impact on climate change, this
22 will have tremendous impacts on our air quality in
23 New York City over a thousand people a year die
24 unnecessarily from air pollution related to buildings
25 and the impact of that falls more heavily on

2 communities of color. And so, by implementing this,
3 we will be taking a big step for environmental
4 justice. Not to add that there will be also a
5 tremendous creation of green jobs and there will be
6 elimination of some of the dangers that we have
7 associated with gas explosions in buildings,
8 providing a safer environment and a healthier
9 environment and a tremendous step towards containing
10 to whatever extent we still can contain climate
11 change. Anyway, thank you for your time and please
12 let's make sure we pass this bill in a stronger form
13 as possible.

14 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Edith very much
15 for your good testimony. We look forward you
16 submitting it to us in writing, if you have not done
17 so already and I want to point out to Irene, I have
18 someone on my list from Sane Energy Project Lee
19 Ziesche it look like. Do you have that? Do you have
20 that Irene? Who was before Edith?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Ziesche.

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: It could be that you're
23 dealing with a more updated list because I got mine
24 very early this morning and so, sometimes the staff
25

1
2 has the latest and best list. So, I just don't want
3 to miss anybody.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, yeah, I totally
5 understand Chair. I have my list updated and
6 actually, I just noticed that Kim Fraczek joined us.

7 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: From Sane Energy Project.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, she was uh -

10 KIM FRACZEK: Sorry, I had to bounce off for a
11 meeting from three to four but yeah, if I could -

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I'm the Chair and I say
13 you're on, so you're on.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

15 KIM FRACZEK: Thank you so much. My name is Kim
16 Fraczek, I'm the Director of Sane Energy Project. We
17 represent uh almost 17,000 New Yorkers working for
18 the past decade to halt fossil fuels and move our
19 economy to 100 percent community owned and led
20 renewables.

21 It is such a pleasure to work with such a forward
22 thinking City Council, and I thank you for your
23 valiant efforts to address climate change as the
24 crisis that is in our beloved waterfront city. We
25 support Council Member Ampry-Samuel Intro. 2317 that

2 is long overdue for New York. We must ensure that
3 methane is no longer a part of our energy equation
4 for heating, cooking, and generating electricity in
5 our buildings, and this bill is a major piece of the
6 puzzle to get us to a 100 percent sustainable and
7 healthy city that can be resilient when the next
8 Super Storm Sandy or Hurricane Ida hits us.

9 We also support Council Member Louis 2196, which
10 is also long overdue to ban gas and kitchen stoves.
11 We know that addressing the climate crisis also means
12 addressing the inequitable health and economic crisis
13 that targets low income communities and communities
14 of color, who make New York City the creative,
15 powerful, vibrant city that it is.

16 We know that during Michael Bloomberg's time as
17 Mayor of New York City, he did everything in his
18 power to push for oil to gas conversions, lying to
19 everyone that gas was somehow cleaner and greener,
20 and suppressed programs that uplifted renewable
21 heating for buildings, and pushing for the Spectra
22 pipeline in the West Village to facilitate the
23 connection with the fracking in PA to force
24 consumption of fracked gas here in New York City, so
25 he could line his personal pockets that were invested

2 in the fracking industry. And now have us behind in
3 our climate goals and now we're locked into the
4 rising cost of infrastructure and find ourselves in
5 this mess. We also saw a lag in decision making and
6 commitments from the United States that the COP 26 in
7 Glasgow recently and it's our duty as New York City
8 to be leading this.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 KIM FRACZEK: Pardon?

11 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Your time is up, so I'm
12 asking you to – so, we're asking you to conclude.

13 KIM FRACZEK: Okay, well we support the bill from
14 Council Member Ampry-Samuel. Thank you so much.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you Kim.
16 Please submit your testimony in writing, we're
17 grateful that you were able to pop back in with us.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yup, our next panelist is Lee
19 Ziesche. I apologize if I mispronounced the name.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, it's like Ziesche
21 maybe. I don't know, I don't know. We'll find out.

22 LEE ZIESCHE: Ziesche like rotten sushi.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Ziesche, okay, okay.

24 LEE ZIESCHE: Uh yeah, so I am Lee Ziesche. I am
25 Lee Ziesche, I am the Community Engagement

1
2 Coordinator for Sane Energy Project. And as my
3 colleague just said, you know we absolutely support
4 Intro. 2317 and we very much support making sure that
5 it gets passed this year and it is not weakened in
6 any way. We support the recommendations made by WE
7 ACT and other members of the GasFreeNYC Coalition.
8 And you know we cannot push this down the line
9 anymore. Sane Energy as Kim said, has been fighting
10 frack gas infrastructure for a decade. And for a
11 decade, this city has been going in the wrong
12 direction believing the fossil fuel lies that gas is
13 cheap. That gas is clean and that is good for our
14 climate but what we've really been doing over the
15 last ten years is connecting our homes here in New
16 York City through pipelines to fracking fields in
17 Pennsylvania. That is one of the most radioactive
18 shale plays in the country.

19 And so, we are creating pathways for unhealthy
20 gas to come directly into our city and that is
21 leaking all along the root. And what the actual cost
22 of that has been is hundreds of millions of dollars
23 on us as rate payers. National Grid, Con Edison have
24 continued to build pipelines like the North Brooklyn
25 Pipeline, which is in Council Member Ampry-Samuels

2 district. And you know, this time last year,
3 community members put their bodies on the line to
4 shut down that pipeline because they understand that
5 we have no time left. So, please do not weaken this
6 bill at all. We have such little time and we have
7 spent so much of it going in the wrong direction. We
8 know that this gas is not clean. That when it's
9 being burned in our homes, it is unhealthy for us.
10 We know that the methane that is leaking is just, you
11 know has been sending us in the wrong direction.

12 So, please stand with these communities. You
13 know it really has been New York City communities
14 that have led the fight to get us where we are today.
15 And it's just so crucial that we do not waste anymore
16 time.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

18 LEE ZIESCHE: Going in the wrong direction.

19 Thank you so much.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much for
21 your testimony Lee and please submit your comments in
22 writing. Thank you for all of your advocacy.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and our next
24 panelist is Karen Arpino from Northeast Hearth Patio
25 and BBQ Association.

1 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

2
3 KAREN ARPINO: It's the Northeast Hearth Patio
4 and BBQ Association. Thank you so much for having me
5 today. I represent the Hearth Patio and BBQ
6 retailers in the northeast, which is New England into
7 New York.

8 While considering this legislation today, it's
9 important to consider that during a time in which
10 natural gas use and infrastructure has expanded
11 across the state, Co2 has been reduced. Co2
12 emissions have been reduced. This season, we've
13 already had four weather related power outages that
14 have had homes and business owners relying on gas,
15 oil and wood for heat. Additionally, the economic
16 impacts of full electrification on working families
17 and small businesses as well as those in
18 environmental justice communities would be costly
19 with today's rising costs and increasing energy
20 prices.

21 The consequences of policies that ban affordable
22 energy always hit hardest those who can afford it
23 least. The Northeast HPBA is concerned with the
24 hyperfocus on electrification currently in New York.
25 Three out of five homes or nearly 60 percent of homes

2 rely on natural gas for home heating and it provides
3 over 40 percent of the states power generation.

4 According to the Energy Information
5 Administration, winter field forecasts the average US
6 residential gas customer will pay \$572 for energy
7 this winter compared with \$1,209 per households using
8 electricity for heating. That's a difference of 111
9 percent. New York area households already pay more
10 than 50 percent more for electricity than the
11 national average.

12 In the last decades, New York has had the
13 countries biggest increase in the number of
14 households using natural gas as a heating fuel source
15 according to the US Census. Between 2005 and 2014,
16 the number of New York natural gas customers went
17 from 3.7 to 4.2. This is an increase of over 500,000
18 households and is more than a net increase in the
19 rest of the country combined.

20 Yet, still in the last several years -

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please conclude.

23 KAREN ARPINO: Despite that in the last decade,
24 Co2 emissions have gone down 18 percent. I submitted
25

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2 my testimony written. Thank you so much for the time
3 today.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Karen. I
5 appreciate your being here and thanks for your
6 patience in waiting to testify and thank you for your
7 good testimony. I appreciate it.

8 KAREN ARPINO: My pleasure, thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You bet.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Karen. Our next
11 panelist is Moira McComas from Supportive Housing
12 Network of New York.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

14 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Hi everyone. My name is Moira
15 McComas, I am a Policy Analyst. Sorry, one moment,
16 I'm pulling up my script. I'm a Policy Analyst at
17 the Supportive Housing Network for New York.

18 Hello, Chair Gennaro and members of the Committee
19 on Environmental Protection. Sorry about that.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: No, it's all good.

21 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Okay. So, the network is a
22 membership organization. We represent over 200
23 nonprofit members who operate and develop supportive
24 housing.

25

2 In doing so, we also strive to keep the best
3 interests of tenants and staff a priority. So,
4 supportive housing is permanent affordable housing
5 with embedded social services for eligible
6 individuals and families. So, those who are
7 experiencing chronic homelessness and living with
8 disabilities. The network has over 100 corporate
9 members as well, including tax credit syndicators,
10 banks and other financial institutions.

11 So, thank you for this opportunity to submit
12 testimony regarding Intro. 2091. So, the network
13 supports many of the goals of this legislation and
14 appreciates the intension and the feasibility
15 component of city measures to decarbonize New York
16 City's buildings. Ultimately, we understand the
17 city's emission reducing targets and initiatives
18 aimed to provide equitable – that benefit the
19 community suffering the worst impacts of pollution.

20 So, we want to underscore just a few specific
21 concerns and then provide some recommendations. So,
22 we have overall concerns with electrification
23 initiatives. They are going to take a massive public
24 investment and any rent regulations must be paired
25

1
2 with programs that ensure we're not diverting limited
3 resources from the development of supportive housing.

4 So, as the network supports the feasibility
5 assessments, we need and hope that this legislation
6 will be used to identify any issues that would
7 disrupt the pipeline preventing preservation efforts
8 and future development. So, we can't allow people
9 experiencing homelessness to suffer as a result of
10 these climate goals. The cost of any required rehab
11 system upgrades needs to be addressed in the
12 assessment. And then worked to the parameters of
13 city term sheets. And I just have one more point.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: What I will do, I will
16 assert my prerogative as Chair and yeah, just to let
17 you finish your thought and then I have a question
18 for you.

19 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Sure, thank you. So, there's no
20 mention of a timetable in the legislation for
21 disseminating information to the community in
22 arriving at outcomes. We just need to ensure all
23 assessments are completed and resources are put in
24 place prior to deadlines.

2 And we would also – you know we’ve heard
3 testimony on 2317, we would like the Committee to
4 consider adding feasibility studies, not just for
5 existing buildings but for new construction.

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, you know what? The
7 question – because you were testifying on you know
8 2091 and we appreciate your you know comprehensive
9 testimony on that Intro. because the other two bills
10 today have been kind of in the shadow of 2317 and I
11 was wondering whether you thought that 2317 should be
12 sequenced after the completion of 2091. Is that what
13 you were getting at? Because the outputs from the
14 study from 2091 will inform 2317. I don’t want to
15 put words in your mouth. I just want to make sure
16 that that’s your position.

17 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Yes and we’ve also reached out to
18 New York City Accelerator and we want to get their
19 opinion as well on how those timelines align with
20 Local Law 97 and other local laws. So, I’m looking
21 for some more clarification on that. But we need the
22 feasibility study to put, as you said inform 2371 and
23 with that, we need to know what the feasibility is
24 and the timeline and the costs associated with new
25

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2 construction. Because 2091 is just focusing on
3 exiting.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Right okay, so again, not
5 to put words in your mouth but your position on 2317
6 would be to hold and access, right? Is that a fair
7 statement?

8 MOIRA MCCOMAS: I mean, we are in support of 2137
9 but we just want to make sure -

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: 2317?

11 MOIRA MCCOMAS: 2317 for the record, yup. We
12 want to see the feasibility studies and it could be
13 concurrent but we need to know what is going to
14 happen with 2317 and what the cost feasibility
15 assessment is going to be.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And your business is
17 supportive housing and uhm, and you indicated some
18 concerns about the future development of supportive
19 housing in the face of you know bills that we're
20 trying to advance. Could you articulate a little
21 more on what your concerns are with regards to
22 supportive housing with respect to these bills?

23 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Absolutely and thanks for the
24 focus on this for a moment. So, there is currently a
25 lack of dedicated and reliable funding to achieve

2 climate goals, especially regarding the financial
3 burden that's going to be disproportionately put on
4 the developers of supportive housing. So, we just
5 don't want any regulations to impede the future
6 pipeline. And so, we are looking for outcomes of the
7 feasibility assessment.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: When you say pipeline, you
9 mean the pipeline of making supportive housing right?

10 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Yup, supportive housing units
11 yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Because pipeline is kind of
13 like a loaded term in this hearing today.

14 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Sure, fair enough. Yes uhm, so
15 what we need is to make sure the policy bills match
16 the underwriting realities. Term sheets need to be
17 increased to meet climate goals and if that's - since
18 that's the case, this housing budget must also be
19 increased to ensure that we maintain production.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you and I look
21 forward to your written testimony and what is your
22 title with regard to the organization Supportive
23 Housing New York? What's your title?

24 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Policy Analyst.

25 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Policy Analyst, okay.

2 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Well, Moira, thank you very
4 much for your testimony and your patience and we look
5 forward to your written testimony.

6 MOIRA MCCOMAS: Thank you, appreciate it.

7 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Ms. McComas. Chair,
9 our next panelist is Michelle Hook from New Yorkers
10 for Affordable Energy Coalition. Unfortunately, I do
11 not see Ms. Hook online right now. I will circle
12 back and I now would like to call our next panelist.
13 And the next panelist is Hillary Aidun from Earth
14 Justice.

15 HILLARY AIDUN: Good afternoon, my name is
16 Hillary Aidun I am an Attorney at Earth Justice. We
17 support Intro. 2317 and urge the Council to adopt the
18 bill but lower the emissions threshold.

19 Electrifying buildings is a key component of
20 addressing both climate change and the even more
21 immediate public health threats posed by fossil
22 fuels. Burning fossil fuels in buildings contributes
23 to dangerous air pollution both indoors and outdoors.
24 Stoves and heating appliances that use gas or oil
25 emit nitrogen dioxide, which causes learning

1
2 deficits, aggravated respiratory systems, and changed
3 lung function, as well as particulate matter, which
4 can increase the risk of heart and asthma attacks,
5 and lead to premature death.

6 Communities of color are exposed to higher levels
7 of this pollution than the general population.

8 Intro. 2317 will make a meaningful contribution to
9 addressing these problems, by supporting the
10 transition to a more sustainable building stock
11 rather than further entrenching reliance on natural
12 gas. But we urge the Council to revise the bill to
13 make sure that this outcome is achieved. The bill's
14 current emissions threshold would prohibit the
15 combustion of pure natural gas in new buildings. But
16 we are concerned that an emissions rate of 50
17 kilograms of carbon dioxide per million BTU creates a
18 loophole that could unintentionally allow continued
19 reliance on natural gas and incentivize the use and
20 expansion of other dangerous fuel sources like
21 hydrogen.

22 Because combusting hydrogen does not produce
23 carbon dioxide, blending hydrogen with natural gas is
24 often touted as a way to make natural gas cleaner.
25 But nearly all hydrogen is produced using fossil

2 fuels through an energy-intensive process that
3 generates significant greenhouse gas emissions. And
4 when combusted, hydrogen can emit even higher
5 quantities of nitrogen dioxide than natural gas. An
6 emissions standard that could be met by a hydrogen-
7 natural gas fuel blend would threaten New Yorkers'
8 health by increasing nitrogen dioxide emissions and
9 allow the use of natural gas in new buildings.

10 For these reasons we urge the Council to pass
11 Intro. 2317 but reduce the emissions threshold so
12 that the bill will preclude the use of hydrogen-
13 natural gas fuel blends in addition to preventing the
14 use of pure natural gas in new buildings. And for
15 further information, I will refer you to my written
16 testimony. Thank you very much.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Hillary. We
18 appreciate your testimony, your patience, the good
19 points that you made and your service to the great
20 organization Earth Justice. Thank you very much for
21 being here today.

22 HILLARY AIDUN: Thank you Chair.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Our next panelist
24 is Lisa DeCaprio from NYU Sierra Club.

2 LISA DECAPRIO: Hello, yes I'm here. Oh, may I
3 speak?

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, you're on.

5 LISA DECAPRIO: Okay. Alright, my name is Lisa
6 DiCaprio. I am a Professor of Social Sciences in the
7 Division of Applied Undergraduate Studies in NYU's
8 School of Professional Studies and serve as the
9 Coordinator of our new Bachelor of Science in Real
10 Estate and Urban Sustainability.

11 I am also a member of several environmental
12 organizations, including the Sierra Club, which is
13 playing an important role in all-electric building
14 campaigns in the United States. The Sierra New York
15 City group has endorsed Intro. 2317. I am going to
16 abbreviate my comments. I did submit my written
17 testimony. Here are several main points. One,
18 electricity is the only form of energy with the
19 potential to be obtained entirely from renewable
20 sources. The electrification of buildings is a
21 global movement and an essential corollary to the
22 greening of the electricity grid throughout the
23 world.

24 Two, Intro. 2317 is designed to preempt legal
25 challenges. Three, gas stoves contribute to indoor

1
2 air pollution, as documented in recent studies by the
3 Rocky Mountain Institute, Harvard University and
4 UCLA. Four, all-electric buildings are technically
5 feasible, as demonstrated by the increasing number of
6 new and retrofit all-electric buildings in the U.S.
7 and throughout the world, as pointed out by several
8 architects who gave testimony today.

9 Moreover, the NYSERDA Buildings of Excellence
10 Competition Award, which was initiated in 2019
11 include several all-electric building projects. You
12 may see the projects at the Buildings of Excellence
13 website Round 122 and Round 221. This demonstrates
14 NYSERDA's confidence in all-electric buildings or
15 all-electric buildings are economically feasible
16 because electricity is a more efficient source of
17 energy than natural gas or oil.

18 Five, The electrification of buildings must be
19 accompanied by the reduction of energy consumption,
20 therefore new and substantially retrofitted buildings
21 that are all-electric should achieve the criteria
22 required for a green building certification, such as
23 Passive House Lead Living Building Challenge and net
24 zero energy buildings are for example, several
25

1
2 passive house all-electric buildings in progress or
3 already constructed in New York City.

4 And finally, scientific reports on climate change
5 – I would like to just conclude one sentence.

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, please conclude.

7 LISA DECAPRIO: Alright, scientific reports on
8 climate change issued this year highlight while we
9 must simultaneously and I'm emphasizing
10 simultaneously in response to some of the comments
11 made by speakers today. Accelerate the
12 electrification of buildings reduction of energy
13 consumption by green building design and the greening
14 of the electricity grid. As you and Secretary
15 General António Guterres emphasized in his statement
16 on the August 9, 2021, UN Intergovernmental Panel on
17 Climate Change report, "This is code red for
18 humanity."

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Lisa for being
20 here and for your service to the Sierra Club and for
21 all the things you do to try to advance sound
22 environmental policy.

23 I think you indicated you sent your comments in
24 already? Did you?

25 LISA DICAPRIO: Yes, I did.

1 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, good.

2 LISA DICAPRIO: And what I read today is an
3 abbreviated version of those comments.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, I look forward to
6 reading your comments in full. Thank you very much
7 for being here.

8 LISA DICAPRIO: Thank you. Thank you for the
9 hearing.

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You bet.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Professor DiCaprio
12 and our next panelist is Anne Pernick from SAFE
13 Cities.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

15 ANNE PERNICK: There we are. Hi, thank you for
16 the opportunity to talk with you today. I'm Anne
17 Pernick, I'm the SAFE Cities and Fossil Fuel Non-
18 Proliferation Treaty Community Manager at
19 Stand.earth. And I'm connecting to you actually from
20 Portland, Oregon, because New York City is a leader
21 in the SAFE Cities movement. It's an international
22 movement where local governments around the world use
23 their authority to stop fossil fuel expansion and
24 phase out fossil fuels. With passage of Intro. 2317,
25

2 you have an opportunity to remain a leader for this
3 movement and for all New Yorkers.

4 This year has brought more devastating and deadly
5 climate change impacts to New York. It's clear the
6 consequences of fossil fuels are only getting worse,
7 for New Yorkers and for people around the world.

8 Meanwhile, the fossil fuel industry and other vested
9 interests are still pushing business as usual. It's
10 exciting that this important bill, Intro. 2317, more
11 fondly known as the GasFreeNYC bill, is getting a
12 hearing today. New York needs to continue to say no
13 to fossil fuels.

14 The positive impacts of passing GasFreeNYC on
15 local health, including asthma rates in kids - local
16 safety, and global climate will be enormous. That's
17 why hundreds of our Stand.earth community around the
18 city reached out to the Council to urge you and your
19 Council colleagues to do three things.

20 To ban new hookups of dangerous, unhealthy
21 methane gas, which we're talking about today. To
22 defend Local Law 97, and to join the call for
23 international action on fossil fuels by endorsing the
24 Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, which has had a
25 hearing but not yet a vote by the Committee.

2 We applaud the leadership of Council Member
3 Ampry-Samuel and are honored to be here today along
4 with the local advocates who have been leading this
5 fight to ban new gas hookups. NYPIRG, New York
6 Communities for Change, WE ACT for Environmental
7 Justice, and Food & Water Watch. In partnership with
8 them and with many others, our community urges a yes
9 vote on Intro. 2317 by this Committee and swift
10 passage by the full Council, to protect health and
11 safety around New York City and climate here and
12 around the world. Thank you for your time.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Anne very much
14 for being here and for your patience. And I look
15 forward to reading your comments in full, if you can
16 send those along. Thank you very much.

17 ANNE PERNICK: Absolutely, thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You bet.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. Thank you
20 Ms. Pernick for your testimony and our next panelist
21 is Emma Urofsky from WE ACT.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 EMMA UROFSKY: Hello, my name is Emma Urofsky, I
24 am studying Sustainable Development and I'm a member
25 of WE ACT for Environmental Justice. I am here today

2 in support of Intro. 2317, and to urge you, members
3 of City Council, to pass this bill now, with the
4 urgency the climate crisis demands.

5 Optimistically, this would be a notable stride
6 towards phasing out toxic gas, oil, and all the
7 incredibly deadly pollution that comes with the use
8 of these fuels. Upwards of 1,000 New Yorkers are
9 killed every single year from burning fossil fuels,
10 including natural gas in the buildings we learn, eat,
11 sleep, worship, and love in. The main opponents to
12 this bill are the Real Estate lobby and ExxonMobil,
13 two actors that profit obscenely by ruining the lives
14 and health of working class people and people of
15 color. Unsurprisingly, the API's also lobbying
16 against this bill. I am so sick and tired of
17 watching this pattern play out again and again on
18 multiple scales of governance.

19 Everyday people take time out of our already busy
20 days, time that could be spent resting, studying,
21 socializing, or taking care of our loved ones, to
22 fight for what is now the bare minimum of what is
23 needed to do damage control for the climate crisis,
24 while a small group of wealthy White individuals
25 leverage systems of violence and oppression to delay

2 any meaningful action so they can continue to make
3 more money than they could possibly spend in their
4 lifetimes at the expense of literally every other
5 living thing on this planet. For longer than I have
6 been alive, the fossil fuel industry has been
7 succeeding in delaying climate action. Their goal
8 has literally been to delay.

9 I am asking our city representatives, don't let
10 them delay any longer. This is urgent. Legislation
11 like this should have been passed in the 1970's. I'm
12 terrified of what's to come and what is already here.
13 I don't want to get asthma from living in this city
14 or drown in a basement the next time there's a
15 hurricane. I don't want my neighbors to either. We
16 need to stop using fossil fuels to keep each other
17 safe and healthy. It is your job to help the people
18 who live here and you can do this by passing Intro.
19 2317.

20 Thank you for allotting me time to speak, I hope
21 you do what is best for our city and for our planet.
22 You actually have the power to make a better world,
23 don't waste it bending to a decades old fossil fuel
24 propaganda campaign. Pass Intro. 2317 today.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Uh, thank you Emma. It is
3 a privilege to have you with us today. I thank you
4 for your patience and for your testimony. I look
5 forward to receiving it in writing if you would be so
6 kind to do so. And I thank you for your service to
7 the great organization WE ACT. Thank you.

8 EMMA UROFSKY: Thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair and thank you
10 Ms. Urofsky and our next panelist is Gina Kruzic from
11 Water – I'm sorry, from Food and Water Watch.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 GINA KRUZIC: Hello. My name is Gina Kruzic, I'm
14 currently a student intern with Food & Water Watch.
15 I'm here to testify in favor of Intro. 2317 and urge
16 the Council to pass it immediately.

17 Intro. 2317 is not only feasible, as we've heard
18 the experts talk about all day but it's your
19 obligation to your constituents. The city's own
20 Office of Climate and Sustainability reports that
21 over 70 percent of our city's greenhouse gas
22 emissions come from our buildings. To take
23 meaningful action in our fight against climate change
24 and meet our own carbon neutrality goals by 2050, we
25 must demand that no new construction has the archaic,

1
2 problematic, and counterintuitive fossil fuel
3 infrastructure.

4 Other cities like Oakland and Seattle already
5 passed similar laws and enacted them within a year.
6 The two-year period this bill is asking for is
7 incredibly lenient compared to that. I will also ask
8 those who are still skeptical or in opposition, why?
9 The opposition is largely coming from the Real Estate
10 Board of New York and ExxonMobil. We have let real
11 estate dictate what goes on in this city for far too
12 long and it has created a city where many cannot
13 afford to live and promoted fundamental changes to
14 many of our beloved neighborhoods. We have to live
15 in this city, not ExxonMobil. What is New York City
16 to them except our money?

17 It's also worth repeating that climate change is
18 already front and center. The city, New York City
19 and State both have carbon neutrality goals to meet.
20 How are we going to meet them if we don't take
21 decisive action and set the precedent for a fossil
22 fuel free future? If this is the direction we are
23 heading towards anyway, why resist it? And for all
24 the elected officials who will not be returning to
25 City Council in the upcoming year, do something

2 incredible before you go and pass Intro. 2317 now.
3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. We appreciate
5 uh, uh, Gina, yes, I'm sorry. I have so many names
6 on the list. Thank you for your patience and your
7 testimony. We look forward to getting it in writing
8 and for your good service. You're an intern right
9 for Food and Water Watch right? Okay, oops, I guess
10 I muted you.

11 GINA KRUZIC: Yeah, that's correct

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much for
13 being here and for your passion to try to create a
14 better world. This is a wonderful thing to see.
15 Thank you.

16 GINA KRUZIC: Thank you.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and our next
18 panelist is Sabrina Maharaj from New York Public
19 Interest Research Group.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ms. Maharaj?

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Why don't we pass and
23 circle back.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Absolutely, our next panelist
25 is Dorian Fulvio from 350 NYC.

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

3 DORIAN FULVIO: Hi, thank you Council Members and
4 Chair Gennaro. My name is Dorian Fulvio and I'm a
5 lifelong New Yorker, a retired public servant and an
6 active member of 350 NYC.

7 I support Intro. 2317, the GasFreeNYC bill and I
8 urge the Council to do the same to strengthen the
9 bill and to escalate its passing this year. I worked
10 for the city in information technology and I also
11 served for about 15 years as my agencies disaster
12 recovery coordinator. I bring this up because I,
13 along with many others had to manage the chaos of
14 Hurricane Sandy and saw first hand how the city
15 struggled to deal with infrastructure failure and our
16 first experience having 300,000 public employees
17 unable to go to work.

18 I vowed that when I retired that I would do
19 whatever I could to fight climate change and prevent
20 this from happening to my city again or any city and
21 my testimony today is part of that commitment. There
22 are powerful vested interests working to maintain the
23 status quo, to lie to us, feed us disinformation and
24 delay action to reduce our use of fossil gas. As a
25 result of their efforts, we've already seen massive

1 failure at the federal level and in COP 26 at the
2 international level as well.

3
4 At the local level, we cannot afford to sit idly
5 by. It will be our responsibility to clean up and
6 pay for this mess locally. New York City and State
7 must act now because state and local action is the
8 last best hope for reducing climate change.

9 Intro. 2317 will allow us to take immediate and
10 definitive steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 DORIAN FULVIO: By stopping new infrastructure
13 from being built, Intro. 2317 will prevent millions
14 of metric tons of climate pollution from heating our
15 city and our planet. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Dorian. Thank
17 you for your long service to the city and for your
18 ongoing service to quest that you think need to be
19 fought and won. And uhm, uh, I also appreciate that
20 you're part of 350 NYC. Please submit your comments
21 in writing and thank you very much for having the
22 patience to be with us all these hours, appreciate
23 it.

24 DORIAN FULVIO: Thank you Chair Gennaro. Thank
25 you.

1 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You bet.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you everyone again and
3 our next panelist is Monica Weiss from 350 NYC.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 MONICA WEISS: Thank you. Thank you very much.
6 Preempt my own testimony because in the interest of
7 not being redundant, there is very little that hasn't
8 already been said.
9

10 My name is Monica Weiss, I'm a Retired New York
11 City Educator. I'm a Member of 350 NYC and I want to
12 speak in support of this bill.

13 What I'd like to do first is give a shoutout to
14 Dr. Leah Stokes because basically, what she said and
15 I'm going to leave it at that articulate,
16 intelligent, thoughtful and absolutely correct.

17 Also, I'm going to pick up on Eric Weltman's
18 comment that what happens in New York does not stay
19 in New York, which is absolutely true. If anyone on
20 this Zoom has not yet seen the climate clock at Union
21 Square, I strongly urge you to take a look. We were
22 the first city in the world to have a climate clock
23 installed and it was installed about a year and a
24 half ago at Union Square. And the clock itself has
25 two running streams of information. The first one is

2 a deadline which essentially calculates the remaining
3 carbon budget globally of course, not just in New
4 York City. And how much time is remaining until we
5 use up the entire carbon budget on earth. That's
6 about seven years. That line is moving very quickly
7 and the one beneath it is in green, which reflects
8 the lifeline which gives information about the amount
9 of clean energy being supported and used and
10 generated. And that number is at about 12 percent.

11 So, those two streams of information and whatever
12 you do on the City Council, you need to pay attention
13 to the deadline and to the lifeline. Because if the
14 deadline reaches zero before the lifeline reaches 100
15 percent.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time ended.

17 MONICA WEISS: We're in trouble. So, I ask you
18 in all of your deliberations to consider the urgency
19 of this issue when you can consider the solutions.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Monica, I
22 appreciate your patience. Please send us your
23 comments if you can reduce them to writing, that
24 would be helpful to us and thank you for your service
25

1 COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION 237
2 to 350 NYC, a great organization. We appreciate you
3 being here.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Our next panelist
5 is Candee Kane from 350 NYC.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

7 CANDEE KANE: Hello, my name is Candee Kane and I
8 live in Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village. I have
9 lived here since August 1986, 35 years. Passage of
10 Intro. 2317 cannot come soon enough for the residents
11 of Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village. As our
12 landlord, the private equity group, Blackstone, with
13 a market capitalization of around \$110 Billion, wants
14 to build two fossil fuel plants, right on the
15 property of Stuyvesant Town.

16 In fact, they have already built one, on Avenue C
17 and 15th Street, and has plans to build an even
18 larger one on 20th Street. We need to pass Intro.
19 2317 now. Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village
20 already has the distinction of being the neighborhood
21 with the second worst air quality in the city,
22 because we live across the street from Con Edison,
23 which burns huge amounts of fossil fuel, to power to
24 all of lower Manhattan. And because we also live
25 across the street from the FDR Drive, where fossil

1 fuel burning cars and trucks traffic it all day and
2 all night.

3
4 I am gasping at the thought of what we are
5 breathing. New York City cannot wait to pass Intro.
6 2317. New York City thinks of itself as a world
7 leader, in every arena. It must lead the world in
8 new power technologies. It was already devastated in
9 2012 by Super Storm Sandy. Super Storm Sandy pushed
10 the Atlantic Ocean northward, through the Bay of New
11 York, and up the East River, causing the East River
12 to surge over the river's banks. The aforementioned
13 Con Edison -

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please conclude Candee, go
16 ahead.

17 CANDEE KANE: Which sits right there, at the
18 conjunction of the East River, and Stuyvesant Cove,
19 was flooded. It blew up and shut down, and when it
20 shut down, all of Manhattan, below 39th Street, shut
21 down for a week. Thank you very much. The Council
22 needs to pass 2317 now and to commit our city to a
23 clean future. This matter is urgent and the time is
24 now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Candee, for your patience. We appreciate it this evening. Oh, oh, we have applause. We have applause, okay.

CANDEE KANE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: It's always good to have supporters.

CANDEE KANE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: And thank you for advocating on behalf of Stuy-Town and your experiences and how we can be a force for positive change. Please send us your comments in writing if you're able to do that and we would appreciate that very much. Thank you.

CANDEE KANE: Thank you. Thank you Mr. Gennaro.

CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you again Ms. Kane. Thank you Chair and our next panelist is Jane Selden.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

JANE SELDEN: Hello, my name is Jane Selden. I'm a Retired New York City Community College Instructor and a member of 350 NYC.

I support Intro. 2317 because I'm deeply concerned that we are continuing to build fossil fuel infrastructure, including two new frack, gas power

1 plants in my neighborhood, Stuyvesant Town when we
2 need to be transitioning without delay to fossil-free
3 renewable energy. If we continue to allow gas
4 infrastructure, we are locking ourselves into many
5 more years of the pollution that endangers the health
6 of our communities and will lead to climate chaos.
7 Passing 2317 is an essential step forward but the
8 city and state can and must do more. They need to
9 deny permits for any new fossil fuel infrastructure,
10 whether it be Peaker plants, pipelines, or CHP,
11 Combined Heat and Power plants like the ones being
12 built on the grounds of Stuyvesant Town. The owners
13 of Stuyvesant Town, the Blackstone Group, a private
14 equity firm, recently built a fracked gas CHP plant
15 on Avenue C, just steps away from the huge Con Ed
16 power plant on 14th street and plans to construct a
17 second larger plant between two residential buildings
18 on 20th Street.

19
20 The electricity produced by these plants will not
21 go to tenants but will instead be sold to Con Ed;
22 however, we, the residents, will be the recipients of
23 the plants' toxic emissions. Our community already
24 suffers from the second worst air quality in the city
25 because of its close proximity to the Con Ed plant

1 and the FDR Drive. Allowing these plants to operate
2 will not only exacerbate this deadly pollution but is
3 also a 20-year commitment to a continued reliance on
4 fossil-fuels. We are already experiencing the
5 devastating effects of the climate crisis. The time
6 to stop any further fossil fuel infrastructure is
7 now.
8

9 I urge the City Council to pass 2317 without
10 delay, and I urge the city and state agencies to stop
11 issuing permits to build for additional fossil fuel
12 infrastructure, including the ones for Stuyvesant
13 Town's Combined Heat and Power plants. Thank you.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Jane. Thank you
16 for your - like Candee, you're advocating on behalf
17 of your community and you spent hours to you know
18 give your voice to this hearing and we do appreciate
19 that and we look forward to receiving your testimony
20 in writing, if you could do that. Thank you so much.

21 JANE SELDEN: Thank you very much.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Our next panelist
23 is Ann Logan.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.
25

2 ANN LOGAN: Hello, first of all, I'd really like
3 to thank you for continuing this hearing rather than
4 cutting it off before hearing from unaffiliated
5 individuals like me. I do appear at these things
6 from time to time and I have been left waiting at the
7 end of a period before. So, thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh, you bet.

9 ANN LOGAN: I appreciate it. Others have spoken
10 about the two primary details that need to be
11 changed. One is to shorten the period before it
12 becomes effective and the other one is to define gut
13 renovation.

14 But I'm here about something more personal. When
15 I was thinking about where to retire, I chose New
16 York and New York City in part because of its leading
17 position on issues that progressives like me really
18 care about. One of them certainly was pure water,
19 which New York has made a point of preserving.
20 Another one however was fossil fuels. At the time
21 when I moved here which was just after 911, I thought
22 that the climate crisis was something that wasn't
23 going to affect me. That it was going to develop
24 gradually and that I would be dead frankly before it
25 got too bad.

2 I was wrong. The infamous end of the hockey
3 stick, it goes straight up. This happening now
4 during my lifetime, we can see measurable changes in
5 everything from wild fires to temperatures, to the
6 acidity of oceans and more. We cannot afford to move
7 slowly. We can be deliberate. We can be well-
8 informed but we have to move expeditiously.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Ann -

11 ANN LOGAN: I have one more sentence.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah, sure, sure, go ahead
13 Ann.

14 ANN LOGAN: I just wanted to say yes, I know
15 there may be speed bumps, although I have confidence
16 in the human ability to get past them and yes, we may
17 need to support financial support for those who are
18 adversely affected but we have to make changes now.
19 We cannot afford to wait. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ann. Let me just
21 thank you for being the first one to bring up the
22 issue of ocean acidification, as you and perhaps many
23 other people on this Zoom may know or may not about
24 one third of greenhouse gases are absorbed you know
25 by the ocean and that produces carbonic acid. The

1 process is called ocean acidification, although you
2 know they are really getting less alkaline really
3 because if the oceans ever do cross that barrier and
4 to like a PH you know less than seven, like we're all
5 dead already. But I served as the Chair of the know
6 New York State Taskforce on Ocean Acidification.
7 That was a law that was passed by my mentor Steven
8 Englebright and I was working on that when I was the
9 Deputy Commissioner at DEC. And it doesn't get as
10 much attention as it should. Thank you for raising
11 that issue. Thank you for being here and I don't
12 care how long hearings go on, I am here for as long
13 as it takes to hear everyone's voice. You know
14 particularly yours Ann, so thank you for being here
15 and advocating for your community.

17 ANN LOGAN: Thank you. This matters so much.
18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ann.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Ms. Logan and our
21 next panelist is Ross Pinkerton.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 ROSS PINKERTON: Hi, thank you everyone for being
24 here. Thank you for having me and for your time and
25 efforts to deal with this critical issue.

1
2 As a Physics Teacher in Manhattan, I have long
3 been concerned about climate change and its effects
4 on my students' future and clearly after this
5 summer's storms and as the previous speakers have
6 said, on our city right now. But in addition, I
7 recently became concerned about the air quality and
8 health impact of gas appliances both on my two sons,
9 including Leo here, in our apartment and on my
10 neighbors in East Harlem. I thought it would be easy
11 to replace my gas stove and water heater with
12 electric appliances, but I discovered that my fairly
13 new building, which was built in 2013, was not
14 designed to supply enough current to each apartment
15 to electrify those appliances.

16 I have the resources fortunately, that I will be
17 able to fund retrofits, but it will be much more
18 cost-effective to build new construction with
19 electrical appliances in mind. And the bill will
20 also help ensure that the benefits reach lower income
21 New Yorkers and prevent greater environmental
22 inequity across communities, as Ismael so eloquently
23 pointed out.

24 And just to respond to some of the kind of
25 misdirection from opponents, there are cases where

1 blends including biodiesel may be better than old
2 heating oil systems and I'm sure they will continue
3 to have a use for the many buildings and heavy
4 vehicles that continue to use fuel during the long
5 transition it will take to replace all of New York's
6 infrastructure. But we need to not lock in future
7 need for blends or even for full biodiesel because of
8 the ongoing carbon and particulate emissions. So, we
9 should not make a blanket exemption for biodiesel as
10 some people argued. Instead, we should acknowledge
11 that even with this great bill we're going to have a
12 lengthy transition and we will make use of those as
13 they are a little bit better, just like natural gas
14 may be still a little bit better than some others but
15 we shouldn't lock in more use. Thank you very much.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ross and thank
18 you Leo for participating in this hearing. This
19 hearing is about you Leo, I hope you're listening to
20 us and you know thank you Ross for giving this
21 personal story about how you wanted to retrofit and
22 then, you know you got to do it the hard way and some
23 people just aren't in a position to do that.

24 And so, thank you for your patience. Thank you
25 for being a great dad and for being with us today.

2 Please submit your comments in writing if you'd be so
3 gracious to do that.

4 ROSS PINKERTON: I will, thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, I see that Ms. Sabrina
7 Maharaj from New York Public Interest Research Group
8 is online and I would like to call her next.

9 SABRINA MAHARAJ: Hi, my name is Sabrina. I am a
10 Student at BMCC. Borough of Manhattan Community
11 College in Manhattan NY, I am interning with New York
12 Public Interest Research Group. Thank you and the
13 Committee for your time.

14 I support Gas Free NYC Bill Intro. 2317, who's
15 primary sponsor member is Council Member Alicka
16 Ampry-Samuel. I support this bill because in order
17 to halt the worst effects of climate change, we need
18 to move away from fossil fuels, and electrifying
19 buildings is a path towards that goal. Buildings
20 emit 70 percent of NYC's greenhouse gases, which
21 pollute the air and contribute to the climate crisis.
22 Plus, it uses dangerous fracked gas, which pollutes
23 our water as well. We need to make sure all buildings
24 in the future are running on electricity, not gas,
25 for a fossil fuel free future.

2 This issue is also very personal. I have
3 relatives that passed away from the Ida storm. There
4 was flooding in their basement, while they were
5 protecting themselves from the tornado warning.
6 These relatives were part of the 11 other people in
7 NYC that perished from the extreme weather. If we do
8 not stop the worst effects of climate change there
9 will be more people who have similar fates. I don't
10 want anyone dying from massive floods in the future.
11 This is why I support Intro. 2317, to make sure all
12 new construction in new buildings is not hooked up to
13 gas. Thank you for your time, and please pass
14 GasFree NYC.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Sabrina, we
16 appreciate you coming back to be with us. If you
17 could please submit your testimony in writing, that
18 would be great to have for us to continue to study
19 and we really appreciate you being here and for your
20 supportive comments.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Our next panelist is Miles
22 McManus.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.
24
25

2 MILES MCMANUS: Great, thank you. My name is
3 Miles McManus, I live in Manhattan and I'm here to
4 support Intro. 2317.

5 Recent findings from New York's Climate Action
6 Council, which is planning the implementation of the
7 CLCPA actually provide another reason that I think
8 this bill needs to move faster. The Council posted
9 their initial analysis and some drafts on October
10 14th and that draft confirms that, "more rapid and
11 widespread end-use electrification and efficiency"
12 is needed to achieve the mandates.

13 Just to give one example, the Council scenarios
14 project it will take 30 years to retire existing gas
15 powered space heating as it reaches the end of its
16 lifecycle and gets replaced with electric. It just
17 takes a long time to make the transition gentle for
18 current gas users and of course, that gas will
19 continue to harm New Yorkers health and the climate
20 as it very slowly phases out.

21 There is a cost benefit analysis included in
22 their latest report as well, which shows very high
23 costs to the state and very high benefits, financial
24 benefits, to moving faster. Now of course, as we've
25 seen, the real estate and petroleum lobbies and other

2 vested interests are going to use every trick in the
3 book to slow this down but big cities like Seattle,
4 San Jose and Oakland already have gas bans in place.
5 And green building techniques premature and
6 widespread. So, the technology and the industry are
7 ready and we have no time to spare.

8 So, please speed it up. The bill should take
9 effect one year after passage not two and please
10 ensure that it clearly covers gut renovations and
11 bans all new fossil fuel hookups. Including false
12 solutions like biofuels and blends.

13 The bottom line is every new gas hookup installed
14 today increase emissions and that's exactly what the
15 CLCPA promises to stop across the state. Please pass
16 Intro. 2317, protect our communities, and help New
17 York start keeping its promises. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Mr. McManus for
19 your compelling testimony and for your patience in
20 waiting this long to deliver it. We look forward to
21 getting your testimony in writing if you have not
22 done so already. Thank you.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you again for your
24 testimony and our next panelist is Delia Kulukundis.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

2 DELIA KULUKUNDIS: Thank you for holding this
3 hearing and allowing members of the public to speak
4 to you today. My name is Delia Kulukundis and I live
5 in Long Island City. I'm here to voice my
6 enthusiastic support for Intro. 2317, the GasFreeNYC
7 bill and to urge the Council to make it take affect
8 earlier, in one year instead of two. And to clearly
9 include gut renovations as well.

10 By now you know that if we want to avert
11 catastrophic climate change and ensure a livable
12 future, every new machine that we install must be
13 electric. If we continue to install new gas-burning
14 appliances, we'll either have to retire them early,
15 or accept the decades of emissions that they lock in.
16 I urge you to consider that with gas, those emissions
17 don't just occur when we burn it but all along the
18 leaky pipeline roots that bring it into the city, all
19 the way back to the fields where it fracked and
20 flared in the first place.

21 It's great that be banned fracking in the state,
22 but we should make fracking obsolete. Right now, as
23 members of this council, you have the ability to
24 ensure that new buildings will be combustion-free,
25 saving everyone from more costly retrofits later and

1 making the air cleaner for everyone. Your
2 constituents don't want to be stuck with stranded
3 assets in their homes and buildings, and you have the
4 ability to prevent that. So, I ask you to stand
5 strong. Don't let REBNY and Exxon scare you. The
6 rest of the fossil fuel lobby would like everyone to
7 stay paralyzed with guilt about their personal carbon
8 footprint and keep you distracted with false promises
9 of hydrogen or biofuels or whatever technology they
10 promise to come up with some time in a decade.

12 Ignore it and ignore the calls to delay. We have
13 the technology now and the ability to solve climate
14 change now, and the first step is electrifying
15 everything, starting with new buildings.

16 Please pass Intro. 2317 now. Thank you so much
17 to Council Member Ampry-Samuel for your leadership
18 and for everyone's patience and perseverance, and for
19 letting us you know speak from the public. Thank
20 you.

21 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Delia. We
22 appreciate you patience and your compelling
23 testimony. Please submit it to us in writing and I
24 found your testimony compelling and I appreciate it.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Ms. Kulukundis and
3 thank you Chair and now, my colleagues Nadia Johnson
4 will continue moderating the hearing.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hi, this is Nadia Johnson, I
6 am the Senior Policy Analyst for the Committee on
7 Environmental Protection and I will be completing the
8 Moderating tasks for this hearing and I would like to
9 call on our –

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Nadia. Thank you
11 Nadia, I appreciate it.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Of course. I'd like to call
13 on our next participant Stuart Waldman.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

15 STUART WALDMAN: Yes, my name is Stuart Waldman,
16 I'm a Retired Children's Book Publisher who walked
17 into a climate act and this was when my granddaughter
18 was born.

19 I never imagined I'd spend my golden years
20 committing multiple acts of civil disobedience. When
21 you are 80, sitting bend over and handcuffed in the
22 back of a police van is an act of pure desperation.
23 But desperation is exactly how I feel at this moment.

24 Two years ago, New York City declared a climate
25 emergency. The definition of emergency by Webster

1 Dictionary is a dangerous situation requiring
2 immediate attention. I referred to the last two
3 words, action and immediate. Twenty years ago, we
4 might have been able to hedge on a bill like Intro.
5 237, we could do – I heard people earlier today you
6 know suggest. We could commission studies, we could
7 delay implementation, we could use phrases like as
8 soon as possible. Give a little to
9 environmentalists, give a little to REBNY, tell
10 everyone we'll get it right the next time. But
11 climate legislation is different. Nature doesn't
12 compromise, half way isn't good enough, and we are at
13 a moment where there is no next time.

14 This is a state of emergency. A dangerous
15 situation requiring immediate action. They didn't
16 get the troops off the beach as soon as possible.
17 They did what they had to. A robust Intro. 237 would
18 result in significant reduction of emissions. Of
19 course one bill in one city won't keep the world at
20 1.5 degrees. New York is in just of the city. What
21 we do here about the climate sends a powerful message
22 to our state, our country, and the world.

23 Let that message be, we're willing to not just
24 make declarations of an emergency –
25

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

3 STUART WALDMAN: We'll act as if there is one.
4 Years from now, our children and grandchildren will
5 look back at this moment and ask, what did they do
6 when they knew? Let's hope the answer will be the
7 right thing. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Stuart, thank you for being
9 here. I gave you extra time on behalf of your
10 grandchildren okay, and so, thank you for your
11 passion. Don't get locked up anymore okay, you know.

12 STUART WALDMAN: I can't promise.

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, okay, fair enough.
14 Please send us your comments in writing and
15 appreciate your passion and advocacy.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We now call on
17 Samantha Galanti.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 SAMANTHA GALANTI: Hi, thank you. My name is
20 Samantha Galanti, I am a full-time College Student
21 and I have successfully completed training in the
22 Climate Reality Leadership Corps. I am speaking
23 before you today to discuss the urgency and necessity
24 of passing Intro. 2317.

2 It has been recorded that 19 of the hottest years
3 have occurred since 2000 as a result of global
4 warming pollution. As a person born in the year
5 2002, I live with the unsettling reality that I was
6 born into a climate crisis that was created entirely
7 without my assistance. This alarming reality is
8 enough of a reason to stress the urgency of putting
9 an end to the use of gas in new constructions and gut
10 renovations.

11 If the bill it is passed, it will aid in the
12 reduction of air pollution and emissions that heavily
13 contributes to global warming and increasingly deadly
14 climate dominions, which will lead to combating the
15 health experience by low income communities and
16 communities of color. It greatly disturbs me that
17 while I have the privilege to speak before you today,
18 there are children living in East Harlem who are
19 being hospitalized for asthma at an unnerving rate,
20 which is three times more than the city rate.

21 And after sharing this information with you, it
22 appears to be inconceivable how many persons or any
23 entity can be against such a bill that will combat
24 these major forms of oppression. However, companies,
25 such as Exxon Mobile have been spreading

2 misinformation and lies to ensure that this bill is
3 not put into effect.

4 For far too long, we have seen mythical
5 conspiracies created by those who put dollar signs
6 before people surrounding environmental and racial
7 justice delaying important pieces of legislation such
8 as this one from making real social change that
9 enhances the lives of all members within our
10 communities.

11 My goal for today is that at least one point I
12 have made in this short period of time has inspired
13 and invigorated you to take action in passing this
14 bill and beyond by using your power to promote
15 justice for all. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much
17 Samantha for your patience, for your passion and
18 advocacy and for your dedication to join – what corps
19 are you? The climate? What was it again?

20 SAMANTHA GALANTI: The Climate Reality Corps. It
21 was started by former Vice President Al Gore.

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh, of course. Okay, well
23 thank you for joining that crusade and for being here
24 with us. If you could send us your testimony in
25 writing, we really appreciate that. Thank you again.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We next call on
3 Ken Schles.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 KEN SCHLES: Thank you. I appreciate this time.
6 My name is Ken Schles, I'm a third generation New
7 Yorker and a father of two. A Volunteer with Food
8 and Water Watch with nearly 100,000 supporters here
9 in New York City.

10 New York Times notable Author and Photographer.
11 I grew up in this city suffering from asthma, a
12 disease that nearly took my life on more than one
13 occasion. Now I suffer from cardiovascular disease
14 made worse by PM 2.5 and the city is fossil fuel
15 [INAUDIBLE 4:56:40].

16 In 2016, I nearly died from a heart attack. Both
17 elements are comorbidities are associated with
18 burning fossil fuels. Pass 2317 without delay.
19 Frack gas is a significant indoor pollutant linked to
20 asthma, cancer and premature death. According to a
21 just released Harvard study, gas leakage is two to
22 ten times worse than current EPA estimates. We are
23 "missing significant sources of methane emissions.
24 These findings provide more evidence that we should
25

1
2 be moving away from natural gas towards renewable
3 energy to heat and electrify our cities.”

4 The human costs, some of which I can attest to
5 are staggering. Loss school, loss work, and
6 irrevocably traumatize families. Tragedy is
7 especially felt in economically and resourced
8 strained environmental justice communities.

9 My cellar flooding during Hurricane Ida, we lost
10 irreplaceable family papers. The CLCPA's Climate
11 Action Council looked at premature mortality, heart
12 attacks, hospitalizations, asthma, emergency room
13 visits and lost work based on fossil fuel emissions.
14 The cost of inaction exceeded the cost of action by
15 more than \$80 billion. There are great external
16 benefits. Opportunities to create hundreds of
17 thousands of jobs, improve air quality generating
18 health benefits ranging from 160 to 170 billion.
19 “Reduced emissions avoid economic impacts of damages
20 caused by climate change of approximately \$260
21 billion.”

22 My personal loss may never be ameliorated but
23 others needn't share my fate. If we're to meet
24 emission targets of the —

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

2 KEN SCHLES: Of the Paris Agreement adhere to COP
3 26 global methane pledge, if we're to keep global
4 warming below 1.5, not burn through our planets
5 forever carbon budget in 11 years, we have to get off
6 fossil fuels.

7 Implementing 2317 is not a choice, it's an urgent
8 necessity. I urge you to pass 2317 without an
9 extended phase in. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Ken. I thank you
11 for your passion and I'm sure I speak for everyone
12 when we wish you good health and if you could submit
13 your comments to us in writing, that would be greatly
14 appreciated.

15 KEN SCHLES: I will.

16 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you again.

17 KEN SCHLES: Thank you.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We next call on
19 Matthew Lipschik.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 MATTHEW LIPSCHIK: Hello, my name is Matthew
22 Lipschik. I am a lifelong resident of New York City,
23 a retired teacher, a member and volunteer with Food &
24 Water Watch. Thank you for this opportunity. I urge
25 you to pass Intro. 2317 now.

1
2
3 You can take this small step to lower the rate of
4 global heating. It's a powerful step to improving
5 local air quality and health. It will also lower
6 fossil fuel infrastructure accidents. Fewer
7 explosions, leaks, fires, deaths, it's a further
8 improvement to societal health. I don't know what
9 the downside is. If fossil fuel companies' make less
10 money, that's not a concern of the Committee and the
11 real estate lobbies against it but they are too
12 afraid of change to see how this bill will actually
13 benefit New York City real estate. So please,
14 strengthen this bill, pass it today and mandate that
15 it take effect within the next 12 months. Good day,
16 thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Matthew. Thank
18 you for your patience. Thank you for your service to
19 Food and Water Watch, with whom we do a lot of
20 business. And I appreciate your good testimony and
21 if you could transmit that to us, we'd greatly
22 appreciate it.

23 MATTHEW LIPSCHIK: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You bet.
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we call on
3 Hody Nemes.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Times starts now.

5 HODY NEMES: Hello, I'm Rabbi Hody Nemes, I'm the
6 Co-Founder and Leader of Jewish Climate Action
7 Network NYC, which is a group of Jews of many
8 backgrounds. We advocate for climate action as a
9 moral and religious issue and I am here representing
10 them.

11 I'm also here because of my wife. On the night
12 of September 1st, I thought she was going to die.
13 And here is my son. My wife is a pediatric emergency
14 room doctor. Hurricane Ida was raging that night of
15 September 1st and she had to go take care of sick
16 kids at the hospital, they needed her. So, she went
17 out into the storm and she called me shortly after
18 leaving our house, panicked. She was on the Major
19 Deegan and floodwaters were rising and her car
20 stalled twice. The waters kept rising, she called 911
21 and no one answered.

22 So, for hours, we wondered if she would survive.
23 And I was home with our young children, one of whom
24 you just heard and I was praying. When EMTs finally
25 rescued her, I cried. And I studied climate change

1
2 for years but this was the first time you know I felt
3 it really threatening my family directly.

4 So, I, like everyone else or many of the people
5 who have spoken, I'm asking you to pass Intro. 2317.
6 To strengthen it by making it apply you know in one
7 year and by making sure to clarify that language
8 around the gut renovations.

9 I also want to mention that you know, my wife as
10 an ER doctor has seen ironically, she's seen
11 thousands of children you know suffering from asthma,
12 particularly from the South Bronx in her ER and we've
13 heard 1,000 New Yorkers are killed by building
14 pollution and I just want to mention that you know
15 Jewish tradition, which I'm apart is obsessed with
16 saving lives.

17 On the very first versus of Genesis, one of our
18 theologians Rabbi Yitz Greenberg has said, "The
19 Torah's central value expressed in ritual and ethics
20 is to increase life and the quality of life." Jewish
21 climate action -

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

23 HODY NEMES: We ask that you vote to protect
24 life.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Rabbi. Ahim(SP?)

3 and my wife is Jewish so I got it going on. So, you
4 know sorry that you had that harrowing day in which
5 you didn't know the fate of your wife and may that
6 never happen again. And we appreciate your focus on
7 the moral imperative and it is the richness to this
8 proceeding that we deeply appreciate. So, thank you
9 Rabbi very much and please, with that said, that
10 doesn't get you off the hook about sending your
11 comments in writing, okay. So, I'm giving you a
12 homework assignment. So, thank you very much. Best
13 to you and your wife and family.

14 HODY NEMES: Thank you. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: You bet.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next is Natalie
17 Cronin.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 NATALIE CRONIN: Hi, how are you. My name is
20 Natalie Cronin, I am very grateful for this
21 opportunity to support this bill. I'm calling as a
22 mom and daycare provider on the upper East Side. Our
23 park, Carl Schurz Park faces a big giant powerplant
24 that we're looking forward to going away and we're
25 happy that the Astoria Peaker Plant was not passed.

2 One of the things that's really important to me
3 as a person who cooks and uses my home for work and
4 play and to earn a living is that I learned through
5 climate action that fossil fuels come into my own
6 kitchen and some of the pollutants - I'm sorry, I'm
7 distracted by my kids upstairs right now.

8 Some of the pollutants that are there, are
9 really, really dangerous. What captured my attention
10 was a woman holding a sign saying, radon is bad for
11 kids. And as a person from the Western Pennsylvania
12 corner where fracking has started its boom, I learned
13 that the radioactive gas coming from where I grew up
14 is actually in my kitchen. And one of the things I
15 know as a mother, the radon, when it breaks down,
16 becomes lead. And we don't want lead dust and we
17 don't want lead pollution in our homes, especially if
18 we have children and pets and we also want to make
19 sure that we are able to make sure that our cognition
20 is continuing to thrive because learning disabilities
21 strike you at any time, learning challenges.

22 So, I think that this bill is extremely important
23 to keep pollution out of our day to day homes. It's
24 not just a big far away issue. Climate change is
25 happening right here in New York City and one of

2 things we can do right here, right now is to defend
3 our own nests, including our kitchens and I thank you
4 for that.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Natalie, we thank
6 you for being here all simultaneously you know giving
7 us the benefit of your views. You're taking care of
8 your kids; you're taking care of presumably other
9 people's kids.

10 NATALIE CRONIN: It's a playroom.

11 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: I think you can it all.
12 So, I really appreciate your perspective. Would be
13 grateful if you could transmit your comments to us
14 in writing and all the best to you. Thank you for
15 your patience in being here and giving us the benefit
16 of your good testimony.

17 NATALIE CRONIN: Thank you, good night.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Good night.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, is Amber Ruther.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 AMBER RUTHER: Hello, my name is Amber Ruther,
22 and I work at Alliance for a Green Economy, also
23 known as AGREE. We have been working for years to
24 phase fossil fuels out of buildings and we've helped
25

1
2 over 100 New Yorkers switch to heat pumps through the
3 HeatSmart CNY program.

4 AGREE urges the Council to honor the rights of
5 New Yorkers to good quality housing, clean air, and a
6 livable climate by passing Intro. 2317 immediately.

7 We also encourage you to work with New York's
8 disadvantaged communities to ensure implementation is
9 equitable and affordable, and that the emissions
10 standards in this bill are strengthened, loopholes
11 are tightened, and expensive, polluting, and false
12 solutions like so-called renewable natural gas,
13 biofuels, and hydrogen are avoided.

14 These false solutions are being pushed by the
15 fossil fuel industry so that we will be forced to
16 continue using their infrastructure, but countless
17 studies show that heat pumps are a safer, healthier,
18 and more cost-effective way to decarbonize the
19 heating sector. The technology for heat pumps is
20 there and cold climate models can operate efficiently
21 below -10 degrees. Very cold countries like Sweden
22 already get 75 percent of their heat from heat pumps,
23 including geothermal district heating systems
24 designed to capture waste heat. This is not a
25 technical problem, it's a political one. We also

2 intervene in utility rate cases around the state and
3 spending billions building new gas infrastructure
4 that will soon become stranded assets is coming at a
5 great cost to ratepayers at a time when over One
6 million New Yorkers already can't afford their
7 utility bills.

8 National Grid is already raising their rates an
9 average of \$125 a year, and this winter, homes that
10 heat with fossil fuels are projected to see an
11 increase in their fuel bills ranging from 22 - 94
12 percent, while homes that heat using electricity will
13 see an increase of only 4 - 15 percent.

14 New York leads the nation in premature deaths -

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

16 AMBER RUTHER: Resulting from the air pollution
17 caused by fossil fuels in buildings. So, we urge you
18 to pass this bill to protect public health. Thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Amber.
21 Again, I thank you as I have all of the others who
22 have testified in the later part of the hearing for
23 your patience. We're going on more than five hours
24 and you know, for you to show that kind of dedication
25 to stay in there just to you know give the benefit of

1
2 your perspective is a real value to what we're doing
3 here. Please send us your comments in writing and we
4 wish you all good luck. Thank you.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next is Marie
6 Pierre.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

8 MARIE PIERRE: Good afternoon, good evening and
9 thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is
10 Marie Pierre and I am the Co-Chair of the Brownsville
11 Chapter of the New York Communities for Change. I am
12 also the Chair of the NYCC Board.

13 I testify today to call on the New York City
14 Council to strengthen and pass Intro. 2317. We have
15 been witnessing failure of climate action on the
16 global and national levels. The lesson is clear: it
17 is really up to us to secure climate change progress
18 on the local level. Passing a strengthened Intro.
19 2317 will be a victory for New York and the world.
20 We are a city of buildings and I can bring you to my
21 neighborhood to see my buildings. We emit far more
22 than our fair share of pollution as a city.

23 Local Law 97 of 2019, was a great step to fight
24 pollution. But we know more needs to be done,
25 quickly. Prohibiting the use of gas in our new

1 construction is a common sense follow up to Local Law
2 97. What else is common sense is that the buildings
3 that undergo gut renovations be required to fully
4 electrify.
5

6 I ask the Council to incorporate concrete
7 language to ensure this provision. Likewise, the
8 timeline needs to be shortened on Intro. 2317. Why
9 delay when the climate crisis intensifies every day?
10 In Brownsville, we are not the ones contributing to
11 the large scale climate. We commute on public
12 transport. I even have solar panels on the roof of
13 my home.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 MARIE PIERRE: But we know that we as
16 individuals, cannot do enough to control what's
17 happening. I ask you to pass 2317 and thank you for
18 allowing me to testify.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Marie. Thank you
20 for your patience and your passion and advocacy and
21 your work for New York Communities for Change.
22 Please submit us your comments in writing and we
23 thank you again.

24 MARIE PIERRA: Thanks, thank you too.

25 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we call on
3 Georgi.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 GEORGI PAGE: Hello, Hello?

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, hello Georgi, this is
7 Chairman Gennaro, you are on.

8 GEORGI PAGE: Okay, I apologize.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: No, it's quite alright.

10 GEORGI PAGE: It's been a long hearing. Good
11 afternoon Chair Gennaro, members of the Committee on
12 Environmental Protection and fellow citizens. My
13 name is Georgi Page. I live in District 35 and I am
14 a constituent of Council Member Cumbo and a Volunteer
15 with 350 Brooklyn. I am here today to state my
16 strong support for Intro. 2317.

17 I come to the environmental movement through a
18 deep conviction that our country, our cities and
19 streets belong to everyone and should be protected
20 and shared equally. I'm thinking specifically today,
21 of the 2014 gas explosion that devastated two
22 apartment buildings on 116th Street in Harlem when I
23 still lived there. This explosion killed eight
24 people, injuring at least 70, and displacing 100
25 families. Ultimately, this failure was blamed on Con

1
2 Edison, but blaming them did not bring those eight
3 people back or make up for the disruption and
4 fracturing of lives and families that occurred.

5 Gas is dangerous, it is poisonous, it is toxic
6 and we don't need it. Even damage that might seem
7 minor to an outsider can have a major effect on the
8 ability to function in everyday life. In any case,
9 this is not how this city should function. We need
10 to protect our citizens, not leave them vulnerable
11 and damaged. I would like to remember them today as
12 we consider whether it is really necessary to
13 continue fracking dangerous gases out of the ground
14 and piping them across the country and into our
15 cities, causing damage and contamination every step
16 of the way and not just to humans. Our nature and
17 wildlife is also ultimately affected.

18 Are you ok with the prospect of a world without
19 honeybees and pollination? I am not. In the wake of
20 that catastrophe in Harlem, I walked the streets of
21 my neighborhood newly attuned to the rotten egg smell
22 of gas in the air and wondered if my building, a
23 five-story walkup, would be next. Are we truly
24 relying on the sharp noses of busy citizens to
25 prevent the next disaster?

2 A recent constitutional amendment passed via
3 statewide vote has firmly established the right of
4 each citizen to clean air and water and a healthful
5 environment. Perhaps the most shocking thing about
6 this new Article is that it didn't already exist.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

8 GEORGI PAGE: What is more fundamental than this?
9 What is our government for if not to protect us? I
10 do not want to make the point that it will personally
11 - I do want to make the point that I will personally
12 consider a failure of leadership if the Council only
13 approves feasibility studies. We already know that
14 decarbonizing and electrifying is challenging but it
15 is feasible and possible. So, we need 2317
16 specifically, to pass during these last weeks of the
17 session or we will miss this opportunity and we know
18 that Adams is very well funded by real state
19 interests, so it is very urgent that you consider
20 your legacy and not shy away from this bold and
21 progressive action.

22 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Just conclude. Please
23 conclude.

24 GEORGI PAGE: We will never get this time back.
25 Thank you for your time today.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much and
3 thank you for your patience and waiting so long to
4 testify. We greatly appreciate it.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next is A Wilson.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

7 A WILSON: Hello, hello, good to see you James
8 Gennaro.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, hello.

10 A WILSON: I'm glad to be able to speak tonight
11 and I would like to address first the -

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Is this Annie? Is this
13 Annie?

14 A WILSON: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Oh, it's Annie. You should
16 have said so Annie, yeah, okay.

17 A WILSON: Annie Wilson, yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, of course.

19 A WILSON: So, for anyone it's been a long time.

20 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yeah.

21 A WILSON: So, I'm really glad to see you where
22 you are and well.

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

24 A WILSON: And so, very quickly, the uhm, the uh,
25 the first comment I wanted to make was about the

2 study of the health impacts from gas stoves and
3 Intro. 2196 very important, so that people could
4 really understand when and what they are dealing with
5 and uhm, I don't know by when this study would be
6 supplied by.

7 But the second study, looking at the feasibility
8 of electrifying existing buildings and I guess you'll
9 be looking at all issues including what was raised
10 earlier today, the air source and ground source heat
11 pumps. That also, by when would that be published?
12 Just I'm curious.

13 And so, the Intro. 2317, absolutely should be
14 supported and hopefully voted on by the end of the
15 year and strengthened along with a better definition
16 of what the renovations are and addressing a loophole
17 that was mentioned earlier. Which would increase or
18 decrease the threshold to 25 kilograms or more of
19 carbon dioxide per million BTU's. And I would like
20 to know how this might coincide with what is the
21 state bill? There is a senate bill 6843, that looks
22 at having introduced by Brian Cavanagh, a state
23 senator that would require that there be a
24 prohibition to municipalities throughout the state
25 for issuing any new permits for the construction of

1
2 new gas powered buildings after 2023. And
3 conversions of existing buildings, I guess that's
4 renovations after 2022.

5 So, either way, I suppose that if the city
6 doesn't pass the state will, hopefully. And uhm,
7 there was a comment you know with the electrification
8 and the needs for reduction of emissions.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 A WILSON: Okay, let me wrap it up. The need for
11 reduction of emissions. We have Local Law 97, we
12 have the using more electricity and I want to address
13 what had been mentioned by Ben Furnas, Director of
14 Mayor's Office of Climate and Sustainability and his
15 reference to 2500 megawatts coming down from
16 transmission. And he was wrong about his facts. In
17 fact, it's 3,800 megawatts with the Clean Path New
18 York Project and then there's the proposed Blackstone
19 Transmission Corridor that is permanent and should
20 not be contracted out by the City of New York which
21 intents to under this de Blasio Administration to
22 procure power that is sourced from [INAUDIBLE
23 5:18:51] -

24 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Annie, Annie, we're getting
25 a little far field here.

2 A WILSON: I'm done. I'm only saying we got to
3 be conscious about where our electricity come from
4 and that's where I'm closing. Thank you very much.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Annie, I mean, so your
6 testimony is concluded but I you know thank you for
7 you know being so patient and you know, thank you for
8 bringing in these other issues about you know where
9 our power is sourced from. Not necessarily like a
10 topic of this hearing but certainly worth noting and
11 because you and I are friends, I'm certainly willing
12 to give you a little latitude on that. And I look
13 forward to seeing you again soon, now that I'm back
14 doing this again.

15 So, Annie, I look forward to long and fruitful
16 collaboration with you and like-minded people on who
17 we could make the city more green. Thank you.

18 A WILSON: Yeah, thank you. Bye, bye.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Bye.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, is Harry P.
21 Johnson.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 HARRY P. JOHNSON: Yes, hi. My name is Harry
24 Johnson, I'm the Vice Chair for Flatbush Chapter of
25 New York Communities for Change.

1
2 Today, I urge the City Council to strengthen and
3 pass Intro. 2317. Please note in my written
4 testimony, which I have submitted for the record, I
5 have included some suggestions for strengthening
6 Intro. 2317 that I think should be incorporated into
7 the bill.

8 I wouldn't review those in my verbal remarks now.
9 At the end of the day, the situation is quite clear.
10 Burning gas is cooking the planet. From Brooklyn to
11 Bangladesh, Black and Brown people are paying the
12 greatest costs. Scientists say we must immediately
13 begin phasing out gas fumes. There are cleaner and
14 safer alternatives to gas ready right now. Intro.
15 2317 could be a huge step in the right direction.

16 It would cut indoor and local air pollution that
17 kills and create tons of good jobs. It will make our
18 city fairer. At the end of the day, we need to rapid
19 and big action to choose a livable future or even a
20 [INAUDIBLE 5:21:13] one or we slow walk off the
21 climate cliff because the people in our society want
22 to make an extra buck.

23 Let's choose rapid and big action. Decision
24 maker of the New York City Council, please tighten up
25 Intro. 2317. A good start as it stands and pass it

2 as soon as possible. Show us you can put climate
3 justice first. Thank you for holding this important
4 hearing.

5 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much Harry
6 for staying around for what it is now? You know more
7 than five and a half hours to give us the benefit of
8 your views and please submit your testimony in
9 writing to us. And we thank you for making a very
10 compelling statement today.

11 HARRY JOHNSON: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. If there has been
14 anyone that we inadvertently missed who was
15 registered to testify today and has yet to have been
16 called, please use the Zoom raise hand function and
17 you will be called in the order that your hand has
18 been raised.

19 Okay, okay, I see two more people. Thank you for
20 waiting. First, I will call - three more people.
21 Rebecca Duvall.

22 REBECCA DUVALL: Hi, I'm Rebecca Duvall, I live
23 in Brooklyn. I enthusiastically support 2017 and
24 would like it to be passed as quickly as possible. I
25 am appealing to you today as somebody who is really

1
2 worried about our future. I work in a school with
3 two-year-old to 14-year-old children and I love them
4 so much. Their energy and joy for life and their
5 ability to love without limit is really a reason for
6 me to live.

7 I look at the children in my life and my family
8 and surrounding me and when I think of their near
9 future, I feel a rush of panic. I worry about the
10 probability that their lives will have more pain
11 because of climate collapse and that they will
12 directly experience pain and upheaval from rising
13 temperatures, extreme weather, physical displacement
14 and the social and economic upheaval that comes from
15 these growing changes.

16 I also worry about the pain that they will
17 witness as the most vulnerable throughout our country
18 and the world bare the most severe consequences of
19 climate destruction hinged on our reliance upon
20 fossil fuels.

21 In my life, I've already experienced growing
22 trends of extreme weather and the instability that
23 comes from it from Hurricane Sandy to the increasing
24 frequency of slow moving low pressure precipitation
25 systems, that regularly wreak havoc on our

1
2 infrastructure on the streets and transit. That have
3 ruined homes and cause loss of lives. I've seen West
4 Coast wildfires burn beyond control and have seen the
5 smoke reach New York, less dramatically but quite
6 noticeably. I felt the erratic seasonal shifts that
7 come from warming temperatures.

8 Globally, I've seen the oceans irreplaceable
9 health compromise -

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

11 REBECCA DUVAL: And plastic waste. I've seen
12 the ocean on fire. I've seen massive numbers of
13 climate migrants lives uprooted far away from me.
14 And while I've seen this, I have seen the city
15 continue passively. I worry when I see the pressure
16 wielded upon the city by the -

17 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Rebecca, please conclude.
18 Please conclude.

19 REBECCA DUVAL: And this is intertwined with the
20 fossil fuel industry. I'm hopeful that we can
21 reverse this pattern. 2317 is a chance for New York
22 City to make a -

23 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Please conclude. Please
24 conclude.

1 REBECCA DUVALL: We owe it to our children.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you. Thank you very
4 much for being with us. Please submit us your
5 statement in writing. We appreciate your patience
6 and waiting so long to testify. Thank you.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, is Nina
8 Grigoriev.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

10 NINA GRIGORIEV: Hi everyone, can you hear me
11 okay?

12 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Yes, you're coming in fine.

13 NINA GRIGORIEV: Alright, excellent. Dear Chair
14 Gennaro and Members of the Committee on Environmental
15 Protection. My name is Nina Grigoriev and I live in
16 Bay Ridge Brooklyn. I'm a constituent of Council
17 Member Justin Brannan in District 43. I worked in
18 public health communications most of my professional
19 career. I'm a mom of two kids, a first generation
20 immigrant and a Brooklyn native. I'm here to speak
21 on behalf of myself and as a volunteer with
22 350Brooklyn. I know you've heard form a lot of
23 technical experts already. It's been a really,
24

1 really long day and really important technical points
2 have been made on both sides.

3
4 I'm here today to make the case from a really
5 personal perspective from my neck of New York City
6 right here in Brooklyn. I live in a historic 450-
7 unit pre-war building and I've served on the
8 buildings Board for a number of years. Our building
9 has been aging and needed a lot of repairs. My
10 experience on the board has convinced me that Intro.
11 2317 is a common-sense measure that as many experts
12 already testified today will put New York City on a
13 path to modernize our very old and frail
14 infrastructure.

15 Over the past few years, Bay Ridge has had
16 multiple major gas leaks, major health and safety
17 issue, I don't have to tell you that. As a result,
18 our streets, right down the street from here, have
19 been torn up to replace aging gas pipes. The pipe
20 replacement work has been done right next to our
21 local school across the street from where I live PS
22 102. The waterfront along Shore Road, an area
23 popular with families such as mine. And next to
24 major commercial strips on Third Avenues, where
25 thousands of people eat and shop every day. A lot of

2 folks, if you haven't come to Third Avenue to grab a
3 bite, come. It's awesome.

4 I appreciate the city allocating resources to
5 replace some of those old, old pipes, but moving away
6 from a reliance on gas for heating and cooking would
7 reduce the need for costly road repairs and the
8 resulting traffic jams and parking nightmare, as well
9 as the release of very harmful gases into our air.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

11 NINA GRIGORIEV: I don't want to have 3-1-1 on
12 speed dial. Are we out of time?

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Sadly, yes.

14 NINA GRIGORIEV: Okay, well, I think you get my
15 point. Everyone deserves to go home and have dinner
16 right now but Chairman Gennaro, thank you so much for
17 your patience, your grace and your humor. For five
18 and a half hours, that's wild.

19 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: It's nothing, it's nothing.
20 I could do ten. I could do ten you know.

21 NINA GRIGORIEV: I submitted my testimony as
22 well. I think it's one small slice from one person
23 in this big, big city but thank you for all of your
24 work on this issue. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much for
3 being patient and giving us the benefit of your
4 heartfelt personal views. And say hi to Justin
5 Brannan for me, okay.

6 NINA GRIGORIEV: Will do. I see him around all
7 the time.

8 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Okay, okay, great, thank
9 you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and finally we have
11 Donna Gill.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 DONNA GILL: Did you unmute me? Thank you very
14 much Chairman Gennaro and everyone.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you.

16 DONNA GILL: For listening to us today. I come
17 to you to say pass Intro. 2317 and I am a member of
18 WE ACT, with my colleagues uhm, uh, my WE ACT
19 colleagues Annie and LJ and Sono(SP?) and other
20 people.

21 I just wanted to bring us back to what we were
22 talking about the Intro. 2317 is called GasFreeNYC.
23 And this bill ends gas in new constructions and gut
24 renovations. The bill also fights climate crisis,
25 creates energy jobs, cuts deadly air pollution in our

1
2 neighborhoods, ends gas explosions and fires and
3 promotes environmental justice.

4 So, I thank you for having me to speak on this
5 bill today because it's very important as my
6 colleagues spoke so eloquently. The leaders in the
7 industry and common everyday people like us who are
8 the one's that are going to benefit from the impact
9 of this - from a GasFreeNYC.

10 I know we need to be change agents and to push us
11 forward. So, I thank you for having this and for
12 staying with us for this long. I appreciate you. I
13 appreciate the City Council but the bottom line is
14 pass Intro. 2317. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you Donna. I
16 appreciate everything that you do. Your work for WE
17 ACT. You know many, many, I guess it's like 20 years
18 ago, it's just like I got my you know the first
19 environmental award I ever got was from WE ACT. You
20 know Peggy and I have been you know friends for a
21 long time and I've always had a special place in my
22 heart for Peggy and for WE ACT and boy, don't we miss
23 Cecil Corban Mark(SP?). You know it's so sad still
24 that he is not with us but he is with us today and
25 uhm, uhm, yeah, so I think that's a good way to end

2 the hearing to think about Cecil and how we dedicated
3 his professional life towards making sure that we had
4 a greener city and a better life.

5 So, there you have it. And so, thank you Donna.
6 We appreciate your good testimony. Please submit it
7 in writing and thank you very much.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes
9 public testimony and I now pass it back to Chair
10 Gennaro for any closing remarks.

11 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Sure, I want to thank all
12 of the you know witnesses. Am I unmuted- yeah, I'm
13 unmuted. I want to thank all of the witnesses who
14 gave us you know their whole day. As I go to the
15 gallery function I notice that there are many people
16 who testified hours ago who are still on. I think
17 that's a testimony you know to the passion about you
18 know 2317 and the other bills. And a passion for you
19 know greater New Yorker and greener New York. I want
20 to thank staff, the Moderators, we have Nadia and who
21 do we have? Nina and everyone who served as a
22 Moderator. All the staff. I want to thank the
23 Speaker of the Council Corey Johnson and Chief of
24 Staff Jason Goldman and my staff Nabi(SP?) and Samara
25 and all the folks that put this good hearing

1
2 together. I'm saving my highest praise for Council
3 Member Ampry-Samuels. You know Council Member Ampry-
4 Samuel has really been a real force and a real change
5 maker and I thank her very much for her you know
6 advocacy in bringing this bill forward.

7 And I look forward to what is to come. I don't
8 know if she's still on but I'm grateful to her and
9 with no one else wishing to be heard and my thanks
10 having been expressed. My deep credit to everyone
11 involved in this hearing, with sadness because I
12 could go another two hours. I am closing the
13 hearing. Oh, Alicka, do you want to say something?
14 I see you.

15 Okay, okay, I got a thumbs up from Alicka. I
16 will take it okay. Thank you all very much and with
17 that, this hearing is officially adjourned. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 27, 2021