

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

----- X

May 25, 2022

Start: 10:08 a.m.

Recess: 9:28 p.m.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 1)

B E F O R E: Justin L. Brannan,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Speaker Adrienne E. Adams
Diana Ayala
Charles Barron
Gale A. Brewer
Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
Tiffany Cabán
David M. Carr
Amanda Farías
Kamillah Hanks
Crystal Hudson
Rita C. Joseph
Ari Kagan
Farah N. Louis
Francisco P. Moya
Chi A. Ossé
Keith Powers
Pierina Ana Sanchez
Marjorie Velázquez
Julie Won

A P P E A R A N C E S

Maria Barbara Lopez
District 38 Community Leader in Sunset Park

Steven Maldonado
Interpreter

Sarai Rodriguez
Mobile Food Workers Program

Mark Cannizzaro
President of Council of School Supervisors and
Administrators

Henry Garrido
Executive Director District Council 37

Michael Mulgrew
United Federation of Teachers President

Shirley Aldebol
Vice President SEIU 32BJ

Michael Yee
Local 3 IBEW

Beth Cheverie
Testifying on behalf of the Laborers Union Local
79's Business Manager, Mike Prohaska

Oren Barzilay
President Local 2507

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

Deborah Allman
President Local 1930 DC37

Joe Puleo
President of Local 983

Michael Burke
Grievance Rep Local 983 DC37

Vinny Musillo
President of DC 37's Local 1508

Marlena Giga
PEP Officer for over 20-years

Faith Behum
Senior Advocacy and Policy Advisor at UJA
Federation of New York

Kevin Jones
Associate State Director for Efficacy at AARP New
York

Bill Meehan
Sage

Vic Benson
Testifying on behalf of Jeanette Estima

MJ Okma
Sage

Daniel Patrick Clay
Neighborhood Gardener in Prospect Park

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

Rosa Chang
Cofounder of Brooklyn Bridge Manhattan

Cory Hassin testifying on behalf of Lynn Kelly,
the Executive Director of the New York
Restoration Project

Marisol Durain
Proud Bronx Native and Community Volunteer

Elvira Uribe
Organizer for CASA

George Sotiroff
CASA

Julie Colon
Tenant Organizer with the Northwest Bronx
Community and Clergy Coalition

Wanda Martinez
Tenant Leader with the Catholic Migration
Services

Mercedes Escoto
CASA

Anya Mukarji-Connolly
Associate Director of Policy at Brooklyn Defender
Services

Brendan Cheney
Director of Policy and Communications at the New
York Housing Conference

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

James Davis

Professional Staff Congress at CUNY

Luisa Rodriguez

Member of a Til Coalition

Tierra Labrada

Supportive Housing Network of New York

Monsignor Kevin Sullivan

Rockeya McVay

Member of DSA's New York City Chapter

Katherine Clad

Member of DSA's NIC Chapter

Tami Lin-Moges

Nature Conservancy

Aaron Sanders

Natural Areas Conservancy

Adam Ganser

New Yorkers for Parks

Randi Levine

Policy Director at Advocates for Children of New York

Salimatou Doumbouya

CUNY University Student Senate

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

Andrea Parker
Gowanus Canal Conservancy

Carol Verdi
Heartshare Human Services of New York

Christopher Treiber
Interagency Council Developmental Disabilities
Agencies

Gregory Brender
Day Care Council of New York

Jeanne Alter
Kennedy Children Center

Leonie Haimson
Class Size Matters

Jane Selden
350 NYC

Maggie Clarke
Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board

Sharon Silbermann
Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board

Rachel Brown
Western Queens Community Land Trust

Will Spisak
New Economy Project

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

Valerie Reyes-Jimenez
New York City Community Organizer for Housing
Works

Jordyn Rosenthal
Advocacy Coordinator at Community Access

Seth Pollack
Ending the Epidemic Community Coalition

Greg Mihailovich
Community Advocacy Director for the American
Heart Association here in New York City

Christopher Norwood
Executive Director of Health People

Michael Hernandez
Community Strive and Recovery

Joneé Billy
Director of Strategic Partnerships and External
Affairs for PowerPlay

Quadira Coles
Deputy Director of Policy at Girls for Gender
Equity

David Cruz
Speaking on behalf of Rachel Gasdick with New
York Edge

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

Potriankamanis Queano Nur
Campaigning for budget for AAPI and culture and
mental health

Mary Cheng
Chinese American Planning Council

Terry Collins
Chinese American Planning Council

Vanita Yogeshwar
Chinese American Planning Council

Benice Mach
Chinese American Planning Council

Darren Mack
Freedom Agenda

Eileen Maher
Vocal New York and Freedom Agenda

Cristina Rodriguez-Hart
New York City Queens Resident and a Member of
DSA's NYC Chapter

Alice Bufkin
Citizens Committee for Children of New York

Kenny Mineya
Make the Road New York

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

Katie Bravo

Trans Immigrant Project Make the Road

Kimberly George

President and CEO of Project Guardianship

Michelle Neugebauer

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation

Sophia Harrison

Founder and Executive Director of Arts House

Schools of Music, Dance, and Fine Arts

Janice Monger

Staten Island Museum

Lucy Sexton

New Yorkers for Culture and Arts

Ariel Herrera

Research and Advocacy Manager for Dance NYC

Donna Schneiderman

Domestic Worker Employer and a Member of Hand and Hand

KC Wagner

Domestic Worker Employer and a member of Hand and Hand

Lisa Bernstein

Domestic Worker Employer, member of Hand and Hand, Domestic Employers Network

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

Tatiana Bejar

New York City Lead Organizer at Hand and Hand,
the Domestic Employers Network

Ben Fuller-Googins

Carrol Gardens Association

Rosemary Martinez

National Domestic Worker Alliance

Salua Baidya

Hand and Hand, the Domestic Employers Network

Jim Dill

Executive Director of Housing and Services Inc

Luisa Pineda

College Retention Specialist at the College
Access and Success program at Queens Community
House

Merble Reagon

Executive Director of the Women's Center for
Education and Career Advancement

Alyssa Figueroa

Coalition Coordinator of the Urban Youth
Collaborative

Paul Nagle

Executive Director of Stonewall Community
Development Initiative

Mateo Guerrero Tabares

Trans-Immigrant project Make the Road

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

Chauvet Bishop
Audre Lorde Project

Elana Lancaster
Ackerman Institute for the Families Gender and
Family Project

Dr. Lisa Sloan
Pride Center of Staten Island

Kayt Tiskus
Director of Legislative Strategy and Special
Projects at Bowen Public Affairs Consulting

Ivette Ayala
Sheltering Arms

Lorenzo Brooks
Case Manager at Urban Pathways

Natasha Connor
Sheltering Arms

Nicholas O'Toole
Advocacy Associate at Urban Pathways

Nora Moran
Director of Policy and Advocacy at United
Neighborhood Houses

Bryan Fotino
University Settlement

Felipe Vargas
Senior Vice President of Programs at the Doe Fund

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

Alex Martinez

Kings Bridge Heights Community Center

Catherine Mykytiuk

Kings Bridge Heights Community Center and KHCC

Emily Miles

Executive Director of the New York City Alliance
Against Sexual Assault

Brian Trezevant

Program Director at Dwyer Gardens Community
Center

Chan Henry

Housing Specialist at Urban Pathways

Christopher Bromson

Executive Director of the Crime Victims Treatment
Center

Carlos Castel Croke

New York League of Conservation Voters

Lonnie Portis

We Act for Environmental Justice

Carlos Castro Croke

Associate for New York City Programs of the New
York League of Conservation Voters

Allison Guardi (SP?)

Family Healing Ambassador, a Parent Guardian and
Volunteer Position created during the pandemic

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

Jennifer Vasquez
District 10 Healing Ambassador

Tory Kaso
Campaign Director of Carbon Free and Healthy
Schools

Kathleen DiPerna
Director of Government Relations at Rethink

Nicholas Buess
Food Bank for New York City

Lisa Gilday
Chief Operating Officer at Birch Family Services

Crystal Rodriguez
Mom of Five from the Bronx, Speaking on Behalf of
Erika Gonzalez

Jolene Gunther-Doherty
Director of the Guild for Exceptional Childrens
Preschool 4410 program

Jennifer Choi
Special Education Advocate at Special Support
Services

Maggie Moroff
Arise Coalition

Chantal Hinds
Policy Entrepreneur at Next100

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

Joy Cambe
Program Coordinator for Empire Liver Foundation

Saaif Alam
Student from John Jay College

Gary English
Executive Director of Get it Get it

Sharone Kaufman
Deputy Attorney in charge of the Immigration Law
Unit at the Legal Aid Society

Rosa Rodriguez
President of 7981 Post Avenue Tenant Association

Jose Martinez
Harm Reduction Associate for National Harm
Reduction Coalition

Jamal Westmoreland
Registered Nurse employed at Woodhall Hospital in
Brooklyn

Jeannette Miller
CAMBA Legal Services

Shane Correia
Deputy Director of Government Partnerships at the
Center for Court Innovation

Lee Sessions
New York City resident and a member of DSA's NYC
Chapter

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

Pablo Estupiñan
Coalition Coordinator for the Right to Counsel
New York City Coalition

Nicholas Navarro
Volunteer with the New York Civil Liberties Union

Patrick Boettcher
Veteran of the Army a King Student

Savannah Millard
Volunteer with the NYCLU

Christine James-McKenzie
Jobs First NYC

Carina Kaufman-Gutierrez
Deputy Director of the Street Vendor Project

Andy Bowen
New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives\

Hannah Towfiek
Middle Eastern and North African Member Organizer
at the Street Vendor Project

Mohamed Attia
Director of the Street Vendor Project

Jackie Del Valle
Coordinator of Stabilizing NYC at Take Root
Justice

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

Rumi Akong

Trans Justice Program Coordinator at the Audre
Lorde Project

Priscilla Alexander

Healing Ambassador for PS 199 in the Bronx

Lily Liang

NYC Organizer of National Asian Pacific American
Woman's Forum

Ravi Reddi

Associate Director of Advocacy and Policy at the
Asian American Federation

Lloyd Feng

Policy Coordinator at the Coalition for Asian
American Children and Families CACF

Mohamed Amin

Founder and Executive Director of the Caribbean
Equality Project

Julian McKinley

Senior Director of Democracy at Work Institute

Jonathan Robinson

Communications Director for Marine Park Alliance

Daniela Contreras

Organizer at the National Domestic Workers
Alliance

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

Stephanie Glass
Against the Strategic Response Group

Victoire S.
Against the Strategic Response Group

Jessica Marshall
Adjunct Professor

Cheryl Warfield
In support of an additional \$100 million in
funding for Arts and Culture

Eleni DeSiervo
Senior Director of Government Relations at the
Lincoln Center

Jessica Chen
Artistic Director and Choreographer of JChen
Project

Francine Garber-Cohen
President of Regina Opera

Taryn Sacramone
Executive Director of Queens Theater and Chair of
the Cultural Institutions Group

Nathaniel Evans
member of Freedom Agenda

Zachary Katznelson
Executive Director of the Lippman Commission

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

Shalonda Curtis-Hackett

Parent of Three at Community-Based Doula

Shania Morris

Youth Leader at Make the Road New York and the
Urban Youth Collaborative

Akeria Adams

Youth Leader at the Urban Youth Collaborative

Aji Gaye

Freshman at High School in the Bronx

Laura Jean Hawkins

Advisory Board Chair of Astoria Queens Sharing
and Caring

Meghan Chappell

Program Manager at Empire Liver Foundation

Debra Ack

Board Member of the East New York Community Land
Trust

Beverly Pabon

Officer of 2 East on 27th Street Tenant
Association

Gigi Verkaik

Senior Director of Development at Encore
Community Services

Boris Santos

East New York CLT

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

Stephani Espinal
Organizer with Family Immigration Services based
in Queens

Karen Asner
Volunteer President of the Friends of St.
Nicholas Park

Rachel Barkley
Law Student at Benjamin and Cardozo School of Law

Sarah Williams
Executive Director of Green Guerillas

Suzette Simon
NY Laughs

Michael Pope
Executive Director of Youth Represent

Amanda Porch
Community Organizer who dedicates a lot of time
to helping the houses community

Ari Silver
New York City Resident asking to defund the
Strategic Response Group from the police budget

Chauncey T. Young
Director of the Parent Action Committee

Rasheedah Brown Harris
Legal Services NYC LSNY

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

Crystal Rodriguez
Mom of Five from the Bronx

Chris Langfield
Member of the New York City DSA

Dahlia Forte
Member of DAC's NYC Chapter

Indira Martinez
In Vivamente Opposition to Mayor Eric Adams
Executive Budget

Benjamin Spierman
General Director of Bronx Opera and a Board
Member of the New York Opera Alliance

Carlye Eckert
Representative of Dance Parade

Scott Daly
New York Junior Tennis and Learning, NYJTL

Kimberly Olsen
Executive Director of the New York City Arts and
Education Roundtable

Athena Bernkopf
East Harlem El Barrio Community Land Trust

Cassondra Warney
Corporation for Supportive Housing

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

Lisa Gitelson
CEO of the Fresh Air Fund

Shannon O'Neill Fonseca
Senior at Hunter College

Annette Robinson
Harlem's Community Board 9's Housing Land Use and
Zoning Committee

Darlene Jackson
Member of Freedom Agenda and the Parent Leaders
Live Action Network

Grace Ortiz
Member of Freedom Agenda

Jeff Lau
Director of the Adult Literacy Program at the
Chinese American Planning Council

Justice Laboy
CBC Extension Project Reach

Ethan Cyrus
Member of the Youth Food Advocates

Faith Catherine Jones
9th Grader at Brooklyn Technical High School and a
Member of Youth Advocates

Leslie Gomez Rivera
Senior in High School

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

Katelin Wong

Liz Accles
Speaking on Cafeteria Enhancement

Shavani Shah
Junior at Stuyvesant High School and I'm a member
of the Youth Food Advocates

Ameer Ahasser
Junior at Stuyvesant High School

Anna Lilla Araiza
Director of Youth Leadership at Community Food
Advocates

Ashley Liu
Junior at Brooklyn Technical High School

Tracey Fu
Member of DSA's New York City Chapter

Yuni Kavalerchik
Member of the DSA's New York City Chapter

Jennifer Jones

Kay Gabriel
Member of DSA and I'm an Adjunct Instructor at
NYU

Melissa Kagle
Member of DSA's New York City Chapter

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

Araceli Espejel Mena

Steven Maldonado
Interpreter

Rob Katz

Kevin Wolf
Senior Government Affairs Manager at the Center
for New York City Neighborhoods

Benjamin Holda
Diverting Funding from the SRG Unit of the NYPD

David Jenkins
Union Member and a Member of NYC DSA

Marlowe Boettcher
A Member of DSA

Zade Haobsh
Member of DSA's NYC Chapter

Brian Kepple

Malat Seyoum
Worker Co-op Policy Advocate for the New York
City Network of Worker Cooperatives

Martha Larson
Member of DSA

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

Eric Seligman

Economics Professor at CUNY's John Jay College of
Criminal Justice

Madeleine Jackson

In support of Section 9

Mimi Shelton

Black transgender woman and a New York resident

Willie Dean

Entertainer/Producer

Deigo Brown

Real Estate agent in the town Manhattan

Charaya Hardy

Recording Secretary for the CEC

Joy Clarke

Amy Tsai

Parent Leader of the New Settlement Parent Action
Committee

Jazzy Rivera

Family Healing Ambassador of PS123 and the
District Healing Ambassador of District 32

Judith Bautista

Alma Rocha

Member of the National Alliance Domestic Worker

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

Deborah Humes Jordan
Leader of National Domestic Workers Alliance

Denise Frederick
National Domestic Workers Alliance

Harnet Mugwuji
Leader of the National Domestic Workers Alliance

Jacque Ori

Marissa Senteno
National Domestic Workers Alliance

Dave Tallivan

Gloria Manzano
Family Healing Ambassador for District 31

Namrata Pradhan
Organizer at Adhikaar

Kieran Clarke
Member/Leader of the National Domestic Workers
Alliance

Gail Haywood
Member with the National Domestic Workers
Alliance

Jennifer Downes
Asking to remove the funding of the NYPD's
Strategic Response Group

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

Ryan Chavez

Program Director of the Basement Apartment

1
2 SERGEANT POLITE: Recording to the Cloud all set.

3 SERGEANT LEONARDO: Good morning and welcome to
4 today's Remote New York City Council Hearing for the
5 Committee on Finance. At this time, we ask that
6 Council Members and Staff turn on their video for
7 verification purposes. To minimize disruptions,
8 please place all cellphones and electronic devices to
9 vibrate or silent. If you have testimony you wish to
10 submit for the record, you may do so at
11 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Once again, that is
12 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

13 We thank you for your cooperation. Chair, we're
14 ready to begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Sergeant.
16 [GAVEL] Good morning everyone and welcome to the
17 public portion of the Executive Budget hearing
18 process. Today is May 25, 2022. My name is Justin
19 Brannan and I am privileged to Chair the Committee on
20 Finance in the City Council and I proudly represent
21 the 43rd Council District which encompasses Bay
22 Ridge, Dyker Heights, Bath Beach and Bensonhurst in
23 the area where I grew up.

24 Over the last ten days, this Committee has heard
25 from more than 20 agencies, authorities, offices and

boards. We've held the Administration to task to ensure that city dollars are spent wisely, effectively and fairly.

As we turn to budget negotiations, we'll work towards a balanced budget that is guided by fairness and equity to every single New Yorker. We'll work to ensure that our city's post COVID recovery reaches all segments of our society and all corners and zip codes of our five boroughs. COVID-19 has adversely impacted our students, seniors, immigrant community, small business owners, those with mental health issues, single parents, people living in temporary housing, incarcerated youth, incarcerated adults, caregivers. In other words, every single resident of this city has been impacted by COVID and is struggling in their own way.

The challenges are large and the recovery is slow. As we begin our new normal following an unprecedented two years, it is the duty of this legislative body and of all 50 of my colleagues on this City Council to ensure that this budget and the budgets to come spend every dime of taxpayer money to achieve positive lasting change and to reverse the losses suffered from the COVID pandemic.

A budget is a reflection of the values one holds. It is a statement by government of what it holds most important. And for this city budget, we need to ensure that those who need the most help get it. We need to ensure that every neighborhood receives the same level of city services and attention regardless of zip code. We need to undo the years of neglect and unfairness. We have more than 400 people registered to testify today and I look forward to hearing from each and every one of you.

I want to hear the challenges you face, the causes that you're fighting for and how you think our city budget dollars should be spent. Over the past ten days, we've heard from over 20 authorities and agencies and boards and offices but today is arguably the most important day when we hear from the people of this city. To hear from what you want to see in our city budget this year.

I want to thank the Council Finance Division, Malcolm Butehorn and my special Advisor Jon Yedin for riding along with me for the past couple of weeks during these budget hearings. We've got a very long day today. It's important that we hear from everybody. It's important that we respect each

other's time. We'll be here long through the night, so it's important that the time is kept in check early on so that people who are testifying at nine o'clock tonight still have enough time and get the attention that they deserve.

I'll now turn to Committee Counsel to review logistics and to begin calling panels. Thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chair Brannan.

Good morning and welcome to the public portion of the Fiscal Year 2023 Executive Budget hearings. My name is Malcolm Butehorn and I am Counsel the Finance Committee. As of right now, we have more than 500 registrants for today. We also have received more than 50 requests for panels in special timeslots. We have tried to accommodate many of those requests but many were received late or persons registered late. Therefore not all requests may be met. We have done our best but not every request will be met simply due to the fluid nature of public hearings. Everyone will receive two minutes to speak. The Sergeant at Arms will let you know when two minutes has concluded.

We ask in fairness to everyone waiting after you to speak that when that happens, to please wrap up your comments. Written testimony may be as long as you wish, please submit it by emailing to testimony@council.nyc.gov. Council Members present, if you have questions, you may ask it at the conclusion of the panel. Please use the raise hand function in Zoom and I will call on you in the order with which it was raised. You will have two minutes to speak. You will be permitted to ask your question at the conclusion of a panel. We have given you the ability to unmute yourselves, please do not abuse that privilege. I will now turn to calling panels and we first have Maria Barbara Lopez. And Steven, I know you're going to be interpreting for her. So, if you could just let her know, she now has two minutes to speak. She is on the Zoom.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 6:13-6:28].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Hello, my name is Maria Barbara Lopez. I am a District 38 Community Leader in Sunset Park. I am here to ask the Borough Council

to approve a budget that is favorable for all New Yorkers. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 6:43].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 6:45-6:52]

STEVEN MALDONADO: The pandemic has left us all in a crisis and the raised rents has left us all with fears of ending up homeless. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 7:00].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 7:02-7:12]

STEVEN MALDONADO: The Mayor awards the rich and the powerful with all these cutbacks on all kinds of services for health, cleaning, maintenance, education and housing. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 7:23].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 7:24-7:38].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I ask to fight against this abuse. It is a crime all these cutbacks. There should be financing and investments into housing done more strongly to help our workers have homes to live in permanently. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 7:59].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 8:00-8:12].

STEVEN MALDONADO: The Council should reject this abuse and all these cutbacks in public education and we need more. We require more counseling for mental health social workers. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 8:27].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 8:28-8:49].

STEVEN MALDONADO: We also need because of these two crisis's that we are confronting with including the environment and overdosing, we require better plans of better health plans with quality for our lives because we are all first line workers. We need better schools, so that we could save the five boroughs. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 9:16].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 9:18-9:27].

STEVEN MALDONADO: We are workers that struggle for the city every day and everything has increased two-fold. How can you diminish or reduce this budget for all New Yorkers? [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 9:40].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 9:42-9:55].

STEVEN MALDONADO: We do jobs that others won't do and we are essential workers and we are the ones

that are helping to protect your communities and the city. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:06].

MARIA BARBARA LOPEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:07].

STEVEN MALDONADO: That is all. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we are going to turn to Sarai Rodriguez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:19-10:29].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Steven, you can tell her that it's her time to testify please.

STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:33-10:36].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:37. Okay?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

STEVEN MALDONADO: Okay. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:42].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:50-10:53].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Good day. My name is Sarai Rodriguez.

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 10:56-11:04].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I am from the program of Mobile Food Workers.

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: One second.

STEVEN MALDONADO: One second.

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 11:32-11:39].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I'm a member of the Street Vendor Project.

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 11:42-11:47].

STEVEN MALDONADO: It's an organization that defends the rights of street food vendors. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 11:42].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 11:53-11:57].

STEVEN MALDONADO: And we fight to improve working conditions. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:00].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:01-12:08].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I would like to thank President Brannan and the whole Committee for the

opportunity to give testimony today. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:14].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:16-12:29].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I've been working for six years as a street vendor and the major problem is that there isn't enough licenses for working.

[SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:36].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:37-12:43].

STEVEN MALDONADO: We have to run around and get very expensive permits just so we can work.

[SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:48].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 12:50-12:56].

STEVEN MALDONADO: The program gives the organization gives the support so we could fight against this injustice. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 13:02].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 13:06-13:20].

STEVEN MALDONADO: As member of the Street Vendor Project -

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 13:26-13:30].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I ask for respectfully for some financing from the City Council of New York.

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 13:38-13:45].

STEVEN MALDONADO: To expand the key two programs that are very necessary for street vendors. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 13:49].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 13:51-13:54].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Which are the smallest businesses in the City of New York. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 13:58].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:00-14:05].

STEVEN MALDONADO: One, a program for education and outreach, for community outreach. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:10].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:11-14:15].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Two, a program for small business, for small businesses, for teaching small businesses. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:22].

SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:23-14:30].

2 STEVEN MALDONADO: These programs would help
3 backup a recouperation project for economic
4 recouperation in New York. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH
5 14:38].

6 SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:39-
7 14:45] —

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 SARAI RODRIGUEZ: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:47-
10 14:48].

11 STEVEN MALDONADO: And for providers that include
12 me, so we can push forward with our businesses.
13 [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 14:54]. Okay.

14 SARAI RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will
16 hear from Sonia Perez followed by Catalina Chaplain.

17 STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 15:07-
18 15:11].

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

20 STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 15:14].

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I do not see Ms. Perez
22 on the Zoom.

23 STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 15:22-
24 15:24].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Nor do I see Catalina Chaplain.

STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 15:27-15:30].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We're now going to turn to our next panel. So, Steven, we will let you know if we have more translation needed.

STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 15:37:40].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. The next panel that we are going to hear from will be Henry Garrido, Executive Director District Council 37, Mark Cannizzaro Council of School Supervisors and Administrators President, Michael Mulgrew United Federation of Teachers President.

The panel following that will be Shirley Aldebol Vice President SEIU 32BJ, Michael Yee Local 3 IBEW, Beth Cheverie Laborers Union Local 79, Oren Barzilay President Local 2507, and Deborah Allman President Local 1930 DC37. We'll first start with Henry Garrido.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, not seeing him, we're going to turn to Mark Cannizzaro, President of CSA.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MARK CANNIZZARO: Good morning and thank you Chair Brannan and distinguished members of the City Council for conducting this hearing today. My name is Mark Cannizzaro, President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators.

We have testified before the Budget Committee already, the Education Budget Committee, I apologize. And nothing is more important than keeping our schools safe and with that, I would just like to take a moment to reflect on the tragic loss of the lives in Texas yesterday. It seems as if these things are just coming too often and it is heartbreaking every time we hear of something of that magnitude.

For quite some time, we've been calling for you know an Assistant Principal in every school. Our contract calls for an Assistant Principal in every school but sadly there are approximately 70 schools in New York City whose budgets do not permit them at this time from hiring an assistant principal. It is our position that the department should be funding those AP's anyway but we call on the Finance Committee to just back us on that proposal and make sure that adequate funding is set aside.

We also are calling for a restoration of the almost 1,000 school safety agents that – positions that are currently vacant in order to make sure that every school is adequately staffed with safety agents. And furthermore, we are in discussion with the Chancellor regarding uhm, uh, making sure that school buildings are locked. Front doors are locked during the school day.

As you know, we've also asked for funding for our professional development group ELI and we have submitted testimony on that. As well as our longstanding fight for a pay equity for –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MARK CANNIZZARO: For our early childhood educators. These folks have been working for years in the early childhood area. They are seasoned professionals with all the credentials of our Department of Education colleagues and they are severely underpaid, earning approximately 50 percent of what their colleagues in the Department of Education make.

Uhm, as I'm out of time, I will stop there but you do have my written testimony. Thank you all so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Mark Cannizzaro.

Next, we'll turn to Michael Mulgrew from the United Federation of Teachers.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you all so much and I want to thank Justin Brannan, the Chair of Finance Committee, as well as the Chair of the Education Committee Rita Joseph and I was very, very happy to hear Justin Brannan's remarks about how this City Council is going to hold the task that taxpayers money is actually going to be spent on the things that it's supposed to be spent on, which is the people and the children of New York City. As well as holding each agency to task.

When it comes to the things that we've asked you to fund, I won't go through them, you have that list. I can guarantee you that you are holding us to task and all of that money is being spent on the children of New York City. As well as additional millions of dollars coming from union members' dues to help with all sorts of different programs that help the children of New York City.

Now, the biggest challenge that I have heard from what Chair Brannan said in the beginning is, he is

going to hold every agency to task. Well, when it comes to the Department of Education, they are undefeated at not being held to task by any City Council. And they have figured out ways for years and decades to continue to waste taxpayers money. To continue to finance a massive bureaucracy that is not helping the children of New York City.

As we talk right now where the budget is going is in the opposite direction, despite the fact that we received \$7.6 billion from the federal government. \$5 billion of which is still not allocated and the fact that the state of New York has now put an additional \$1.3 billion.

So, when we ask the question about the basic issue that every parent and teacher wants in terms of class size, the Department of Eds response to us is, well, the state needs to give us more money or why don't you pay for it. Well, it's time for us to say enough is enough with their garbage and we need to all come together to hold them accountable. If not, they will continue to just spin and spin and spin and it is the children of New York City who they are cheating and it is time for -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Michael.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Uh, and for the record, we've been joined by Council Members Brannan, Farias, Louis, Kagan, Hudson, Joseph, Barron, Sanchez and Carr.

The next panel that we're going to call up Shirley Aldebol, Michael Yee, Beth Cheverie, Oren Barzilay, Deborah Allman. The panel following will be Joe Puleo, Michael Burke, Daniel Patrick Clay, Dilsy Ben(SP?), Vinny Musillo, Marlena Giga. We will first start with Shirley Aldebol.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SHIRLEY ALDEBOL: Good morning Chairman Brannan and members of the Committee. My name is Shirley Aldebol, I'm Executive Vice President of SEIU Local 32BJ. As you are aware 32BJ is the nation's largest property services union with 85,000 members in New York.

I'm speaking to you today on behalf of over 5,000 cleaners and handy persons employed by New York City School Support Services represented by 32BJ to call on the City Council to fully fund our city schools, including funding for schools cleaning and

1 maintenance. These hard working men and women
2 employed by NYSIS, work under contract with the
3 Department of Education to provide school facility
4 cleaning and maintenance services.
5

6 Since the outset of COVID-19 pandemic, these
7 essential workers have been cleaning uhm, have been
8 providing services to the community and putting
9 themselves at risk in order to keep students and
10 staff and the community at large healthy and safe.

11 While schools were closed to students and
12 teachers, they became a resources and childcare
13 centers for children of first responders. They
14 became food distribution hubs, COVID testing sites
15 and more. The schools facility staff made sure that
16 the schools could remain healthy and safe places for
17 our communities.

18 The hiring freeze in 2020 and 2021 led to a
19 staffing shortage of nearly 750 workers citywide.
20 Since the reopening of New York City public schools
21 last fall, workloads have increased and maintenance
22 staff has had to work overtime to deal with the
23 staffing shortages as well as enhance cleaning and
24 disinfection protocols. As we determine our budget
25 for next year, spending to ensure that New York

City's public school buildings are clean and safe should be a top priority. Funding NYSIS represents a small portion of DOE's annual spending. However, it has an outside impact on the welfare of our school community. This includes not only students and teachers but also NYSIS workers themselves. We cannot afford to reduce maintenance or cleaning in New York Schools in the midst of an ongoing crisis.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we're going to turn to Michael Yee from Local 3 IBEW.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MICHAEL YEE: Good morning Chair Brannan and Council Members. My name is Michael Yee and I am the Director of the Educational and Cultural Trust Fund of the Electrical Industry. And a 35-year member of Local Union number 3 of the International Brothers of Electrical Workers.

Local 3 represents 28,000 workers in New York City, engaged in electrical construction, maintenance and manufacturing. Local 3 is a member of the Climate Jobs New York Coalition and I'm here today to speak on the coalitions carpentry and the Healthy Schools Initiative. The city is at an inflexion

point. The pandemic exacerbated deep inequality. We are running out of time to act on climate change and working families are getting hit hard by inflation and rising costs of living.

Climate Jobs New York has a concrete plan that would address all of these issues. This plan works to solve the climate crisis and create jobs that benefit workers and their communities and presents a roadmap for New York City to fight the climate crisis, make New York City safer and address racial and economic inequality by investing in proworker renewable energy transition. The city would prioritize the transition to carbon free and healthy schools, ensuring these buildings are safe for the students and staff who occupy them and for the surrounding communities. In a way that promotes equity and creates job, good union jobs in traditionally overlooked and under resourced neighborhoods.

Investing in to retrofit and transform all public K-12 schools to be carbon free by 2030, New York City would create over 62,000 good union jobs in the communities that need them most. While making schools healthier for over 1.2 million students,

teachers, administrators and staff, reduce emissions by the equivalent of taking 154,000 cars off the road and save millions annually in energy costs. Money that would be reinvested into schools.

Many New York City school buildings are in need of basic repairs and upgrades.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and folks when time is called, you know just if you have a sentence you just want to wrap up, you know feel free to just give a sentence to wrap up. And I apologize if I'm messing up anybody's names. Believe me, I go through it myself with my own.

Next, we're going to hear from Beth Cheverie, Laborers Union Local 79.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

BETH CHEVERIE: Thank you. I hope everyone can hear me.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

BETH CHEVERIE: My name is Beth Cheverie, you pronounced it right and I'm here on behalf of the Laborers Union Local 79's Business Manager Mike Prohaska.

Local 79 represents over 8,000 members working in construction in New York City and we also sit on the Executive Board of Climate Jobs New York. Climate Jobs New York is calling for the city to make public schools and housing carbon free by 2030 and as you know, we're running out of time.

The Carbon Free and Healthy Schools Initiative is a concrete plan that would help the city tackle its climate crisis, create good union jobs that will employ workers for the community. This initiative will address economic inequality by investing in the neighborhoods that have been overlooked in the past.

The city needs to prioritize the transition to carbon free schools to ensure these buildings will create a healthy learning environment for the city's 1.2 million students and staff. By retrofitting all K-12 public schools to be carbon free by 2030, the city would create over 62,000 good paying middle class union jobs that will revitalize the local community. Over time, the conversion is projected to save millions annually in energy costs, which could be reinvested into our school systems. And many of the city's school buildings are currently in need of these basic repairs and maintenance.

By making the investment in carbon free schools, the city has the opportunity to create a model on decarbonization that can be replicated on other private and public buildings. Thank you for your consideration.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Oren Barzilay President Local 2507 DC 37.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

OREN BARZILAY: Good morning. Good morning Committee Chairperson and honorable Council Members. My name is Oren Barzilay. I'm a 25-year veteran of FDNYMS and the President of Local 2507.

I'm here today to speak on behalf of more than 4,000 uniformed EMT's, paramedics and fire inspectors. Our agency is budgeted to over \$2 billion. Yet, there's no pay parity for EMT's, paramedics and fire inspectors compared to other city first responders.

EMT's and paramedics through the past year have gone through hell. Three of my men and women have committed suicide, yet there's not many mental health options or any sort of mental therapy for our men and women. This issue needs to be resolved immediately as this crisis is escalating across our nation. Our

1
2 EMT's and paramedics on a daily basis get assaulted,
3 beat down, sometimes hospitalized and are placed on
4 long-term medical leave to recoup from their
5 injuries. Yet there's no solutions or any help on
6 how the department will deal with the ever ongoing
7 increasing assaults.

8 Our call volume is through the roof. The Bronx
9 residents are the ones who are mostly suffering as
10 units across the boroughs from Manhattan and Queens
11 get redeployed on a daily basis to assist the
12 residents of the Bronx. EMT's, paramedics, need more
13 resources out there to be able to provide an
14 essential service to the public. I think it's time
15 that the Fire Department has implemented a serious
16 solution to all these problems. Thank you.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will
18 turn to Deborah Allman, President Local 1930 DC 37.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

20 DEBORAH ALLMAN: Good morning. I'm Deborah
21 Allman, President of New York Public Library Guild
22 1930. Chairman Justin Brannan and fellow Committee
23 Members, thank you for giving me an opportunity to
24 testify on behalf of all the patrons and employees of
25 the Brooklyn Public Library, the New York Public

Library and Queens Public Library. We are united in our request for the City Council to help our public libraries.

On July 1, 2021, the City Council and Mayor acknowledged all the amazing work library workers performed for our city. Your constituents joined the first year of this tragic pandemic and gave the three New York City library systems budgets that allow us to continue our excellent work.

In the beginning of this current fiscal year, our city was still struggling, yet we have hope because we had a vaccine. Library Branches started opening up, offering more services. Our customers with job and a bit trepidation started coming back. In December and January, the COVID surge spread throughout the city and the library systems for the safety of their staff and customers wisely curtailed our opening plans.

As case diminish we continued expanding our physical operations, our customers are true to have their in-person programs, newspapers, books. Even though our physical buildings are open, we still have to maintain our virtual infrastructure presence that we don't the previous year.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

DEBORAH ALLMAN: Honestly, we struggle to keep our libraries open. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. I will now call panel four but before I do, I will let panels five and six know who they are. Panel five will be Faith Behum, Breanna Pardon Williams, Kevin Jones, Bill Meehan, MJ Okma, and Jeanette Estima.

Panel six will be Rosa Chang, Kay Webster, Lynn Kelly, Marisol Durain and Mark Harren(SP?) But I will now turn to panel four Joe Puleo, Michael Burke, Daniel Patrick Clay, Delcie Ben(SP?) Vinny Musillo, Marlana Giga. And we'll start with Joe Puleo, President Local 983 DC 37.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JOE PULEO: Thank you. Good morning. Good morning Chair. Good morning City Council. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Joe Puleo, I am President of Local 983. I am also Vice President of DC 37 and also on the DC 37's Parks Committee along with Delcie Bens.

I'd like to begin by saying that we have been going through a struggle for the last 20-years to allocate one percent of the Parks Budget to excise

me, one percent of the city's budget to Parks. That would enable us to stop begging every time there are cuts being faced as they are now.

One percent would cover all of our needs you know moving forward. We have never recouped from the Fiscal crisis of the 1970's when it comes to work shortages throughout the parks. During the pandemic, the parks were horrendous. Everybody was going to the parks. We didn't have enough personnel in the parks until we got money from the federal government under the City Corpse program and we were able to get thousands of workers to clean our parks. They have been employed since then. The money is going to run on this Fiscal Budget. If we don't have restoration for these people, these people who actually go these jobs because they were probably laid off from their other previous jobs will now be laid off and possibly become homeless as a result.

We're asking that we at least get the \$40 million to band aid us till next year. So, these people can continue to work, put food on the table and pay their rent. We also ask that our Urban Park Rangers right, be renewed for another year. These workers have worked — during the pandemic, they gave out PPE, they

gave out gloves, masks, they were essential during the whole time that the pandemic –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JOE PULEO: Alright thank you. Thank you all for having me and please restore the funding. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Mr. Puleo and we've also been joined by Council Member Brooks-Powers.

We'll next turn to Michael Burke, Grievance Rep Local 983 DC37.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Burke?

MICHAEL BURKE: Hello, good morning.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Go ahead.

MICHAEL BURKE: Council people, I just want to say thank you very much Joe Puleo. To continue with what Joe Puleo was saying, the Play Fair Urban Park Rangers were requesting their renewal. Again, throughout the pandemic, they were out there, they were first responders, they were handing out PPE. In addition, they were performing public programs in the hardest hit COVID areas. They spent time, they spent hours and then last fiscal year, they were released. A lot of people lost their jobs and now we're back to the same situation.

We're requesting that the city refund these urban park rangers for another year. These urban park rangers are from a lot of the local community neighborhoods that you folks are representing and they're serving these same communities. They are there. They are doing programs. They are helping the public. They are going ahead; they are doing animal rescues. They're doing above and beyond what they were asked to do and they still don't know if they are going to have a job after September 30th.

So, with all of your consideration please keep these people in mind, our city workers. Thank you very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will turn to Daniel Patrick Clay.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, not seeing him on the Zoom. We will turn next to Delcie Ben.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will turn to Vinny Musillo.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

VINNY MUSILLO: Good morning Finance Chair Brannan and all Council Members. My name is Vincent

Musillo, President of DC 37's Local 1508, which represents administrative park and recreation managers and park supervisors. I would like to speak on behalf of all parks workers and New Yorkers that will be effected if New York City does not come through on their promise of one percent of the budget for March maintenance. Since the start of the pandemic, it was parks that former Mayor Bill de Blasio urged New Yorkers to visit. It was the place of refuge and solace for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers during extremely trying times. And during these times, it was park staff comfortably known as parkies that showed up day in and day out to clean, maintain and safeguard all of the parks they were responsible for. At a time when many were given an option to work from home, our dedicated parkies that work down in the field were not.

We were deemed essential in the fight against COVID. Field workers stood up to the challenge and did their best to keep New Yorkers visiting the always beautiful green space and playgrounds throughout the city. Proudly, we arrived at work every day knowing at any moment we could victim to COVID or a loved one could do the same.

Parkies were lost. Loved ones were lost. Despite all of this, we continue to do our job as parkies. Many of these workers have established themselves within the community they were assigned. When a city park worker or a city seasonal aid is fixed post at the same location, they take these playgrounds in as their own. The community can put a smiling face to the playground they visited for the last two and a half years. If the budget for one percent for parks does not pass, this will end. The effect it will have on the children and families will be enormous. And this pales in comparison to the workers themselves. After the long, hard road of working in unknown conditions throughout this pandemic and deemed essential, the thank you they may receive is a pink slip, determination letter. How much more demoralizing can an individual feel if they put their heart and soul to serve New Yorkers to be told, hey, thanks for the hard work.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

VINNY MUSILLO: But your time with parks is over. Thank you very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Marlana Giga, Secretary Treasurer of Local 983.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MARLENA GIGA: Hi, my name is Marlana Giga and I've been a PEP Officer for over 20-years. This past weekend, the temperatures were high and we had about 20,000 patrons at Orchard Beach with only six officers assigned to that Beach. The crowd was overflowing. Our officers were barely able to keep the traffic flowing and one of the vehicles was ran by a patron that didn't want to wait to get out.

Our offices are very short staffed. They're responding to about 18 calls a day. They're not even able to do regular patrol because of the amount of calls. They're actually working eight days straight and they're overwhelmed.

Also, our city seasonal aids, they do security and they also do maintenance work. We'd like to keep them working. A lot of them have been working through the pandemic and they are in dire need of keeping their job and we also need them because everybody is utilizing the parks now more than ever

and we just want to keep everybody working. We want to keep the park safe.

Also, our APSW employees, their maintenance workers, we would like to see more of the work being done by them. It's currently about \$3,000 to plant a tree. Our APSW's can do this work. Stop outsourcing the work to private companies. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes panel four. We'll now turn to panel five but I will just re-announce panel six and also seven and eight. Panel six was Rosa Chang, Kay Webster, Lynn Kelly, Marisol Durain and Mark Herrin.

Panel seven, Elvira Uribe, George Sotiroff, Julie Colon, Mercedes Escoto, Wanda Martinez, Anya Mukarji -Connolly. And panel eight, Brendan Cheney, Ryan Chavez, Luisa Rodriguez, Alex Roak(SP?), Tierra Librada, and Monsignor Kevin Sullivan. But we'll turn to panel five starting with Faith Behum.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

FAITH BEHUM: Good morning Chair Brannan and members of the Committee on Finance. My name is Faith Behum and I am Senior Advocacy and Policy Advisor at UJA Federation of New York. Established more than 100-years-ago, UJA is one of the nation's

largest local philanthropies. UJA supports a network of nearly 100 nonprofit organizations serving those that are most vulnerable and in need of programs and services. UJA urges the Council to increase the investments in the LE We Sell Holocaust Survivors initiative to \$5 million.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, social workers funded through the Survivor initiative have continued to provide this specialized care the survivors require due to the trauma they experienced during the holocaust. The \$5 million investment will support case management services that provide access to including but not exclusive to, mental health services, trauma informed care, crisis prevention and emergency financial assistance. It is crucial to provide specialized care and support programs for survivors to enhance their quality of life and allow them to live out the remaining years with dignity. UJA is a member of the Just Pay Campaign, which is dedicated to increasing wages for human services workers. These workers are the backbone of the nonprofit to provide essential services to their communities. Unfortunately, they are some of the lowest paid workers in New York's economy.

To combat this, UJA requests the city establish, fund and enforce an automatic cost of living adjustment on all human services contracts, set a living wage floor of no less than \$21 an hour for all city and state funded human services workers. Create, fund and incorporate a comprehensive wage and benefit schedule for government contracted human services workers comparable to the salaries made by city and state employees in the same field.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify. The entirety of UJA's budget request can be reviewed in our submitted testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And next, we'll turn to Breanna Padden Williams.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we'll turn to Kevin Jones from AARP New York.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KEVIN JONES: Good morning, my name is Kevin Jones. I'm the Associate State Director for Efficacy at AARP New York. Thank you for allowing me to be here and advocate for better services for New Yorkers 50 plus including for our 750,000 New York City AARP members.

Older New Yorkers built this city and made it great and now it's time to make sure they can comfortably and safely retire in the homes and communities they love. First, the Department for the Aging is responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of older adults, particularly most vulnerable. For that reasons, we respectfully request no PEG for DFTA.

Older adults can't afford rising housing costs either. They deserve better. They need an increase reimbursement rate for senior affordable rental apartments and 1,000 new units of affordable senior housing per year. We also need to ensure that they receive the services to stay in their home safely.

We're grateful for the City Council for their pledge to invest \$7 million to clear the homecare and case management wait lists. It's what the 50 plus deserves. We're also grateful to the City Council for wanting to increase funding for the Get Food Recovery Meals Program but we need significant funding to meet the demands for weekend and holiday meals because New Yorkers 50 plus deserve food on their tables.

They also deserve to have their mental health needs addressed. The City Council has proposed

1
2 increasing the budget for mental health services and
3 we thank you for it but the city budget also must
4 expand the geriatric mental health program and this
5 is crucial as the 50 plus continue to recover from
6 the isolation and trauma of the pandemic.

7 We hope we can count on the City Council to fund
8 the programs and services that New Yorkers 50 plus
9 deserve. I'll be submitting additional details in my
10 written testimony. So, thank you for your time and
11 I'm happy to take any questions.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll
13 turn to Bill Meehan from Sage.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

15 BILL MEEHAN: Good morning. Numbers are
16 important and at a budget meeting, they are very
17 important. But often their cold and faceless.

18 I'm Bill Meehan, an actual person reflected in
19 Sage's numbers and I'm here to talk about the
20 importance of the LGBTQ Senior Services in every
21 borough initiative. After no longer being able to
22 afford an apartment in my long time neighborhood in
23 Jackson Heights, I now live in Stonewall House, an
24 LGBTQ affordable older housing development in Fort
25 Greene. Here I help run the Stonewall House Tenants

1 Association and I'm an active participant in Sage
2 Center Brooklyn, located on the ground floor of this
3 building. Through the Sage Center, I became involved
4 in a writers group which has pushed me back to
5 blogging, not to everyone's happiness. I attend a
6 gay men's group that facilitates discussion not only
7 on our past but helps director our future activities.
8 And I'm not able to march as I used to. I
9 participate in a political discussion group, making
10 sure that my voice is heard.

12 The Stonewall house offered an opportunity to
13 find housing proudly without fear of discrimination.
14 I was not sure how I would be able to adjust to this
15 but sage center helped build more connections to the
16 community.

17 The Sage Centers staff and services helped me and
18 many others on a daily basis in a setting that is
19 safe, and affirming. This is extremely helpful in
20 addressing social isolation which is prevalent among
21 seniors and has greatly increased due to COVID. The
22 LGBTQ Senior Services Initiative in every borough has
23 had a tremendous and positive effect on LGBTQ seniors
24 and I ask the City Council to not only continue but
25 to enhance this initiative to meet the demands for

safe and competent aging services in Brooklyn and across —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

BILL MEEHAN: And across the city. Thank you for your time and support.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to MJ Okma, also from Sage.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MJ OKMA: Hi, good morning. My name is MJ Okma with Sage. The country's first and largest organization dedicated to improving the lives LGBTQ+ and HIV affected older people. Over the past two years, Sage has become the onsite service provider and New York's first LGBTQ+ welcoming elder housing developments, located in Brooklyn and the Bronx.

Having a history of trauma and systemic discrimination has deeply impacted LGBTQ+ elders creating health disparities and unequal access, particularly among housing. Countless LGBTQ+ older people like Bill, who you just heard from, find themselves being priced out in neighborhoods that they've lived in for years due to raising rents and financial security as they age. Communities like Stonewall House and Catriona Pride House not only

1 help fill this direct need for stable housing, they
2 also serve as an entry point for LGBTQ+ competent
3 aging services for residents and community members.
4 The onsite Sage Centers bring much needed LGBTQ+
5 services to neighborhoods that lack such support and
6 Sage is reaching elders who have previously been
7 isolated in services. This includes many elders who
8 struggle with mental illness, substance abuse, food
9 insecurity and homelessness. And require intensive
10 care management and social services support.
11

12 Over the past several years, there has been a
13 growing demand for the services and supports provided
14 at these locations and our other four adult centers
15 across the city. This is due to new elders that
16 we're now able to reach through these housing
17 developments. The growing demand for mental health
18 services, wider access to services under a hybrid in-
19 person and virtual delivery model and the
20 disproportionate impact COVID-19 has had on LGBTQ+
21 elders. Due to high levels of underlying health
22 conditions and thin support networks.

23 Because of this demonstrated growing need for
24 services, we are asking the Council for an
25 enhancement of \$300,000 to the LGBTQ+ Senior Services

and every borough initiative. This enhancement would maintain Sages funding under the initiative as well as directly fund the work for Griot Circle. New York City's only staffed community-based organization, specifically serving LGBTQ+ elders of color. Thank you so much for your time and support.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. For the record, we've also been joined by Council Members Moya, Ossé and Powers. Next, we'll turn to Jeanette Estima.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

VIC BENSON: Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm here on behalf of City Meals on Wheels. My name is Vic Benson, I'm the Senior Programs Associate, Jeanette couldn't make it right now.

City Meals works in partnership with the city and the network of home delivered meal providers to cover the cost of delivering meals on weekends, holidays and emergencies to homebound older adults. These are meals that are not included in DFTA's contracts with HDM providers. For the new clients transitioning from recovery meals, we believe there will be more than 3,000 older adults in need once DFTA's assessment is finished.

Many though have chosen not to go through with the assessment because they find it intensive and invasive. We believe these people will try to make due on their own and find that they can't. So, we continue to ask for the \$30 million that was included in the Council's response. Though I'd like to add one caveat, that amount did not include funding for weekend and holiday meals.

We estimate that for every 1,000 new clients in the system, City Meals has to raise \$1.1 million and it's just not possible for us to raise millions of new funding overnight. I want to be very clear about this because without an allocation for weekend and holiday meals that are provided by City Meals, thousands of people will not receive meals on 115 days out of the year. So, we ask for your support in ensuring that there is enough funding to cover a meal for every day for every person who will transition into HDM.

Moreover, the system was already strained beyond capacity. The number of more recipients has been increasing over the years along with costs for food, labor and capital needs such as truck repairs or food storage. In order to maintain the current level of

services outside of the new clients transitioning from recovery meals, we also request an investment of \$12.7 billion in the HDM program with \$3 million earmarked for City Meals to continue providing weekend, holiday and emergency meals.

And finally, we ask that the Council includes \$1 million in senior centers, programs and enhancement initiatives for our emergency meals program. Thank you again for the opportunity.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Daniel Patrick Clay.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

DANIEL PATRICK CLAY: Hi there everybody. It's Dan, your friendly neighborhood gardener here in Prospect Park out here with a couple of our mighty volunteers and General, General Slocum too.

Just doing the best we can knocking down these absolutely relentless weeds and I just wanted to give my regular reminder to everybody that there's so much to do. There's so much work out here all year long. You think of us gardeners as planting some flowers and watering. But there's so much heavy stuff to be done and I'm really, really just hoping that you guys can do the best you can by us boots on the ground and

baseline the seasonal workers, the 50 gardeners and the 100 SPW's so that these parks efforts can be worthwhile and not look so – sometimes they just look so meager.

So, thanks in advance and I'll see you guys around.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And just for folks on the Zoom, the raise hand function is only for Council Members if they have questions. Please do not use the raise hand functions. Panels are not permitted to ask questions of other panelists. So, if you do raise your hand a staff member will lower it. We're now going to turn to panel six. Rosa Chang, Kay Webster, Lynn Kelly, Marisol Durain and Mark E. Herrin. We will first start with Rosa Chang.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ROSA CHANG: Thank you for your time. I'm Rosa Chang, Cofounder of Brooklyn Bridge Manhattan, a grassroots community led nonprofit working to build a new nine acre public park underneath the iconic Brooklyn Bridge. The escalating crisis of gun violence and mental illness and drug addiction are so complex, but I do know one thing. While we must address these issues in the immediate crisis, we must

also address these issues with an eye to permanent change. This cannot go on.

It was Mayor Adams who introduced me to a quote by Desmond Toto. "There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river." We need to go upstream and find out why they are falling in. Jails are downstream. Building strong, supportive communities is how we address these crisis upstream.

Communities are not built on our sidewalks and inside our apartments. They are built in our shared common spaces. Communities are built in parks. A straight line exists between our failure to sufficiently fund our parks and the crisis we find ourselves in today.

We need to correct that fundamental error today. Where we choose to spend our money is a crystal clear indicator of our priorities. Let's fund our money upstream or stop pretending to be surprised when we keep pulling people out of downstream. Every resident of New York City should have equitable access to green space but as we all know; this is not the case. Brooklyn Bridge Manhattan represents the unheard voices of Chinatown and the lower east side.

This TRIE neighborhood is one of the city's most densely populated areas and one the area's most heavily impacted by the pandemic. Since 2010, there has been only \$16 million in open space capital investment in our surrounding communities and we have only 20 percent of the city median of open space.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If you can just wrap up with sentence.

ROSA CHANG: I would love to invite every single one you on a tour of Brooklyn Bridge Manhattan. We would love your support because we believe that the best use of the nine acres underneath the landmark Brooklyn Bridge is not as a parking lot but actually as a park. And we desperately need your help to get that to happen. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Kay Webster.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Kay Webster? You're unmuted if you would like to begin your testimony. There are two minutes allotted.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yeah, let's move on.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next we're going to call Lynn Kelly.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CORY HASSIN: Hi, I'm Cory Hassin(SP?). I'll be testifying on behalf of Lynn Kelly who actually has a board meeting right now.

Good morning and thank you Finance Committee Chair Justin Brannan for convening this hearing to discuss the FY23 Executive Budget. My name is Lynn Kelly and I'm the Executive Director of the New York Restoration Project. NYRP is the only land conservancy operating in all five boroughs of New York City, especially in under resourced neighborhoods.

For over 25-years, NYRP has planted trees, renovated gardens, restored parks and transformed open space for communities throughout New York City.

1
2 NYRP brings private resources to spaces that are
3 under served by municipal support. These communities
4 have been the victims of decades of disinvestment.
5 Parks serving low income communities of color are
6 generally smaller, serve more people per acre, and do
7 not receive private funding.

8 Decreased private donations compounded with
9 budget reductions from the last year had a
10 devastating effect on parks in low income
11 neighborhoods. Even as park visitation increased to
12 unprecedented levels as a result of the COVID-19
13 pandemic.

14 As one of the 400 plus organizations in the Play
15 Fair Coalition, NYRP implores the Committee of
16 Finance to help fight to secure raising park funding
17 from 0.6 percent currently proposed in the Executive
18 Budget to one percent of the total operating budget.
19 One percent for parks is necessary for adequate
20 staffing, maintenance and park planning to ensure our
21 public parks are equitable, safe, clean and
22 accessible for all New Yorkers.

23 The current budget as proposed translates to a
24 net reduction in agency staff. By the end of the
25 month, the Parks Department will lose roughly 1,800

members of the cleanup corps that help beautify our parks during this unprecedented pandemic by keeping them clean and safe.

Parks workers have been frontline workers during the pandemic and deserve the resources needed to help support their work. Parks that serve low income communities would desperately benefit from one percent for parks. New York City must commit to a higher standard of maintenance across all five boroughs. It's time for us to end environmental injustice and reinvest our green spaces. Urban green space is not a luxury.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CORY HASSIN: But a necessity. We urge our partners in City government to prioritize one percent for parks in this year's budget. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Marisol Durain.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MARISOL DURAIN: Good morning. I come before you all as a proud Bronx Native and Community Volunteer. Unfortunately, my local park Crotona Park faces many challenges. Some of the challenges relate to Crotona Park not having an administrator and Council Members

1 lack of funds for capital projects in Crotona Park.
2 Our parks are not equitable or thriving because
3 Crotona Park has not had an administrator for many
4 months.
5

6 Also, the Lands Park Administrator was not
7 involved when the decision to convert parks of the
8 park for nonpublic use were being discussed and voted
9 by the local community board. Many people in my
10 community find the timing of the proposal to convert
11 parts of Crotona Park for nonpublic use disturbing.
12 During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and
13 [INAUDIBLE 1:01:45], free to community board members
14 at a private parking area for nonresidents would
15 benefit the community because a nonprofit offer free
16 programs for young people.

17 Even though these few board members think their
18 decision was appropriate, they do not acknowledge
19 that residents were left out of this important
20 decision. Community member did not know or were
21 available to express their concerns to this proposal.
22 Many of my neighbors were struggling with the highest
23 number of unemployment, hospitalization and deaths.

24 Also, many people in my community struggle to
25 afford the internet or keep a mobile phone in

1
2 service. In my humble opinion, the local community
3 board was desperate for funding that it approved a
4 proposal, not fully thinking of the residents. I
5 have started a petition on change.org with almost 200
6 signatures raising awareness of this problem in
7 Crotona Park. Please take a look at it to help us
8 address this problem.

9 The second challenge, my community confront is
10 the disproportionate number of dog runs in our
11 borough. In fact, constituents of District 16 do not
12 have a nearby dog run. Manhattan, Brooklyn and
13 Queens residents have enjoyed dog runs for many years
14 because they either have the funding or support of
15 their elected officials. The problem residents
16 living nearby Crotona Park is that the park may fall
17 under two Council Members Districts. District 17 and
18 District 15.

19 Also, even though Crotona Park –

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 MARISOL DURAIN: Is not in District 16 – just one
22 more sentence. In some Crotona to be more equitable
23 and thriving if there's funding to employ a park
24 administrator who cares about the park for present
25 and future generations. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Mark E. Herrin.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, that concludes panel six. Just so folks know, I will announce panels nine and ten. Panel nine will be Salimatou Doumbouya, James Davis President of PSC CUNY, Jeremy Gong, Rockeya McVay.

Panel ten will be Devery Dulman, Valeed Kabir, Jennifer Downs, Jessica Simal, and Katherine Clad. And we've also noted that there were people on the Zoom who do not have a little mic button next to their name. If that's the case, you will not be able to speak when we call on you, so you may want to log out of the Zoom and log back in. But we will now turn to panel seven, starting with Elvira Uribe from CASA.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ELVIRA URIBE: Hi, my name is Elvira, I'm an Organizer for CASA. So, uhm, for the time I have been working at CASA, I've gotten to see firsthand how important it is for New York City tenants to have access to organizations like CASA.

Information is power. It's a phrase that I always here but now I get to experience it. When organizers goes to a building and let tenants know about their right to live in safe apartments and about the right to have a free attorney in housing court, they gain changes. You see how they get empowered and they start fighting for their rights. Now more than ever is vital. The tenants learn about the rights they have.

In the pandemic, the pandemic left thousands of tenants at risk for eviction. They need to know they are not alone. So, that's why it is important that Local Law 53 supports organizers will work to ensure that tenants know about their right to counsel and feel supported using it.

More tenants will be prepared to defend harms against eviction and fight for the right to a safe affordable home. The right to counsel have proven to stop evictions in New York City but many tenants who are eligible for right to counsel don't know about it or are too afraid to use it. When tenants don't know or use their rights, they are more easily harassed out of their apartments. This led to the

displacement of mostly poor Black and Brown New Yorkers. Yeah, uhm, thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will turn to George Sotiroff, also from CASA.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

GEORGE SOTIROFF: Thank you. My name is George Sotiroff and I thank you for the opportunity to testify today. What is oh, what is a Hooverville? A Hooverville is a shantytown built by unemployed and destitute people during the early years of the Great Depression of the 1930's.

John Steinbeck and his Pulitzer prize winning novel, the Grapes of Wrath, features a California family which lived in a Hooverville. Hooverville's posed health risks to their inhabitants and to those nearby. Mainstream media has been reporting the rise of modern day Hooverville's ever since the collapse of 2008. Recently Hooverville's of significant size have been identified in Oregon, California and Florida. The right to counsel is a bullwork against the plague of Hooverville's, but only if it is adequately funded and seriously implemented. I urge the Committee here today to implement adequately and fully, Local Law 53 and to work with the courts to

insure that no case move forward without a right to counsel attorney.

We were told that the city had allocated \$3.6 million towards this bill and was going to release it in November of last year. To date, we have seen none of it. The city is now out of compliance with its own law. If we don't find and enforce the courts to — if we don't fund and then force the courts to implement the right to counsel. Then, I can only imagine New York City, the live of the world, the citadel of all nations, suddenly collapsing into a single overwhelming Hooverville, complete with all the chaos and depression that is sure to follow. So, I'm urging adequate funding for Bill 53. Thank you very much for allowing me to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, Julie Colon, Right to Counsel New York City Coalition.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JULIE COLON: Oh, thank you. Sorry about that. Hi, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Julie Colon, I am a Tenant Organizer with the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition and we are also a part of the Right to Counsel Coalition which led and won the Campaign

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2 to Establish a Right to Counsel for Tenant Space and
3 Eviction. We are really proud of New York City's
4 groundbreaking Right to Counsel legislation and we do
5 applaud the City Council, the Mayor and the Office of
6 Civil Justice for its dedication to making the Right
7 to Counsel available to all New Yorkers during this
8 pandemic.

9 The law had a tremendous impact in just the few
10 years it was passed. 84 percent of tenants who had
11 right to counsel won their case and stayed in their
12 homes. Landlords are suing people less and community
13 groups are actively using the right to counsel as a
14 powerful tool to protect and advance tenants' rights.
15 Right to counsel had also helped to develop a body of
16 more than just case law, lower tenants rents,
17 restabilize apartments and enforce landlords to make
18 repairs.

19 As we have seen during the COVID-19 pandemic,
20 right to counsel is more important than ever before
21 and we know that evictions in housing instability
22 have a disproportionate impact on people of color,
23 especially women and children of color. Evictions
24 and housing instability also have significant impact,
25 not just on peoples housing but on peoples education,

employment, family relationships, physical and mental health and so much more.

New York City's right to counsel moves us closer to achieving economic gender and racial justice. So, we are here today to urge this Committee to immediately and fully implement Local Law 53 and to work with the courts to ensure that no case move forward without a right to counsel in turn. The expansion of right to counsel to work with and fund community organizing groups to do the necessary education and outreach work of Right to Counsel Local Law 53 is so incredible. We know the mayoral City Council administrations take time to transition but with the expiration of the eviction protections of cases moving forward, we can't wait. The city is now out of compliance with its own law and it needs to be implemented now. Thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Mercedes Escoto also from CASA.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MERCEDES ESCOTO: Hi there, my name is Mercedes Escoto and I really want to make sure that the Right to Counsel continues because in my personal

1
2 experience, the landlord gave me an eviction notice
3 in 2019. When I went to court, it was like I didn't
4 know where I was at. It was like I was in a shark
5 tank. I didn't know how to proceed. You know that
6 situation stressed me out. I live with my mother who
7 is 84 years old. She is disabled and right now I
8 just retired two months ago. I'm on a very low
9 income. So, for me, if I don't have the right to
10 counsel, I would not have had the help that I needed.
11 They helped me to get the republication - they
12 applied for me. They took me through all the steps
13 on how to get that going. Otherwise, I would have
14 been in the streets. The right to counsel is a very
15 important program for as people with low income. Now
16 I'm in a fixed income, I just retired. I would
17 appreciate it if that program is not eliminated.
18 Please don't do it. Do us a favor and let us live
19 you know a better life. Thank you.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll hear
21 from Wanda Martinez, Catholic Migration Services.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

23 WANDA MARTINEZ: Good morning. My name is Wanda
24 Martinez and thank you for the opportunity to testify
25 today. I'm a Tenant Leader with the Catholic

1 Migration Services, a nonprofit leader services
2 provider and community based organization actively
3 engaged in tenant organizing. As an active member of
4 the Right to Counsel Coalition, we are proud of the
5 cities groundbreaking right to counsel legislation
6 and applaud the City Council, the Mayor, and the
7 Office of Civil Justice for its dedication to making
8 the right to counsel available to all New Yorkers
9 during this pandemic.
10

11 The law has had a tremendous impact in just a few
12 years since it passed. 84 percent of tenants who
13 have right to counsel won their case and stayed in
14 their home. Landlords are suing less people and
15 community groups are actively using the right to
16 counsel as a powerful tool to protect and advance
17 tenant rights.

18 In Queens for example, as tenants learn about
19 their right to counsel, they are more encouraged to
20 form tenant associations, fight over charges, fight
21 quality of life conditions and harassment among other
22 things like I'm currently doing in my building. I'm
23 here today to urge this Committee to immediately and
24 fully implement Local Law 53 by working with the
25 courts to ensure that no case moves forward without a

right to counsel attorney. The intent of the law is clear to fund trusted tenant organizing groups working in low income communities of color, to lead outreach and education efforts through community meetings, workshops, tenant association meetings and more.

This vital work of tenant organizers ensures that tenants are informed of right to counsel and supported through – prior to an eviction being filed. For us tenants, to exercise our rights, we need to have them, to know that we have them. With hundreds of thousands of –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

WANDA MARTINEZ: One more, can I just one more thing? Uh, okay, to meet the needs of the tenants across the city, this law must be implemented now. As tenants representing Queens residents, I urge the Committee to work with the necessary officers to release the RFP, so that tenant organizing groups can do their work to educate and organize tenants across New York City during this incredibly scary time. I urge the Committee to call on Mayor Adams to fully fund and implement Local Law 53. Thank you very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We just remind everyone when time is called, please just wrap up with a sentence. Next, I'm going to call on Anya Mukarji -Connolly, Brooklyn Defender Services.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ANYA MUKARJI-CONNOLLY: Hi, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

ANYA MUKARJI-CONNOLLY: Hi, my name is Anya Mukarji-Connolly and I'm the Associate Director of Policy at Brooklyn Defender Services. Thank you to the City Council Committee on Finance and Chair Brannan for this opportunity to testify about our work and the importance of funding for indigent defense providers in New York City.

BDS is a public defense office whose mission is to provide outstanding representation and advocacy free of cost to people facing the loss of freedom, family separation and other serious legal harms by the government. We represent approximately 25,000 people each year who are accused of a crime facing the loss of liberty, their home, their children or deportation.

In my oral testimony today, I'd like to briefly flag for this Committee our three budget priorities

Third, the Right to Family Advocacy Initiative is a two-year old initiative that provides critical due process representation and advocacy services to parents and families who cannot afford to hire an attorney during an ACS investigation. And in

hearings before the State Office for Children and Family Services.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ANYA MUKARJI-CONNOLLY: Lastly, I want to quickly uhm, uhm mention our other request that include the Immigrant Opportunities Initiative, which is funding for our affirmative immigration services, pandemic relief funding, our civil justice practice support, as well as alternative to incarceration and DOVE funding for comprehensive legal services. Uhm, thank you to this Committee on Finance for the time to testify today and to the City Council for your ongoing support of Brooklyn Defender Services. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll turn to panel eight, Brendan Cheney, Ryan Chavez, Luisa Rodriguez, Alex Roque, Tierra Labrada and Monsignor Kevin Sullivan. We will first turn to Brendan Cheney from the New York Housing Conference.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

BRENDAN CHENEY: Good morning, my name is Brendan Cheney. I'm Director of Policy and Communications at the New York Housing Conference. For the past two years, we've led United for Housing, a Coalition of

more than 90 organizations working together to fight the housing crisis. We released a report last year and our main recommendation was for the city to double housing capital spending to \$4 billion per year.

We really appreciate the City Council's support and advocacy for this housing investment. Make no mistake, \$4 billion per year for housing is fiscally responsible. The city is well under the benchmark of debt service being no more than 15 percent of total taxes, by our calculation it would rise to no more than 14 percent with the added housing spending.

Eric Adams supported this recommendation during the campaign, calling on a smart ask but he has yet to deliver on that promise. His proposed \$5 billion for housing capital for over ten years, roughly \$500 million more per year is insufficient to meet the crisis.

For HPD the new funding will mostly cover rising interest rates and construction costs. For NYCHA, the added funding goes to PACT projects and WYKOFF and Gowanus Houses, as agreed to in the Gowanus rezoning. It will not assist any of the 110,000 units not slated for PACT.

While the NYCHA Preservation Trust would assist these units and we hope City Council members will support legislation in Albany for the trust, more funding is needed and the city and state must do their part and provide \$1.5 billion per year each in capital funding.

We also remain concerned about the staffing crisis at HPD and related agencies. We were encouraged to hear HPD leadership address the issue in budget testimony but there are further steps the city can take to hire and retain staff, which we have outlined in a forthcoming report including increase staff, pay in workplace flexibility, decreased bureaucratic oversight and fine flexibility within and outside the civil service system.

Finally, this month, we released a New York City housing tracker showing housing stats by City Council District. We found that all districts in neighborhoods need to build more affordable housing but some districts are not doing their fair share and must support more affordable housing.

We hope you will take a look at the tracker and use the data to support the need for more affordable housing in all neighborhoods. Thank you –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

BRENDAN CHENEY: For the opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Ryan Chavez, Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will turn to Luisa Rodriguez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LUISA RODRIGUEZ: Hi, my name is Luisa Rodriguez. Thanks to the Finance Committee for holding this public hearing and give us the opportunity to express our needs.

I'm a tenant of a tall building 615 West 150 Street in Manhattan. Member of a Til Coalition organized by Pa'lante Harlem(SP?). Since your committee works to make sure that taxpayers dollars are used wisely, effectively and fairly, and to achieve positive, lasting change, the purpose of my testimony is to bring to your attention the need to include in this year's budget funding for the long awaited reallocation of buildings in the Til program, instead of funding the ANCP third-party program that HPD is pushing this Til buildings into.

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The agreement was that if the tenants could manage their buildings for a number of years, not decades, the city will then restore the buildings with governments funds and then will sell to tenants their units for \$250 after creating a cooperative HDFC. The tenants and the City of New York enter into that agreement and the tenants have done their part and have been patiently waiting for HPD to deliver on their part of the agreement. However, after decades in which still tenants have taken care of their buildings and cleaned up their communities, HPD is transferring now the Til buildings to third-party programs to the ANCP program –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LUISA RODRIGUEZ: Okay, one more thing. In my written testimony I will clarify many of the things that HPD is doing with the Til buildings.

Now, I just want to tell you, you have the power. You can undo the years of neglect to Til buildings by transferring funding from the ANCP third-party program to the Til program. To fund the reallocation of Til buildings. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we will call on Alex Roque, Ali Forney Center.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we're going to turn to Tierra Librada.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TIERRA LABRADA: Hi Chair Brannan and members of the Council. My name is Tierra Labrada and I'm here representing the Supportive Housing Network of New York. Supportive Housing is a proven affordable housing model with wrap around support services for people with a history of homelessness who may need support to maintain independent housing. We are making the following recommendations for the FY23 budget. A more detailed testimony will be submitted.

One, continue to push for affordability and annually in affordable and supportive housing. Two, continue to support Just Pay and insist the mayor include a \$5.4 percent COLA in the adopted budget and to establish, fund and enforce an automatic cost of living adjustment.

Three, match the states investment in older, underfunded DOHMH scattered site contracts, which are operating at a deficit leaving tenants in poor housing conditions without the services they need and deserve.

Four, improve NYC 15/15 by reallocating the 50/50 split between congregate and scattered site to a 75/25 split respectively and create new units for people leaving jail, prison and long-term hospitals stays who are currently ineligible for the program.

Five, dedicate HPD capital service and operating funding to holistically preserve 300 units of supportive housing per year. Six, expand mobile treatment teams specifically for supportive housing residents who need a higher level of care than what's currently being funded in older, underfunded supportive housing residences.

Seven, match the federal financial investment into the coordinated assessment and placement system and encourage stronger collaboration. Collaboration between DHS, HRA, NYCHA and HPD to streamline the housing process. Eight, continue to put pressure on the Administration to increase staff capacity at HRA and HPD and create an Ombuds person at City Hall to conduct interagency coordination, fast tracking necessary approvals for supportive housing projects. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Monsignor Kevin Sullivan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MONSIGNOR KEVIN SULLIVAN: Thank you for the opportunity. I will save a little time because let me just echo what Brendan said Tierra said and just put a little exclamation point. We need more capital funding for affordable housing but we also need the infrastructure for the very city agencies to be able to actually process good projects quickly.

So, that is a critical need. The other item in terms of affordability, there are a lot of programs which provide various types of rental assistance. We need to establish a New York City policy which says,

any New Yorkers, any New York household at less than 50 percent of the AMI should not be rent poor, and should only have to pay 30 percent of their income for housing.

And therefore I suggest the Council do a supplemental voucher program for those New Yorkers who fall between the cracks. Let me punctuate again, the need for better just pay for human service workers that is built into contract escalation; critically important.

And the final area, which I want to speak to, is the need for efficiency, accountability and flexibility in funding. The way that contracts are funded; they sometimes do not target the most important needs of people but because of the forced categorization of the spending of funds, the best use of the money is prohibited. So, I would encourage the Council accountability, flexibility and efficiency in the funding of human service of New York. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify before you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Monsignor. Before I call panel 9, I will announce panels 11 and 12. Panel 11 Tami Lin-Moges, Terri Carta(SP?), Aaron

Sanders, Adam Ganser, Andrea Parker. Panel 12, Randi Levine, Carol Verdi, Christopher Treiber, Gregory Brender, Jeanne Alter and Leonie Haimson. I will first turn to Panel 9, Salimatou Doumbouya, the CUNY University Student Senate followed by James Davis, President of the Professional Staff Congress at CUNY, Jeremy Gong and Rockeya McVay. But we'll first turn to Salimatou Doumbouya.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SALIMATOU DOUMBOUYA: Good morning Chairperson Brannan and honorable members of the New York City Council. My name is Salimatou Doumbouya and I serve as the 37th Chairperson of City University of New York University Student Senate, serving the nearly 500,000 students total in CUNY. I also am the only student of the University of New York Board of Trustees, President of the New York City College of Technology, Student Government Association where I pursue my bachelors in architecture. I have a liberal arts degree for the Borough of Manhattan Community College. The Preliminary Executive Budget proposal which includes a three percent overhead spending reduction for most of the agencies would result in around \$14.6 million in critical funding

dollars being cut from the City University student budget. This would have a significant impact on CUNY's community college which receive the majority of their funding from the city and need 128 full time faculty positions unfulfilled. A 2019 report purchased by the New York City Comptroller's Office found that CUNY graduates contribute to \$4.2 billion to the state's economy and at the same time, the Department of Labor has routinely recommended investing in community colleges as available and effective pathway to decrease incarceration and recidivism.

Missing the chance to invest in CUNY is the chance to benefit from CUNY's track record of being an upward college mobility agent. On behalf of the nearly 500,000 students at CUNY, I ask you to support fully funding the following initiatives: This would include operational funding for immediate investment at the University such as expanding ASAP availability, mental health services, hiring new full-time faculty. We also ask you to support a co-allocating funding for our disability services. It's really important for us that you fund \$4 million for expansion of our childcare services, \$2 million for

increasing graduation rates by funding remediation and \$500,000 for CUNY diversity incubators. You will see more details about what us CUNY students are asking for –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SALIMATOU DOUMBOUYA: In my submitted testimony. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll turn to James Davis from the Professional Staff Congress at CUNY.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JAMES DAVIS: Good morning. I'm James Davis, President of the Professional Staff Congress. We represent 30,000 faculty and staff at the City University of New York. Thank you Chair Brannan, members of the Finance Committee for the opportunity to testify today and for your passage of the Council resolution in support of the new deal for CUNY state legislation in March. As you know, support for higher education in Albany reached stark levels this year with over \$200 million in additional funding. This year's value of public higher education resonated because our members came together with CUNY students and community allies to amplify our message

to the governor and the legislature in Albany and now CUNY needs this level of support from New York City budget as well.

We're counting on you to build off the work done in Albany and deliver for our members and our students. We're asking for an additional \$62.6 million above last year's budget. An investment in students, workers, and communities will uplift New York in its continued recovery from the pandemic. As Salimatou just alluded to, our labor union as well as opposed to the Mayor's assistance on leaving 128 faculty positions at CUNY vacant in order to achieve a \$14.6 million PEG cut. The Governor and the state legislature just invested in new faculty for the first time in recent memory and the Mayor's cut would seriously impede CUNY's ability to replenish the full-time faculty that we've lost to attrition and retirement.

Our community colleges were already struggling before the pandemic. Federal stimulus funds have helped but they have not made CUNY whole and they are not expected to. I could tell you many, many stories and these are not extras or embellishments. We're

CUNY already lacked sufficient full-time faculty and staff before the pandemic. A report by our university faculty senate last fall showed —

JAMES DAVIS: Thanks, I'll just finish up. It
wed that colleges that serve students of color are
s likely than colleges with a Whiter student body
have access to full-time faculty which deepens
ial inequities.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Our final two panels. First, we'll turn to Jeremy Gong.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I had my hand raised.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Barron, we're doing Council Member questions at the conclusion of the panel.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh, okay.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: So, I'll call on you.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hmm, hmm. Jeremy Gong.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, not seeing him on the Zoom. Rockeya McVay.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ROCKEYA MCVAY: Hi, uhm, my name is Rockeya McVay. I'm a New York City resident and a member of DSA's New York City Chapter. I am here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive Budget and to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID-19 cases are surging. Landlords are raising rents and families struggle to stay in their homes. But the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over every day New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation

and education, while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

Today, I urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adam's cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and expanding the ASAP program to include all community colleges.

Finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's regressive return to law in order. I urge the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of new CO's for solitary confinement, a practice the UN defines as torture. I also urge the Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization programs like the ineffective and violent plain closed units. The so-called Subway Safety Plan and the ending for all NYPD response to mental health cause.

Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan for hearing my testimony. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and Council Member Barron, on this panel, you have Salimatou Doumbouya from the CUNY University Student Senate, President James Davis of the Professional Staff Congress and Rockeya McVay. Council Member Barron.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I just wanted to say very quickly to Salimatou and to Rockeya, I really appreciate your testimonies. You all sound like me in the City Council but I want to caution all of you today that unless you organize, because it honestly compels me to tell you, the way this this thing is going, it appears that a lot of the City Council Members are going to go for this Mayor's Budget. There are some of us that are fighting it but I think that it's going to take an uprising from the 500,000 students in CUNY and the 4-500,000 people in NYCHA because sometimes Council Members, they get Chairs and they get little programs for their communities and then the Speaker appoints them to things and the next thing you know it, they'll be justifying some meager increases in things but this budget for your information; and I'm only saying this because I got

to leave and I'm going to come back to hear more testimony.

This budget, a \$99.7 billion budget, \$94.5 billion capital budget; that's just the expense budget and they have \$6.3 billion in a reserve fund and then another \$3.2 to \$5.0 billion that came in unexpectedly this year. So, they have about \$11 billion to work with. If you talk to OMB and the City Council Finance Division or you speak to IBO, they may have some different figures but they have \$9-\$11 billion. There should be no PEGs to no agencies and there should be a re-enhancement to all of the agencies and plus, the money that's going to run out from the federal money is going to be a conservative austerity budget.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So, I just wanted to say I'm with you and I'll stop there but you're going to have to organize because these Council Members, the way it's heading, I'm really concerned about how many of them will be committed to the things they said to you when they asked for your vote.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member Barron and we've also been joined by Council Members

Brewer, Velázquez and Ayala. I will now turn to Panel Ten, Devery Doleman, Galib Kabir, Jennifer Downes, Jessica Semmel and Katherine Clad. We'll first start with Devery A. Doleman.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will turn to Galib Kabir.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I'm not seeing them on the Zoom. Jennifer Downes.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will turn to Jessica Semmel. Next on list is Katherine Clad.

KATHERINE CLAD: Hi, thank you Council -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KATHERINE CLAD: Op, I'm sorry. My name is Katherine Clad, I'm a New York City resident, a member of DSA's NIC Chapter and the mother of a first grader in the public school system. I'm here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adam's Executive Budget to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID cases are surging.

Landlords are raising rents at obscene rates and families struggle to stay in their homes. But the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful at the expense of every day New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services, like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education, while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

I strongly urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of Austerity and Punishment, instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams's cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and funding DOE mental health counselors and social workers, rather than filling police vacancies in schools.

I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crisis facing our city climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the Streets Plan, \$1.8 billion for the Green Public Schools, \$250 million for Fair Fairs and \$10 million to expand lifesaving save consumption sites to all five boroughs.

1
2 Finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's
3 regressive return to law in order. I urge the
4 Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of
5 UCL's for solitary confinement. I also urge the
6 Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial
7 justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization
8 programs like the ineffective and violent plain
9 closed units, the so-called Subway Safety Plan and
10 ending all NYPD response to mental health calls.

11 Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair
12 Brannan for hearing my testimony.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and now we'll turn
14 to Panel 11, Tami Lin-Moges, Terry Carta, Aaron
15 Sanders, Adam Ganzer and Andrea Parker. We'll first
16 start with Tami Lin-Moges from the Nature
17 Conservancy.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 TAMI LIN-MOGES: Hi, thank you so much. My name
20 is Tami Lin-Moges and I am the Deputy Director of the
21 New York City program at the Nature Conservancy. The
22 Nature Conservancy is the world's largest
23 conservation organization. In New York State alone,
24 we have 90,000 members, 35,000 of whom reside in New
25 York City. The Nature Conservancy in New York is a

member of the Play Fair Coalition and we're also a leading member and convener of Force For All NYC. A coalition of over 50 organizational members. Force for All NYC works to increase the investments in the urban forest and to expand the tree canopy cover from 22 percent to 30 percent citywide by 2035 in an equitable manner. I'm here today to express support for growing the New York City Parks budget to one percent of the total city budget and to increase funding to the urban forest.

Thank you to Chair Brannan and the Finance Committee for the opportunity to speak about the need for funding parks and the urban forest. The urban forest provides many benefits. It cleans the air and cools the city. Trees and parks also provide health and quality of life benefits. Our urban forest and its care is a matter of environmental and social justice. Low income communities and communities of color tend to have less tree canopy, a key factor in heat vulnerability.

Fully funding the urban forest means planting more trees in areas that need it the most to make our city more equitable. It also means protecting and maintaining existing trees that provide huge benefits

1 today. Investments in the urban forest will create
2 jobs and help make the city more livable and climate
3 resilient. To support the care and growth of the
4 urban forest, New York City Parks needs consistent,
5 sufficient baseline funding for both capital and
6 operations expenses. Further details can be found in
7 our written testimony which also include signoffs
8 from 31 Force for All NYC organizations. Thank you
9 again to Chair Brannan and the Finance Committee for
10 considering the benefits of parks and the urban
11 forest to New Yorkers as they continue to work on the
12 next city budget.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will
15 turn to Terry Carta from the Brooklyn Greenway
16 Initiative.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on my list, I have Aaron
19 Sanders Natural Areas Conservancy.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

21 AARON SANDERS: Good afternoon. My name is Aaron
22 Sanders and I am the Associate Director of Advocacy
23 and Policy at the Natural Areas Conservancy.

24 Thank you Chair Brannan for the opportunity to
25 testify about the proposed Fiscal Year '23 budget.

The Natural Areas Conservancy is a nonprofit organization founded in 2012 with the goal of increasing capacity for New York City Parks and its partners to restore and manage 10,000 acres of forest, wetlands and 300 miles of trails under the agencies jurisdiction.

Today, I represent our organization, the Forest for All Coalition and the Play Fair Coalition. I am testifying to highlight the importance of New York City's urban forest, wetlands and natural areas but to also advocate for one percent baseline funding for New York City parks.

New York City's urban forest provides a multitude of benefits. They mitigate extreme heat, improve air quality and provide other myriad of benefits. A signature project of the Natural Areas Conservancy is the forest management framework for New York City, which we released in partnership with New York City Parks in 2018. This plan includes ecological and social metrics for the care of the city's natural areas forest and calls for an investment of \$385 million over 25 years to protect natural areas.

In order to ensure that New York City's urban forest including natural areas thrives and provides

continued benefits to residents now and in the future. New York City needs at least one percent of the city's total funding. Currently, natural areas receive .7 percent of the total expense budget for forest care. If the New York City Council commits to one percent funding for parks, \$4 million of that funding would be appropriated to support the forest management framework.

I want to say that I'll submit more robust testimony later but I want to reiterate my support for one percent for parks and our care for forests, the urban forest system in New York City and again, I want to thank the City Council and fellow advocates for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Adam Ganser, New Yorkers for Parks.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Ganser, it's your time to testify. Okay, we're going to turn to Andrea Parker from the Gowanus Canal Conservancy.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ANDREA PARKER: Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. I'm Andrea Parker, Executive Director at Gowanus Canal Conservancy where we

advocate and care for ecologically sustainable parks and public spaces in the Gowanus lowlands while empowering a community of stewards.

We are also a proud member of Forest for All NYC Coalition and the Play Fair Coalition and are here today to ask this Council to fight for a budget that prioritizes equitable management of our shared public realm. In particular, we need to see full capital and expense funding for the urban forest, increase funding for the Parks Equity Initiative and we need Council to hold Mayor Adams to its commitment to dedicate one percent of the city budget for parks.

As Tami and Aaron just detailed, our seven million trees provide critical ecosystem services to New York City residents. Services that are becoming all the more important as our climate changes. Here in Gowanus, 670 young trees installed over the past decade are growing to help fill a neighborhood wide gap in the urban canopy.

When mature, these trees will provide critical benefits of flood management, cooling, shade and they will also absorb storm water before it pollutes our canal. But surviving to maturity depends on adequate maintenance and protection. From the Parks

Department, from local organizations like us and from volunteers.

In Gowanus, we empower our network of volunteer key stewards who water, weed, prune and remove litter and debris. The Parks Equity Initiative has provided essential support for this work as it does for thousands of volunteers across the city and this initiative should be increased in order to cultivate social and ecological infrastructure. But street trees also need maintenance that cannot be done by volunteers, such as structural pruning, stump removal, sidewalk repair and species control.

This Council must end the long-term underfunding of the Parks Department and the workers who care for these trees and hold Mayor Adams accountable for baseline funding of one percent to parks, to ensure that our young trees are able to provide critical services to neighborhoods across New York City. Thanks for the opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We're going to try Adam Ganer one more time from New Yorkers for Parks.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, folks, for everyone listening, if I call on you and you do not speak, uhm, we are going to move on. Just so everyone's aware there will be a catch all statement at the very end of this hearing. Anyone that did not get a chance to speak will be able to but we are going to be keeping moving things along.

So, next, I'm going to call on Panel 12. Randi Levine, Carol Verdi, Christopher Treiber, Gregory Brender, Jeanne Alter and Leonie Haimson. We'll first start with Randi Levine, Advocates for Children.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

RANDI LEVINE: Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Randi Levine and I'm Policy Director at Advocates for Children of New York. Given the needs we see as we help thousands of families navigate the school system and the historic levels of federal and state education funding, the city should be increasing and certainly not decreasing supports to students including in the following areas, and we're pleased that the City Council included a number of these priorities in your response to the preliminary budget.

First, in 2020 nearly one in four English language learners dropped out of high school and few schools provide the support recently arrived older immigrant ELLs need. The city should invest \$2.1 million for programs to support older ELLs at existing transfer schools and \$12 million to hire 120 school based ELL instructional specialists.

Second, two years ago, the city increased salaries for Pre K general education teachers at CBO's but excluded preschool special education teachers. The city should invest \$30 million to increase salaries for teachers and staff at preschool special education programs to address the shortage of these programs.

Third, the DOE announced it would launch the first team focused on students in foster care but only 4 of the 11 promised positions have been posted and none has been filled. The city should fully staff this team and also invest \$5 million to guarantee bus service to students in foster care so they can stay in their original school as per their legal right.

Fourth, 60 percent of students living in shelter are chronically absent from school. The city should

invest \$12 million to hire an additional 100 DOE shelter-based community coordinators to help ensure students can get to school every day and get needed support.

Fifth, too often students who are struggling are met with exclusionary school discipline and policing practices. The city should invest \$118 million for citywide expansion and implementation of school-wide restorative justice practices. I also want to highlight two critical programs where the Council was instrumental in securing funding last year. Both programs were funded for only one year and unless extended will expire in June.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

RANDI LEVINE: \$5 million for the mental health continuum, the first ever collaboration between DOE, H&H, and DOHMH to help students with significant mental health challenges at 50 high needs schools and \$4 million for immigrant family communication, to help ensure immigrant families get needed information.

We urge the Council to ensure these programs are funded in the adopted budget. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Carol Verdi, Heartshare Human Services of New York.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CAROL VERDI: Good morning. My name is Carol Verdi. I work for Heartshare Human Services. I'm here today to speak about teachers who work in 4410 schools which serve New York City public school children and who are the lowest paid teachers in New York City. When pay parity was put in place in 2019, 4410 teachers were left out. 4410 schools are experiencing teacher vacancies in record numbers. We went from a 34 percent vacancy rate in October to 46 percent as of April of 2022 and this is as per IEC data. 4410 programs serve 88 percent of preschool students with disabilities in New York City. 87 out of 119 approved classrooms have been closed due to the inability to hire teachers due to salary inequity. The 4410 programs have lost 102 teachers to higher paying jobs. This year for the first time in 40 years, Heartshare has eight dark classrooms due to the inability to hire teachers, yet children wait with calls every day for placement.

We are facing a dire situation which we fear will get worse as we approach September, where we historically lose many teachers to the DOE. It appears that 3K and 4K for All is really only for some and the most vulnerable students are being excluded because of the fact that we cannot hire teachers. Please put \$30 million into the budget for our 4410 teachers to receive what they should be entitled to. The same credentials that are required for public school teachers are required for our teachers and these students deserve to have an education in the greatest City of New York and we're letting them down.

So, we really implore you to help us be their champions, help us hire teachers so our students get what they need.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CAROL VERDI: Thank you for the opportunity.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Christopher Treiber, Interagency Council Developmental Disabilities Agencies.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CHRISTOPHER TREIBER: Good afternoon Chair Brannan, Chair Joseph and members of the City

Council. My name is Christopher Treiber, I'm the Associate Executive Director for Children's Services with Interagency Council.

I'm testifying here today to advocate for salary parity for the early childhood teachers in special education programs. I'm here today to speak on behalf of preschool children with developmental disabilities and their families.

You will receive a full copy of my testimony but I want to share some numbers with you. Carol, I think shared some of these numbers with you already. I think it's important to remember that these numbers, while overwhelming at times, represent preschool children with disabilities. And they are our youngest children in the city with the highest levels of need.

17 percent, 17, that was the vacancy rate for preschool certified special education teachers in 2016-17 and like Carol Verdi just said, based on our new data, 46 percent is the average vacancy rate currently in ISE preschool special education programs. The New York City DOE in November of 2021 projected that they would need 900 preschool special education seats in spring of 2022. I'm here to tell

you that currently right now, 119 approved preschool special education classrooms are closed because we don't have teachers.

The numbers I shared with you documented the devastating impact of excluding 4410 teachers from the Early Childhood Salary Parity Agreement and the impact it's had on our preschool children with disabilities and their families. I'm here to ask the Council today, how can New York City continue to justifying paying early childhood teachers for children with disabilities substantially less than all of the early childhood teachers in New York City. You have the opportunity this year to correct the critical failure of previous administration to address the injustice and to commit salary parity to early childhood preschool special education teachers in New York City.

We implore you to include the \$30 million in the city's final budget for salary parity for these teachers and to send a clear message to the parents of children with disabilities —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CHRISTOPHER TREIBER: In New York City that the city values their children and will guarantee that

every child has access to a certified preschool special education teacher. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Gregory Brender from the Day Care Council of New York.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

GREGORY BENDER: Thank you Chair Brannan and members of the City Council for the opportunity to testify. My name is Gregory Brender, I'm here on behalf of the Day Care Council of New York. We are a membership organization of early childhood education providers who are serving children in all five boroughs of New York City.

We are so grateful for the Council's leadership in early childhood education. I just want to go through some of the key priorities for this year's budget. First, I want to start with the workforce. We recognize the Council has been a leader in moving towards salary parity. The work of salary parity is really unfinished. We urge the Council to invest \$21 million in line with the Council's response to the preliminary budget for program director salaries. Community-based organizations are losing their

Second, we urge the Council to raise the minimum wage for all support staff to at least \$21 per hour in line with the demands of the Just Pay Campaign.

Finally, the 2019 salary parity agreement never included longevity increases for any staff including teachers. We urge the city and the Council to work with the Administration to ensure that for teachers, directors and support staff, longevity increases are included in the early childhood salaries.

We also wanted to talk just a bit about the utilization of state funding. The state has made a historic commitment this year, increasing the funding it provides to New York City to support early childhood education programs. We urge the city to use this funding one, to work with community-based providers but particularly to ensure that there's increased access to extended day, extended year

programs. Programs that are longer than the school day that PreK and 3K provide, as well as programs for infants and toddlers.

Finally, we support and are part of –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

GREGORY BRENDER: Just one more thing, the Care for All Campaign, asking for \$10 million for undocumented children who have been excluded from childcare. Thank you and sorry for running over time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Jeanne Alter from the Kennedy Children Center.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JEANNE ALTER: Hi, good afternoon officially and thank you for the opportunity to address the City Council on the crisis facing the early childhood special education programs in New York City.

As my colleagues have already told you, in the 30-years that I have been working with New York City programs and families and children in New York City, I have never seen things as bad as I see them right now. Since July 1, 2021, I have lost 50 percent of my staff. 50 percent of our staff have left our

1 school to work at higher paying jobs in the New York
2 City Department of Education. We have three
3 classrooms like my colleague Carol told you. She has
4 eight or smaller agency, we have three classrooms of
5 children sitting at home who are three and four-
6 years-old with autism, with developmental delays who
7 deserve to be in school. They are New York City
8 public schools children.

9 In addition, many of our children are now
10 receiving speech and occupational therapy because
11 there is a shortage of staff there as well. Because
12 again, they leave to go to the Department of
13 Education. Simply rehiring or hiring inexperienced
14 or not fully certified staff is not the answer. We
15 are cheating children of an education that they
16 rightfully deserve. And make no mistake about this,
17 this does affect the quality of education. This
18 means this effects that child trajectory to
19 kindergarten to high school.

20 44 programs like us provide these services, as
21 Carol Verdi already told you, using the same exact
22 certification and licensure. There's no difference
23 between a 4410 special ed teacher and a DOE 4410
24 special ed teacher. The difference is the PEG.
25

Why should our staff make any less money than DOE staff for doing the exact same work with the exact same credentials. It's discrimination, it's unfair.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JEANNE ALTER: And those who have been in the field, we've seen this for a long time. The lack of funding and support for staff like ours is to blame for this crisis and it's a problem that's been simmering for decades; the pandemic has made it worse. You have the power to make this change. I appreciate your time and thank you for this.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Leonie Haimson from Class Size Matters.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LEONIE HAIMSON: Good afternoon Chair Brannan and members of the City Council. My name is Leonie Haimson, I'm the Executive Director of Class Size Matters. A nonprofit organization that advocates for smaller classes in New York City public schools.

The budget cuts proposed to school budgets of \$375 million over the next three years are projected to lead to a loss of over 3200 teaching positions. I urge you to prevent these cuts from being imposed or this will likely cause the largest increase in New

1 York City class sizes since the great recession. And
2 the quality of our schools will fall further behind
3 being able to provide children with a better
4 opportunity to succeed. The DOE euphemistically
5 caused these proposals right sizing school budgets or
6 enrollment adjustments, instead they reflect wrong
7 sizing school budgets and keeping them handcuffed to
8 an outmoded system, called Fair Student Funding
9 devised 15-years-ago by Joe Klein. A man who did not
10 believe in small classes and did everything he could
11 to prevent them from happening.
12

13 As a survey undertaken by the Fair Student
14 Funding Task Force revealed, nearly 80 percent of
15 principals identified their large classes as a
16 consequence of this formula. Our analysis reveals
17 substantial decreases in average class size this year
18 citywide, especially in the early grades due to
19 enrollment decline and more than 187,000 students are
20 still in classes of 30 or more and sharp disparities
21 exist across school districts.

22 I'm including a PDF with charts with the relevant
23 data along with my submitted testimony. Yet, instead
24 of seizing on this decline in average class size and
25 moving forward to make it more equitable across the

city, the Administration seems intent on undoing this progress, however inadvertent and moving backwards.

While the DOE often claims there is not the space to lower class sizes to accepted levels, at the same time, the SCA proposes to slash new capacity by \$1.5 billion or 19 percent compared to the adopted five year capital plan. This would include cuts of more than \$11,000 new seats with especially large reductions in both the Bronx and Queens. Though the SCA has now substantially lowered their classroom capacity standards -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LEONIE HAIMSON: At the same time, they counteracted that change by eliminating the classroom efficiency ratios, which means that they expect all classrooms, whether specialty rooms or general classrooms to be filled 100 percent of the day in middle schools and high schools, which reflects magical thinking. I urge you to restore the cuts to schools and to the capital plan and to resubmit Intro. 2374, which would phase in smaller classes by amending the administrative code.

As you know the original bill last session had the support of 41 out of 50 Council Members last

session including Chair Brannan but never came to a vote. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and now, I will call the next few panels, so people know where they are. The next panel we're going to hear from is Anna Sax, Eric Goldstein, Jane Selden, Maggie Clarke, Sharon Silberman. That is Panel 13. Panel 14, Rachel Brown, Boris Santos, Hannah Anousheh, Zoria F and Will Spisak.

Panel 15, Valerie Jimenez, Jordyn Rosenthal, Loretta Fleming, Seth Pollack, Greg Mihailovich, Christopher Norwood and Michael Hernandez. I will first turn to Panel 13 Anna Sax.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on my list is Eric Goldstein, Natural Resources Defense Council.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Not seeing him in the Zoom. Next, I am calling on Jane Selden.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JANE SELDEN: Good morning and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today. My name's Jane Selden, I'm testifying on behalf of 350 NYC. As

1 a climate activist group, 350 NYC recognizes the
2 critical role organic waste recycling plays in
3 meeting the city and states greenhouse gas reduction
4 goals and we would like to thank the City Council, in
5 particular Chairperson Nurse and City Council Speaker
6 Adams for recommending restoring funding for New York
7 City's community composting programs and for
8 expanding the composting programs to all of the
9 city's public schools in the next year's budget.

11 However, we know that this is not enough. It's
12 been seven years since the city made the zero waste
13 to landfill by 2030 pledge, yet the recycling rate
14 for organic waste has never exceeded 1.5 percent.
15 This means that over one-third of the way stream is
16 still ending up in landfill where it produces methane
17 or greenhouse gas over 80 times more potent than CO2.
18 The City now spends \$193 million a year exporting
19 organic waste and this figure doesn't factor in the
20 human costs. The damaging health effects experienced
21 by frontlines communities living near landfills,
22 incinerators and the city's waste transfer stations.

23 It makes no sense to treat organic materials
24 waste rather than the valuable resource it actually
25 is. Instead of ending up in the giant trashcans that

crowd our streets where it's feeding our thriving rat population, it can be enriching the soil of local parks community gardens, urban farms and street trees. And as the city faces the threat of rising sea levels, composts can play a vital role in flood mitigation efforts because of its ability to retain many times its weight in water.

To make zero waste to landfill by 2030, more than a slogan, we need to codify this pledge into law by passing Intro.'s 274 and 275. And in order to achieve this zero waste goal, the City Council must pass Intro. 244 which will -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JANE SELDEN: Organics and curbside collection to every community. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Maggie Clarke, Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MAGGIE CLARKE: Thank you. Uhm, sorry. Maggie Clarke, representing the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board. We recommend that the Mayor and the City Council restore funding to redesign the organics

program to ensure as phased in, a citywide mandatory universal equitable curbside program.

Today, according to the IBO, we mix organics, which represent 41 percent of our exports with garbage to be burned and buried, causing preventable environmental and social harm. Half of our recyclables are also exported due to poor separation. Therefore, almost 70 percent of what we send to landfills and incinerators is recyclable or compostable, costing us \$400 million in Fiscal Year '23. The city must reallocate this export funding to redesign and optimize organics collection and a participation in enhancement programs, via education and enforcement.

Redesign includes moving from inconvenient opt in and drop-off to universal curbside collection, as well as redesign of the city's education and enforcement program into an enlightened multiapproach system with targeted outreach.

Currently, the trucks do not come back full, due to chronic underfunding of inconvenient programs and poorly designed education. We should learn from model cities. For example, Austin has achieved 85 to 95 percent participation by funding education costing

\$12 per household per year compared with New York City's \$0.86 per person per year. Both Seattle and San Francisco spend \$3.00 per person per year.

Finally, the Council must update the city's recycling law so that organics are part of it –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MAGGIE CLARKE: Recycling program made mandatory and universal. The same as it is for our other recyclables and we've developed a list of provisions that must be included in any successful organics and zero waste laws.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Sharon Silbermann, also from the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SHARON SILBERMANN: Hello everyone. I would mimic Maggie's comments. I had the same script in front of me and I urge the City Council, who I thank very much for being here and listening to us today to reexamine our organics and zero waste programs as suggestions that will be in our written testimony. And to expand our programs rather than abandon or defund them because we should be recycling and composting everything that we can. We need to

dedicate that funding to education and enforcement and to increase our participation and it only makes sense given the climate crisis that we do this and that we invest in it now, which will reduce costs due to inflation over time. And we will benefit from it environmentally, in regards to social justice. We need to expand our organics programs to NYCHA housing and to all buildings, including high rises. Not just two and three story buildings as a recent organics bill has been proposed.

I thank you very much for your time and invite your questions.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and now we will turn to Panel 14. Rachel Brown, Boris Santos, Hannah Anousheh, Zoria F, and Will Spisak. We will start with Rachel Brown.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

RACHAEL BROWN: Good afternoon Committee Chair Brannan and members of the Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Rachel Brown and I'm on the steering and outreach committees for the Western Queens Community Land Trust.

We're a nonprofit organization made up of community members who fight for a democratic and equitable land use in Western Queens. The Western Queens CLT is part of a citywide community land trust initiative that seeks to develop CLT's and permanently affordable housing, commercial and community spaces in all five boroughs of New York City, CLT's are organizing in Black, Brown and immigrant neighborhoods across New York City to stabilize housing, combat speculation and ensure a just recovery from the COVID pandemic.

I'm here today to urge the Committee and the Counsel to support full funding of \$3 million for the citywide CLT initiative in the 2023 budget. We further urge City Council to ensure the final budget includes robust capital funding for the construction and preservation of affordable housing to prevent budget cuts to HPD, DSS and DHS that would threaten the housing security of thousands of New Yorkers.

The speculative real estate market doesn't just affect housing, it affects small businesses that make Queens and New York City the unique and diverse place it is. The Western Queens CLT has recently released a feasibility report detailing how our CLT would turn

a city owned building in Long Island City into the Queens Borough people space.

Our community vision for this public building would house hundreds of jobs in industries and sectors that have historically excited in Long Island City but have been pushed out. For example, our vision includes storage space for street food vendors and a commissary kitchen where they can prep food. This is why we need City Council funding. The Western Queens Community Land Trust will do the work to create permanently affordable housing and commercial spaces in Western Queens to keep our borough a place where immigrants and working class folks can live, own and operate businesses. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Boris Santos from East New York CLT.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will turn to Hannah Anousheh.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

HANNAH ANOUSHEH: Hi Council Members.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hannah, your Zoom is frozen.

HANNAH ANOUSHEH: I'm on staff at Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation. I'm here today to request that you provide the \$3 million for the Community Land Trust Initiative. The East New York Community Land Trust is one of 18 emerging or existing CLT's around New York City and the East New York CLT was actually founded during the -- in March 2020. And since our founding, we've grown enormously with very little resources. We're really relied on the City Council funding you know for our one staff person myself --

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hannah, your uhm, Hannah, your Zoom keeps freezing. You may want to turn off your video.

HANNAH ANOUSHEH: Thank you. Sorry about that.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: It's okay.

HANNAH ANOUSHEH: With the funding from previous years, we've been able to build out the infrastructure of our community land trust, write our laws through a democratic process, create our membership structure and you know really set ourselves up to acquire land. There's a real, real need to grow the community land trust in East New York. You know we're heading into a serious, serious

foreclosure crisis and we really need the tools to address this crisis and we really need the tools to address this crisis in East New York. So, we're really asking that you provide the funding for the CLT initiative to grow. Thank you so much for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Zoria F.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list Will Spisak from the New Economy Project.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

WILL SPISAK: Good afternoon. My name is Will Spisak, I'm a Senior Program Associate at New Economy Project, a citywide organization that works with community groups to build a just economy that works for all. Among our activities, New Economy Project is a founding member and co-coordinator of the New York City Community Land Initiative. A citywide coalition working to promote community land trust or CLT's as a strategy to address the city's affordability crisis and ensure equitable community led decision making over land use in New York City. New Economy Project and 19-partner organizations are

1 part of the Community Land Trust Initiative that's
2 seeking \$3 million in City Council discretionary
3 funding. So, we are urging the Committee and the
4 Council to support full funding of \$3 million for the
5 CLT Initiative, as well as urging the Council to
6 ensure the final budget includes robust capital
7 funding for the construction and preservation of
8 affordable housing, including deeply and permanently
9 affordable housing.
10

11 New York City faces unprecedented threats of
12 speculation and displacement in the wake of the
13 pandemic, holding reportedly massive amounts of cash,
14 global private equity firms are expected to pounce on
15 vulnerabilities in the real estate market. And this
16 feeding frenzy could lead to an unparalleled level of
17 displacement at a time when tenants, homeowners, and
18 small businesses are at greatest risk. This is why
19 the Council needs to invest in community land trust,
20 which permanently take land off of the speculative
21 market and democratize the ownership and stewardship
22 of land and housing. In order to prevent
23 displacement and fight speculation, CLT's need access
24 to capital for development. We also need access to
25 land for acquisition. So, we're also pushing policy

changes like the Community Opportunity of Purchase Act, Public Land Disposition that will prioritize CLT's and the replacement of the predatory tax lien sale. But we can't really take advantage of any of these policy changes if we don't have adequate funding for the ongoing –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

WILL SPISAK: Community organizing that CLT's need to do. So, please make sure CLT's are fully funded in Fiscal Year '23. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Valerie Jimenez from Housing Work – oh, before I call Valerie, that's Panel 15, let me announce Panel 16, 17, 18 and 19 so people can be ready.

Panel 16 will be Betty Garger, Joneé Billy, Martha Camber, Quadira Coles, Rachel Gasdick. Panel 17, Potriankamanis Queano Nur, Mary Cheng, Terry Collins, Vanita Yogeshwar, Benice Mach.

Panel 18, Darren Mack, Eileen Maher, Mon. Christina Rodriguez Hart, and Stuart Stout.

Panel 19, Alice Bufkin, Kenny Mineya, Luba Cortez, Katie Bravo, Kimberly George, Soroya Friedman Gonzales, and Michelle Neugebauer.

I will now start with Panel 15. We will start with Valerie Jimenez from Housing Works.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

VALERIE JIMENEZ: Hi, my name is Valerie Reyes-Jimenez, I'm the New York City Community Organizer for Housing Works and uh Housing Works is a founding member of the End AIDS New York Community Coalition and we fully support each of the additional New York City investments for the FY 2023 Budget. Although I want to stress that although the city and the state has made significant progress implementing the 2015 ending the epidemic blueprint and we have begun to bend the curve for the data showing that over progress is not reaching every community and unacceptable HIV disparities persist in the HIVs impact of New York City Black, indigenous and people of colors BIPOC communities and in the key populations including young men who have sex with men and transgender women.

The COVID pandemic has further exacerbated these inequalities to pressing HIV prevention, testing in connection to care and there has been a steep increase in premature mortality among people with HIV

due to heightened vulnerability and severe COVID-19 disease.

We need continued support of organizations funded through the New York City Ending the Epidemic Initiative. We are asking for an increase of \$8.7 – from \$8.7 to million to fund additional services. We ask the Council to mitigate the anticipated loss of \$1.7 million in New York City federal HOPWA funds Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS. The grant to make sure that no HIV housing provider is defunded. We urge the Council to sustain your current \$1.4 million in support for the delivery of range of harm reduction services by four proposed overdose prevention center operators.

We fully support the Council's call for at least \$10 million annually in New York City support of OPC's and make sure that there is at least one OPC operator –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

VALERIE JIMENEZ: In each borough and our testimony will be submitted and thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and just reminding everyone, testimony can be submitted or emailed to

testimony@council.nyc.gov. Next, we'll turn to Jordyn Rosenthal, Community Access.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JORDYN ROSENTHAL: Hi, everyone I'm so sorry, I was in a meeting before. Is it possible to switch my time?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uhm —

JORDYN ROSENTHAL: Okay, no.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yeah, sorry, it's now.

JORDYN ROSENTHAL: I wasn't fully —

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sorry.

JORDYN ROSENTHAL: I was in a meeting right before this. So, hi everyone. My name is Jordyn Rosenthal. I work at Community Access and I am the new Advocacy Coordinator. I'm here today to represent Community Access and the CCIT NYC Coalition.

Uhm, the CCIT NYC Coalition and really what we're asking for right now is to change the Be Heard model. The Be Heard Model is not pure lead and we need a pure lead crisis response. The core components of CCIT NYC are the removal of police responders calls routed to a call number other than 911, specifically the 988 number that will be rolling out nationally

1 this July. Response teams that are made up of
2 trained peers and emergency medical technicians that
3 are not affiliated with the police and peer
4 involvement in all aspects of planning,
5 implementation and oversight, specifically nothing
6 about us without us. Expanded development of
7 noncoercive mental health services, training teams to
8 use a trauma informed approach, response times
9 comparable to those of other emergency services and
10 24/7 operating hours and oversight by an advisory
11 board of 51 percent or more peers from impacted
12 communities.
13

14 Be Heard does not incorporate any of those. In
15 the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget, we ask that you enact
16 into legislation, the CCIT NYC proposal to create a
17 non-police response that peer driven and allocate
18 \$112 million annually to fund the CCIT NYC proposal.
19 I will be submitting a full piece of testimony to the
20 testimony website. Thank you so much.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next on our list
22 is Loretta Fleming.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Loretta, I see you in our
25 attending, you are calling in, you should see an

unmute request on your phone. Okay, we will continue Panel 15, circle back to Loretta at the conclusion of Panel 15. So, next, we've going to call on Seth Pollack from Ending the Epidemic Community Coalition.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SETH POLLACK: Hi, good morning and thank you to the Finance Chair Brannan for making this time available. I'm Seth Pollack speaking on behalf of the Ending the Epidemic Community Coalition, which represents tons of community-based organizations across New York City and stated committed to ending the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

We've made important strides toward ending the epidemic we refer to as ETE but approximately 130,000 New Yorkers are still living with HIV. We have bent the curve in recent years by reducing new HIV infections per year. We've improved health outcomes for people living with HIV and AIDS but we need key investments to continue this progress. I'll mention some highlight here and of course we'll send our full request to the Chair. We're asking the Council for \$10 million for its ETE initiative in order to provide community-based HIV prevention and care services to ensure continued progress toward the

city's ETE goals. These services are essential to overcome continued barriers to engagement that have been presented by COVID-19. We're also asking for \$1.4 million to support the harm reduction services provided by a projected four overdose prevention center operators. The overdose epidemic is claiming lives at a shocking pace. In the first two quarters of 2021, there were 1,233 overdose deaths in New York City compared to 965 overdose deaths during the same period the year before. This crisis is deeply interrelated with the HIV and AIDS epidemic. We're also asking the Council to baseline \$3.5 million for the Check Hep B and Hep C, at patient navigation programs to help eliminate Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C, other deeply interrelated epidemics impacting vulnerable New Yorkers particularly Black and Hispanic or Latino New Yorkers and we're seeking \$200,000 to support routine testing to address congenital syphilis during COVID. Rates of gonorrhea and syphilis among women in New York has soared 23 percent. Rates of STI testing have fallen. Congenital syphilis can be fatal in utero and to infants. This funding could launch a new DOHMH program to help implement routine syphilis testing

among all people who are or could become pregnant and who present in emergency departments. This is just a partial overview of the Council. The other request of the Administration and with your help and a relatively modest investment, we can continue critical –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SETH POLLACK: Progress we made toward ending HIV and AIDS for the generational advocates have fought for and too often given their lives. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Loretta Fleming, it appears you have no audio. So, you may want to log out of the Zoom and log back in. We still have more to go on Panel 15. Next we're going to turn to Greg Mihailovich from the American Heart Association.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

GREG MIHAILOVICH: Okay, thank you Chair Brannan, members of the Council Committee on Finance. My name is Greg Mihailovich, I'm the Community Advocacy Director for the American Heart Association here in New York City.

You know, as the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, American Heart Association

1 prioritizes a lot of different policies to kind of
2 address health and equity and better cardiovascular
3 health. And the written testimony I'm submitting
4 goes into a little more detail but I'm going to take
5 my two minutes to highlight one of them, mainly CPR
6 in schools. Each year, more than 350,000 out of
7 hospital cardiac arrests occur in the U.S. with 70
8 percent happening in homes and when a person has a
9 cardiac arrest, survival depends on immediately
10 receiving CPR from somewhere nearby.

12 About 90 percent of people who suffer out of
13 hospital cardiac arrest die and CPR, especially
14 performed immediately can double or triple the
15 changes of survival. People who need CPR less likely
16 receive it. People from primarily poor, Hispanic,
17 African neighborhoods are more likely to need CPS,
18 less likely to get it.

19 It's part of the reason why since 2015, New York
20 State requires that all high school students receive
21 CPR training as a graduation requirement. You know
22 the thinking is that the children trained in CPR
23 contribute significantly to the number of adults
24 trained in CPR in the community and increasing the
25 likelihood that somebody receives CPR when they need

1 it. Now, that graduation requirement was waived for
2 the 2019-2020 school year due to COVID-19 concerns
3 but even prior to that, we were hearing stories about
4 schools not having manikins, not having staff, doing
5 chest compressions on uninflated basketballs or piles
6 of gym towels. We applaud the ingenuity of teachers
7 to get it done but if we want our students to be able
8 to act when somebody nearby suffers a cardiac arrest,
9 we need to provide them with the materials and
10 equipment they need for effective CPR training.

12 We ask the Council to set aside \$1 million in the
13 next budget to ensure that New York City high school
14 students receive the proper CPR and ADD training to
15 fill their graduation requirement. Thank you. We
16 appreciate everything the Council does to keep New
17 York City safe and we —

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

19 GREG MIHAILOVICH: Continue to be your partner in
20 the health and wellbeing of New Yorkers.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll
22 turn to Christopher Norwood, Health People.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

24 CHRISTOPHER NORWOOD: Oh, okay, thank you. Thank
25 you City Council and Chair. I'm Christopher Norwood,

Executive Director of Health People and also Co-founder of Communities Driving Recovery. The Council may not; we are asking the Council to keep pursuing its proposed \$50 million in public health funds. The Council may not fully realize that what the DOH is calling the Public Health Corp was formed for millions of CDC funds. The RFP that the city put out for those funds had stipulations that I have never seen before in any city RFP, which fundamentally barred smaller neighborhood organizations from applying.

Moreover, DOHMH completely ignored community requests, include Recovery and Wellness programs in those funds and in large the focus from vaccination. Meanwhile the T2 or Trace and Trace Corp, the some 35 mainly smaller CBO's who were the first out there and have relentlessly promoted COVID prevention and vaccination giving the city the highest vaccination rate in the United States of any large city, will be totally cast aside and defunded at the end of the month.

We wonder why communities are in despair. Those who risk their lives and help make an enormous success get cast aside first. But with the Public

Health Corp funding, the City Council has asked for, these organizations and their very local staffs can go forward and start the real wellness that we need, such as chronic disease prevention and self-management programs.

That brings me to diabetes. Please pursue diabetes education funding. That has been our most widespread epidemic for 20 years and during that time, DOHMH has not spent one penny, not one penny of city tax levy funding on the kind of education that can help people prevent diabetes and is also proven to bring down complications, costs, amputations, when they have diabetes. Please, let's end this 20-years and keep your –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CHRISTOPHER NORWOOD: Diabetes education money in the budget. Thank you very, very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Michael Hernandez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MICHAEL HERNANDEZ: Hello and thank you very much. Good afternoon Chair Justin Brannan and members of the Committee on Finance. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you. My name is

Michael Hernandez and I am offering testimony on behalf of Community Strive and Recovery.

We are requesting continued funding for New York City Test and Trace partners to finish the task that we were asked to do, which is protect vulnerable populations from COVID-19. We know city leadership prioritizes keeping all New York City residents safe, protecting those who are the most vulnerable, building health equity for all and reducing health costs.

Furthermore, we realize managing a city's budget is not an easy task. You were asked to make smart choices that will maximize return on investment. Funding T2 CBO's is not only a smart decision but also the best solution to ensure our city can effectively recover from COVID-19. We are the best investment the city can have and maximize ROI. That's on building health equity, reducing health costs and saving lives.

City R is a citywide coalition of community groups, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations, many of whom were brought together by the New York City's Test and Trace Corp Initiative to battle the COVID-19 epidemic. Together with the New

York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and New York City Health and Hospitals, we, the T2 CBO's, help keep our city safe during every stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, from Stop the Spread to Vax for All.

We place ourselves at the frontlines to protect our city's most vulnerable populations and built an infrastructure that is uniquely suited to help with the recovery. Simply put, we are the city's best asset to COVID-19 recovery.

As trusted members and messengers, we are positioned to bridge the gaps to critical services and programs needed to bring health equity to all New Yorkers. We know all too well the systemic inequities that prevent members of our communities from accessing good health and we are here to help the city address these barriers to continue to impede health equity for all and stymie the road to recovery.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MICHAEL HERNANDEZ: Simply put, we ask the Council to include the \$50 million in this proposed budget for community public health support and call on the Adams Administration to incorporate the

proposal into the city's final budget. Thank you so much for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and we will try Loretta Fleming on Panel 15 one more time.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we are going to turn to Panel 16. Betty Garger, Joneé Belly, Martha Camber, Quadira Coles and Rachel Gasdick. We will first start with Betty Garger.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list was Joneé Billy.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JONEÉ BILLY: Hello, good afternoon. My name is Joneé Billy and I serve as Director of Strategic Partnerships and External Affairs for PowerPlay. I will also be advocating on behalf of the Sports Training and Role Models for Success Citywide Girls Initiative for which PowerPlay serves as the lead agency.

Thank you Chair Brannan and Committee Members for taking your time to hear our testimony today. Powerplays mission is to advance the lives of girls

through sports, helping them grow physically, emotionally and academically stronger.

Through our structured sports and social, emotional learning curriculum, we build girls confidence and resilience and create safe spaces where girls can learn from each other and from strong female role models. PowerPlay offers opportunities for girls where they would not otherwise exist. Furthermore PowerPlay serves as a lead agency for a coalition of ten New York City nonprofits known as STARS CGI.

As a collective, we support the healthy development of over 6,000 girls in gender nonconforming youth of color overcome barriers to success and develop as leaders in their communities. Specifically, STARS develops the lives and leadership skills of New York City youth through afterschool and summer sports, academic enhancement, STEM, college prep and the arts. Because of the Council's generous support for nearly a decade, the cohort of ten partners have collectively served nearly 50,000 girls of color and gender expansive youth. Many immigrants and first generation college bound across all five boroughs and in all 51 Council Districts.

We have done so with life changing outcomes from one of the city's most vulnerable populations. STARS persist in our fight for girls and women causes that have remained severely underfunded. On behalf of girls and gender expansive youth of color across New York City, we thank the Council for its generous support of nearly \$10 million over the course of our history and we look forward to our continued work together ensuring the social, emotional wellbeing of our communities. The STAR CGI Coalition respectfully seeks total funding of \$2 million for FY23, inclusive of the restoration of \$1.4 million.

I thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify before you today.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Martha Camber.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list is Quadira Coles, Girls for Gender Equity.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

QUADIRA COLES: Good afternoon Chair Brannan and members and staff on the Committee of Finance. My name is Quadira and I the Deputy Director of Policy

at Girls for Gender Equity and I apologize for not being camera today. But it makes sense to refocus some of my old testimonies because here we are again demanding now a new Council to prioritize police free schools and invest in students education with healing and restorative services, programs and support despite our unwavering advocacy over the past years.

I want to be clear that students are still feeling the pandemics two year impact. We are currently living through a nationwide mental health crisis with the general consistence among students themselves and adult allies at their emotional and mental wellbeing is and should be at the top priority right now. We can't ignore that.

Funding to the School Safety division, which fosters harmful policing tactics and surveillance takes away from areas within our education system that needs adequate and sustainable fiscal support, such as staff retention, restorative and extra-curricular programming.

During the pandemic, students have access to their school buildings, peers and teachers and had to rapidly address to new routines and new methods of learning that has exposed a multitude of educational

inequities within New York City school system. This has brought a tremendous amount of stress in mental health issues that students are constantly uplifting. Neither school communities nor students were prepared for this and we are still trying to play catch up.

So, the plan to replenish school police officers in the school safety division seems absurd considering the many other things that need investment and that will truly ensure holistic safety for students. And as we begin to see rollbacks on the progress the city has made to undo pathways to harm and abuse by the NYPD in our own communities, we must ensure that we cut more than \$500,000 million out of the school policing budget. This includes money for police, school police as well as police officers and the city calls youth coordination officers who are essentially tasked with surveillance of students in and outside of school.

This kind of tactic never works. There are enough research to show that the outcomes of youth interactions with police are negative. Students do not —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

QUADIRA COLES: Need more antagonizing surveillance in the guise of mentorship from officers who are also being told to bring back heavy handed policing tactics on a quest to allegedly get tough on crime, which disproportionately targets Black and Brown youth.

Furthermore, we, and that includes our fellow DSC advocates and students here demand that the city hire 2,000 New Yorkers to strengthen schools, invest \$75 million to hire restorative justice coordinators in 500 schools and \$45 million to implement restorative justice practices. Direct \$350 million to new funding to grow school climate supports and baseline —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

QUADIRA COLES: \$5 million to sustain Mental Health Continuum Initiative. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Rachel Gasdick from New York Edge.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

DAVID CRUZ: Good afternoon everybody. I am David Cruz. I am here on behalf of Rachel Gasdick with New York Edge. Chair Brannan and members of the Committee, I am here today to ask you to prioritize

New York Edges' Fiscal '23 citywide funding request of \$1.2 million under the Council's After School Enrichment Initiative.

Our request represents an increase of \$200,000 over our Fiscal '22 allocation from the Council and would be our first increase in 14 years. We are the largest provider of free afterschool and school-based remote programming, summer programming and NYC, and have partnered with the Council for the past 30-years in bringing these programs to all five boroughs to youth and families.

We are a leader in the afterschool community, well regarded for our evidence-based approach to after-school programming grounded in social, emotional learning and one of the city's largest providers of college access programs. Our mission is to help bridge the opportunity gap among students in underinvested communities. Our entire student population is 90 or more African American or Hispanic, with an approximately equal number of male and female.

More than 85 percent of these students we serve come from low-income households eligible for Title 1 free or reduced price lunches. Students need healthy

minds, bodies and relationships as well as creative outlets to thrive and our programs help to develop these students in all four of those areas.

With funding under the Councils Afterschool Enrichment Initiative, we annually impact tens of thousands of students in grades K-12 from over 100 sites across the city through our school year and summer programs. Programs run before or after the day school year round and include Saturday's, over the summer and holiday periods. Our core components in our programs include academic and steam education, social emotional learning, sports and wellness, arts, including visual and performance.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

DAVID CRUZ: College and career readiness, summer camps and learning labs. With your continued support and the increase of the \$200,000, we would be able to service and keep providing the strong program that we have for the past years. Thank you for your support and thank you for listening to me today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. That concludes Panel 16. Before I turn to Panel 17, I will announce Panels 20 and 21 before announcing 18 and 19.

Panel 20 will be Lauren Miller, Sophia Harrison, Janice Monger, Lucy Sexton, Ariel Herrera. Panel 21, Donna Schneiderman, Casey Wagner, Lisa Bernstein, Tatiana Bejar, Ben Fuller Googins and that's it, okay.

Now, turning to Panel 17, we will start with Potriankamanis Nur.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

POTRIANKAMANIS NUR: Good morning everyone. My name is Potriankamanis Queano Nur, I am the Artistic Director and Founder of a 30-year-old cultural interdisciplinary group called [INAUDIBLE 2:44:17] and very much supported by DCLA.

So, today I'm accompanying for budget for AAPI Community Support Initiative at \$6 million in order to fund community programming including mental health support, racial literary hate crimes intervention, gender-based violence intervention and prevention, youth programs and other culturally response services needed to be of long-term care and healing for our Asian American Pacific Islander New Yorkers during difficult times.

Access Health NYC to \$4 million to sustain the Citywide Initiative that funds community-based

organization to provide an education, outreach and assistance to all New Yorkers about total access to healthcare and coverage. Communities of color and nonprofits stabilization fund to \$7 million the first New York City Council fund to its kind aim to yield the capacity of NYC non-for-profit the recognition of the fact that organization led by people of community are best equipped to meet the needs of the community. CCNSF also intended to promote learning among CBO leaders. Also, I would like to speak for the cultural sector requesting a total of \$1 million investment from NYC for Fiscal Year '23 to augment NYC economic recovery and create an inclusive sector growth towards a future focused and equitable economy. Investing in culture means investing in the long-term financial health of our city.

The \$100 million request presents .24 percent of city total budget and a commitment to our ultimate goal of reaching one percent for culture. \$50 million in CID—

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

POTRIANKAMANIS NUR: Uhm, thank you very much and as I said, I'm campaigning for budget for AAPI and culture and mental health. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Mary Cheng from the Chinese American Planning Council.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MARY CHENG: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Again, my name is Mary Cheng from CPC. CPC's SCC early childhood and school age centers are critical safety nets for thousands of working class AAPI and immigrant families, in addition to providing childcare for low-income families.

CPC's childhood development services staff are instrumental in supporting the growth of children of color with disabilities. We are contracted to serve New York City's children under the same capacity, to educate with the same curriculum, credentials, assessments and requirements but yet, CPO's, FCC's and DYCD programs are still funded disproportionately to the counterparts within DOE. It is unethical and discriminatory in that the DOE still does not invest in equitable benefits and salary parity to the staff they considered essential during this pandemic. Support staff without longevity are paid a mere \$0.30

above the minimum wage due to the contract negotiated with the city.

We are seeing an exodus of staff from the childcare system, due to the disparity, many of the support staff have left for substitute positions within the DOE which pays a rate of \$33 an hour. The exodus of staff truly compromises the quality of programming our children deserve. CPC calls for equitable investments towards pay parity of the staff within all childcare centers and center-based organizations and further investment towards the increase of childcare rates for home-based and childcare providers.

As we head into another year of COVID, we continue to see an increasing number of children with disabilities requiring so many services. The lack of services that is really unethical at this point, the systematic inequities impacting the low-income children of color and children with disability and immigrant CBO's such as language accessibility, digital disparity –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MARY CHENG: And the cultural competence of supporting the teachers. CPC calls for an equitable

investment in community led childcare services and the integration of intentional community outreach for families with digital and linguistic barriers and provision of trainings for the school guidelines for community-based organizations.

There is more to the testimony but I do want to stress one more thing. I really think that families, especially low income families all deserve and –

SERGEANT AT ARM: Time expired.

MARY CHENG: One thing that has been missed was undocumented children to get subsidized care in the city. Uhm, really want to stress that the Mayor, the City Council needs to ensure that the Mayor invests \$10 million into the New York City's FY23 budget to ensure undocumented children have access to the same early childcare and education programs for the new Care for All Families Campaign. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll turn to Terry Collins from the Chinese American Planning Council.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TERRY COLLINS: Okay, good morning, good afternoon. My name is Terry Collins. I am an alumni of Project Reach, a satellite outreach program of

1 CPC. CPC does not only service the Chinese American
2 Community but through project reach, we're able to
3 unite and service youth from across all five
4 boroughs. For well over 40-years, we have provided a
5 safe haven drop in center and social services for
6 underserved youth from a multitude of racial,
7 cultural, sexual orientation and gender identities as
8 well as ethnic communities, undocumented youth and at
9 risk gang violence youth through conversation and
10 dismantling prejudices using sensitivity and
11 diversity workshops to combat discrimination in
12 everyday life. We are currently rolling out a
13 training program to combat anti-Blackness and anti-
14 Asian violence in the city, using historical racist
15 imagery to demonstrate the common history of media
16 biases that plagues both communities. Our trainings
17 are always inclusive of the Me Too Movement, Black
18 Lives Matter, Transphobia, antisemitism, Islamiyah
19 phobia and all the other communities.

21 We are also partners with the American Indian
22 Community House, because we are all on stolen land
23 and we always fail to acknowledge indigenous people
24 and native people.

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But I had a choice to make, either I get with the program, help my child out and have him succeed in life no matter what choices he makes or what he identifies as or lose him and become a parent bereft of a child. So, I work for health and hospitals and I'm very proud. I've been working here for 20-years. Through the resources at Health + Hospitals, they connected me with the CPC Project Reach. And as Terry identified, so many wonderful things that Project Reach does, Max was able to get the help that he required. He graduated from high school from the Staten Island Technical Institute and moved on with an admission to Syracuse University where he studies international relations and with a focus on social justice. So, seeing the direct effect of how Project Reach gave him the power of knowing oneself to be able to give him the courage to face live and to face the difficulties that come with being a transgender male. Max has, I'm very happy to report this summer he is graduating from Syracuse University and from the Maxwell School of International Relationship. He is such a powerful young man now. He works as —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

VANITA YOGESHWAR: Thank you and he also is focusing on working in the future with Project Reach and making us all very proud to be New Yorkers. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my story.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next our final panel no Panel 17, Benice Mach also from the Chinese American Planning Council.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

BENICE MACH: Good afternoon. Thank you so much Chair Brannan and members of the Finance Committee for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Benice Mach and I work as a Project Coordinator at CPC. AAPI hate crimes have served more than 339 percent nationwide last year and CPC's community members have increasingly mentioned their fears of going outside.

While some of our community members may call for policing, many of them also know that increased policing does not necessarily equal safer cities or decreased crime rates. If anything severe mental health symptoms and poverty are unjustly criminalized, especially in Black communities and other communities of color.

1
2 NYC must address persistent disparities in access
3 to health and mental health services amongst our most
4 vulnerable communities. CPC urges the City Council
5 to invest in preventative safety measures and address
6 root causes such as housing and education for our
7 communities instead of increased policing and
8 incarceration.

9 Investing in our communities is healthcare
10 justice and we'll open up the conversation for
11 increased mental health access and decreased stigma.
12 CBO's are best situated to offer long-term solutions
13 and more direct community engagement to address and
14 prevent hate violence. We have four asks. One,
15 expand funding for CBO's working in the community
16 like the NYC Against Hate Coalition, which includes a
17 diverse group of organizations representing
18 communities across the city to coordinate responses
19 to incidents of hate violence.

20 Two, to increase funding for the AAPI Community
21 Support Initiative to \$6 million to directly support
22 AAPI led and serving organizations that offer
23 critical programming.

24 Three, to fully fund non-policing approaches to
25 hate violence through the Office of the Prevention of

Hate Crimes Partners against the Hate Initiative at \$10 million with the renewal of the same grantee cohort.

And four, raise wages for all human services worker through Just Pay Campaign, which sets a living wage floor of \$21 per hour and includes a cost of living adjustment.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and now, we will turn to Panel 18. We will start with Darren Mack from Freedom Agenda.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

DARREN MACK: Thank you so much. Thank you Chair Brannan and Finance community members. My name is Darren Mack, I'm a Co-Director at Freedom Agenda. I'm also a member of the Commission of Reinvestment in the Closing of Rikers Island, established by Local Law 193. This Commission is charged with ensuring significant reinvestment recommendations are made in vulnerable communities disparity and historically impacted by mass incarceration. And the Commission just released its first report.

So, research and data have shown a significant percent of the individuals impacted by the criminal

1 legal system reside in historically under resourced
2 communities, neighborhoods and throughout New York
3 City. As a Co-Chair of the Youth Subcommittee in the
4 Commission, our mission is to identify that
5 investments that will prevent or remove young people
6 from the criminal justice pipeline. The question
7 remains, where will city get the funding from?

9 New York City Department of Correction has the
10 highest DOC budget in the country. The proposed
11 Fiscal Year 2023 DOC budget is \$2.679 billion. We
12 spend the most money in DOC in the country and get
13 the worst results. We, to be clear, we want the
14 programs and services that the people held in
15 pretrial detention rely on to continue to be funded
16 to meet their basic needs, however, we urge City
17 Council to reject increase in DOC's headcount, which
18 already has the largest DOC staff in the country and
19 instead, reinvest those resources to fund the
20 Commission recommendations.

21 Lastly, the Board of Corrections, which serves as
22 an independent oversight board that monitors New York
23 City's jail system should be fully funded to serve
24 its purpose more efficiently. The Boards budget is
25 only 0.2 percent of the Department of Corrections

budget compared to the Civil Complaint Review Board whose budgets set at one percent of the NYPD's budget. With the country looking on -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

DARREN MACK: With the country looking at our city, due to the human rights crisis at Rikers Island, this is the best time to increase the Board of Corrections budget. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Eileen Maher from Vocal New York and Freedom Agenda.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

EILEEN MAHER: Okay, uhm, good afternoon. Thank you for allowing me to testify. I'm Eileen Maher. I am Civil Rights Union Leader of Vocal New York and a member of Freedom Agenda and the Justice for Women Taskforce. I am also a survivor of Rikers Island where I spent over 420 unnecessary days as a result of a criminalized domestic violence situation.

Right now, we have a civil rights catastrophe going on. [OUTSIDE NOISE] Excuse me, sorry about that. Right now, we have a civil rights catastrophe going on at Rikers Island that has been instigated and sanctioned by COBA. The officers and employees

1
2 have been staging blue days that are organized by
3 COBA and given a silent blessing by the employees
4 that do show up. In addition to this, this has
5 caused not only five deaths this year and 22 deaths
6 in the past year, it has caused an uptick in violence
7 on behalf of the officers who instigate most of the
8 violence as well as excessive sanitary issues. Such
9 as people urinating in bags, being locked in their
10 cells without medications, such as insulin, mental
11 health medicine and methadone, and women having to
12 utilize torn up clothing instead of having adequate
13 sanitary protection during their monthly periods.

14 And right now, all the Mayor wants to do is pack
15 the cells and dorms and more. He and the COBA want
16 to send more children to jail, rather than invest in
17 community services. This is not keeping anyone
18 safer, not our communities and not our homes.

19 Locking away the so-called alleged problem
20 indefinitely does nothing to help anyone. So, I beg
21 the City Council to ignore Mayor Adams when deciding
22 on this budget and his punitive abuse of an
23 ultimately murderous ideas to curb a -

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.
25

EILEEN MAHER: Non-existent increase in crime. I just have like two more sentences. We need to maintain the course with bail and discovery reform. We need to implement community services such as increase education, domestic violence, and I apologize. Increase domestic violence services, services for the unhoused, job training, supportive housing, summer youth employment, and affordable grocery stores that stock healthy foods in underserved neighborhoods. We don't need people being locked and caged.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

EILEEN MAHER: We don't need people not receiving those services.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, thank you Eileen. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Mon.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on my list is Cristina Rodriguez-Hart.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CRISTINA RODRIGUEZ-HART: Hi, my name is Cristina Rodriguez-Hart and I am a New York City Queens

resident and a member of DSA's NYC Chapter. I am here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive Budget and to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID-19 cases are surging, landlords are raising rents and families struggle to stay in their homes. But the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over every day New Yorkers. This budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

Today, I urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing, including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and funding DOE mental health counselors and social workers. Rather than filling school police vacancies.

I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crisis facing our city climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the streets plan, \$1.8 billion for green public schools, \$250 million for Fair Fares and \$10 million to expand lifesaving, safe consumption sites to all five boroughs.

Finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's regressive return to law in order mentioned by many of the people in this hearing. I urge the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of new correction officers for solitary confinement, a practice the UN defines as torture. I also urge the Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization programs like the

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CRISTINA RODRIGUEZ-HART: And violent plain clothes unit, the so-called Subway Safety Plan and ending all NYPD response to mental health calls and Be Heard, as already discussed needs to be improved because it's failing us. Also disband the SRG.

Thank you very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll hear from Stuart Stout.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will go ahead and turn to our next panel. Alice Bufkin, Kenny Mineya, Luba Cortez, Katie Bravo, Kimberly George, Saroya Friedman-Gonzalez and Michelle Neugebauer. We will start with Alice Bufkin from the Citizens Committee for Children of New York.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ALICE BUFKIN: Thank you Chair Brannan and members of the Committee for this opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Alice Bufkin and I am the Associate Executive Director of Policy and Advocacy at Citizens Committee for Children. We'll be providing written testimony, but in the time I have, I'm going to briefly touch on some of the key issues needed to support children and families in the budget.

First, despite the urgent need to address the children's behavior health crisis, there's simply not enough in the Mayor's budget or the City Council's response to address children's mental health needs. Among other parties, we urge you to fund and baseline

\$5 million for the mental health continuum. We were grateful that this funding was championed by the state council in last year's budget. The continuum offers an essential opportunity to ensure interagency coordination and provide behavioral supports to students across the continuum of needs. However, progress made through this initiative will end in June if City leaders do not baseline the funding in this year's budget.

We also urge you to provide \$28.5 million to increase the number of school-based mental health clinics and expand the capacity of those that already exist.

In terms of housing, we urge you to add \$30 million to fully fund the City FHEPS program, address staffing shortages at RHA and RPD and hire 150 DOE shelter-based community coordinators to support students in shelter. Turning to early care and education, we urge you to prioritize pay parity for community-based preschool special educators and others left out of the original parity agreement, as well as address teacher and staff longevity and benefits.

We also ask that you prioritize expanding and aging down the childcare system and work towards universality for infants and toddlers, as well as expanding access to all day year round care for all children birth to five. The central part of COVID recovery is supporting youth and youth programming. We therefore urge you to baseline Fair Futures as well as expand year round youth employment and increase cost per participant rates for Compass and Sonic contracts.

Finally, we urge you to support the economic recovery and well-being of New Yorkers by enacting the Mayor's proposal to enhance their local EITC and fully support the Just Pay Campaign, including a 5.4 percent COLA to combat inequitable pay among human service workers. This is obviously a long list of priorities but it's really just reflective of the deep needs of children and families in our city and a recognition of the enormous —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ALICE BUFKIN: We have to make long lasting investments in communities, have a foundation for resilience and recovery. So, thank you for your time and commitment to children and families in the city.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Kenny Mineya from Make the Road New York.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KENNY MINEYA: Good afternoon Chair Brannan and members of the Committee on Finance. I'm the Director of Government Affairs and Make the Road New York. As you all know, Make the Road New York is a nonprofit community-based membership organization with over 25,000 low-income members dedicated to building the power of immigrant and working class communities to achieve dignity and justice through organizing, policy innovation, transformative education survival services. We have offices in Jackson Heights, Bushwick and Port Richmond New York City.

We will submit comprehensive written testimony but I just wanted to take this time to focus on a couple of proposals that are of concern to us.

First, we echo the speakers call for DOE to restore and baseline \$9.16 million for all 52 community schools facing cuts. As you all know, community schools have a proven success record that relevance a necessity of only becoming magnified and providing the critical services our city's most

vulnerable youth need as they struggle to reengage after the pandemic's disruptions. As a nonprofit community-based partner at the Bushwick Campus, we know firsthand the harm that our youth will experience if these proposed cuts at nearly 40 percent are implemented.

Next, Make the Road echoes and joins the Council's call for DYCD to double the baseline funding for adult literacy programs to \$27 million, including restoration of the \$1.7 million that was cut from the Prelim budget to continue the case manager pilot and calling for an extension of the Adult Literacy Pilot Project for a second year and for that to be expanded to \$5 million.

Lastly, we call on the city to cut at least \$1 billion from the NYPD Expense Budget and for those funds to be invested in community programs that promote health and real safety solutions. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Luba Cortez, Trans Immigrant Project Make the Road.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list, I have Katie Bravo, also from Trans Immigrant Project Make the Road.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will turn to Kimberly George. Oh, Kimberly George? Okay, we can go ahead and mute her. Okay, we're going to turn to Saroya Friedman Gonzalez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SAROYA FRIEDMAN GONZALEZ: Okay, uhm, good afternoon. My name is Saroya Friedman Gonzalez and I'm the Executive Director of New Yorkers for Children. A nonprofit dedicated to improving the wellbeing of children and families in the child welfare system, with a particular focus on those aging out of the foster care system. We are one of the only organizations in the city with a connection to nearly every single young person who has aged out of the New York City foster care system. And I am here advocating for additional investments and services to support these young people.

At New Yorkers for Children, we provide direct educational and financial support to these youth and support other child welfare focused organizations by

1
2 developing new initiatives designed to fill gaps in
3 the system. We do this through our long-standing
4 partnership with the Administration for Children
5 Services, the 26 contracted foster care agencies and
6 many community partners. We know that the need for
7 the services is great because the challenges this
8 population faces are significant. This is true based
9 on our own experiences but this reality is brought
10 out in the data as well.

11 One in four youth in or aging out of the foster
12 care system will not graduate high school. Fewer
13 than three percent will earn a college degree in
14 their lifetime. Even worse, after aging out of the
15 system, 20 percent of people and youth will become
16 instantly homeless.

17 At New Yorkers for Children, we serve about 1,000
18 young people a year and since 2018, we have directly
19 supported more than 3,500 youth as a transition out
20 of the New York City Child Welfare System. Since our
21 founding in 1996, we have distributed \$70 million in
22 total support to these young people when they need it
23 most.

24 Our signature programs help nearly 700 young
25 people go to college each year and as a result of our

wrap around support, including our scholarships and peer mentoring programs, our participants pose a 78 percent graduation rate. We are proud of this work —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SAROYA FRIEDMAN GONZALEZ: But we know we can do more. With increased funding, we can deepen our existing programs, which we see greater demand than our current funding allows.

With help from the city, we hope to achieve increased well-being for youth in these programs, increased graduation rates, expanding service delivery and creating a smoother continuum of care and reduce wait time for services. Thank you so much for listening to my testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, I'll call on Kimberly George.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KIMBERLY GEORGE: Good afternoon. My name is Kimberly George. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am the President and CEO of Project Guardianship. Project Guardianship was founded 17 years ago as a social justice initiative of the Vera Institute of Justice. Vera launched project guardianship in partnership with the New York State

Office of Court Administration to fill a gap in the adult guardianship and elder services safety net for New York City residents.

In 2020, Project Guardianships went off as an independent non-profit providing comprehensive court appointed guardianship services to hundreds of limited capacity New York City residents. We serve clients regardless of their ability to pay for guardianship services and for some of the most compelling and complex cases in the city. We also share research and recommendations for a better guardianship system and we advocate for more equitable responses to providing services for adults in need of protective arrangements.

New York City's population is aging rapidly. One-third of older adults identify as Black, Latinx, Asian or non-White and the number of older immigrants statewide is growing at nearly double the rate of the U.S. borne older adults. And nearly one in seven older New Yorkers is living in poverty. Older lower income adults are at the center of the housing affordability and homelessness crisis, especially older adults of color. These adults are disproportionately impacted by abuse, neglect and

financial exploitation. Despite increased state in federal investments in care for aging and disabled New Yorkers, too many will be denied the opportunity to benefit from these programs because they are physically and cognitively unable to navigate our complex public benefits and social services.

This is where legal guardianship often steps in. Nonprofit guardianship programs work to secure public benefits, housing, healthcare and other supports that this population needs to improve outcomes and promote safety and stability. Our clients include older New Yorkers, those living with serious disabilities, physical impairments, traumatic brain injury and the list goes on.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

KIMBERLY GEORGE: We ask that the City Council continue supporting people who need guardians, put it at the top of the priority list for our local budget and continue championing older adult New Yorkers and funding initiatives like Support our Seniors. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I'll turn to Michelle Neugebauer from Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MICHELLE NEUGEBAUER: Good afternoon members of the City Council. My name is Michelle Neugebauer and I'm the Executive Director of the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation. We're a not-for-profit community development organization and settlement house that serves about 11,000 East New Yorkers every year from 21 different service locations. We're also an advocacy organization and fought very hard with Houses of Worship, other CBO's and neighborhood residents in the 2016 neighborhood rezoning of the East New York. We fought for equity, justice, displacement prevention, local hiring and deeply and permanently affordable housing.

One of the things the community won was the Basement Legalization Pilot. The city committed to \$12 million for the neighborhood to legalize 40 basements into apartments and lay the ground work for citywide basement legalization pilot. Well, that promise was broken and we're depending on the new City Council to keep their promise to the East New York neighborhood.

The pilot had just started. 800 homeowners expressed interest. A pandemic hit and the program

1 was gutted. Almost all the funding was cut for the
2 program and the remaining nine homeowners who are not
3 six homeowners, were promised that they could go
4 through. That their rehabs would be done. That it
5 would be affordable. That tenants could come back to
6 those basements?
7

8 Well, now the funding is in jeopardy again. We
9 have no assurances in FY23 that the expense or the
10 capital money is going to be there. We need this
11 City Council to right this wrong that's been done to
12 the East New York community. Basement Legalization
13 means a lot. It's a win-win, both for the homeowners
14 that can now afford rising maintenance costs and for
15 the tenants who can live in safe, healthy
16 accommodations and an affordable regulated grant.

17 I'm going to ask you to take a good look, hard
18 scrutiny at the Basement Legalization Pilot and –

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

20 MICHELLE NEUGEBAUER: And fully fund it or return
21 that money to East New Yorkers. Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. That conclude
23 Panel 19. Before going to Panel 20, I will announce
24 Panels 22, 23, 24, and 25, so people can be ready.
25

Panel 22 Rosemary Martinez, Yolanda Arthur, Salua Baida, James Dill, Luisa Pineda, Merble Reagon.

Panel 23, Acura Adams(SP?), Alyssa Figueroa, Keith Fuller, Kayonna Bernard, Crystal Reyes. Panel 24 Paul Nagle, Mateo Guerrero-Tabares, Chauvet Bishop, Elana Lancaster, Lisa Sloan, Kayt Tiskus. Panel 25, Ivette Ayala, Lorenzo Brooks, Natasha Connor, Nicholas O'Toole and Pamela Mosario(SP?).

I will now turn to Panel 20, Lauren Miller, Sophia Harrison, Janice Monger, Lucy Sexton, Ariel Herrera and Adam Ganser. I will first turn to Lauren Miller.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on my list, Sophia Harrison.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SOPHIA HARRISON: Good afternoon. I am Sophia Harrison, the Founder and Executive Director of Arts House Schools of Music, Dance, and Fine Arts.

The only cultural institution in Coney Island Brooklyn that serves the artistic and cultural needs for the children and senior citizens in this neighborhood. Our mission is to provide culture in the humanities for the children in the Coney Island

community while providing them with the opportunity to build self-esteem, self-confidence and develop poise, grace and balance.

I am here today to advocate for the culture vibe ask for the FY23 \$1 million request. This ask includes a \$50 million in CGI and at CDF baseline funding, \$45 million in grants for five strategic initiatives, \$15 million for a cultural equity fund, \$10 million for tourism and marketing or cultural across five boroughs, \$10 million for workforce development and program support, \$5 million for access and inclusion of deaf and disabled communities, \$5 million for individual artists and renewal of the city artist program and a \$5 million increase for staffing at DCLA for the agent to provide – the agency to provide efficiency and timely support.

The \$15 million ask for the Cultural Equity Fund will create an investment in BIPOC led founded in certain organization like Arts House Schools. All of us are founded to serve the underserved resource needs of the communities we serve. Communities of color, immigrant communities in the mostly low income neighborhoods in the outer boroughs and zip codes of

New York City. Many of our organizations have two string budgets, living from check to check with budgets under \$250,000 with no full-time paid staff.

I, myself, am a full-time volunteer for 17 years. This investment would not only secure the future of our organizations but it will also provide a better quality of life for our staff, many of whom are part-time workers and their families. Since 2006, the different Council Members of the 47th District have supported Arts House Schools –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SOPHIA HARRISON: It is the Council that has supported the majority of BIPOC led and serving organizations throughout the City of New York. However, BIPOC led organizations need not only to subscribe but to thrive. We need to – my request is that you support the cultural vibe and the Cultural Equity Fund. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Janice Monger from the Staten Island Museum.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on my list, I have Lucy Sexton from New Yorkers for Culture and Arts.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LUCY SEXTON: Thank you so much. My name is Lucy Sexton, I lead the Cultural Advocacy Coalition, New Yorkers for Culture and Arts. I'm here to ask you to include an additional \$100 million in the city budget for culture as detailed in the Culture Vibe NYC ask.

The Culture sector is united in our ask for cultures visionary investment to build the economy. It calls for equity in every part of the ask. From a \$50 million increase to the Department of Cultural Affairs funding base to adequately serve organizations of all sizes in the citywide cultural ecosystem to the Cultural Equity Fund, which Sophia just talked about. Which at long last begins to address the historic underfunding of BIPOC org serving communities of color.

I want to note that we have not had an increase to the baseline funding for DCLA since 2009 despite the fact that the creative economy generates \$100 billion in economy activity for the city. It is past time for this \$50 million add to the DCLA baseline. Culture was the first to close and we are still struggling to fully reopen. Federal relief for those of us lucky enough to receive it runs out next month. Meanwhile audiences and other income are still not up

1 to pre-pandemic levels. The slower culture takes to
2 recover, the slower the city will take but if you
3 invest this relatively small amount, less than a
4 quarter of a percent of the city's budget into
5 culture now, you will see a robust recovery for every
6 neighborhood. We bring visitors. We bring folks
7 back to offices. We drive traffic to restaurants and
8 local businesses. We improve education outcomes. We
9 improve mental health. We create strong communities
10 and are key to public safety. When youth have places
11 to make music, dance, theater, science. When
12 communities have places to gather and connect. When
13 folks caught with criminal justice system have places
14 to tell their stories, we build strong, safe
15 neighborhoods. Data backs this up.

17 The more cultural assets, the safer the
18 neighborhood. Let's invest in a strong economy –

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

20 LUCY SEXTON: And vibrant city by investing in
21 culture for every New Yorker. Thank you so much for
22 allowing me to testify.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll
24 turn to Ariel Herrera.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 ARIEL HERRERA: Thank you for the opportunity to
3 speak to you today. My name is Ariel Herrera and I
4 am the Research and Advocacy Manager for Dance NYC.
5 Dance NYC is the only service organization for the
6 dance industry and they make a powerful New York City
7 area and its actual oriented research and advocacy
8 seek to a percent and advance interest in the dance
9 sector. Dance NYC joint colleague advocates working
10 across creative disciplines and thanking you for your
11 leadership.

12 And I just want to echo my colleague Lucy Sexton,
13 everything that she said but I also would like to
14 reiterate just one more time \$100 million investment
15 in the Department of Cultural Affairs for Fiscal Year
16 2023. An investment that represents 0.24 percent of
17 the city's total budget.

18 In addition Dance NYC is asking a robust
19 investment in Arts Education to the Department of
20 Education and boosting the arts allocation to \$100
21 from \$79.62. The city's budget represents far more
22 than a financial statement. It is a social contract
23 that articulates to the public the values that the
24 Council and Administration place on a specific
25 constituencies and communities including industries

and workers. The arts and cultural industry is a major economic engine and it counts for 13 percent of New York City's total economic output. \$110 billion in 2017 alone. New York City must invest back its fair share through the arts and culture sector to ensure that it not only survives but thrives. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll turn to Adam Ganser.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ADAM GANSER: Hi there, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

ADAM GANSER: Fantastic. My name is Adam Ganser, I am the Executive Director at New Yorkers for Parks. We've been around for 100 years advocating for equitable access to parks and open spaces throughout the five boroughs. We are the co-founder of the Play Fair Coalition that's more than 400 organizations across the city focused on parks and open space. We will submit more detailed testimony but we're — I'm testifying today, asking for the Council to hold the Mayor accountable to the promises that he made on the campaign trail for one percent of the city budget for parks.

We have delivered a letter to the Mayor signed by 26 Council Members, 400 organizations across the city asking for that and this is something that has been in the works for 20 years with our organization. It's high time that the city fund parks at an appropriate level.

The second thing I want to bring up is that there are roughly 300 positions that are funded by the Council. They're informally called Play Fair positions, CPW's, Pep Officers, gardeners, rangers etc. Those positions are set to expire at the end of this Fiscal Year, along with roughly 1,800 positions of the Cleanup Corp. That is going to put the Parks Department in a really difficult situation. We are not out of COVID, people are spending more time than ever in their parks. We would like to ask the Council to re-up on those positions and again, push the Mayor to fund parks at a higher level than he is right now, which is at .6 percent, .06 percent of the budget. I appreciate your time and thank you for your support.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 20. I will now turn to Panel 21, Donna Schneiderman, KC Wagner, Lisa Bernstein, Tatiana

Bejar, and Ben Fuller-Googins. I'll first start with Donna Schneiderman.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

DONNA SCHNEIDERMAN: Hi there. Hello and thank you very much for hearing my testimony to everybody here on the Council.

My name is Donna Schneiderman and I am a Domestic Worker Employer, a founding member of Hand and Hand, the Domestic Workers Network and we're part of the New York City Coalition for Domestic Work.

I'm here today to request your support for the Domestic Worker and Employer Empowerment Initiative. A new City Council initiative for FY23 that will provide \$300,000 in much needed funding to support outreach, education, and enforcement supporting over 6,000 domestic workers this year.

This initiative will enable the outreach and education about domestic workers rights to both workers and employers, support investigation of rights of uses, create referrals to the City Commission on Human Rights, and Department of Consumer and Worker Protection, as well as broaden enforcement of the recently passed Intro. 339, which is also known as Local Law 88.

1
2 I've had the honor of partnering with domestic
3 workers as an Employer Alli and Advocate for many
4 years, since the passage of the New York State
5 Domestic Workers Bill of rights and I've learned over
6 the years that while there are many employers aiming
7 to be fair, despite the lack of standards around,
8 unfortunately there are many employers who actively
9 may take advantage of their employees or who are
10 willfully ignorant at the expense of their employees.

11 I've been involved in this movement for better
12 guidelines and standards because I believe that
13 employers need guidance from the government so we can
14 do what's right. And without the guidelines,
15 employers are left to figure out on our own online or
16 through word of mouth sometimes not accessing the
17 right information.

18 We're so pleased that we are -

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

20 DONNA SCHNEIDERMAN: Thanks, I appreciate the
21 time.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will
23 turn to KC Wagner.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.
25

1
2 KC WAGNER: So, thank you so much to the City
3 Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan. My name
4 is KC Wagner and I am a Domestic Worker Employer and
5 a member of Hand and Hand. And it is my great honor
6 to be partnering with the Domestic Employees Network
7 and the worker centers that are part of it, the
8 National Domestic Workers Alliance and Carrol Gardens
9 and I am a better employer because of my membership
10 in Hand and Hand.

11 Maxine, the caregiver, for my 96-year-old mother
12 has made my work possible. Domestic Workers have
13 made all work possible, as she has provided devoted
14 care to my mother for nine years. Starting with her
15 first hospitalization, then to her independent living
16 facility, assistant living facility, memory care unit
17 and finally at the nursing home where she now resides
18 with dementia.

19 Maxine's commitment to my mother's safety and
20 mental health also include at her disclosing to me
21 the emotional abuse that my mother experienced at the
22 hands of her then partner with whom she was living.
23 Needless to say, our intervention and their
24 separation was immediate but I would not have known
25 about this or done anything without Maxine's

priceless gift to my family based on her knowledge and expertise.

Maxine is invaluable to my family and she alone with all caregivers should continue to be entitled to both the recently one workplace rights and benefits and more that Donna identified and that all of us on this call enjoy. And so, we greatly appreciate your support in getting this word out. The collaboration between employers and domestic workers and the training and education that we are doing in partnership to get the word out to educate domestic workers about what their rights are and to educate employers, so we can do the right thing is invaluable. And so, I thank you so much for your time.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

KC WAGNER: And listening to my testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Lisa Bernstein.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LISA BERNSTEIN: Lisa Bernstein and I am a Domestic Worker Employer, a member of Hand and Hand, Domestic Employers Network and a part of the New York City Coalition for Domestic Workers. 27-years-ago,

when I gave birth to my daughter, I actually was the Marketing Director for the What to Expect when Your Expecting Pregnancy Books.

And yet, when it came to hiring childcare so I could go back to work, I had no idea what to expect. And now, 27-years later, if my daughter were to have a baby right now, she too would be right in the same place of nobody guiding and telling her what to expect.

I am here today to urge you to support the Domestic Worker and Employee Empowerment Initiative, which is the New York City Council Initiative for FY23, that will provide \$300,000 in much needed funding to support outreach, education and enforcement to support, thank you, to over 6,000 domestic workers this year.

As employers, we need guidance from the government, so we can do what is right. By passing this proposal in the current budget session, our local government will be taking a step in the right direction by acknowledging an investment to ensure domestic workers, the workers who care for our families have the rights and are empowered as workers to negotiate better contracts and will empower

1 employers because we would have guidance and the
2 support to be good employers. We pass some great,
3 the city has passed some fabulous laws including the
4 domestic worker bill of rights, paid safe and sick
5 leave and most recently Intro. 339. Many employers
6 know nothing about, nor do employees but as an
7 employer, we're left to figure it out all on our own
8 and not always finding the right information. Some
9 of us are doing the right thing but we now need local
10 government to do the same. This initiative will
11 enable outreach and education about domestic workers
12 rights deal with workers and employers, support
13 investigations of rights abuses, which happen -

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

15 LISA BERNSTEIN: Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn
17 to Tatiana Bejar.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 TATIANA BEJAR: Thank you. Uhm, my name is
20 Tatiana Bejar. I'm the New York City Lead Organizer
21 at Hand and Hand, the Domestic Employers Network.
22 Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on
23 behalf our membership and also, thank you to our
24 members who just spoke in the last minutes.
25

1
2 Hand and Hand is a national network of employers
3 of nannies, house cleaners and home attendants, our
4 families and allies. We support domestic employers,
5 improve their employment practices and believe that
6 dignified and respectful working conditions benefits
7 worker and employer alike. We envision a future
8 where people live in caring communities and recognize
9 all of our interdependence. Hand and Hand is a
10 nonprofit organization and one of the major
11 organizations in the country that organizes domestic
12 employers. They are also part of the New York City
13 Coalition for Domestic Work along with the National
14 Domestic Workers Alliance, Adhikaar, and [INAUDIBLE
15 3:35:29] Association.

16 Our coalition has submitted the Domestic Worker
17 and Employer Empowerment Initiative for this budget
18 session to ensure workers note and exercise their
19 rights and employers are guided about their
20 responsibilities and obligations regarding the law.

21 In 2010 Domestic Workers Bill of Rights was
22 passed in New York State. The first ever in the
23 country that provided their own framework and human
24 rights for these workforce, such as minimum wage,
25 basic leave and overtime, among others. Similar

1 bills like the basic leave and safe — uh, sorry New
2 York City pay sick and unsafe leave as well as Intro.
3 339 just recently. A bill that ensures human rights
4 protections for domestic workers.
5

6 So, having said that, we ask the Finance
7 Committee on the budget negotiation team to consider
8 approving this initiative for this Fiscal Year that
9 we provide \$300,000 in much needed funding to support
10 outreach, education and enforcement support to over
11 6,000 domestic workers as well as employer through
12 our city.

13 Yes, I know my time is almost done but again,
14 this is really a very important program. We don't
15 feel like —

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 TATIANA BEJAR: And feel the sector is changing.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn
19 to Ben Fuller-Googins.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

21 BEN FULLER-GOOGINS: Good afternoon. Thank you
22 Chair Brannan and Council Members on the Finance
23 Committee for offering me time to speak today. My
24 name is Ben Fuller-Googins, I'm with the Carrol
25

Gardens Association or a proud member of the New York City Coalition for Domestic Work.

Council Member Brannan, it was refreshing to hear in your opening remarks this morning, naming caregivers as one of the impacted groups of people in our city during the pandemic. Unfortunately, caregivers – there's a long history of caregivers, domestic workers being invisibilized, their work undervalued.

And so, that's one of the reasons I'm here with fellow members of our coalition that you just heard and other members that you'll hear this afternoon, to urge you to pass our new budget initiative, the Domestic Worker and Employer Empowerment Initiative. This will be amazingly the first time in New York City's history that there is an explicit investment in domestic worker and employer outreach to education. We're asking \$300,000 for Fiscal Year '23 and that will be enable us to provide outreach and education, so that we're able to go into the parks and into the libraries and make sure that workers across the city, over 200,000 domestic workers across the city know what their rights are. Know the rights to overtime, the basic time, to Intro. 339, which we

worked so hard this past year and still, as we just heard from Hand and Hand members, many employers, workers aren't aware. So, we're excited to work together to make this the first investment in domestic workers and employers around the city.

Again, we're asking \$300,000 for Domestic Worker and Employer Empowerment Initiative and thank you for your time. And look forward to some of our worker members sharing in this hearing about why this initiative is so critical for them. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 21. I will now turn to Panel 22, Rosemary Martinez, Yolanda Arthur, Salua Baida, James Dill, Luisa Pineda and Merble Reagon. We will start with Rosemary Martinez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ROSEMARY MARTINEZ: Hello everyone. Thank you for this opportunity. Thank you Chair Brannan and Council Members. My name is Rosemary Martinez. As a reminder, in correlation from last years comprised of the National Domestic Worker Alliance, NYC Chapter Adhikaar and Hand and Hand, the Domestic Employers Network, and Care Guidance Association, Domestic workers and employers of New York City. I have been

a domestic worker for six years despite being born in this city due to the lack of opportunity for my mom who has been a domestic worker for more than 30-years and due to the lack of information and respect for her work. I had to grow up away from here. I can say knowingly about the lack of opportunities and now, as a domestic worker, organizer, with CDA, I can see and know about these troubles domestic workers had to go through.

I'm here today to request your support for the Domestic Worker and Employer Empowerment initiative. A new City Council initiative for FY23 that will provide 300,000 in much needed funding to support outreach education and support to over 6,000 domestic workers this year. There are over 200,000 workers in New York City and while we have celebrated many transformative wins over the past decade, including the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, Pay Safe and Sick Leave and the most recently Intro. 339.

Like, my colleagues say before, we need our city to support us just as we support the family and loved ones. Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan for hearing my testimony and I hope we can

look forward to working with you where domestic work is valued and dignified.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Yolanda Arthur.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list I have, Salua Baida.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SALUA BAIDA: Thank you Mr. Butehorn. My name is Salua Baida. Good afternoon from Forest Hills Queens. I'm also a part of Hand and Hand, the Domestic Employers Network and the reason I am speaking today and testifying today is because like a lot of my peers that you just heard from, I am both a person who employs a domestic worker inside of my home and I'm also a Latino lawyer. I'm also the daughter of a now retired house cleaner. And so, like so many of the folks that have spoken already, I find that it's really important for both workers to know what their rights are and what their responsibilities are and for employers to know what the requires of them.

1
2 And so, as we've heard you know the paid and sick
3 bills have passed. Intro. 339, which considers
4 domestic workers to be employees like any other
5 employee. All of these different things, paid and
6 sick leave. All of these different things are
7 wonderful. There we go, wonderful developments that
8 we've all fought for and that are important to keep
9 our city running. At the same time, if both the
10 employees and the employers don't know about them,
11 they can't actually follow those guidelines and they
12 can't make these kind of policies makes New York the
13 best city that it can be.

14 So, in order to that, we got to fund the
15 initiatives that provide outreach, that provide
16 support, the provide enforcement. If we can do that,
17 then this is going to be transformative. So, that's
18 why you've heard my colleagues and you've heard so
19 many of the other people that'll be speaking ask for
20 that funding, that \$300,000, which is completely
21 reasonable to be able to make those outreach and
22 other support efforts actually possible.

23 Thank you so much and muchas gracias. Bye, bye
24 everyone.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to James Dill.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JAMES DILL: I'm Jim Dill, Director of — Executive Director of Housing and Services Inc. We provide permanent supportive housing to 720 New York City households. We support all of supportive housing networks, advocacy points to this meeting, but I will focus on the immediate and dire need to build HRA capacity for the referral process to permanent supportive housing projects.

Due to the lack of HRA capacity, our projects that rely on contracted HRA, DHS shelter referrals, now have vacancy rates in excess of ten percent. I have neither the time today nor the words to describe the human cost of homeless individuals whose shelter stays are being needlessly prolonged by the lack of capacity. However, I can speak to the financial cost of those providers and the city. Our Kenmore project on East 23rd Street has 325 housing units and an annual residential rent flow of approximately \$4 million.

During the pandemic, it has taken an average of 72 days from referral requests to a tenant move in.

At 72 days for a move in, tenants are leaving a much faster rate than new ones are coming in. In calendar 2021, Kenmore's vacancy rate was six percent. For February 2022 was 11 percent. With no solution to the capacity problem, Kenmore's vacancy for 2022 could approximate a half million dollars. It is well documented that the city's annual cost for a homeless person in the shelter in excess of \$30,000. These costs are needless and must be cured by an immediate investment in HRA capacity. It is truly dismal that the homeless are being driven out of the subway system and encampments while thousands of permanent supportive housing units that they want and need remain vacant.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to testify. We will provide detail written testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next I will turn to Luisa Pineda.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LUISA PINEDA: Good afternoon. Thank you Chairman Justin Brannan and members of the New York City Council Committee on Finance. My name is Luisa Pineda and I have worked in the Human Service Sector for over ten years. I currently work as a College

Retention Specialist at the College Access and Success program at Queens Community House where we provide individuals and families with the needed tools to enrich their lives and build healthy, inclusive communities. We are a supporter of the Just Pay Campaign.

I am thankful for this opportunity to testify on behalf of Queens Community House. Essential human services workers earn one of the lowest wages in New York City economy due to chronic underfunding from New York City government contracts. If we learned anything from the COVID-19 pandemic, is the importance of human services because they are just that, human.

Human Services worker make about \$20,000 a year less than a public sector worker with a comparable education. I make 70 percent of what I would make if I worked in government. We need human services workers but it is hard to recruit and retain them when government pays so little. Within the last year, many of programs under Queens Community House have been understaffed, as many leave due to low wage salary. Which means many of us are taking on more work for the same pay.

I advocate for my students when no one else has the time to, providing them in the guidance they need to move forward and have a better future. I serve the children and youth, the young adults and families, older adults in the LGBTQ population to provide them with my time and understanding and connecting each of them with the resources that will empower them to help them achieve –

LUISA PINEDA: We need the city to acknowledge

our work and to address crisis in the sector and save jobs of health and human services workers. We are

asking the city to adapt reforms that save Just Pay Campaign for fighting. Thank you for my time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Merble Reagon from the Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MERBLE REAGON: Thank you Chair Brannan and members of the New York City Council Finance Committee for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Merble Reagon and I am Executive Director of the Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement.

I have worked for more than 40-years in nonprofit human services. I support the Just Pay Campaign. Today, I take this time to urge the Committee to factor into its budgetary determinations the factual realities for many of the tens of thousands of human services workers who are providing mandated essential services and earning far less than their government and private sector counterparts. If we don't right this wrong now, then when? This is the right time for New York City to finally address this issue of fairness and wage parity.

1
2 In my written testimony, you will find the link
3 to our New York City self-sufficiency calculator. I
4 invite you to put in your zip code and the ages of
5 the adults and children in your household. In less
6 than two seconds, you will see the numbers that make
7 up your working families break even bare bones budget
8 and the salary you need to cover all your basic
9 expenses.

10 Then, do the same for one of your constituent
11 families headed by a contracted human services
12 worker. Consider the results, then ask yourself, is
13 this not the time to finally build it back better for
14 contracted human services workers who continue to
15 provide the essential services and deserve to be paid
16 fairly for their work. As others have said, we ask
17 you to set an annual cost of living adjustment on all
18 human services contracts. Set a living wage for
19 floor of at least \$21.00 an hour, create and fund a
20 wage and benefit schedule that is comparable to the
21 salaries made by New York City workers doing the same
22 work.

23 Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for
24 your support on all issues impacting –

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MERBLE REAGON: Our sector.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next is 22.

Before going to 23, I will announce panels 26, 27, 28 and 29, so people can be ready. Panel 26, Nora Moran, Bryan Fotino, Michelle Feldman, Felipe Vargas, Alex Martinez, Rebecca Cleary.

Panel 27, Catherine Mykytiuk, Emily Miles, Brian Trezevant, Chan Henry, Darren Bloch, Christopher Bromson.

Panel 28, Carlos Castel Croke, Lonnie Portis, Stephanie Earlick, Fabiola Sierra(SP?), Jennifer Vasquez, Alison Gardy, Korena Garcia, and Tory Kaso.

Panel 29, Kathleen DiPerna, Nicholas Buess, Freedom Carado(SP?), Arline Cruz, Doxine Roberts(SP?) and Won Pinzon.

I will now turn to Panel 23 Aquira Adams(SP?) Alyssa Figueroa, Keith Fuller, Kayonna Bernard, and Crystal Reyes. We will first turn to Akira Adams with the Urban Youth Collaborative.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will turn to Alyssa Figueroa.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

1
2 ALYSSA FUGUEROA: Hey Malcom. So, you know Akira
3 Adams, Nia Morris, Kayonna Bernard and Agi Gia (SP?)
4 are students who are currently in school. They are
5 prepared and eager to testify. I ask that you call
6 their names at 4:30 today or after that, so that they
7 can.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: All I can say is I will do my
9 best. I have uh, you know there's — we have 400 some
10 odd people, so we'll do our best. That's all I can
11 promise.

12 ALYSSA FIGUEROA: Thank you. Yeah, they're in
13 school currently, so they can't be on right now.
14 Uhm, so again yeah, Akira and Nia Kayonna and Agi.
15 Uhm, so I'll start my testimony. Hi y'all, my name
16 is Alyssa Figueroa. I am the Coalition Coordinator
17 of the Urban Youth Collaborative, a student led
18 coalition of New York City youth organizing groups
19 fighting to end the school to prison and deportation
20 pipeline.

21 Today, I'm here to talk about school safety. I'm
22 sure that's on the minds of everyone after that
23 injustice that occurred in Texas yesterday. School
24 should be a place where students from all walks of
25 life are safe to learn and grow.

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That means, he plans to spend tens of millions of dollars funding nearly 800 vacant school police positions in order to fill them. New York City already has more and spends more on school policing than any city in the country by far, for comparison, Los Angeles has 20 times less police in their schools

than we do despite having more than half of New York City's student population.

Quarter one data on school policing incidents occurring between January to March 2022, was just released this month. Yet again, the data shows what we've been seeing since data was made publicly available in 2016. That Black and Latinx students make up 90 percent of school police incidents, despite them making up 66 percent of the student population.

It's no surprise that when we survey students of color, they overwhelmingly say that school police make them feel less safe.

It's time for the city to pass a budget that follows an antiracist, evidence-based approach to public safety.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

ALYSSA FIGUEROA: In our schools and communities. I am calling on Council Members to stay on to listen to students testify later today, hopefully around 4:30 p.m.. Thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we're turning to Keith Fuller.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay and just so everyone knows, the raise hand function is only for Council Members. If they have any questions for any panelists, so if members of the public are using the raise hand function, we will be lowering it. There will be a period of time after all names have been called for those who were not on when we called their name to use the raise hand function. So, everyone will have a second opportunity to speak if they were not available when I called their name.

Uhm, the last that was on this list was Crystal Reyes.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I am going to call the next panel. Panel 24, Paul Nagle, Mateo Guerrero-Tabares, Chauvet Bishop, Elana Lancaster, Lisa Sloan, Kayt Tiskus; I apologize if I mispronounce any names. We'll first start with Paul Nagle.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

PAUL NAGLE: Hi, my name is Paul Nagle, I am the Executive Director of Stonewall Community Development Initiative.

It's LGBTQ older adults welcoming housing they can afford with access to health and mental health to

1
2 meet their unique needs. Our services are available
3 to all New York City older adults. The Housing
4 Innovations and solutions we create are meant to be
5 universal and reputable for all seniors but we know
6 that by centering LGBTQ older adults in the creation
7 and piloting of these models, our needs will not be
8 ignored as so often happens.

9 New York City is facing an unprecedented senior
10 housing crisis as baby boomers age in. A report on
11 the 2010 census for New York City Planning Department
12 projected a 40 percent increase in New Yorkers over
13 65 between 2010 and 2040 from \$1 million to \$1.4
14 million. Where will they live?

15 LGBTQ elders face a number of challenges beyond
16 those of the general older population. A study by
17 the Equal Rights Center published in 2014, conducted
18 intense dates and covered a 48 percent discrimination
19 rate against same sex, older adults, couples and
20 housing increase. And more than likely than our
21 heterosexual counterparts, the lack of support
22 networks, Black family live in poverty, experience
23 increased comorbidities attributed to living lives of
24 anxiety and constantly hostile environments. And
25

they experience discrimination or fear of discrimination in housing and healthcare delivery.

On the flip side, the LGBT community has elements that uniquely position us to successfully pilot innovative housing solutions. We have a shared lived experience, a history of building networks of support and a deep well of creativity. This here we're seeking support from the speakers initiative for Leave no Veteran Behind, a project we're piloting in the Bronx with a tier grant from the New York Community Trust which will create LGBT welcoming supported home shares for 14 adult veterans.

Community-based housing solutions will be critical to meeting the challenges of coming housing crisis for seniors. Please keep your eyes and your attention on innovations emerging from grassroots groups like ours and support them through the budget process. Our budget request information will be included in our written testimony. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Mr. Nagel. Next, we will turn to Mateo Guerrero Tabares from the Trans-immigrant project Make the Road.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hi, good afternoon. I'm actually going to read the testimonies of the three other members who were skipped in Panel 22.

So, I'm going to start with [INAUDIBLE 3:59:15].

Good afternoon. Thanks everyone for this public safety – for this public hearing. My name is Dulsa(SP?), I'm a member of Make the Road New York and a trans person from [INAUDIBLE 3:59:22]. I'm a resident of Queens and also a sex worker. VICE has criminalized my community for many years, especially my trans sex worker sisters who have been deported for raids and wrongfully arrests made by the VICE squad.

I am here to raise my voice and make it clear that New York needs to dismantle the VICE police units. I know that in the recent city budget there was an adjustment that reduces the funding of the city – of the VICE units to \$12 million. But I demand that New York City and Mayor Eric Adams stops providing more money to the VICE units and instead invest in our communities.

The rate of discrimination in unemployment, food insecurity, trauma, unstable housing and police abuse are issues that are little heard of. But a reality

that we face – but as a reality that we face in my community.

Many of our community members are an increased risk for anxiety, depression, suicide, low life satisfaction, self-harm, isolation, PTSD, HIV and incarceration. Therefore, it is necessary to invest in programs for our communities and to stop investing in police squads that constantly harass our communities and use racist and sexist tactics to criminalize us and put barriers in our futures.

These rates and arrests leads to barriers to obtaining a decent job, housing and being able to –

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Guerrero-Tabares, I'm just going to ask that uhm, that you wrap up your testimony and others will be able to give their testimony, either submitted to testimony at council@nyc.gov, or they will have an opportunity to be on the Zoom later for those who were not on when I called their name. They will have an opportunity to speak when we are done with our panels.

MATEO GUERRERO-TABARES: Alright, well what I want to mention to – there are three members who joined that were skipped in Panel 22. Rosalyn, Kathy Rowel and Dulca. Who are sex workers who have been

consistently being harassed by the VICE units. This is a police unit that instead of providing any support, what they do is traumatize, harass, steal money from community members –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

MATEO GUERRERO-TABARES: Sexually assault sex workers and get away with it. We are demanding that the \$12 million that they still have in the funding are removed and given to the community members that have been impacted by providing health access, legal support as well as housing insecurity for our community members.

This behavior from the VICE units and again, from NYPD is terrorizing and only continues to instigate fear in our community. Nearly 93 percent of VICE targets for uhm – 93 percent of VICE targets for sex are Black and Brown or Asian. While 90 percent of those targeted for selling sex are people of color.

Almost all the people, VICE officers prey upon our low-income neighborhoods like Jackson Heights, 5th Avenue in Brooklyn and under Mayor, prior Mayor de Blasio, New York has spent more than \$1 million to settle false arrest claims for people that were targeted for patronizing. Thank you very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and the next person we're going to call on is Chauvet Bishop from the Audre Lorde Project.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

CHAUVET BISHOP: Hello, uhm, my name is Chauvet Bishop with the Audre Lorde Project, we're an LGBTST and TGNC POC organizing center. I'm a member of both the SOS, Safe Outside the System and third space collective. We work to keep our communities safe and educate our communities in de-escalation. We trained over 100 households, people, businesses, organizations so that they do not call police because that has not been safe for our communities that disproportionately people of color, LGBTTST and TGNC folks do not have correct access to things like housing, healthcare, mental healthcare, accessibility to support immigration needs, legal needs. All these things are things that funding could go towards and that organizations are doing for our communities, the most impacted communities and these are the funds that need to be allocated, not to more policing. Not to Eric Adams office. These are not the things that I hope, well, we don't need more rainbows in June. We need our communities to be cared for. To have the

resources and housing and education and food and safety that we need because you cannot heal without safety. The two go hand and hand. Our communities need to feel safe. They need to be provided for. We do not need these institutions to be further fortified, we need our communities to be fortified everywhere from our youth to our elders and everyone in between need resources, especially for our communities. The LGTBQ+ communities, especially those of color, disproportionately are impacted every day by a lack of healthcare, housing, food, education, the list can go on and I can echo the need to organize and to come together to make sure that these services are provided as many of the people before me have said.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Elana Lancaster from the Ackerman Institute for the Families Gender and Family Project.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

ELANA LANCASTER: Good afternoon. Thank you to Chair Brannan, all the City Council members, Council staff and community members here today. My name is Elana Lancaster. I'm the Associate Director for

1
2 Training at the Gender and Family Project of the
3 Akerman Institute for the Family.

4 I worked in trans health for a lot of years and
5 so I knew intellectually for a long time what a huge
6 difference it makes when youth have family support.
7 We see this all through the research. It's like the
8 best possible thing you can do for mental health, for
9 physical health throughout the lifespan. And I can
10 quote you all the statistics and you still wouldn't
11 understand the way that I didn't understand until I
12 saw it in a totally different way when I started
13 working with the Gender and Family Project.

14 There's a mom who I spoke to this week who used
15 the description that I've gotten to hear a lot and
16 she said that there were these two moments when she
17 suddenly saw things click. One, she was watching her
18 kid realize for the first time after they came out
19 that they were truly embraced and celebrated by their
20 family for all of who they are.

21 And the second moment was when she watched her
22 kid interact and be surrounded by kids like them for
23 the first time in their life and what she said she
24 saw watching her child's face in those moments was
25 that it was like they had been wondering through the

1 dessert thirsty for years and that they've finally
2 been given a drink of water for the first time. And
3 I've heard that story so many times and every kid
4 deserves that. And we've seen that moment with so
5 many families, thanks to the programs that the City
6 Council supports through its trans equity funding.
7 City Council funding has been absolutely crucial to
8 our work, making sure that we can provide family
9 therapy, community support services to families all
10 over the city in English and Spanish. We expanded
11 our services to support trans and gender expansive
12 youth involved with the foster system including
13 everyone they consider family and senior families
14 start in a place of crisis and transform is honestly
15 the closest thing I've seen in real life to magic.
16 We and all of the programs under the trans equity
17 funding are providing direct, vital services that
18 keep our community safe and help us thrive and it is
19 greater than ever both because of the pandemic and
20 because trans people and their families across the
21 country, we are under attack.

22
23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

24 ELANA LANCASTER: All over the place. So, this
25 is a moment when more than ever this funding is

crucial as a way of knowing that New York City is different. That this is a place where we support our kids and support our communities for all of who they are and so, thank you for your continued support for expanding this funding. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Dr. Lisa Sloan from the Pride Center of Staten Island.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

DR. LISA SLOAN: Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Lisa Sloan and my pronouns are she, her, hers. I'm the Deputy Director at the Pride Center of Staten Island, an LGBTQ plus community center that has received funding through the Trans-Equity Initiative since Fiscal Year 2019. The Trans-Equity Initiative has supported the creation and/or expansion of culturally competent programs and services through transgender and gender nonconforming and nonbinary or TGNC and B individuals and their families across New York City. I am asking for continued support of this initiative.

To demonstrate the impact of Trans-Equity supported programs on Staten Island, I want to share a statement from a Latino transgender man who has

benefited from Trans-Equity programs and service at the Pride Center of Staten Island. He says, finding the Pride Center has truly done wonders for me. It's a place where I've always felt safe to express myself freely and find community. There aren't many LGBTQ plus safe places in my neighborhood and even fewer places that don't revolve around alcohol use.

Finding the Pride Center honestly changed my life for the better. If not for the amazing staff and the programs that they have available, I would be in a very different place in my life. Everyone at the Pride Center has given me the freedom and the space to figure out who I am. To understand my emotions and most importantly, the Pride Center is a place that I feel seen for who I am instead of seen for what others want me to be.

It has been a necessary part of my growth and in understanding myself better and for that, I'm always grateful. The transformative services that this transgender Staten Island describes are made possible by the Trans Equity Initiative. I urge you to maintain or even increase the funding associated with the Trans Equity Initiative, so that culturally competent programs and services for the TGNC and B

individuals and families can continue in Staten Island and across New York City. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Dr. Sloan. Next, we'll turn to is it Kayt Tiskus from Bowen Public Affairs.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You're - oh, hold on. We'll send you the unmute one more time. It should come up saying - asking you to accept. There we go.

KAYT TISKUS: Great, uhm, thank you very much and in fact, Kayt Tiskus is the right pronunciation. So, well done there. It's a weird one from both sides. Much appreciated.

So, thank you Chair Council Members and all of the staff who are putting this hearing together and also, keeping it clipping along so efficiently when there are so many of us speaking here today.

My name is Kayt Tiskus, I am the Director of Legislative Strategy and Special Projects at Bowen Public Affairs Consulting and I'm also a queer woman.

Today, I'm here to request that the Committee and Council support a proposed new initiative to help LGBTQIA plus people into union careers, which we're calling the Pride at Work Initiative and we ask that

the Council fund this proposed initiative at \$561,000.

Here is why I love this initiative. It's important, it's impactful and it's cheap. It's important because LGBTQ people, especially people who are also racial, religious, ethnic and cultural minorities in New York City are disproportionately impacted by unemployment, have incomes lower than 200 percent of the poverty line at higher rates than other populations and some are from various other forms of long-term economic deprivation.

These New Yorkers have taken it on the chin even more disproportionately during the past few tough years. The City Council has done a lot of great work over the last few years with unity workforce program for LGBT plus youth and a manual on LGBTQ plus workplace inclusivity.

However, a lot of the work around LGBTQ plus workforce does not adequately focus on adults. And given the poverty rates and unemployment faced by LGBTQ plus adults, it's clear that we need high road employment of the sort that we get from our union to blames.

1
2 So, this initiative is impactful because many
3 organizations have committed to work together if the
4 initiative is created. This will create multiple
5 pathways into unionized jobs for LGBTQ plus New
6 Yorkers. Some of the organizations supporting the
7 project include DC37, SCIU 1199 employment and
8 training fund, Mount Sinai, Pathways to
9 apprenticeship, Nontraditional Employment for Women,
10 Destination Tomorrow, Brooklyn Workforce Innovations
11 —

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

13 KAYT TISKUS: And the Department of Citywide
14 Administrative Services and other labor and LGBTQ
15 partners who want to take part in this initiative
16 will not necessarily seeking Council funds.

17 My last sentence I promise is that the third
18 thing to love in the initiative is cheap. It's only
19 \$561,000 to fund a lean focus program that will have
20 an outsize impact dollar for dollar. Thank you very
21 much for your time to let me testify today.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes
23 testimony for Panel 24. Before we go to 25, I just
24 want to remind everyone that if you are not present
25 when your name is called, no one is being skipped.

1
2 There is an opportunity at the conclusion of all
3 panels for those people who have a Zoom link and
4 didn't get to speak to use the raise hand function
5 and I will call on you in the order with which you
6 raised your hand but that is after the conclusion of
7 panels. We've done our best to respond to requests
8 for special times and for certain panels and so, you
9 know again, if you are not on when your name is
10 called, there is an opportunity at the conclusion of
11 all panels to use the raise hand function in Zoom and
12 you will be called on.

13 I will now turn to Panel 25, Ivette Ayala,
14 Lorenzo Brooks, Natasha Connor, Nicholas O'Toole and
15 Pamela Rosario. We will start with Ivette Ayala at
16 Sheltering Arms.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

18 IVETTE AYALA: Hi, good afternoon. Thank you
19 members of the New York City Council Media Finance.
20 My name is Ivette Ayala, I have been working at the
21 Human Service sector for about 12-years. I have
22 worked as a Supervisor at Sheltering Arms in the
23 preventive department. At Sheltering Arms, our goal
24 is to foster a society where every child and family
25 we serve will have the opportunity to succeed and

1 thrive. We addressed the fact of social inequality
2 in most challenging communities in New York City. We
3 are a supporter of Just Pay Campaign, which is a
4 racial equality and gender justice campaign committee
5 to end the government exploitations of human service
6 workers by demanding the sector employees on the
7 contract with the New York City and state repair fair
8 wages for their labor.
9

10 So, essential human service sector workers are in
11 one of the lowest wages in New York City economy due
12 to the chronic underfunding from New York City
13 government contract. So, human services worker
14 generally makes about \$20,000 a year less than public
15 sector workers with a comparable of education and
16 credentials. The sector is facing a high turnover
17 rates and we need human service workers but it's hard
18 to recruit and retain them when the government pays
19 so little.

20 Since the outbreak of COVID pandemic, COVID-19
21 pandemic, while the burden on workers like myself
22 carry out additional work hours, working in person,
23 and virtually with families and other essential
24 services for New Yorkers have grown. And the burnout
25 we feel has increased. New Yorkers across the city

1
2 rely on me and my team to provide them counseling
3 prevention services to increase safety and decrease
4 any risk of child welfare involvement. Yet, I do not
5 make enough to sustain myself in this city. I
6 dedicate — I am dedicated to this work because I know
7 firsthand the values —

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 IVETTE AYALA: Thank you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn
11 to Lorenzo Brooks.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

13 LORENZO BROOKS: Good afternoon Chairman Brannan
14 and members of the Committee. My name is Lorenzo
15 Brooks and I have worked in human services for nearly
16 six years. I am currently a Case Manager at Urban
17 Pathways. A nonprofit that helps homeless New
18 Yorkers get the services and housing they need.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on
20 behalf of my colleagues today. And sector human
21 service workers like me, we are one of the lowest
22 wages in New York's economy due to chronic
23 underfunding from New York City government contracts.

24 As predominant funder of Human Service Contracts,
25 government is the main drive of involving wages.

1 Mayor Adams has highlighted safe havens like my
2 implore is an effective model for addressing street
3 homelessness and I couldn't agree more with that.
4 But without funding for our workforce, these programs
5 could not be effectively staffed? The high turnover
6 rate is the primary complaint of our clients who are
7 negatively impacted when they build relationship with
8 the staff member, only to see them leave for a job of
9 higher wages.
10

11 Human Service workers don't even make about
12 \$20,000 a year less than a public sector worker with
13 a comparable education. Why are these contracted
14 employees so underfunded. It is imperative that a
15 3.4 percent cost of living adjustment for human
16 services workers be included in the city's Fiscal
17 Year '23 budget. The state provided a 5.4 COLA and
18 the city must match it as the first step to moving
19 our workforce towards equitable wages.

20 Despite the challenges, I am passionate about
21 this work. Where for a full- time job I am
22 completing my master's degree in social work, so that
23 I can work more effectively with my clients. While I
24 further my education, I am concerned that this field
25 will not support me without a wage increase, as I

have accumulated over \$50,000 in student loan debt. I deserve just pay for my work and wages that allow for a reasonable —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LORENZO BROOKS: Lifestyle. Thank you again for giving me this opportunity to testify and for your partnership on the issues impacting our sector.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Lorenzo. Next, we will turn to Natasha Connor from Sheltering Arms.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

NATASHA CONNOR: Hello, my name is Natasha Connor. I have worked in the human services sector for five years. I currently work as a Youth Counselor at Sheltering Arms. At Sheltering Arms, our goal is to foster and a society where every child and family we serve will have the opportunity to see and thrive. We address the facts of social equality in the most challenging communities in New York City.

We are in support of the Just Pay Campaign which is a racial and gender justice campaign committee to end the government assortment of human services workers by demanding the sector employees under contract with the New York City and state to be paid fair of their labor.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, while the burden of workers like myself carry out additional work hours, work in person and virtual with families and other essential services for New Yorkers has grown, the burnout refill has had an increase. With all of the challenges provided in these services, some of the sectors workers are still required to work multiple jobs and cover minimal living expenses.

The city has relied on the nonprofit human services sectors workers since the start of the pandemic. We need the city to acknowledge our work and address the crisis in the sectors and save jobs of selfless human services workers. We are asking the city to adapt these core reforms that the Just Pay Campaign is fighting for. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Nicholas O'Toole from Urban Pathways.

NICHOLAS O'TOOLE: Alright, good afternoon Chair Brannan and committee members. My name is Nicholas O'Toole and I am the Advocacy Associate at Urban Pathways. Thank you for the opportunity to testify at today's Fiscal Year '23 Executive Budget hearing for my organization.

Urban Pathways like my colleague Lorenzo mentioned is a nonprofit homeless services and supportive housing provider that services over 3,900 New Yorkers in need annually. As an organization that has found that drop-in center and safe haven models effective for serving adults experiencing street homelessness, we're happy to see Mayor Adam's investment in the expansion of these services in the Executive Budget.

But funding for their expansion must be coupled with workforce investments. Without these, staffing these new programs would be impossible and opening new programs will be untenable. Urban Pathways recently opened a new safe haven and is having extreme difficulty filling necessary positions with

20 out of the total 37 positions still unfilled,
after working to hire staff for seven months.

We cannot take on another contract that pays our employees poverty level wages with essential jobs starting at a dismal \$15 an hour. Organization-wide we have 26 percent staff vacancy rate, leaving our organization in a constant staffing crisis and a cycle of burnout amongst workers picking up the slack. This is a sector-wide problem impacting human services agencies that hold contracts with city agencies that hold contracts with city agencies.

As a first step to combating this issue, the FY23 budget needs to include a 5.4 percent cost of living adjustment for human services workers. This would match the states investment, which is especially important for organizations like ours that have both city and state contracts to avoid a disparity between employees doing the same work on different contracts. We are a proud supporter of the Just Pay Campaign, a racial equity and gender justice campaign committed to ending government exploitation of human services workers.

In addition to the 5.4 percent COLA, a full list of needed reforms is provided in my written

testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for the City Council's support of human services sectors.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Pamela Rosario from Sheltering Arms.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will now turn to Panel 26, Nora Moran, Bryan Fotino, Michele Feldman, Felipe Vargas, Alex Martinez, and Rebecca Cleary. We'll first turn to Nora Moran with United Neighborhood Houses.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

NORA MORAN: Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Nora Moran, I'm the Director of Policy and Advocacy at United Neighborhood Houses. We're a policy organization representing New York City settlement houses. Our written testimony has a lot more comments but I'm just going to highlight three of our budget priorities.

The first, you heard about this on the previous panel is that the city must fund a 5.4 percent COLA for human service workers in the FY23 budget. This workforce kept New York City running during COVID and provided essential services when many of us stayed

home. They haven't seen a COLA in the last two years and their wages have not kept pace with inflation.

Furthermore, many of these workers are understandably leading the sector in search of higher wages elsewhere, sometimes in city government. A COLA is the bare minimum of what is right and fair for these workers and must be included in the budget. Furthermore, the city should also set a wage floor of \$21 per hour for all human services workers and set wage scales for fair wages for workers at all levels in the sector.

Second, youth service providers also deserve adequate rates in order to operate both summer programs and year round programming. We urge the city to raise summer reimbursement rates for these programs to \$1,848 per elementary student and \$1,410 per middle school student. Furthermore, there has to be rate parity for all summer programs, not just one's in DOE buildings but also for those in NYCHA cornerstones and community centers who are doing similar work. This will also be needed to attract staff to run these programs and to avoid the staffing problems we saw in last summer's programs.

1
2 Finally, we urge the Council to fund a \$25
3 million initiative to implement Local Law 11 2022
4 known as the Our City Our Vote Bill, which allows
5 noncitizens to vote in Local elections. Grassroots
6 outreach will be critical to making sure that newly
7 and franchise voters know their rights and are
8 comfortable heading to the poles next year and CBO's
9 are ready and able to do this work as they
10 demonstrated during the 2020 Census.

11 Thank you so much for your time and thank you for
12 keeping everything moving during this hearing.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll
14 turn to Bryan Fotino with University Settlement.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

16 BRYAN FOTINO: There we go. So, good afternoon.
17 My name is Bryan Fotino and I have worked at
18 University Settlement for two years. Well, I worked
19 in the human service sector for two years now. I'm a
20 Case Manager at University Settlements. We have 30
21 locations in Brooklyn and Manhattan and the program I
22 work for, Project Home focuses preventing evictions
23 and addressing the root causes of housing and
24 stability. So, the support that I provide along with
25 my colleagues helps New Yorkers stay in their homes.

University Settlement strongly supports the #Just Pay Campaign, a significant portion of our work is funded by government contracts, however as other people mentioned, these contracts are chronically underfunded and we make some of the lowest wages in the city. According to a Center for New York City Affairs report, annual pay in 2019 and the New York City Core Social Assistance Sector, average only \$34,000. Making it the fifth lowest paid sector in the city's economy.

As someone starting out in my career, I chose a lower paying job because I believe in making a difference in people's lives. However, I know people who chose not to go into this work due to the atrociously low pay. Though I am dedicated to this work, I don't know how long I'll be able to stay in the sector. My wages do not match the rising cost of living. Just like the clients I serve, I am struggling to pay rent, to pay food, to pay bills. In my time as a social worker, I have seen qualified caring colleagues leave for higher paying jobs and unless something changes, I may be the next to go.

Likewise, we are asking that the city please implement the three reforms of the #Just Pay Campaign.

One, an automatic annual COLA or Cost of Living Adjustment. Two, a living wage floor of \$21 an hour for human service workers. And three, a comprehensive wage and benefit schedule comparable to that of city and state employees in the same field. Again, University Settlement strongly supports the Just Pay Campaign. We deserve fair wages, especially for the essential frontline work we do.

I thank you for listening and I please ask you to uhm, boost the Just Pay Campaign.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Michele Feldman from Women's Community Justice Association.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I have Felipe Vargas from the Doe Fund.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

FELIPE VARGAS: Good afternoon. Thank you to the Committee for having me. My name is Felipe Vargas and I'm Senior Vice President of Programs at the Doe Fund.

Our organization has been around over 30-years. We provide paid transitional employment, transitional housing, training, educational programming, employment placement and housing placement. We applied for City Council funding for alternatives to incarceration. Currently, we have 659 beds of transitional housing and we place about 300 plus people every year in jobs, placed them in housing, and they're drug and alcohol free. We know that because we test people randomly.

In one of our facilities in Brooklyn, we've dedicated that solely to individuals coming out of the New York State Correctional System and unfortunately in this state, for people coming out of the State Correctional system, they recidivate at a rate of two-thirds after three years. Our program has been shown to reduce that recidivism rate by 62 percent, which is pretty impressive and significant.

We'd like to be able to offer those services to folks at an alternative to incarceration basis. There's been many great reforms in the city, bail reform, less is more legislation, court process and participatory reforms and it had resulted in many,

less people going into the jail and the State
Correctional system.

We support that because we support the ending of
mass incarceration and there's a realization that our
system of criminal justice is racially biased. But
true racial, economic and social justice, the
potential of that, cannot be realized unless the
individuals are provided with jobs, with drug
treatment, with health services and with housing and
our program would be able to do that and we ask you
to please support -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

FILIPE VARGAS: Our request for alternatives to
incarceration. Thank you and we have a more detailed
request as a written submission.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll
turn to Alex Martinez from the Kings Bridge Heights
Community Center.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next we will turn to
Rebecca Cleary from Decriminalize Sex Work.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we are going to turn to
Panel 27, Catherine Mykytiuk, Emily Miles, Brian

Trezevant, Chan Henry, Darren Bloch, and Christopher Bromson. And I apologize for butchering names. Also, from the Kings Bridge Heights Community Center, we'll turn to Catherine Mykytiuk.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

CATHERINE MYKYTIUK: Uhm, hello. Thank you for allowing me to be here to testify today. My name is Catherine Mykytiuk and I'm here today on behalf of Kings Bridge Heights Community Center and KHCC. We're also here on behalf and in coordination with the Sexual Assault Initiative. KHCC is a multiservice agency with three programs and services across the lifespan embedded in the Bronx with multiple entry points, including our early head start classes, food pantry, housing services and after school programs. As such, we are best positioned to reach and support families impacted by sexual violence that wouldn't otherwise be able to access services.

Our Changing Futures Program is one of the only free long-term therapy service providers to specialize in child abuse, child sexual abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence regardless of immigration status and insurance coverage.

We are also in need of increases in pay and affordable benefits for our staff and support our survivors day in and day out. As you can imagine, our staff are experiencing burnout and vicarious

trauma at increasingly high numbers. But it also contributes to staff turnover. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Emily Miles from the New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

EMILY MILES: Hi, my name is Emily Miles and I am the Executive Director of the New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault. Our mission is to prevent sexual violence and reduce the harm it causes through public education, prevention programming, advocacy for survivors and the pursuit of legal and policy changes.

The Alliance is a member of the Sexual Assault initiative, which has been funded by the Council since 2005. SAI, as we call it, is a collaboration between five New York City based sexual violence intervention programs that serve survivors of sexual assault of all ages and across racial, gender and economic spectrums.

As a result of the Council's investment in the past year alone, the SAI has served over 6,500 survivors with 30,000 plus counseling sessions and over 115 direct support services and reached over

27,000 individuals and organizations with trainings and technical assistance.

Yet despite this good work, the demand for our services is great and has only increased over the course of the pandemic. Resulting in the need for additional resources to provide adequate support for the survivor community. Rates of sexual violence tends to increase during times of emergency and the global pandemic has been no exception. In New York State, 75 percent of programs saw an increase in requests for services and noted higher demand for more complex survivor needs noting longer waiting lists for trauma informed therapy, counseling services and support groups.

Similarly, trainings in technical assistance that are provided by the initiative have also seen an increased demand over the past year. Due to the increased demand for services and trainings, the Sexual Assault Initiative is requesting an enhancement of \$2.5 million. For the Alliance, SAI funds and supports our Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner training. Which trains doctors, nurses, and physicians assistants to provide competent, compassionate and prompt care to sexual assault

1 survivors. Many don't know that uhm, training in how
2 to address the unique needs of sexual assault
3 survivors is not part of standard training for
4 medical professionals. With the majority leaving
5 their medical education, having never worked with
6 survivors in any capacity.
7

8 As a result, too often survivors present in a
9 medical setting, seeking care and those on staff lack
10 the knowledge in how to support them during this
11 critical and traumatic time.

12 Our training seeks to change that. Bringing
13 together a multidisciplinary team of experts to
14 provide comprehensive training and evidence
15 collection, injury identification, trauma informed
16 practices, and culturally competent care to child,
17 adolescent and adult survivors of sexual violence.

18 This is only possible due to the ongoing support
19 of the City Council and we appreciate that support
20 for this critical initiative and for your support for
21 survivors across New York City.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will
23 turn to Brian Trezevant.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.
25

BRIAN TREZEVANT: Yes, you said it right. It's Brian Trezevant. Thank you. Hello everyone. Thank you to my elected officials for hearing our testimonies today.

My name is Brian Trezevant. I am a Program Director at Dwyer Gardens Community Center and I work for an organization Brooklyn Community Services. Uhm, and I want to tell you a little bit about why I'm here more personally. Uhm, at the beginning of my career here back in 2020, March 2020, even as a newly promoted Assistant Director at that time, facing homelessness and securities. It was hard for me to live day to day because I couldn't afford it. And I'm facing the same problems that we're providing for our community.

I couldn't understand that as a Program Director, how am I struggling living pay check to pay check, can't afford a home, sleeping on a mattress floor at my mom's in a one bedroom apartment. It didn't register to me. So, I am here to let you guys know that I am a supporter of and advocate of the Just Pay Campaign, and to let you guys know that we need a 5.4 percent COLA or an \$86 million increase to address

the sector crisis. That is my spiel. Thank you for my time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we're going to turn to Chan Henry from Urban Pathways.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

CHAN HENRY: Good afternoon and thank you Chair Brannan and members of the Committee. My name is Chan Henry and I've worked in the human service sector for four years. I currently work as a housing specialist at Urban Pathways. A nonprofit homeless service and supportive housing provider.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of Urban Pathways and human service workers. I recently offered an op-ed featured in the Daily News on May 7th, highlighting the need for increased pay for our workforce in order to provide homelessness. Our staff cannot afford to work in programs that serve New Yorkers in need. Opening new programs alone will prove effective. High turnover rates lead to burnout among the staff that you say who take on extra work.

The pandemic has also amplified the challenges our clients already face, increasing the burden on workers like myself. As I help my clients obtain

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COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, we will turn to Christopher Bromson from Crime Victims Treatment Center.

CHRISTOPHER BROMSON: Hi everybody. Thank you. Thank you to the Committee Members, the Council, Malcom, thank you and the Sergeants who are keeping beautiful time.

My name is Christopher Bromson and I'm the Executive Director of the Crime Victims Treatment Center here in New York City. We have been around providing expert treatment to survivors of any type of interpersonal violence since 1977 completely free of charge.

I'm here today also as part of the New York City Sexual Assault Initiative, which is comprised of the five leading programs that provide direct services and support to survivors of sexual violence in New York City and the Sexual Assault Initiative funding is the only direct funding that these programs get and that survivors of sexual assault get directly from this city.

So, we've been getting funding since 2005, like my colleague Emily said and at CVTC, that allowed us to start New York City's only free program for male

1 survivors of child and sexual abuse, adult survivors
2 of sexual assault and domestic violence. And to
3 them, we provide individual trauma-focused therapy.
4 We provide a number of different support groups and
5 help people heal.
6

7 In 2005, we were serving about a dozen male
8 identified individuals a year. Since that time,
9 thanks to Council funding, now over 20 percent of our
10 overall client population is male identified. So,
11 each of the five programs really focuses on a
12 different population that faces immense barriers to
13 service and seeking healing after sexual assault.
14 We've heard a lot today about how COVID has really
15 reeked-havoc on systems and individuals and sexual
16 assault survivors are no exception to that.

17 The increase for demand in services that we have
18 seen at our one program over the past year and since
19 COVID and since we made everything hybrid, has gone
20 through the roof. The number of people calling in
21 severe mental health crisis has expanded immensely.

22 So, CVTC requests the increase with the Sexual
23 Assault Initiative to meet these needs. And support
24 through this initiative doesn't only make a profound
25 impact on the 6,500 people who come to our offices

for services. It impacts their families, their friends, their neighborhoods and their communities.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

CHRISTOPHER BROMSON: And it's multiplied by the hundreds of thousands of people who are supported by the 21,000 people we train each year with just policies and systems and that's how change happens and supporting this initiative is how the city can make that change. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 27. I'm going to announce a few others in advance so people know if they are coming up. Okay, so, for panel 28, we have Carlos Castel Croke, Lonnie Portis, Stephanie Earlick, Pabiola Sierra, Jennifer Vasquez, Alison Gardy, Korena Garcia, and Tory Kaso.

Panel 29, Kathleen DiPerna, Nicholas Buess, Freedom Carado(SP?), Arline Cruz, Doxine Roberts(SP?) and Won Pinzon.

Panel 30, Catherine Hoy, Lisa Gilday, Jeanette Farias, Johnathan Diaz, Samsul Hussain, Erika Gonzalez.

Panel 31, Jolene Gunther-Doherty, Jennifer Choi, Maggie Moroff, Chantal Hinds, Cal Hedigan, and Joy Cambe.

So, I will now turn to Panel 28. We will start with Carlos Castel Croke from the New York League of Conservation Voters.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Carlos, you should have a button that says accept to be unmuted. Okay, I'm going to call Lonnie and then I'll come right back to you. So, we will turn to Lonnie Portis from We Act for Environmental Justice.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

LONNIE PORTIS: Good afternoon Committee Chair Brannan and Committee on Finance. I'm Lonnie J. Portis, the Environmental Policy and Advocacy Coordinator at We Act for Environmental Justice. We Act is testifying on the need to invest in the city's future by funding environmental and climate policies and programs. We Act in an organization based in Harlem has been fighting environmental racism at the city, state and federal level for more than 30-years.

We are in the midst of a worsening climate crisis and the city must do everything it can to reduce emissions to carbonize our building, remediate environmental health hazards and more. All with environmental and climate justice at the foundation

of this work. We strongly urge the Committee to make this budget as climate forward as possible, which means bold, necessary investments for the following policies and programs: \$1 million to fund staffing and outreach at the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice, fund childhood lead poisoning prevention programs and lead service line replacements, restore the \$47.8 million in Fiscal Year '23 cuts to DSNY budget, investment of \$1.8 billion in our school infrastructure through HVAC upgrades, adding solar to roofs and accelerate the transition away from the use of fuel oil number four, commit a minimum of one percent for the budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation to expand the urban tree canopy and increase access to parks and green space at \$6.5 million in the Executive Budget for the 81 positions removed from the Department of Buildings budget in the preliminary plan to ensure the DOB has adequate staffing for equitable implementation of Local Law 97, and provide funding for the implementation of Local Law 120, which mandates school buses be electric by 2035.

We also want to see the city agencies maximizing all state and federal resources, especially federal

government funds, including the investment and – the Infrastructure and Investment in Jobs Act that has signed into law in November 2021. If equity was distributed, can bring much needed investments that will begin to address present and legacy still show environmental injustices and improve –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

LONNIE PORTIS: The life's of these communities in New York City. A more detailed written testimony will be provided after this hearing and We Act is looking forward to seeing New York City invest in climate and environmental justice.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Carlos, there was a problem on our end, so you should be able to speak now.

CARLOS CASTRO CROKE: Yes, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, sorry about that. Go ahead.

CARLOS CASTRO CROKE: Alright, thank you. Good afternoon, my name is Carlos Castro Croke, I'm the Associate for New York City Programs of the New York League of Conservation Voters. NYLCV represents over 30,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make

our people, our neighborhoods and our economy
healthier and more resilient.

I'd like to thank Chair Brannan for the
opportunity to testify today. Year in and year out,
NYLCV has fought for a New York City budget that
prioritizes green spaces, public health and climate
resiliency. This year is no different. With so many
new leaders in government, it is imperative that we
set a strong precedent for environmental
accountability and climate action in the FY23 budget.

We are thankful that the Mayor committed
significant dollars to environmental initiatives in
the Executive Budget including \$900 million in the
New York City Streets Plan and \$600 million for the
Parks Department. However, the budget could go even
further to fully fund parks, sanitation and building
initiatives that help us fight climate change, invest
in resiliency and reduce emissions.

I'm just going to go into a few of our priorities
but I will send a full detailed testimony in for
review. For the Parks Department specifically, we
have been adamant that no less than one percent of
the New York City Budget is significant for keeping
our parks safe, clean and accessible.

Parks are our most valuable environmental assets. They absorb stormwater runoff, keep our neighborhoods cool and cleaner air. Providing one percent of the budget will ensure parks have the money that they need to maintain our green spaces, so that they can effectively provide these crucial environmental benefits.

In 2021, Mayor Adams and many city council members committed to one percent for parks because they knew how crucial this funding was for the health of our communities and the green future of our city. We hope that our elected leaders will make good on their promises to help us work towards one percent for parks.

Also, making sure that we have money for sanitation, specifically organics recycling programs and the pilot program, it has gone back and forth over the past couple years, is really important for us to reduce our emissions. Budgets express priorities and we have made our priorities clear. Climate change is here and we must be doing everything in our power to fight it and protect New Yorkers.

While the Mayor and City Council have proven they will invest in efforts to do so, there is still more work to be done.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

CARLOS CASTRO CROKE: We look forward to working with elected leaders as they continue to finalize the budget. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Stephanie Earlick.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will turn to Fabiola Sierra.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, we have Jennifer Vasquez, Healing Ambassador Program. Okay, next, I will turn to Allison Guardi.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

ALLISON GUARDI: Mute. Okay.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You're unmuted.

ALLISON GUARDI: Thank you so much. Thank you Chair Justin Brannan and Committee on Finance Members including my wonderful Councilwoman Gale Brewer. I appreciate the amazing New Yorkers who've spoken so far. Your commitment to our city's wellbeing makes

me proud to be your fellow New Yorker and all of here today are ultimately asking for a culture shift that values our humanity and capacity to care for each other.

I'm here as a family healing ambassador, a parent guardian and volunteer position created during the pandemic by the NYC DOE. I request funds for the Family Healing Ambassador program to continue and grow after its first successful pilot year. Like nothing I have ever seen before. This program is positioned to create the culture shift we need to incubate a healthy, productive future for our city. The Family Healing Ambassadors program launched last spring in K12 schools in zip codes hardest hit by COVID-19.

Schools elected Family Healing Ambassadors and engaged parent coordinators to that, so that last summer, more than 800 of us received more than ten hours of training to help us recognize trauma in children and address the wellbeing, mental, physical, emotional, social, of students, families and our school cultures. With three children in three different public schools, elementary, middle and high, I was elected Family Healing Ambassador in both

District 3 in Manhattan and District 10 in the Bronx.

This past year, we've Zoomed regularly with translation in many languages to give each other emotional, creative and strategic support as we each devise programs to help heal our school communities.

Skilled facilitators ensure that our meetings lift voices that need to be heard and reflect the demographics of our public schools. Our meetings are free of judgement and full of caring. We hear each other's concerns, connect and finally feel united citywide as a parent, guardian community. In a time of division, strife and fear, we need the Family Healing Ambassadors program to have a second year and a long future, so that we can support the recovery, resilience and progress of our children, families, schools and our great city. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, Jennifer Vasquez, I think we had a problem on our end unmuting you, so —

JENNIFER VASQUEZ: Yes.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JENNIFER VASQUEZ: Hi, I'm here.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay.

JENNIFER VASQUEZ: How are you? Thank you so much. Good afternoon everyone. My name is Jennifer Vasquez and I'm a District 10 Healing Ambassador supporting PSA Isaac Varian in the Bronx.

I live in Council District 11 and my representative is Eric Dinowitz. As a former educator, I know he knows how important healing centered schools are. I am absolutely honored to hold this title as District Healing Ambassador as this program has truly changed my life for the better.

It has forced me to deal with my own trauma's, insecurities and lack of self-care. It has also empowered me to be a better parent leader, help other members in my school community deal with their own traumas and educate them on a variety of topics, such as self-care, coping with financial stress, managing parental stress, etc. The Healing Ambassador Program is very much needed and supported wholeheartedly by my school leaders.

It is also supported not only by parents in my school community but by family members outside my school community and staff members at other schools.

I truly hope to see this program expand and continue to be funded. We really need the City Council to become our allies and support this program to create a greater impact for all of New York. Thank you all for allowing me to speak today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Jennifer. Next, we will turn to Korena Garcia.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, we will turn to Tory Kaso from Climate Jobs New York.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TORY KASO: Hello, thank you Chair Brannan and members of the Finance Committee. My name is Tory Kaso and I am the Campaign Director of Carbon Free and Healthy Schools. An initiative driven by Climate Jobs New York, a coalition of labor unions, many of whom you heard earlier today. Climate jobs recently adopted Climate for Change, a complete climate jobs roadmap for NYC. A report released just last week by Cornell's Labor Leading on Climate Program that lays out a concrete plan that works to solve the climate crisis, create jobs that benefit workers and presents a roadmap for New York City to fight the climate crisis, in which makes the city safer and addresses

1 racial and economic inequity by investing in a pro-
2 worker renewable energy transition. This report
3 makes one thing very clear, that New York City is
4 failing on climate. It's climate goals are not
5 ambitious enough and climate work is not happening at
6 scale. Buildings account for 70 percent of all the
7 city's emissions but the city is not thinking
8 strategically about cutting down those emissions.
9

10 The transition to carbon free and healthy schools
11 will ensure that these buildings are safe for the
12 students and staff who occupy them and for their
13 surrounding communities. By investing in deep energy
14 efficiency retrofits and installation of solar and
15 battery storage at all schools by 2030, the city
16 would create over 62,000 good union jobs in the
17 communities that need them most while making schools
18 healthier for students, teachers, administrators and
19 staff, reducing emissions by the equivalent of taking
20 154,000 cars off the road and saving millions
21 annually in energy costs, money that can be
22 reinvested into schools. The time is now, the city
23 can take a major step forward towards meeting its
24 climate goals by dedicating funding in this year's
25 budget to carbon free and public schools while

leveraging additional available, federal and state funds. By taking bold action, New York City can serve as a model on decarbonization with policies and incentives that bring good jobs to traditionally disadvantaged communities and adjust in an equitable way. Thank you for your time and attention today to this important initiative.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next that concludes Panel 28. We will now turn to Panel 29 Kathleen DiPerna from Rethink Food, we'll turn to first.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KATHLEEN DIPERNA: Good afternoon Chairperson Brannan and Finance Committee Members. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of Rethink Food. My name is Kathleen DiPerna and I'm the Director of Government Relations at Rethink, a New York City based nonprofit with a mission to create a more sustainable and equitable food system.

One where every New Yorker has access to dignified and culturally responsive and nutritious food. We seek to support from this Council on our citywide funding requests and they operate in 35 Council Districts across all five boroughs and have

plans to expand 40 Council Districts by Fiscal Year 2023. Support in partnership with the Council will be critical to ensuring that Rethink can continue to operate its programs to support the lives of our fellow New Yorkers.

Rethink was founded in 2017 operating the Rethink commissary kitchen by transforming access food from restaurants, kitchens and grocery stores into meals delivered to community-based organizations free of charge. A model that can currently tackles food waste and food insecurity. Today, that same kitchen prepares an average of 7,000 to 8,000 meals per week and distributes to eight CBO's in Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan.

Our workers evolve to include another innovative solution to address food insecurity, the Rethink certified restaurant program. Lunched at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, with food insecurity escalating and restaurants facing widespread closures, Rethink leveraged its experience to partner with restaurants to prepare meals for the community. In exchange we provide grants to support food operating and staffing costs. We had a unique opportunity to distribute meals and help restaurants

1 stay open and retain their staff. In 2021, Rethink
2 and its partners delivered nearly 3.3 million meals
3 to 88 CBO's, invested \$15.7 million into 76
4 restaurants, 75 percent of which were minority and/or
5 women owned and recovered nearly 500,000 pounds of
6 excess food.
7

8 Rethink services are greatly needed now more than
9 ever across the city because nearly one out of four
10 New Yorkers is experiencing food insecurity and due
11 to the COVID-19 pandemic, the existence of up to 50
12 percent of New York City restaurants are in danger.
13 We cannot let our neighbors continue to wonder where
14 their next meal will come from.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

16 KATHLEEN DIPERNA: Closed and thereby will
17 conduit in their community. Although perfectly
18 edible food is continuing to be wasted. Thank you
19 for the opportunity to testify today and I will
20 expanding on different points in my written
21 testimony.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sorry, just give us one
23 moment everyone. Uhm, next, we're going to call on
24 Nicholas Buess from Food Bank for New York City.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will turn to Freedom Harato(SP?).

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we'll turn to Arline Cruz.

ARLINE CRUZ: Good afternoon, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ARLINE CRUZ: Perfect, thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Arline Cruz, my pronouns are she, her, ya and I'm the Associate Director of Help Programs that Make the Road New York.

We thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the Make the Road New York and our 25,000 members in Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island, Long Island, and West Chester.

We've reached over 8,000 low-income immigrant New Yorkers through our health access service which we continue to provide via hybrid model. Based on these experiences, we are making the following recommendations for this Fiscal Year 2023 Budget to support the crucial health access services and programs that benefit some of the most marginalized BIPOC communities. We ask the Council to expand

funding for Access Health Initiative to \$4 million and allocate \$2.3 million for MCCAP Initiative.

These are key programs and some of the few that provide funding for the community-based organizations to conduct outreach and education efforts regarding health access and coverage.

And other intersecting benefits that address social determinants of health and hope to improve New Yorkers health access. For example, a member Sapora{SP?) who only earns \$50 a day met with Promotoda(SP?) who was able to ease her fears and tensions around public charge to finally access benefits which she and her family qualify for.

She was able to enroll not only to SNAP benefits for her citizen children but she was able to get enrolled into NYC Care and connect with a health advocate to help her navigate hundreds of dollars of medical debt from a previous hospital visit. We also ask City Council to maintain \$2 million allocated for the Immigrant Health Initiative and maintain \$7 million in funding for the End the Epidemic Initiative. The Administration must continue to fully fund the NYC Care program that with at least one million – \$100 million per year including funding

for CBO's to conduct outreach, education and direct enrollment into the program.

The city should ensure sustainable, municipal funding for community health workers and –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ARLINE CRUZ: Expand upon existing models that place CHW's at CBO's while embedding them into hospitals and clinics which help expand immigrant access. And lastly, continue funding for a T2 COVID outreach funding for community-based organizations. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. My name is Brenda McKinney. I'm also a Committee Counsel at the New York City Council. I will be taking over as moderator for a period of time, continuing with Panel 29.

So, our next witness is Doxine Roberts. You may begin when the Sergeant calls the clock. Thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll wait just one moment for Doxine Roberts. Okay, I'm going to move to the next Panelist and as a reminder, we will check for anyone that we have inadvertently missed at the end

of the hearing if we miss you. The next panelist, also on Panel 29 is Won C. Penzone.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll wait one more moment.

Okay, not seeing Won Penzone, we will be moving to Panel 30 at this point but we will again check for anyone that we inadvertently missed at the end of the hearing.

The next panel is focused on education and childhood, early education. The panelist will be in order on Panel 30. Catherine Hoy, Lisa Gilday, Jeannette Farias, Johnathan Diaz, Samsul Hussain, Erika Gonzalez.

I will call you in order and you may begin when the Sergeant calls the clock. The first witness will be Catherine Hoy.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we'll wait just one moment. Thank you for your patience. Okay, we'll move to the next panelist. The next panelist is Lisa Gilday, also on Panel 30. You may begin when the Sergeant calls the clock.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LISA GILDAY: Good afternoon members of the Finance Committee of the City Council. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I am Lisa Gilday, Chief Operating Officer at Birch Family Services, a non-for-profit agency. Birch is a leading provider that Special Education Preschool Service under contract with the New York City Department of Education. We offer eight New York State education department approved 4410 preschool programs and provide services to 1,000 preschool student in the least restricted setting.

Our students are New York City public students and refer to us because their needs cannot be met by the DOE. For years providers like ours have struggled to recruit and retain certified teachers, teacher assistants and related therapist because of the lack of tuition increases. The result has been our inability to provide competitive salaries to our teachers. As most of you know in 2019, the city reached an agreement to raise the salaries of certified early childhood teachers at DOE contracted CBO's working ten months.

There were special education teachers of DOE contracted preschool special education programs, 4410

1
2 programs who work 12-months serving young children
3 with the most extensive needs were excluded from the
4 agreement, perpetuating the problem of salary
5 inequity.

6 The city has not yet committed to salary parity
7 for these educators. Even a shortage of seats in
8 preschool special education classes have left
9 preschools with disabilities without the support they
10 need and have a legal right to receive. According to
11 the DOE's own projections the city's short by more
12 than 900 seats in these classes.

13 Birch Family Services and other providers have
14 indicated that in order for them to open new
15 preschool special education classes, the city needs
16 to address the salary rate disparities that are
17 causing our teachers, teacher assistants and staff
18 members to leave for other jobs.

19 We thank the City Council for recognizing this
20 issue and including us in your preliminary budget
21 response. The need for \$30 million to address
22 disparities in salaries between preschool special
23 education teachers and staff at community-based
24 organizations.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LISA GILDAY: Please ensure that the FY23 budget includes \$30 million to provide preschool special education teachers and staff with salaries on par with the 12-month UE counterparts. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. The next witness will be Jeannette Farias.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Waiting one moment. Okay, the next witness moving on is Johnathan Diaz.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Not seeing Mr. Diaz. I will move on to the next witness. Again, we will call for any witnesses that we have inadvertently missed at the end. The next witness will be Shamsul Hussain.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will move to the next witness. The next witness on Panel 30 will be Erika Gonzalez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CRYSTAL RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon everyone. Ms. Gonzalez wasn't able to attend. Uhm, but my name is Crystal Rodriguez, I am mom of five from the Bronx. I've been an active parent leader on SLT's, PTA's PA's and Title I boards consecutively since 2016.

In the summer of 2021, I was elected a family healing ambassador for PS146 in District 8 but I also work closely with NMBA and BCA in District 9.

Although all the boards I have been a part of, our amazing and do lots of unrecognized and uncompensated work, those positions are already solidified.

Today, I approach you all in hopes that you guys will find in the budget to continue funding and supporting our family healing work citywide. These last nine months of doing work of Family Healing Ambassador, I have recognized that now more than ever, our (COUGHS), excuse me. Our work, along with restorative justice practices continue to the entire dynamic of our schools, communities, city, state and maybe one day even globally.

Yes, our schools are incorporating SCL into their curriculums but honestly, how much of an impact has this truly made in our schools. As healing ambassadors, we have already done so much work in such a short amount of time. From workshops on testing anxieties, parents and teachers collaborating to recognize and help our students with trauma while healing on their own. To classes of Zoomba, group walks, relay rally races, meditation workshops,

promoting self-care and those are just to name a few. We're getting parent engagement going again, bringing back hope and getting conversations started again in our communities.

We hope to continue to expand our work outside of our schools. I believe that with more time and funding, we can make a huge impact in our school systems, our neighborhoods and our communities. This work has been an inspiration for myself. It has changed my perspective on life and has helped me to begin my own healing journey to become a better parent, a better coach, friend, neighbor, a human being overall.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CRYSTAL RODRIGUEZ: And I'm sure that my fellow ambassadors would concur. I thank you all for the time to be able to speak today and I truly hope that this movement will continue to be backed with your support because this is history in the making. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your testimony. This concludes Panel 30 and we will now be moving to Panel 31. This panel will also be focused on education and childhood education, as well

as education disabilities, foster care and health. The panelist in order as I will read them are Jolene Gunther-Doherty, Jennifer Choi, Maggie Moroff, Chantal Hinds, Cal Hedigan(SP?) and Joy Cambe or Cambe. Please forgive any pronunciation. So, the next panelist will be Jolene Gunther-Doherty and you may begin when the Sergeant calls the clock. Thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JOLENE GUNTHER-DOHERTY: Thank you. My name is Jolene Gunther-Doherty and I am the Director of the Guild for Exceptional Childrens Preschool 4410 program. For over 60 years, the Guild has provided services for preschool students with disabilities. Two years ago, the city reached an agreement to raise the salaries of most certified early childhood teachers at DOE contracted CBO's. But excluded teachers of DOE contracted preschool special education programs. These teachers work 12-months serving young children with the most intensive special needs. The city has not yet committed to salary parity for these educators. Even as the shortage of seats in preschool special education classes has left preschoolers with disabilities

without the support they need and have the legal right to receive.

As you heard in earlier testimony, many classrooms in 4410 schools have had to close. Our school over the past year has had to close four classrooms due to staff shortages. Crime families of children with autism keep calling looking for seats. According to the DOE's own projections, the city is short by more than 900 seats in preschool special education classes.

CBO's have indicated that in order to open new preschool special ed classes, the city needs to address the salary disparities that are causing their teachers, teacher assistants and therapists to leave for other jobs where they can earn much higher compensation. The city has a plan to open 800 needed preschool special ed class seats starting next year by offering a contract enhancement to the CBO's that run these classes. But the city is not yet committed to increase staff salaries as part of the contract enhancement.

Without increased salaries, the -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JOLENE GUNTHER-DOHERTY: The city will be able to open the classes it needs. Please ensure the fiscal year budget includes the \$30 million to provide preschool special ed parity. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. And the next witness will be Jennifer Choi.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JENNIFER CHOI: Okay, I'm unmuted. Thank you. I'm Jennifer Choi. I am a Special Education Advocate at Special Support Services. I'm also a parent of two students with disabilities in Queens.

The New York City Comptrollers Report revealed that the DOE has spent only 12 percent of the \$251 million of federal COVID relief funding allocated for students with disabilities. This is unacceptable. To provide the Council with a picture of just one way this can happen, I'll share with you my own child's story. He's an 18-year-old student with dyslexia, autism and ADHD who used to go to every class, every day and attend hours and hours of tutoring to make progress in school.

The pandemic changed all that. Zoom school did not work for him. He became addicted to the computer and lost his motivation. I wake up every morning not

1 knowing if he will go to school. He cannot fill out
2 college applications. He cannot manage money nor his
3 hiking and now my son is failing and will not
4 graduate with his peers next month.

5 I asked the school to send him to a New York
6 State approved therapeutic boarding school but the
7 school said no, because he'll probably graduate in
8 January. Why do schools still not know the purpose
9 of IEP is not just about getting a diploma? The
10 purpose is to help students with disabilities pursue
11 further education, employment and independent living.
12 My agency just released a survey report on students
13 with disabilities refusing school.

14 57 percent never refused school before the
15 pandemic. 34 percent are expressing self-harm.
16 Today, I request this Council to please add items to
17 the budget to police not our students but instead,
18 the New York City Department of Education
19 Administrators to stop wasting money, stop breaking
20 the law and stop ruining the lives of students with
21 disabilities. Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll
23 turn to Maggie Moroff from the Arise Coalition.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.
25

1
2 MAGGIE MOROFF: Thank you Malcom. Good afternoon
3 Chair Brannan and all other Council Members here
4 today. I'm here on behalf of the Arise Coalition, a
5 group of parents, advocates and other stakeholders
6 interested in improving experiences and outcomes for
7 students with disabilities in New York City. I want
8 to talk about three things all laid out in more
9 detail in my written testimony already submitted.

10 As you just heard, a recent Comptroller's report
11 revealed that as of March, the DOE had spent only 12
12 percent of the \$251 million in federal COVID relief
13 funding allocated for Fiscal Year '22 for extra
14 support for students with disabilities and creation
15 of new seats in preschool, for preschool students
16 with disabilities. I wish I could say that came as a
17 surprise to us. While the DOE allocated funding to
18 schools for afterschool or Saturday special education
19 recovery services, SERS, to students with
20 disabilities and launched the SEED program for
21 students with sensory challenges, we've heard
22 repeatedly about children unable to access those
23 services.

24 For some time now around those make up services,
25 we've been recommending improved delivery of the

1 services actually offered. Clear information for
2 families about those services, expansion to all
3 students with disabilities regardless of where they
4 attend school. Targeted instructional interventions
5 at all SERS programs and guaranteed busing for
6 students with IEPs mandating transportation, after
7 school and on weekends to SERS and SEED programs.
8 There's no way around it. To be successful in making
9 up for what was lost for all these students, the DOE
10 must use the COVID relief funds already committed to
11 support students with disabilities. We ask for your
12 help making that a reality.
13

14 We also want to be sure that all new education
15 initiatives funded in this year's budget explicitly
16 include students with disabilities. Think about the
17 Career Pathways program in the Executive Budget for
18 that and all other new programs to be successful –

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

20 MAGGIE MOROFF: Students who require
21 accommodations and modifications to participate, must
22 receive them or risk being effectively cut out.
23 Finally, we join with all the others who have
24 testified about the need to provide pay parity for
25

preschool special education teachers working at CBO's. Thank you very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Maggie and next, we'll turn to Chantal Hinds from Next100.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CHANTAL HINDS: Thank you. Good afternoon Chair Brannan and members of the Committee on Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Chantal Hinds and I am a Policy Entrepreneur at Next100. A startup think tank working to diversify the public policy sector. Prior to Next100, I was an Attorney at Advocates for Children of New York, working to ensure students in foster care receive the support they needed to succeed.

I am here to ask the City Council to support students in foster care by ensuring the DOE will follow through on its commitment to create and fully staff a foster care office and for the budget to include \$5 million to guarantee transportation for students in foster care.

Students in foster care are disproportionately Black and come from the city's poorest communities. Black and Latinx children make up about 80 percent of

1
2 children in foster care in New York City. Many
3 students in this unique population have significant
4 academic needs. Nearly half of this population have
5 special education needs and less than half graduate
6 high school in four years.

7 It's important that the DOE move quickly to hire
8 and fully staff its first ever team to support these
9 students.

10 This office is especially important to improve
11 policy development, educational interventions and
12 data collection and transparency for students in
13 foster care. While the DOE has started posting some
14 of these positions, it is important that all eleven
15 of the promised positions move forward.

16 Additionally, children cannot succeed in school if
17 they aren't able to get there. The DOE must
18 guarantee busing or other door to door transportation
19 for students in foster care. Federal and state law
20 require the city to provide transportation to
21 students in foster care, so they can stay in their
22 original school unless it's in their best interest to
23 transfer.

24 Since the law went into effect nearly six years
25 ago, the DOE has refused to guarantee bus service or

another comparable mode of transportation to these students. The city should include and baseline \$5 million for bus service or other door to door transportation for students in foster care –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CHANTAL HINDS: To maintain school stability. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll call Cal Hedigan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will turn to Joy Cambe from Empire Liver Foundation.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JOY CAMBE: Hi, my name is Joy Cambe and I'm the Program Coordinator for Empire Liver Foundation and we're part of the New York City Council's Viral Hepatitis Initiative, which provides the most innovative and effective Hep B and C treatment prevention and linkage to care initiatives in the country.

We submitted our written testimony, so I'm going to take this time to highlight the potential impact of the first ever New York City viral hepatitis

elimination program from the New York City DOHMH.

So, and how we can put New York City on the map as one of the first cities to eliminate viral hepatitis using the existing service framework that the Viral Hepatitis Initiative already put in place, thanks to the New York City Council.

So, for funding year '23, we have a minimal ask of \$2 million to support the necessary work to achieve viral hepatitis elimination. So, on behalf of some of our members, I have some stories to illustrate the profound impact of Viral Hepatitis Initiative. From Dr. Rundishudian(SP?) of Cornell, he said, "I saw a patient, 66-year-old female with a history of intravenous drug use and a new diagnosis of Hep C. This is not to be discovered without the recent public health messaging on universal screening for Hep C.

As she had never previously been screened despite A, being a baby boomer and two, her known risk factors were infectious. By the time that I got to her, she was shocked to hear that she developed advanced fibrosis of the liver, despite never having symptoms.

Our initial conversation about chronic hepatitis C and the risk for cirrhosis and liver cancer were tough for her to hear and I'm happy to report that she has successfully treated herself, all the hepatitis C and no longer lives with that danger. I still follow her regularly but I have been pleased to inform her that her risk for both cirrhosis and liver cancer are now significantly reduced, after the viral clearance of hepatitis B and she's profoundly grateful for feeling that she had narrowly avoided a major health threat and uh, our organization has worked with the previous Health Chair —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JOY CAMBE: For such a vital — for such these vital services for New York City living with hepatitis but there's a lot of work to do. So, together New York City has the existing resources in place to set the precedence for viral hepatitis elimination for the country. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 31. I will announce the next few panels. Panel 32 will be Saaif Alam, Dana Politis(SP?), Gary English, Sharone Kaufman, Rosa Rodriguez, Jose Martinez, and Jamal Westmore.

Panel 33, Aga Trojniak(SP?), Anya Mukarji-Connolly, Jeannette Miller, Shane Correia, Lee Sessions, and Pablo Estupiñan. Panel 34, Michael Janice, Mariam Fisher, Nicholas Navarro, Patrick Boettcher, Savannah Millard, and Mon Yuck Yu. Panel 35, Andy Bowen, Christine James-McKenzie, Carina Kaufman-Gutierrez, Hannah Towfiek, Mohamed Attia, and that's Panel 35.

So, I will now start with Panel 32, Saaif Alam.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SAAIF ALAM: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Saaif Alam, a Student from John Jay College. I currently serve as the University and Senate by a share of disability affairs. As an individual growing up with an invisible disability, I understand the challenge because I went through it myself. We currently have 930,100 New York City residents with disabilities and 11,000 community students with disabilities at CUNY.

And representation for individuals with disability including man's help is crucial for these communities. I'm here to testify because our New Yorkers, including New Yorkers with disabilities need to have better access to mental health and healthcare

services. Mental health accessibility is important for individuals with disabilities, especially the pandemic. Based on the statistics, one in ten New Yorkers experience mental health challenges that effect their life at work and school. Also, one in six CUNY students experience distress, anxiety and depression.

The pandemic has negatively affected our New Yorkers including CUNY students since they face food, housing and job insecurity. Also, a great number of New Yorkers and CUNY students has lost a loved one. According to conversations from constituents, they express that they need to have adequate access to counseling services, which also includes individuals with disabilities.

Healthcare accessibility is also not a challenge. Our individuals with disabilities are still in need for assistive devices for effective communications, housing for interactive service building, more staff at the facilities, auxiliary aids through our mental health center. Healthcare is a priority and there's a need to invest in healthcare, so individuals with disabilities receive the healthcare they need to thrive in our society.

I want the City Council to acknowledge that this month is Mental Health Awareness Month and please prioritize the \$393 million funding for mental health and \$145 million from the Mayor Adams healthcare funding initiatives for our New Yorkers including New Yorkers with disabilities –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SAAIF ALAM: Mental health care and mental health services, which also includes CUNY students with disabilities. Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Dana [INAUDIBLE 5:27:29].

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on our list is Gary English.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

GARY ENGLISH: Hello. Good afternoon everyone. My name is Gary English and I'm the Executive Director of Get it Get it, which is a non-profit organization in New York City that serves Black gay men and our mission is to prevent infection in the Black gay community.

1 I would like the City Council to be aware of the
2 End of AIDs Epidemic Campaign will not be successful
3 until we really get a handle on the new infections
4 with Black gay men in New York City. And we're
5 proposing that the City Council green light a special
6 initiative of \$2 million for Black gay men prevention
7 in New York City. And this initiative has other
8 successes such as the Faith-Based Initiative, has
9 been happening for the last eight years. It's been
10 very successful and also, the Department of Health,
11 started two years ago with a special RFP for Black
12 gay men and some reason it disappeared. And I think
13 one reason why it disappeared because we're not
14 visible. We're not in the face of City Council and
15 say, these are our issues. These are the ways you
16 can effect and get Black gay men attention.

17 And we also want this initiative to be targeted
18 to small CBO's because there's a space, a unique
19 space for organizations like mine, Get it Get it to
20 reach Black gay men. And Black gay men need to talk
21 to Black gay men because we know the strategies of
22 what is the best way to get their attention. And so,
23 keeping within my two minutes, and I would like say
24
25

to the City Council, let's make history together and make this special initiative happen. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you sir. Next we will turn to Sharone Kaufman from the Legal Aid Society.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SHARONE KAUFMAN: Good afternoon. My name is Sharone Kaufman and I'm a Deputy Attorney in charge of the Immigration Law Unit at the Legal Aid Society. Thank you Chair Brannan and Council Members for this opportunity to address you.

In Fiscal Year '23, NYIFUP is seeking an increase from \$16.6 million to \$18 million to help address our increased costs. Although ICE raids have been lower in the past year than before, it seems likely that detention numbers will go back up as things start to return back to normal.

This would include NYIFUP clients for whom we one, released during the pandemic due to health reasons, who ICE could try to re-detain, claiming that the jails are safe again.

We also need to be able to fully staff up in response to ICE detention activities. While representing the many clients we got released over the past years and before. Also, there's an

increased need to fight against the horrific conditions that our clients face in detention and the impending transfers of New York City residents to jails and courts across the country. There's a need for continued support from the Council for these most vulnerable immigrants.

In addition to supporting NYIFUP since 2014, the Council has been a steadfast supporter of unaccompanied minors since 2014 through the Unaccompanied Minors and Families Initiative, which is granted annually to Legal Aid and our partners in the Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative ICARE.

For Fiscal year '23 ICARE is seeking an enhancement to four million five hundred and seventy thousand, of which one million seventy five thousand would be for Legal Aid. The enhancement would be to offset the loss of funding to ICARE from the Robinhood Foundation, which is ending its investment at the end of Fiscal Year '22.

We applaud the city for supporting removal defense and affirmative immigration benefits through the Immigrant Opportunities Initiative. We encourage the city to keep the flexibility adopted in the last two fiscal years regarding meeting deliverables

through overall units of service, rather than
specific -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

SHARONE KAUFMAN: Of cases. Just one more minute
please. We also thank the Council for their
continued support and funding for the Low Wage
Workers Initiative, which we hope can be baselined.

And finally, we're seeking \$710,000 for
immigration federal practice to allow us to continue
our cutting edge work. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I'll turn
to Rosa Rodriguez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ROSA RODRIQUEZ: Good afternoon. Can you hear
me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

ROSA RODRIGUEZ: Okay, thank you very much. Good
afternoon. I appreciate your attention. My name is
Rosa Rodriguez, I'm the President of 7981 Post Avenue
Tenant Association. I mean Washington High. This is
in reference about the teil coalition. This is a
program that HPD had formed back in 1978. We have
uhm, my plea's to the Mayor and the City Council to
fund the HPD program to make the funding to the New

York City Council to include the funding in 2023 budget adequate funding to rehabilitate the teal building. Instead of funding ANCP and third party program to which HPD is transferring the teal buildings.

Those third party programs will end in contribution to increase the homeless situation in New York City as the original tenant of the teal building will not be able to afford the maintenance of the ACHC apartments. Which we include payment on the mortgage entering into the development and mandatory percent increase. Therefore, they will lose their apartment and any opportunity to ownership and in the general world.

This is why we plea, the whole coalition plea you, so we are low-income family, we plea you at the end of the day that we are working together to rebuild and maintain our community in New York City. Yes, together we can succeed in the city for a better future. Our children are becoming professionals. They are the people of the future who will maintain the city. We don't want our descendants to move away from New York City and work in other states. They

are the New York City seeds to be planted in New York City and grow. They are New Yorkers.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ROSA RODRIGUEZ: So, we plead to the City of New York to fund our program, our teal program, and defund the ANCP, which are going to take all the tenants to the street and be homeless. Thank you and I appreciate your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Jose Martinez from the National Harm Reduction Coalition.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JOSE MARTINEZ: Hi sorry. Hello, my name is Jose Martinez. I'm the Harm Reduction Associate for National Harm Reduction Coalition, National Advocacy and Capacity Building Organization whose main office is in Midtown Manhattan.

And I'm responsible for providing a general support system for Hep C navigators throughout New York City. Support maybe a system and navigator would create a new outreach methods and approaches, navigating resources for community members, workforce development or support with personal issues. The viral Hepatitis Initiative has played a vital role in

harm reduction efforts to combat viruses that effect our communities like Hep C and HIV.

Since 2014, we've been responsible for over 10,000 linkages to care, many of which led to community members being cured of Hep C. Many of our navigators who were responsible for keeping community members engaged in care, have done it with very little funding and resources. The Viral Hepatitis Initiative for the last eight years has been that little bit of funding and resources for our Hep B and Hep C navigators.

My experience with the Viral Hepatitis Initiatives have been a lessen every day. My work has allowed me to see how our community is effected by Hep C and how much services we really need and how much more we can do with a little more focus on this problem. I'm not living with Hep C; I was introduced to the program when I used to go to the Hep C group in Saint Anne's Corner of Farm Reduction. I was in a bad space and would go to the groups to receive the Metro. After a month of attending the groups, I became more interested in being a part of the movement that tackles Hep C than receiving a metro.

New York City Council Viral Hepatitis Initiative also allows my organization and funding to provide various Hep C related trainings and the Hep C basics over those preventions of Hep C navigators and medical care and treatment update.

With these workshops we provide navigators through the city with skills and information they can use to help themselves and community members.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JOSE MARTINEZ: Thank you for having us.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Jose. Next, we will turn to Jamal Westmore from the New York State Nurses Association.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JAMAL WESTMORELAND: Good afternoon Chairman Brannan and Council Members. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to provide my testimony. My name is Jamal Westmoreland and I am a registered nurse employed at Woodhall Hospital in Brooklyn. I am also a proud NYSNA member and a membership committee chairperson at Woodhall Hospital. NYSNA represents 9,000 registered nurses to work for the public hospital system. As a frontline staff nurse, I am more than familiar with the invaluable role

1
2 registered nurses play within the public healthcare
3 system, and their recruitment and retention are
4 essential to ensuring that New York City public
5 hospital are able to provide high quality, safe,
6 effective, patient centered care. The nursing
7 profession continues to face shortages due to the
8 lack of potential funding, educators, high turnover
9 and burnout rates and inequitable workforce
10 distribution, as I can attest to.

11 Nursing shortages can only lead to more potential
12 medical error, higher morbidity and mortality rate
13 and ultimately patient dissatisfaction. An
14 environment that empowers and motivates nurses is
15 imperative in order to rejuvenate and sustain the
16 nursing workforce, especially within these uncertain
17 times we find ourselves living through. Life
18 continues to supportive initiative directed toward
19 the recruitment and retention of nurses within the
20 NYHNNH hospital system. Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes
22 our testimony for Panel 32. We will now move to
23 Panel 33. Aga Trojniak(SP?), Anya Mukarji-Connolly,
24 Jeannette Miller, Shane Correia, Lee Sessions, and
25

Pablo Estupiñan. We'll start with Aga Trojnia from Flatbush Tenant Coalition.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will call on Anya Mukarji-Connolly from Brooklyn Defender Services. I felt like I called that name.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I did call on Anya already and she did testify. Okay, so Jeannette Miller from CAMBA Legal Services.

JEANNETTE MILLER: Thank you. Thank you to Chair Brannan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JEANNETTE MILLER: Uh, thank you to Chair Brannan, Chair Ayala and to the New York City Council at large for the longstanding support of the Legal Services for the Working Poor Coalition.

My name is Jeannette Miller, I'm an Executive Vice President at Camba Legal Services. One of the five members of the Legal Services for the Working Poor Coalition that includes Housing Conservation Coordinators, Mobilization for Justice, Mimic and Take Root Justice.

The coalition was created 18 years ago with support from the City Council to address the civil legal needs of working poor and other low income New Yorkers whose income is slightly higher than the poorest New Yorkers. Their income renders them ineligible for free civil legal services and yet they are often one missed paycheck from facing eviction or other dire consequences. Our services are critical to allowing working New Yorkers to maintain financial independence and preserving economic stability in communities across New York City.

In Fiscal Year 2022, each of the five coalition members received \$455,000. In FY23, each of us are asking for an allocation of \$600,000 from the City Council to support civil legal services for working for New Yorkers.

Additional legal services in these areas are needed to support working poor New Yorkers particularly as they were and continue to be disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council's funding for civil legal services is the only funding that targets the civil legal needs of working poor, working people to ensure continued

self-sufficiency for families struggling to survive in New York City.

Our organizations represent these New Yorkers in all five boroughs in housing, consumer, foreclosure, immigration benefits and employment matters. If we are not able to meet the legal service needs of the many people who seek our help, particularly those affected by the COVID-19 crisis, the human consequences will be dire. It is vitally important that the Council not only continue to support this flexible funding stream –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JEANNETTE MILLER: Thank you. We urge the Council to fully fund civil legal service initiatives overall and for the legal services for the working poor allocation in particular. The positive benefits of civil legal service funding for the city's budget and its economy make it the right choice for economic, social and humanitarian reasons. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next from the Center for Court Innovation, I'll turn to Shane but I won't butcher his name anymore.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SHANE CORREIA: You actually did a great job. It's Correia. Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Shane Correia, I'm the Deputy Director of Government Partnerships at the Center for Court Innovation. Briefly, we're an organization that researches and implements justice system reforms. Our first program being the Midtown Community Court, established 25 years ago, helping change the nature of Time Square with proportionate responses.

Since then, we've grown to reach and provide expert assistance across the nation and the world but the majority of our direct service sites are actually here in New York City where we help improve civil, family, criminal and non-court based processes that touch the justice system. In fact I'm a South Bronx Native and a participant in one of the programs after two of my siblings were arrested, convicted and deported for violent felony crimes back in 2002. Which brings me here to talk to you today about what the Center for Court Innovation is doing in increasing public safety, yet reforming the justice system.

Specifically, we're implementing new approaches to addressing intimate partner violence, anti-gun violence programing and reducing unnecessary incarceration through community supervision. Regarding budget asks, I want to highlight the following items in our testimony that I think are exceedingly important. Our ask to expand our core center funding under the innovative criminal justice initiatives is where we have the flexibility to respond to needs in our communities as they arrive throughout all five boroughs. Over the last two years, that's been everything from deploying remote youth engagement programming during the height of the pandemic to implementing new methods of gun responses in the following months.

We're asking that this be expanded to \$1 million. Similarly, we're asking that the city continue with support of felony alternatives to incarceration in Brooklyn at \$1.3 million and take over the funding that will expire from Dannie's asset forfeiture dollars sun setting for a total ask of \$2 million in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

It's effective throughout Brooklyn mental health court practices which have shown to reduce recidivism

while keeping communities safe and we hope to continue to show its efficacy –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SHANE CORREIA: Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will turn to Lee Sessions.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LEE SESSIONS: Hi, my name is Lee Sessions, I'm a New York City resident and a member of DSA's NYC Chapter. I'm here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams's Executive Budget and to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID-19 cases are surging, landlords are raising rents and families struggle to stay in their homes but the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over every day New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education. While leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget impact.

Today, I urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead

of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent, affordable housing, including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD.

The Council must also reject Adams cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and funding DOE mental health counselors and social workers, rather than filling school police vacancies. I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crisis facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic.

We need \$3.1 billion for the streets plan. \$1.8 billion for green public schools. \$250 million for Fair Fares and \$10 million to expand lifesaving safe consumption sites to all five boroughs.

Finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's regressive return to law in order. I urge the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of new CO's for solitary confinement. A practice the UN defines as torture. I also urge the Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization programs, like the ineffective and violent plain clothes units. The so-called subway safety plan and ending all NYPD

response to mental health calls. Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LEE SESSIONS: For hearing my testimony. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and our final panelist is Pablo Estupiñan from the Right to Counsel New York City Coalition.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

PABLO ESTUPIÑAN: Good afternoon Chair Brannan and Council Members. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Pablo and I'm the Coalition Coordinator for the Right to Counsel New York City Coalition and I'm here today to testify in favor of Local Law 53.

As many of you know, we, our coalition passed a historic right to counsel legislation back in 2017 giving tenants the right to free legal representation housing courts. Unfortunately, that is no longer the reality with the overwhelming volume of eviction cases, there is currently not enough attorney's to take on eviction cases, so now thousands of tenants are at risk of being evicted without ever access a right to counsel attorney and last May 2021, our

1 coalition passed a bill, Intro. 1529, which is known
2 as Local Law 53 that mandated that the city
3 specifically, the Office of Civil Justice, the city
4 agency in charge of implementing right to counsel.
5 This Local Law 53 requires OCJ to fund tenant
6 organizing groups because the reality is that half
7 the tenants that we have surveyed don't know about
8 right to counsel when they are going to housing
9 courts and facing eviction.
10

11 And we're here today because that law was signed
12 last May. The city had 180 days to release the
13 request for proposal RFP at the end of November and
14 they haven't. And so, from our perspective, the new
15 mayoral administration, Mayor Adams, is failing New
16 Yorkers, not delivering on its promises to ensure
17 that New Yorkers stay in their homes and we're
18 calling on the — we're urging the Committee to
19 immediately — to help us immediately and fully
20 implement Local Law 53 and allocate \$5 million for
21 tenant organizing groups. And that would come
22 through OCJ and that would help fund trusted tenant
23 organizing groups to work in low-income communities
24 of color.
25

We know that this issue impacts people of color, especially women and children.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

PABLO ESTUPIÑAN: You know eviction is housing instability, have significant impact on all people's lives. So, we look forward to working with you and thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. (COUGHS) Excuse me. Thank you. Next, we will go to Panel 34. Michael Janice, Mariam Fisher, Nicholas Navarro, Patrick Boettcher, Savannah Millard and Mon Yuk Yu. We will first turn to Michael Janice.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list, I have Mariam Fisher.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I have Nicholas Navarro.

NICHOLAS NAVARRO: Thank you for the chance to speak. Uhm, I am Nicholas Navarro, a volunteer with the New York Civil Liberties Union. I have been monitoring police activity at protests for almost two years. So, recently, I have had a lot of encounters with the SRG, which is supposedly the counter

terrorist unit. However, many, many times recently, I have seen them being deployed in just completely inappropriate situations.

I remember, I was at Union Square and there was a small group of people singing and dancing pro-choice protestors and a couple blocks down the street there was the SRG parked. So, I would – I have seen them insight violence many times at protests. They're very opaque and unclear about their funding and strategies, so I would request that the City Council seriously reconsider this funding for this department and demand accountability for where the money is going. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will turn to Patrick Boettcher from the Divest from the Strategic Response Group.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

PATRICK BOETTCHER: Hello, my name is Patrick Boettcher. I'm a Veteran of the Army a King student. I'm here today to urge the City Council to seize funding to the New York City Police Department through the Strategic Response Group.

I've personally witnessed several incidents of misconduct by the SRG. On one occasion, I saw an

officer armed as though we were going into battle.

As I passed him, I heard the distinctive click of his rifle safety and look over to see the officer playing the safety on a deadly weapon in crowded street.

If he were soldier and he were caught by a Sergeant, he would suffer severe consequences, however, this officer was not a soldier. These officers do not have the training, discipline or responsibility to be entrusted with the equipment and the funding that they've been given.

I was recently at a climate protest where the SRG demonstrated this to me by inappropriately using a reciprocating saw to cut protestors down from wooden structures. As they were doing this, most of the officers who have asked the other protestors were simply standing around idly, some chatting casually. I asked an officer if they truly had no other more pressing matters to attend to and he said, no.

By then, I asked why in that case, were all of his officers on duty? He simply said, "I don't know." However, when I was recently attacked on a subway the police were nowhere to be found. Given the clear misuse of the funds by the SRG and their self-professed lack of need for their services, I

urge the City Council to shift their funding to areas that will meaningfully improve the lives of New Yorkers.

I'm currently attending City College on the GI bill and I could tell you from firsthand experience that many of the buildings are badly run down. With ceilings that leak in the rain and bathrooms regularly shutdown due to the plumbing malfunctions. One's even had a ceiling tile fall on me at EMCC.

As many of my classmates come from around the country and around the world, I ask you, "is this the image of the city you once lived in." "Do we want to be a city that takes pride in our dedication to educating the next leaders of the world?" Or one that takes pride in cracking down on its citizens as they practice their first amendment rights.

The proposed new deal for CUNY would be a much better use of the funds and would bring us much closer to embodying the ideas that we claim to hold in SRG every day. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Savannah Millard from the NYCLU.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SAVANNAH MILLARD: Hi, thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Savannah Millard and I am a volunteer with the NYCLU. I'm here to urge the City Council to remove funding of the NYPD Strategic Response Group from the police budget. The unit has been a consistent presence at protests across New York City and has been known for escalating and bringing violence to protestors. In 2020, the units brutality was in public view as members of the unit deployed militarized tactics against protestors. The SRG has been central to many lawsuits and investigations related to the NYPD's abuse of protestors throughout 2020. And as someone that participate in the Black Lives Matter Movement of 2020, I can personally attest to seeing these things happen.

However, the violence of the SRG is without coincidence. The units training overwhelmingly focuses on the use of force and members of the unit are trained to treat racial justice protestors as enemy combatants. In the SRG Bikes Squads Manual, protests groups are divided into two categories, peaceful and violent with examples of violent

protestors as being part of the BLM movement, occupy Wall Street and anti-Trump demonstrators.

SRG officers receive disproportionately high levels of misconduct complaints and have a history of racial violence. The SRG has inflicted emotional and physical harm on New Yorkers with impunity. City Council must put an end to the SRG's abuse by disbanding the unit and removing its funds from the hands of the NYPD and then reinvesting those funds into our communities. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and our last panelist is Mon Yuck Yu.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I'm going to turn to Panel 35, Andy Bowen, Christine James-McKenzie, Carina Kaufman-Gutierrez, Hannah Towfiek, Mohamed Attia. We'll first start with Andy Bowen from the New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ANDY BOWEN: Good afternoon Chair Brannan, members and outstanding staff of the New York City Council Committee on Finance. I'm reading the testimony of Clara Kowvo(SP?), a worker/owner at Cooperative Homecare Associates CHCA and a member of

the New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives
Advocacy Council.

I came to the United States in 1955 from the
Dominican Republic looking for an opportunity to
improve my life and the life of my three children.
For five years, I worked long hours, unpredictable
schedules, and in challenging work environments while
making very little money.

In 2000, I found and was trained by Cooperative
Home Care Associates or CHCA, a Bronx space company
that trains and employs homecare workers. Shortly
after beginning my career at CHCA, I joined the
company as a worker owner and have served on the
board for multiple terms. Whether as a board member
or worker/owner, I am always an engaged leader,
providing insight and guidance to my fellow worker
owners. I believe I'm an amazing reflection of why
the model of a worker cooperative is so powerful,
transformative and necessary for worker protection.

Like my cooperative, there are a number of
cooperatives in New York City with different economic
activities from cleaning, support for the elderly,
childcare and a lot more services that help the
economic growth of this city. However, as with many

small businesses, the pandemic wreaked havoc on some of the cooperatives.

With the support of the worker cooperative, this development initiative or WCBDI partners, though our cooperatives have largely sustained the challenges of the pandemic by getting grants, loans and other financial support, technical assistance in making sure we did our work safely under pandemic conditions and more formal kinds of support like with bookkeeping.

Your commitment to cooperatives is necessary and urgent in our growth. So, we're not among the small businesses that disappear as a result of the pandemic. We hope that you will consider the Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative at \$5.012 million during this year's budget negotiation process. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and Andy and next, we will turn to Christine James-McKenzie from Jobs First NYC.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CHRISTINE JAMES-MCKENZIE: Good afternoon Committee Chair Brannan and the distinguished members of the City Council Committee on Finance. Thank you

for allowing Jobs First NYC to provide testimony today on important issues effecting New York City's budget. My name is Christine James-McKenzie, I'm the Communications and Policy Manager at Jobs First NYC which provides research and developed systems that impact health, philanthropy and government invest and workforce development.

In 2021, Jobs First NYC published a report titled, 'Equitable Recovery for Young Adults and Agenda for Young Adult Workforce Development in New York City. It provides a set of citywide policy priorities that are routed in the real needs of young people.

It also includes the perspectives of on the ground practitioners and the literature on successful policies and interventions. It details the changes needed to quickly connect our 18-24 year old's to employment now and to effectively prepare them for the future for in a rapidly shifting and increasingly virtual economy.

It builds on Jobs First NYC comprehensive system level view of the city's young adult workforce ecosystem and proposes an actionable timebomb framework to foster citywide systems change. We must

act now to connect our young adults to training, education and work opportunities and to advance them along educational and career pathways. Our report outlines six recommendations for the city that we informed by a diverse coalition of workforce development and education stakeholders.

We call for \$770 million increase in annual investment by New York City. This proposed funding would support \$100 million for bridge programming, \$150 million for sectoral training, \$357 million for subsidized jobs, \$105 million for high school degree attainment and career preparation and \$58 million for capacity building and system enhancement.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CHRISTINE JAMES-MCKENZIE: We appreciate the opportunity to submit the testimony to the Finance Committee and we are certainly looking forward to your leadership to address the crisis that young adults in New York City face. Thank you and we will submit the rest of our testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Carina Kaufman-Gutierrez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CARINA KAUFMAN-GUTIERREZ: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Carina Kaufman-Gutierrez and I'm the Deputy Director of the Street Vendor Project. I first would like to thank Chair Brannan and all the Council Members present today for the opportunity to testify.

The Street Vendor Project is a membership based organization that works to improve the working conditions of the approximately 20,000 people who sell food and merchandise from the streets of our city. SVP is respectfully requesting funding to sustain and expand two of our critical programs that serve street vendors, New York City's smallest businesses. Our first is the community outreach and education program and the second is the small business consultation program. Both of which together support an equitable economic recovery for our entire city. Our membership base of the Street Vendor Project includes over 2,600 of New York City Street Vendors. This population is primarily new immigrants who rely on vending to provide for themselves and their families. And vendors come from some of the most marginalized communities, specifically immigrant communities of color and low-

income households. Over 90 percent of vendors are immigrants.

The high demand for our services, especially during the pandemic has presented an unsustainable demand on a very small staff body and organization. Hence our request for support to increase our ability to respond, so that we may support our community to rebuild and thrive.

In 2021, we connected nearly 3,000 street vendors to resources and information about housing, food access, and loan and grant opportunities and held 450 consultations to support street vendors with business development trainings, financial empowerment workshops and enhanced business, stabilization and growth. We work in five different languages. In Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic, Bengali and a little bit of English.

In this New York City Council's support, we do hope to sustain and expand our vital programming for small businesses and community outreach, so that we can ensure that street vendors –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CARINA KAUFMAN-GUTIERREZ: Receive support and education that they deserve. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify and your consideration.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Hannah Towfiek.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

HANNAH TOWFIEK: Good afternoon Chair Brannan and fellow Council Members and thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Hannah Towfiek and I am the Middle Eastern and North African Member Organizer at the Street Vendor Project and a resident of Bensonhurst Brooklyn.

So, as my colleague Carina had mentioned, we request support to both sustain and expand our Cooney Outreach and Education Program. Through this program, we conduct multilingual outreach in a range of formats as street vendors to educate them on the rules and regulations of vending. Teach them their legal rights and responsibilities and connect them to a variety of resources ranging from public health to immigration. Our staff provides interpretation and translation services for outreach materials in many languages, including Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin and Bengali.

With support from City Council this year for the community outreach program, SVP intends to conduct 85 sessions of in person outreach across the five boroughs to educate vendors on their rights and responsibilities. Meeting street vendors where it's convenient to them, whether that's on the streets, on the sidewalks, in commissary kitchens, accommodating the schedules of these business owners. And also lead 24 in person and virtual community education sessions to speak with vendors and to also share materials regarding regulatory compliance, financial literacy and referrals to other governmental resources and support.

Last year, we supported more than 1,000 vendors with individualized applications for the funding saluted workers – for the Excluded Workers Fund, pardon me. Connected more than 3,000 vendors to housing, food and mental health resources and created multilingual COVID safe business operating guidelines for vendors. Through this process, the vendors themselves become community ambassadors as they have deep connections with their neighborhoods. They are allowed to disseminate information to their cliental and with the help of the Council, we're hoping to

1 ensure that street vendors not only survive in our
2 city but also thrive and prosper as a central part of
3 the city's fabric. Thank you for your time and
4 consideration.
5

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, from the
7 Street Vendor Project Urban Justice Center, we'll
8 turn to Mohamad Attia.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Attia, oh, I see you
11 speaking but I don't hear anything. We'll unmute you
12 again, bear with us just a second. Okay, try
13 speaking again.

14 MOHAMAD ATTI: It's now better?

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, now I can hear you.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

17 MOHAMAD ATTIA: Alright, good afternoon my dear
18 Council Members, Chair Brannan and Members of the
19 Committee. My name is Mohamad Attia, I'm the
20 Director of the Street Vendor Project, a part of the
21 Urban Justice Center. I would like to first thank
22 you for the opportunity to testify today.

23 As the only organization that Street Vendor
24 Project serves the street vendors in New York City
25 SVP is the centralized hub of this underserved

1
2 population, providing regular services including
3 legal consultations, small business development,
4 outreach and education and even more. Additionally
5 SVP supports vendors across several issues, including
6 but not limited to immigration, housing, childcare,
7 and food access needs.

8 SVP respectfully request funding to sustain and
9 expand two critical programs that serve street
10 vendors, our city's smallest businesses. The first
11 one is community outreach and education program and
12 the second is small business consultation program.
13 The programs will support an incredible economic
14 recovery for New York City by serving the smallest
15 businesses. The Street Vendor industry has grown
16 significantly within the last two years, with many
17 New Yorkers who lost their shops, their businesses,
18 turn street vending for an income, dramatically
19 increasing the demand for our services and our work.

20 With the membership base of more than 2,600
21 street vendors, our organization currently has a
22 growing list of over 300 individuals interested in
23 accessing our services. The current ratio of staff
24 to street vendors in the city is one to 400. As we
25 have seen also in Monday's hearing with the

Committee, some Council Members ask the questions to the agencies about services provided to the street vendors and we didn't hear any answer from the city.

What the city offers street vendors usually is enforcement by multiple agencies who hand vendors stake it with very high fines. Street vendors need investment from the city and they deserve it. We hope that the Council will consider our request and help us support our smallest businesses. Thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Uhm, I will now call panel 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40 so people can be ready. Panel 36, Jackie Del Valle, Carmen Quenonez(SP?), Rumi Akong), Michael Winston Pam and Lorraine Collins.

Panel 37, Andrew Cesano (SP?), Priscilla Alexander, Petra Morales (SP?), Ricarda Pantaleone, Gloria Manzano.

Panel 38 Salma Mohammed, Lily Liang, Ravi Reddi, Netta Goash and Lloyd Feng and Mohamed Amin. Panel 39, Adrianna Duffey(SP?), Emma Katz(SP?), Julian McKinley, Emina Frankle(SP?), Marcella Sosa(SP?) and Minerva Contreras.

I will start with Panel 36 Jackie Del Valle from Take Root Justice.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JACKIE DEL VALLE: Hi, my name is Jackie Del Valle, I'm Coordinator of Stabilizing NYC at Take Root Justice. Take Root is a founder and coordinator of Stabilizing NYC, which is a coalition of grassroots organization that combine tenant organizing with legal representation to combat tenant harassment and preserve affordable housing for New Yorkers who need it most. The Council's funded Stabilizing NYC every year since 2014 and we're looking for an enhancement to \$4 million from \$3.75 million to bring SNYC organizing groups to equal levels. Take Root Justice and the 19 grassroots they're apart of Stabilizing NYC form and strengthen hundreds of tenant associations.

Despite the limits of the pandemic, stabilizing groups continue to organize tenants association and represent tenants across the city. Many groups organize outreach programs and tenants for evictions, ensuring that tenants and communities not only know of their rights about housing court eviction and accessing rent arrear funds like ERAP and Excluded

Workers Fund but also had hands on assistance to access these and other resources.

As a result, the Tenants Associations we organize: one, rent strikes, held their landlords accountable for incorrect rent amounts and received the ERAP protections that they're entitled to to the Benefit and Housing Court.

Through organizing, tenants are stopping evictions from moving forward in court and fighting to keep one another in their homes. Tenants connect their individual building experiences to the wider fight for housing justice. Through mass rallies and trips to Albany, tenant leaders connect with fellow members of working class to fight for racial and economic justice.

I don't think I need to spend a lot of time explaining our housing crisis and its disparate impacts across the city and the tolls of the pandemic on housing and community stability. Speaker Adams herself spoke passionately in her State of the Speakers Address about the importance of having people living in good conditions and that the foundation of health for every neighborhood in our city is save in stable housing.

We're also advocating for a COLA increase —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JACKIE DEL VALLE: All the discretionary awards and enhancement for the Community Land Trust, Legal Services for the Working Poor, Worker Co-op Business Development and Community Housing and Preservation Strategies. Thank you so much for this time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next from Douglas Houses, I'll turn to Carmen Nonaze(SP?).

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, not seeing them on, we'll turn to Rumi Akong.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

RUMI AKONG: Good afternoon. My name is Rumi Akong, I'm the Trans Justice Program Coordinator at the Audre Lorde Project. I'm here today to ask you to support stronger pathways to safe, long-term housing resources for all New Yorkers.

Last fall, I voted in-person, double masked in District 31 out in Queens. When I moved into Central Brooklyn five years ago, it was to be closer to my classes at the CUNY Graduate Center and my part-time gigs in food service. I rented apartments within District 41, 45, and now 37.

I choose to live in Brooklyn because these neighborhoods are among the few neighborhoods where low-income lesbian, gay, bisexual, two spare, transgender and gender nonconforming New Yorkers of color can just barely afford rent. Any time I've experienced housing insecurity, I've been offered a couch, a room, an entire studio apartment by friends and lovers in community.

Access to housing has not been too far out of reach for me. However, I've commuted with many community members from events whose journey home is more than 90-minutes away. At our events, too many trans people have shared with me that they hadn't eaten for 60-hours before our food delivery arrives. Our most marginalized New Yorkers, my community of trans and gender nonconforming people of color are on our 3,019 housing equity supports across the city are asking City Council and the Mayor's Office to collaborate in developing secure permanent housing.

Please help Trans Justice and the Audre Lorde Project develop resources to increase access to housing, food security and competent and comprehensive medical care within all five boroughs. I wish for my home city to be truly a sanctuary city.

For our institutions to be responsive, truly people entered and to prioritize those most disproportionately impacted. We, our discretionary ask, for the housing equity resource guide. Trans Justice members are available to co-work alongside City Council Offices finish budgeting for the fiscal year coming up.

New Yorkers of all gender expressions deserve access to safe and secure housing. So, let's talk –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

RUMI AKONG: All New Yorkers deserve housing. Housing for all New Yorkers. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And next, I will turn to Michael Winston Pam.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, the next person on our list is Lorraine Collins.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. That concludes Panel 36. Next, I will turn to Panel 37, Andrew Cesano, Priscilla Alexander, Petra Morales, Ricarda Pantaleone, Gloria Manzano. I will first call on Andrew Cesano.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, not hearing from Andrew, I'm calling on Priscilla Alexander.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Go ahead Priscilla, you're unmuted.

PRISCILLA ALEXANDER: Okay, thank you. Hi everyone. Thank you for allowing me to speak today. I am here on behalf of the Healing Ambassadors. I am the Healing Ambassador for PS 199 in the Bronx. I can vouch that the Healing Ambassador Program has been beneficial to our school community and also, our surrounding community. People love having the space where they can confide with one another, get resources, tips and information.

After our meetings, they leave feeling with a clearer head and a mentality that lets them know that they are not alone and they can conquer anything. Getting rid of this program will be very detrimental to our community. Healing Ambassadors have been the bridge that's needed between a community who is afraid to speak with Department of Education representatives or for anyone for that matter.

We have created a safe and trusting environment, keeping this program is what our community desperately needs. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Petra Morales.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will turn to Ricarda Pantaleone. Okay, next, we'll call no Gloria Manzano.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, not in the Zoom. I will now turn to Panel 38. Panel 38 is Salma Mohamad, Lily Liang, Ravi Reddi, Neta Goash, Lloyd Feng and Mohamed Q. Amin. I will first turn to Salma Mohamed.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will now call on Lily Liang.

LILY LIANG: Hi.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LILY LIANG: Hi everyone. My name is Lily Liang. I am the NYC Organizer of National Asian Pacific American Woman's Forum. We're the only organization

for abortion rights and uh, economic equity for AAPI women.

Well, I just want to point it out to the City Council that based on 2020 Census, that NYC has three million immigrants. New AAPI immigrants are almost 850,000. Most of them communicate with inadequate English. But unless it doesn't have a designated fund for quality translations, yes, there are over 100 languages appeared HRA's website but the Mayor's Office [INAUDIBLE 6:17:52] that they use Google translate and cannot guarantee accuracy.

And we have identified numerous translation errors and the most common thing we hear on the street while doing canvassing from mothers, seniors, cannot have someone who speak my language to help me navigate the application of public benefits. But there is now a translator for by the city agency.

So, the community-based organizations pick up the work and the factual translators for government agencies. They help with schools with parents and the doctors with patients and the low-income communities who need to sign up for subsidized housing or food stamps. But their work are not —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LILY LIANG: So, I just want to call on City Council to recognize the work and the need to fund AAPI organizations. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Ravi Reddi from the Asian American Federation.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

RAVI REDDI: Thank you so much to Committee Chair Brannan. My home Council Member, Council Member Hudson and all Council Members here for this endurance test of a hearing. Special thanks to Malcom, I don't know how you're doing it.

I'm Ravi Reddi, the Associate Director of Advocacy and Policy at the Asian American Federation where we proudly represent the collective voice of more than 70 member nonprofit serving \$1.5 million New Yorkers. We want to thank Speaker Adams for advocating our communities behalf during the State of the City Address and pushing for change and for Council for asking the critical question than advocating for our community throughout the Executive Budget hearing. Specifically, when it comes to mental health, AAF just recently released a first Asian focused mental health directory in our city.

Featuring more than 100 culturally competent language accessible mental health therapists and the database is growing.

Here is some of our mental health recommendations. I'm just going to race through these. Provide increased consistent investment in Asian mental health organizations to build bilingual and culturally competent staff capacity and expertise to address the increasing needs of our clients with severe mental illnesses.

Develop the capacity of Asian serving community-based organizations to identify mental health needs and provide non-clinical interventions. Develop and finally develop workforce initiatives that create a pipeline of Asian mental health professional skills in bilingual and culturally competent mental health care. And on language access, we're thankful that City Council has expressed support for the Community Lingual Interpreter Bank and worker co-ops for that support – that support the need for quality language access from within our communities. Now we need the funding to bring this home to the tune of \$2.25 million for the Community Lingual Interpreter Bank and 300K per worker co-op for three worker co-ops

covering African, Latino and Asian languages. The Asian One is the one that Asian American Federation would focus on.

In addressing public safety and anti-Asian hate, we urge City Council to continue our Hope Against Hate Campaign, which amongst other things has already trained thousands of upstanders through training with partner organizations through the city since last year and implement these other recommendations. Increase funding for the APAC Community Support Initiative to the tune of \$600 million in order to sustain, expanded direct services that are seeing an increased demand as well as fund critical anti-violence programming in our hope against -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

RAVI REDDI: Finally, uh, you know there are a few other things we'd like to discuss but we'd also just like to raise up the fight of our seniors and are thankful that they have been prioritized in several ways, through the Exec Budget hearings and in the Stated City's Speech.

For now, thank you and our written testimony will feature more thorough breakdowns of our community and organization asks. Thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Netta Goash.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next we'll turn to Lloyd Feng.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LLOYD FENG: Good afternoon and I just want to apologize for my COVID voice. My name is Lloyd Feng, I am a Policy Coordinator at the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families CACF. The nation's first and only Pan-Asian children and families advocacy organization that leads the fight for community equity. CACF also leads the 18 percent and growing campaign, which brings together nearly 78 AAPI organizations across all five boroughs of the city to fight for a fair and inclusive budget that protects the needs of our most vulnerable AAPI community members.

There are currently over 1.5 million residents of AAPI descent in New York City comprising over 18 percent of the city's total population. AAPI New Yorkers are the fastest growing racial ethnic group and voting population in New York City, New York State and the nation. Despite our communities

expansive growth and development, the needs of AAPI New Yorkers continue to be overlooked, misunderstood and uncared. Last year, AAPI organizations received less than 4.5 percent of City Council discretionary funding and less than 1.5 percent of social service contract dollars.

Therefore, we call on Council to expand funding to the following: AAPI Community Support Initiative to \$6 million to fund critical programming including mental health support, racial literacy, hate crimes intervention, gender-based violence intervention and prevention, youth programs and other culturally responsive services needed to build long-term care and healing for our AAPI New Yorkers during this critical time. Access Health NYC to \$4 million to sustain the citywide initiative that fund CBO's to provide education, outreach and assistance to all New Yorkers about how to access health care and coverage and Communities of Color Non-Profit Stabilization Fund to \$7 million.

The first Council fund of its kind that aims to build the capacity of NYC nonprofits in recognition of the fact that orgs led by people of the community are best equipped to meet the needs of the community.

We also call on City Council to ensure an investment and baseline of \$6 million to DOE to establish a permanent central system for immigrant and limited English proficient family communications and expansion of the \$4 million investment made last year.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LLOYD FENG: To address the racial inequities that have underwritten the rise in anti-Asian violence in this city. Resources must be allocated to CBO's that have trust and deep ties within our diverse communities.

Thank you so much and a big shout out to Malcom here.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Mohamad Q. Amin from Caribbean Equality Project.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MOHAMED Q. AMIN: Hi, good afternoon everyone. My name is Mohamed Q. Amin and I am the Founder and Executive Director of the Caribbean Equality Project, founded in 2015 in response to anti-LGBTQ hate crime violence in Richmond Hill Queens. Caribbean Equality Project is a New York City based community

organization that empowers advocates for and represents Black and Brown LGBTQ Caribbean immigrants in New York City. We are a proud coalition member of the Asian American Children and Families, CACF, which leads the 18 Percent and Growing Campaign.

In New York City, South Asian and Indo-Caribbean New Yorkers had the highest COVID rates infection and hospitalization in 2020 due to limited lack of access to culturally congruent testing and vaccination sites. Including neighborhoods of Ozone Park, South Ozone Park in Richmond Hill Queens.

Even before the pandemic, being underfunded has led to our community-based organizations who experience growing capacity uncertainties, rising costs and inadequate resources to support our undocumented and documented communities in sustaining vital and lifesaving services such as culturally competent mental healthcare, immigration support for LGBTQ asylum seekers, language accessibility and domestic violence resources.

We call on the New York City Council to invest in and protect our marginalized communities by increasing funding to the communities of color, nonprofit stabilization fund to \$7 million. During

the pandemic, this funding became essential to help the Caribbean Equality Project build capacity to respond our communities emergent needs. From training, our community action team volunteers, to address food insecurity by distributing culturally response groceries, fresh produce, EPE and safe sex products to expand in the organizations leadership capacity to advocate for culturally, inclusive and linguistically COVID-19 testing services.

The Communities Color Nonprofit Stabilization Fund was critical in addressing and relieving these ongoing challenges.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MOHAMED Q. AMIN: AAPI New Yorkers and LGBTQ people have always been essential workers. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted immigrant communities and it will take years to recover from its economic crisis. Our diverse intersectional communities can no longer be neglected, underfunded and under resourced. Thank you for the time to testify today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will call on Adrianna Dufey(SP?) from the New York City Coalition for Domestic Work.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, that concludes our panels. I'm now going to announce the next five, so people can be ready. So, Panel 39, Emma Katz, Julian McKinley, Jimena Frankel, Modicella Sosa and Manerva Contreras.

Panel 40, Jonathan Robinson, Keith Signora, Roxanne Delgado, Christina Fernandez and Destiny Tucker.

Panel 41, Jeannette Boca Negra, Sarah Nisble, Stephanie Glass, Victoire S., Jessica Marshal. Panel 42, Lyric Thompson, Katherine Clad, Ombre Shamet, Brandan Acton Bond and Harrison New House. Panel 43, Cheryl Warfield, Eleni DeSiervo, Jessica Chen, Francine Garber-Cohen, Taryn Sacramone. Beginning with Panel 39, Emma Katz.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list was Julian McKinley.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JULIAN MCKINLEY: Good afternoon Chair Brannan and distinguished committee members. My name is Julian McKinley, I'm the Senior Director of Democracy at Work Institute and I'm testifying today as a

member of the Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative, also known as WCBDI.

Since 2014, WCBDI has created more than 1,000 jobs in pathways to business ownership. We've reached more than 9,000 entrepreneurs with education and technical assistance. We've created more than 175 worker owned businesses that offer higher hourly wages, better working conditions and importantly, opportunities for Wealth building for Workers.

Worker Cooperatives are businesses that are owned and managed by the people who work in them and I want to share the impact of worker ownership with you. Now, the South Bronx is home to the largest worker cooperative in the United States, CHCA and CHCA has transformed home healthcare locally. A traditionally low-wage, high turnover yet essential industry where the vast majority of workers are BIPOC immigrant women.

They've raised job quality and industry standards through on the job training and skill development. Now, this is a fundamental component of worker ownership that's investing in long-term worker success. Now, compared with similar programs, CHCA has nearly tripled job placement rates with quality

wages and doubled long term employment. When you invest in worker ownership, you invest in a more resilient future for businesses and for workers.

And now, in response to COVID, WCBDI sought to preserve conventional businesses we love and the jobs we rely on. At the request of SBS, we provided the signature service of the Employee Ownership NYC Initiative. It's the first initiative of its kind in the U.S. and we've helped more business owners than ever access support for a more resilient and equitable approach. Worker owned small businesses are unique in their ability to establish, grow and retain community wealth as well as to create stable, dignified work for all New Yorkers.

We ask City Council to continue investing in workers cooperatives through WCBDI as an innovative, economic and workforce development strategy by enhancing WCBDI funding to \$5.012 million for FY23. Thank you for the opportunity today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Jimena Frankel.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list is Modicella Sosa(SP?).

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next I will turn to
Manerva Contreras (SP?).

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I heard a voice I thought.
Okay, that concludes Panel 39. I will now turn to
Panel 40, Jonathan Robinson, Keith Signora, Roxanne
Delgado, Christina Fernandez and Destiny Tucker. We
will start with Jonathan Robinson from the Marine
Park Alliance.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JONATHAN ROBINSON: Hi—

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uh —

JONATHAN ROBINSON: Hello?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: There we go. You are
unmuted. You can begin.

JONATHAN ROBINSON: Hey, okay, great thank you.
Good afternoon, I'm Jonathan Robinson, Communications
Director for Marine Park Alliance. We're a nonprofit
that advocates for our name sake park. Today, I'd
like to share with you the letter our Board Chair
Mariah Carroll Dalessandro wrote to Mayor Adams
regarding the inadequate state of parks funding.

Dear Mayor Adams, it is paramount that I share with you the concerns of my organization and the constituency and advocates for particularly regarding the lack of resources and support parks receive to fulfill their critical role in our communities. The city's parks have received inadequate funding for over four decades and the meager funds that are allocated to them are inequitably distributed.

Marine Park, the largest city park in Brooklyn has nearly 800 acres of green space across its natural grasslands, salt marshes, and its recreational areas. It has a range of uses including leisure and sporting activities, ecological conservation, and outdoor recreation. With proper support, you could stand alongside the lights of Central and Prospect Park as a preeminent New York City destination. And it has nowhere near the needed amount of staffing and upkeep for a park of its size and potential.

As things stand, even if it were to receive additional staffing and resources, this would likely come at the expense and to the detriment of another city park. Marine Park Alliance works hard to bridge this gap, providing volunteer programs to maintain

the park and free recreational and cultural programing to enrich the experience of all park visitors. Yet MPA and other charitable organizations that champion Marine Park, can only do so much.

For a healthy, thriving greenspace, services like these should be ensured through the city's budget. Furthermore, as a vital point and connection between social service providers and the people who depend on those services, parks should have an ample budget, not face deep budget cuts that result in the loss of critical part in jobs and services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only underscored the need for parks and showing just how stretched their already thin resources are. I implore you to change this disheartening status quo. Please dedicate one person of the budget to New York City Parks. Signed, Mariah Carroll Dalessandro Ward Chair. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Mr. Robinson and Minerva was in attendees, now on panelists. So, next, we'll call on Minerva Contreras.

DANIELA CONTRERAS: She is my sister but I will be testifying on behalf of her and everyone else. So, my name is Daniela Contreras, a former domestic worker and currently an Organizer at the National

Domestic Workers Alliance, also a volunteer at the BDA at my child's school and a constituent of District 43. I'm here today because I want to speak up on behalf of the people who while so many of us have the opportunity to be safe at home. While the pandemic was hitting hard, they had to go to work and care for the families they work for, unfortunately, many of them risking their lives. As we say at NEWA, domestic work makes all the work possible. Today, we're here because someone is caring for our loved ones at this event.

In 2021, even while the pandemic was happening, domestic workers were fighting to pass a bill. Unfortunately we won. We had great supporters, like employers from Hand and Hand that were supporting us but 300,000 workers are currently looking for more rights and more benefits and while we're passing laws, they're not able to get access to this benefits. So, we're asking for the Council to please allow us to get those \$300,000 that we're asking so that we can support other domestic workers, we can support workers and let them know that they have protections and that we want them home, a workplace

and the space to be treated with respect and dignity
and thank you. Sorry.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, that's alright, thank
you, appreciate that. Next, we will turn to Keith
Signore. I hope I pronounced that right.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list, we
will turn to Roxanne Delgado.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list,
Christina Fernandez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next I will call on
Destiny Tucker. Okay, I'm going to move to Panel 41.
Panel 41, Jeanette Boca Negra, Sarah Nisble,
Stephanie Glass, Victoire S., Jessica Marshal. I'll
first start with Jennette Boca Negra. Sarah Nisble,
Stephanie Glass.

STEPHANIE GLASS: Hi.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

STEPHANIE GLASS: Can everyone hear me? Okay,
great.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, yup hmm, hmm.

STEPHANIE GLASS: Hi, I'm Stephanie Glass. I am personally very familiar with the Strategic Response Group and I can tell you first hand that as a unit, they are violent, cruel and functional useless at counter terrorism and they must be disbanded by eliminating their immense budget.

In April of 2021, I was at a March in honor of a 13-year-old who had been killed by Chicago PD, Adam Toledo. For some reason, the SRG had a particular interest in us that night. That night, I was with a friend who tended to walk in the back of the March to make sure everyone was safe. I remember very clearly, my friend is walking backwards away from the line of SRG following us with his hands up and Captain Julio Delgado, who is the Captain of Strategic Response Group Two. Suddenly, he just points at my friend and he says, get em. And four officers push in and grab my friend and they're manhandling him into the cuffs. And I'm freaked out and I'm screaming and screaming, "let him go. Let him go, he didn't do anything." And the SRG officers are shoving me back.

And then suddenly, I see a different friend of mine on the ground and she has four or five SRG

officers on top of her. She is this very short Black woman and multiple men have their knees on her back and her limbs and they're holding her down and she's screaming in pain.

These men are in full body armor covered in weapons. There is no way my friend in her miniskirt was posing a threat, much less a terroristic threat to any of them. In that moment, I thought she was going to die.

At the moment Frank James opened fire, the SRG were throwing out the possessions of homeless people and arresting their supporters. That is a fact. They only exist to intimidate and traumatize people who are trying to do the right thing. Their only purpose is to hurt people. I am not a terrorist. I am a taxpayer. I'm a good neighbor. I try very hard every day to do the right thing and the SRG live in my nightmares. If — I believe the Speaker said at the beginning of the meeting, the Budget is a moral document.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

STEPHANIE GLASS: If the budget is a moral document, which I agree that it is, the SRG cannot be funded. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Victoire S. Sorry if I mispronounced that.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting Time.

VICTOIRE S.: Uhm, hi. My name is Victoire. I'm a New Yorker here to urge City Council to completely remove funding from one of the NYPD's most violent units, a Strategic Response Group.

On June 5, 2021, I was violently arrested by the SRG while protesting the illegitimate curfew imposed on Washington Square Park. That night, hundreds of SRG officers rushed into the park and before I knew it, one of them had slammed me to the ground. Had I not been carrying a backpack that cushioned my fall, I could have fractured my skull.

Despite being compliant and yelling that I was resisting, four officers insisted on carrying me by each of my limbs. I cannot express how distressing it was to have been carried with my legs spread apart in the air by two male officers. I wish I could say I'm the only person this has happened to but I'm not.

In fact, like Stephanie mentioned, this is just one of the many instances of SRG brutality we've witnessed over the past two years. I've personally seen the SRG beat, shove, drag, pepper spray, tase,

kettle, strip and humiliate civilians, press, medics and legal observers at protests.

I've witnessed the SRG thrust heavy bikes into people's chests and use the L-Rad, a military weapon that can cause ear damage and migraines, even when not used at its full power. Removing the SRG from policing protests isn't enough because the unit also harms communities. Specifically, Black and Brown communities outside of protests.

In 2018 SRG officers were involved in the murder of Saheed Vassell in Crown Heights. More recently, they have been assisting in the city's violent homeless sweeps, destroying the property of houseless folks. The SRG needs to be stopped.

I urge City Council to disband the Strategic Response Group and prevent it from ever being recreated in any form. Thank you and I will also be later reading the testimony for Kelsa, just as a note.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uhm, next we're going to turn to Jessica Marshall.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JESSICA MARSHALL: Hi, my name is Jessica Marshall. I am proud to be one of the many who left

their city at birth to realize their dream of coming to New York City to live, work, and raise a family.

My students too – I'm an Adjunct Professor. Have come from all over the country and they're ecstatic to be starting their adult lives here in New York City. This is a city that is all about tolerance and doing the smart thing. And today, I'm here as a New Yorker, a teacher and a parent to urge you, esteemed City Council Members to do the right thing and remove the funding for the NYPD's Strategic Response Group from the NYPD's budget.

This group tasked extensively with fighting terror, has attacked New Yorkers including our most idealistic young people who take to the streets calling for justice and change. It's a source of shame for all of us who've seen the videos and at this point, that's pretty much all of us.

Thanks to a study by the Human Rights Watch, we know that the SRG is specifically training its members to attack people from groups calling for progressive change. And that the SRG's efforts have disproportionately affected people of color.

In that report, New York City, the city that we love, seems like one of the throwback regimes so

popular in other parts of the country. Cities and states, where bullies believe they can silence people calling for social equity. Come on. That's not New York. We should be leading the country, not following its worst examples.

City Council Members, you have the opportunity to fix this and approve that New York City, the city the people around the world dream of is back and better than ever. Please, I urge you to remove the funding from the NYPD's SRG and instead, invest in these wonderful organizations that have testified here today. Thank you so much for your time and your work.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and now we will go to Panel 42, Lyric Thompson, Katherine Clad, Ombre Shamet, Brandon Acton Bond and Harrison New House. We will first turn to Lyric Thompson.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I'm going to now turn to Katherine Clad.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next turning to Ombre Shamet. Okay, next on the list is Brandon Acton Bond. Okay, next is Harrison New House. Okay, I'm

going to turn to the next Panel 43 but I will announce a few others. Panel 43, Cheryl Warfield, Eleni DeSiervo, Jessica Chen, Francine Garber-Cohen, and Taryn Sacramone.

Panel 44, Ms. Amel Vega(SP?), Jeff Kuntz, Nathaniel Evans. Panel 45, Zachary Katznelson, Shalonda Curtis-Hackett, Shania Morris, and Zolema Dominquez. Panel 46, Aji Gaye, Laura Jean Hawkins, Jeninia Ding(SP?) and Meghan Chappell.

Panel 47, Debra Ack, Albert Scott, Beverly Pabon, Jeremy Caplin, Valerio Orseli(SP?). And Panel 48, Randy Dillard, Alejandro Corieat(SP?), Stephani Espinal, Karen Asner, Rachel Barkley, Damian McShane(SP?), Sarah Williams, Ivan Felkner, and Suzette Simon.

I'll first start with Cheryl Warfield for Advance More Opera.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CHERYL WARFIELD: Greetings. Thank you Chair Brannan and Finance Committee Members for the opportunity to testify in support of an additional \$100 million in funding for arts and culture. Culture generates billions for the economy and has employed nearly 400,000 people in New York City in

the past. Communities with cultural assets show better outcomes for education, aging, health and against crime. Arts initiatives provide greater access to the arts.

I am Cheryl Warfield, a Professional Opera Singer, Su-Casa Teaching Artist with the Bronx Opera and Founder of More Opera. We make opera accessible in underserved communities through culturally responsive programs that showcase Black themes. We presented free outdoor concerts of opera, spirituals and Caribbean music in Spanish and English in Washington Heights and East Harlem through a grant initiative last fall.

Now, we are in partnership with the Department of Transportation to present the program in public spaces around the city. I urge you to support culture vibes request for an additional \$100 million in the Fiscal '23 budget for \$50 million in CIG and CDF baseline funding. \$45 million in grants for strategic initiatives and an additional \$5 million to increase staffing for TCLA.

The additional \$100 million would bring the city's annual investment in culture to less than one quarter of a percent. That's 0.24 percent to be

exact of the city's total budget. I wish to thank
New Yorkers for —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CHERYL WARFIELD: And Culture at Three for
including more opera in its efficacy work and I thank
you Council Members for your efforts towards a
greater, more equitable, and just New York. Thank
you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will
turn to Eleni DeSiervo.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ELENI DESIERVO: Thank you. Good evening Chair
Brannan and members of the Committee on Finance. My
name is Eleni DeSiervo, Senior Director of Government
Relations at the Lincoln Center.

Today, I implore you to prioritize the cultural
sectors request for an additional \$100 million
investment from the city in the Fiscal Year '23
budget as a down payment toward Cultural for All.
Supporting the cultural sector is the key to moving
New York City's holistic economic recovery forward.
Culture creates jobs is part of the ecosystem
supporting small businesses and is economic
development.

From our [INAUDIBLE 6:51:07] to construction workers, we work to support union jobs. At a time of high employment, Lincoln Center accelerated its timeline for the new David Geffen Hall to get New Yorkers back to work. By supporting 6,000 jobs, awarded 43 percent of construction contracts to MWBE's and developed a workforce development program with Turner Construction after 30 local residents on track with full-time union positions.

Culture is a pathway to upward mobility for the leaders of tomorrow. Lincoln Center invests in students through programs like the DOE's middle school addition camp participating at the Summer Youth Employment Program, Ladders for Leaders and CUNY Cultural Corp. We know this is important to raising the next generation of New Yorkers or dance artists as administrators.

Art is healing. Throughout the past two years of uncertainty, culture played an essential role in the city's pandemic response. Despite incredible loss, organizations found new ways to engage audiences to help us process our collective grief grappled for injustices and continue to heal. At Lincoln Center, we firmly believe in rejuvenating power of the arts

and we're dedicating our summer season, called Summer for the City with hundreds of free events for all New Yorkers to rejoice for member reclaim, a city built on equity inclusivity.

And the arts is interwoven in social service and civil life. We've hosted countless community graduations, blood drives, food distributions, naturalization ceremonies. You know we encourage the City Council to restore –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ELENI DESIERVO: Initiative funding, like Autism Awareness and Geriatric Mental Health Initiative. As a proud member of the 34 Cultural Institutions Group, we encourage the City Council and the city administration to work together to pass the additional \$100 million request under the NYC Culture Vibe. Thank you for listening.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Jessica Chen.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JESSICA CHEN: Hello everyone. My name is Jessica Chen. I am Artistic Director and Choreographer of JChen Project, a contemporary dance company. Thank you Malcom, Chair Brannan, Council

Members and my colleagues for the time to speak today.

New York City is a place where culture thrives and trends are set. The arts are vital to our city's soul and our collective humanity, as well as an essential, economic driver. New York City Comptrollers report before the pandemic at NYC's creative industries employed nearly 300,000 people and it accounts for 13 percent of the city's total economic output, totaling \$110 billion.

As the most populated city in the United States, we have the power to set trends globally. Let's use this power to make a positive change in our city and our country. Trends I would like to see reflected in this city budget includes: One, a significant investment in the arts. My colleagues at New Yorkers for Culture and Arts, Cheryl who just spoke, Eleni who just spoke and all other cultural workers who have testified today, request for an additional \$100 million investment in culture, which brings us to a .24 percent of the city's total budget. Let's start there.

And two, budget equity for the Asian American Pacific Islanders communities. 2021 saw a 343

percent increase in anti-Asian hate crimes. At the same time, API is the fastest growing racial group in New York City, currently representing 18 percent and growing. We are advocating for budget equity. JChen products mission is to create dance works that emphasize identity, cultural diversity and belonging. Our work challenges stereotypes and negative biases.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JESSICA CHEN: We believe that culture connects and representation matters. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have to help navigate the budget negotiations. Thank you so much for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Jessica and next we will turn to Francine Garber-Cohen from the Regina Opera Company.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

FRANCINE GARBER-COHEN: Can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

FRANCINE GARBER-COHEN: Okay, I'm Fran Garber-Cohen, President of Regina Opera. For 52 years, Regina Opera has offered fully staged operas with four orchestra and English super titles in Sunset Park and underserved low-income community. We also present many free concerts in public accessible

spaces in Sunset Park, Bay Ridge and other sections of Brooklyn. One result is that we bring money to businesses in these areas from money from tourists from our staff, from our musical artists. We provide affordable professional level entertainment in accessible venues. The performances bring people together, especially senior citizens which make up 65 percent of our audience.

The need for cultural enrichment is reflected in the fact that over 4,000 people usually attend our performances each season due to COVID-19, Regina Opera lost a ticket income from about two years of shows. We lost most of our private sponsorship and we've relied on public funding from the Department of Cultural Affairs and Council Members Brannan and former Menchaca, to pay for rent, insurance, phone, to keep our company alive.

From the March 2020 shutdown until May 2021, we never gave up the task and joy of bringing happiness to our friends and neighbors by offering recorded Operas and concerts online. Now, we have returned to fully staged operas with a full orchestra but the audiences are only 50 percent of our prior attendance, greatly reducing earned income.

Donations and grants have also not returned to prepandemic levels. Making it difficult to plan for the Fiscal Year '23 season due to loss of funds. We cannot retain singers, staff, orchestra members. Many have not returned to a company after being laid off.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

FRANCINE GARBER-COHEN: So, we request again, just like the other members, we request additional funding, \$50 million for Department of Cultural Affairs and \$5 million for the Department of Cultural Affairs to hire additional staff needed to process the grant proposals.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Taryn Sacramone.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TARYN SACRAMONE: Thank you Chair Brannan and members of the Committee. I'm Taryn Sacramone, Executive Director of Queens Theater and Chair of the Cultural Institutions Group. A diverse coalition of 34 cultural organizations who share a public, private partnership with the City of New York and are located in all five boroughs, including Zoo's, gardens and performing arts organizations.

The city's cultural sector has proven time and again its capacity is the number one driver of tourism and it has been the impetus behind all of the city's past recoveries. As my colleague said, the importance of our sector, the services we produce and the revenue we generate towards the economy are underrepresented in the city's budget.

Today, we are coming together to request an additional \$100 million investment. This investment known as NYC Culture Vibe, the in visionary investment in building the city's economy will bring the annual investment in culture to less than a

quarter percent of the city's total budget. And represent a commitment toward the ultimate goal of reaching one percent for culture.

This includes \$50 million in funding for the Cultural Institutions Group and Cultural Development Fund baselined. Baselined support to sustain these organizations, plus \$45 million in funding across five strategic initiatives, including the establishment of a cultural equity fund to support BIPOC led and serving organizations. \$10 million in tourism and marketing, \$10 million for workforce development, \$5 million in accessibility, \$5 million for artists and money to increase the staffing.

Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and now I will turn to Panel 44, Ms. Amel Vega (SP?), Jeff Kuntz, and Nathaniel Evans. We will first turn to Ms. Vega.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I will turn next on my list to Jeff Kuntz.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on the list, Nathaniel Evans.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

NATHANIEL EVANS: Hello.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, you can go ahead. We can hear you.

NATHANIEL EVANS: You can hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

NATHANIEL EVANS: Okay, yes, thanks for having me. My name is Nathaniel Evans, I'm a member of Freedom Agenda. Uhm, this is the great value in closing Rikers Island and now it's the protection of life. When your life is not the ultimate goal to look forward to then life takes on little meaning.

Today, the Department of Correction is for more suffering and loss of too many lives instead of care and control as it claims to be its purpose. It is time to stop the devaluing of life that is being perpetuated within the system design or pretrial detention and not death.

New York City does not have a death penalty, so there's no reason for anyone to lose their life within the system. Value life above the system of dehumanizing and death that is taking place on Rikers Island. The Mayor is proposing to hire over 500 new CEO's. Department of Correction already has the largest budget and staff than any Department of

Corrections in the country. DOC does not need any more guards, that the Federal Monitor has made clear. DOC needs transparency and accountability to maintain the dysfunction and reduce the harm people in their custody are experiencing every single day.

The \$63 million of taxpayers money proposed for more jail guards should actually go into more vulnerable communities in our city. This action will validate the true purpose of a city budget, which will also contribute the public safety. We need to make urgent investments into the most vulnerable communities in our city. Investments need to be made in developing people that have a social impact into the community. For instance, creating one on one mentorship programs for individuals who leaves from Rikers will ensure the lowering of recidivism, thereby improving public safety as a whole.

I encourage this Committee to also fully fund –
SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

NATHANIEL EVANS: The Board of Corrections which serves as an independent oversight board that monitors New York City jail system. My last phrase, in closing, do not increase DOC's already bloated budget. Instead we should be deflating DOC's budget

and redistributing those resources to the communities that the jail system is extracting its population from. Thanks a lot, good day.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 44. Next, I will turn to Panel 45, Zachary Katznelson, Shalonda Curtis-Hackett, Shania Morris and Zulema Dominguez. I will first turn to Zachary Katznelson.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ZACHARY KATZNELSON: Hi, good afternoon. Sorry about that technical difficulty for a moment there. I'm Zachary Katznelson, I'm the Executive Director of the Lippman Commission. Thanks for the chance to testify. I'm here to talk about Rikers.

As we all know as Mr. Evans was just saying, lives on Rikers are at great risk, both staff and incarcerated people alike but the Council can help ease this crisis even as we take the essential steps to close Rikers. Critically, Rikers cannot safely handle a number of people that are locked up there right now, not with the current staffing crisis. Safely lowering the jail population will allow the Department of Correction to consolidate operations to close jails. That will mean fewer officers in need

on any given shift. Overtime costs will come down. Safety should go up and this is not just about opening the gates. This is about safely and smartly lowering the population. I'm going to give you two ways the Council can help do that. First, please continue to push to increase funding for supportive housing, particularly for people who are in the system which is called justice involved supportive housing.

Now the corporation for supportive housing analyzes the system and so, there are 2,500 people, more than that could go through Rikers every year who need supportive housing but haven't been able to access it. We spend over \$1 billion, well more than \$1 billion incarcerating them every year. Supportive housing for these folks would cost over \$100 million. Far better investment with far better results.

Second, 90 percent of the people at Rikers are there pretrial. 1,400 folks have been there for more than one year waiting for trial and what's probably the most expensive dangerous waiting room in the world. Every week they're there, it cost New York City another \$13 million.

If we fund for \$600,000, a pilot project that was done in the Brooklyn Courts, run by the Center for Court Innovation make that citywide to help speed up cases, we can lower the jail population by about 1,000 people. A huge amount with just a small investment, basically the cost of incarcerated; one person on Rikers for a year, we can change thousands of lives, safety will increase, positive outcomes will increase. This is the way forward. Thanks so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Shalonda Curtis-Hackett.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SHALONDA CURTIS-HACKETT: My name is Shalonda Curtis-Hackett and I'm a parent of three at community-based Doula and part of Dignity in Schools Campaign NY. As a parent and community member, I stand with New York City Youth who have worked tirelessly to get the Mayor and his administration to understand why police free school is important and to invest in them, their care, mental health and restorative justice over policing.

Our Black and Brown children are adultified, dehumanized and criminalized in schools. Eric Adams

and his administration are refusing to listen to the demands of students. Instead, the Mayor's NYPD and DOE are doubling down on youth criminalization. The DOE has passed the buck. During the Executive Budget hearing process, the DOE refused to acknowledge that they are funneling DOE funds to the NYPD. They've tried to deflect and escape accountability for the harms of school policing. Let the record show, every dollar spent on school policing is a dollar not spent on education.

The Mayor spreads fear to hide the harms and financial and social costs of youth policing. City Law makers jeopardize students childhood when they choose to funnel hundreds of millions of dollars into school policing. Full commitment to funding for school restorative justice models will make schools safer for all students. We are calling for new initiatives of \$75 million directly to 500 high schools to hire school-based restorative justice coordinators. The city must stop hiring new cops.

When you negotiate the adopted budget, push to hire 2,000 New Yorkers to strengthen schools, fund school-based restorative justice, support students social and emotional wellbeing and move money away

from policing. In light of such tragedies as yesterday in Texas, Buffalo and the countless other acts of violence.

School should be a safe and supportive space for children to process their emotions and seek counsel. Unfortunately, I am afraid this will be co-opted and used as an opportunity to capitalize on fear. When students arrive in schools, they should be greeted by community members and teachers, not police. Young people and families must be well-resourced, have borough resourced schools and communities. It is the city's government duty to make sure that happens. It is important to fund evidence-based solutions and school policing is not one of them.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SHALONDA CURTIS-HACKETT: I urge the City Council to reject the Mayor's cuts to the public school system. The Mayor's proposed budget would set the city back. It doesn't have to be this way. When you negotiate the adopted budget, please push for all the initiatives I said earlier.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Shania Morris.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 SHANIA MORRIS: Hello, my name is Shania Morris,
3 my pronouns are he, him. I am a Youth Leader at Make
4 the Road New York and the Urban Youth Collaborative.
5 I am in the tenth grade. I go to high school in
6 Staten Island. Everyone please listen to what I'm
7 about to say. In New York City, Black and Latinx
8 youth represents 91 percent of all arrests, despite
9 being only 66 percent of the students population.
10 Ain't that injustice?

11 For almost a year, I have been fighting for
12 mental health support, guidance counselors, nurses,
13 teachers, after school programs for Black and Brown
14 students. Students like myself are constantly
15 ignored. All we are fighting for is our own future.
16 It inferiorities me to see how each year, City
17 Council Members turned their back on us as they keep
18 passing the city budget that spends more than \$400
19 million on police in schools, yet there is no proof
20 that school police actually prevent conflict in our
21 schools. In fact, we have seen it mostly escalate
22 any conflict that does happen, making things worse.

23 As a Black gender non-conforming student, every
24 time I go through a metal detector at my school, I
25 feel intimidated, threatened by police officers.

Especially after what happened to me in eighth grade. I was pushed to the ground and held down by school cops when they thought I was going to fight another student. School police don't know how to deescalate situations. Often they try to resolve confrontations with more violence.

Schools are supposed to be welcoming. Police in schools don't make me feel safe or any of the other students, yet Mayor Adams Executive Budget even funds nearly 800 empty school police positions. New York City must not hire a single new cop.

New York City already funds more school cop positions than school counselors.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SHANIA MORRIS: Social workers or restorative justice coordinators. New York City already has the largest school police force in the country. For comparisons, Los Angeles has 20 times less police officers in schools than we do, despite having more than half of New York City students population. It is time for students voices to be heard by the City Council. Stop funding racist policing and start funding our futures. Thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you and next we will turn to Zalima Dominguez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

AKERIA ADAMS: Hi, Zulema's an organizer and I'm the student leader and we'll be testifying. My name is Akeria Adams, I'm a Youth Leader at the Urban Youth Collaborative and a high school senior in Queens. I'm here today testifying on the city's budget, which will fail me and my peers by prioritizing funding police in schools into the resources that help students like me.

As a student that attends a heavy police public school with mostly students of color, I witnessed and experienced the impact of spending so much money on school cops.

Every day when I walk into school, the first thing I see is about ten cops waiting to scan students at metal detectors. But getting support inside the school building is hard to come by. My school has one college advisor for 100 students, 100 seniors and one guidance counselor for 400 students. As a senior, I wanted to start my college application process early but it was difficult for me to do so

with both my schools college advisor and counselor being busy to give me support.

When I tried to reach out to them, they were often busy and would postpone the time we were supposed to be meet for weeks. This led to me feeling discouraged to apply and even led to me missing application deadlines. School cops can't help solve issues that students have, yet the Mayor's Executive Budget plans to again spend \$400 million on them next year. In addition to being a waste of precious funds, school police also harm students. School police are known to escalate situations. I have seen school police in my school use excessive force and hurt students until they are bruised.

I have seen them arrest students and yell at them during metal detector searches. I once had a fork in my bag for lunch and they told me I couldn't bring it to - I couldn't go to class unless I threw it away. Making me late to class. I have been taken aside nearly every other week to be scanned by a wand because of harmless items like a hole puncher and jewelry. I really don't know how the city officials sleep at night knowing that they are funding cops

instead of care for students. And it is a slap in the face that the Mayor's Executive –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

AKERIA ADAMS: Budget funds nearly 800 vacant school compositions. We don't need hundreds of new cops in schools. We need support. Stop neglecting our needs and give us police free schools and resources that help us. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes testimony for Panel 45. I'm going to announce a few more panels since we're approaching the end of what I announced. So, I'm going to announce Panels 50, 51, 52, 53, 54.

Panel 50 will be Brian Carmichael Freedom Agenda, John Paris Govoculous(SP?), Michael Pope, Amanda Porch, Ari Silver, Rosalyn, Chauncey Young, Rasheedah Brown Harris, Crystal Rodriguez, and Erica Bravo. Panel 51, Ruwee Lee, Yaka Yatzillo(SP?), Justin Pascone, Chris Langfield. Panel 52, Dahlia Forte, GG Racake, Indira Martinez, Benjamin Spierman, Carlye Eckert, and Scott Daly. Panel 54, Kimberly Olsen, Richard Bronner, Athena Bernkopf, Beverly McFarlin, Cassondra Warney. I'll now start with 46 Aji Gaye.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 AJI GAYE: Good afternoon everyone. My name is
3 Aji Gaye and I'm a freshman at high school in the
4 Bronx. A youth leader with Sisters and Brothers
5 United and the Urban Youth Collaborative. I'm here
6 today to urge the City Council to stand up for young
7 people and support our demands for police free
8 schools.

9 Young people across New York City have been
10 constantly calling for the complete divestment of a
11 policing infrastructure that has historically
12 disproportionately targeted Black and Latinx young
13 people like myself. I am tired of attending a school
14 with more school police than counselors. I am tired
15 of attending a school that doesn't feel welcoming. I
16 am tired of feeling like I'm entering a prison.

17 As a freshman, it was shocking to see this many
18 police at my school on the first day. I immediately
19 thought something had happened and quickly realized
20 that all those cops were there for me. I was the
21 schools biggest threat on the first day and my second
22 day and my third day and every day I go into school.

23 Cops are aren't there for my safety. When they
24 see me and my peers, I'm a threat, so I don't
25 understand why New York City continues to hire them.

At this moment, many of you are probably wondering why even after yesterday's tragic incident in Texas, me and my peers are still calling for police free schools. The answer is that the public school system has been used as a tool to further criminalize Black and Brown young people and while we know violence in our community is real, we also understand that violence is a symptom of underfunding, disinvestment and neglect of our basic human rights. When people can't access living wage jobs, quality healthcare, education and mental health services and affordable housing, I can go on and on and what we see is a community reacting to that neglect and I'm not justifying violence but I hope you can understand that if we address the root cause of these issues, than we've been taking a step forward to transforming our communities into healthier and safer environments.

You as City Council have the opportunity to begin to shift the conditions in our schools. To do this, NYC must spend \$75 million to hire restorative justice coordinators in five high schools and \$45 million to implement restorative justice practices. Unlike policing, restorative practices seek to

1 address the root cause of the harm. It would look at
2 youth like me as a person rather than a potential
3 problem. New York City must spend \$75 million to
4 hire 500 new school counselors and \$75 million to
5 hire 500 new school social workers.
6

7 School counselors and social workers provide key
8 mental, emotional and academic support for us that is
9 badly needed. While we need a one to one fifty ratio
10 of counselors, social workers and students, NYC's
11 ratios for these are like one to four. We must have
12 a one to 181, 82 ratio for school police to students.
13 NYC must spend \$75 million to hire 500 community
14 members.

15 When students arrive at school, they should be
16 greeted by community members, not police. We must
17 prioritize hiring Black and Brown community members
18 to greet students as they enter the building and
19 check in visitors. Additionally, we need youth
20 advocates, parent coordinators and community outreach
21 coordinators to help contribute to the safety and
22 flourishing of our communities. New York City must
23 baseline \$5 million on the mental health continuum.
24 Youth in New York City need a better mental health
25 system, especially living through this pandemic. We

are calling for a mental health continuum. A network of mental health services that connect students with in school services and community services to get the care they need.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

AGI GAYE: Lastly, they must not hire a single new school cop. New York City already funds more school cop positions than school counselors and social workers combined. New York City already has the largest school police force in the country by far. For a comparison, Los Angeles has 20 times less police in their schools than we do, despite having more than half New York City school population.

Today, I ask the City Council Members to not give into Mayor Adams call for more school police, which is a tactic of fear mongering. Instead, you need to stand up and vote for budget that divests in our criminalization and invest in our care. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we will turn to Laura Jean Hawkins from Astoria Queens Sharing and Caring.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LAURA JEAN HAWKINS: Good evening, oh, good evening Chair Brannan and all the members of the Council who have been powering through today's

In her State of the City Address, Speaker Adams outlined her vision to expand health and opportunity to improve safety and recover from the pandemic. She talked of equity, health equity in our communities and that resonated with me. 28 years ago, Sharing and Caring was founded by four breast cancer survivors to address the disparities that existed in Queens County. It was our feeling then and it is still today that Queens residents should not have to leave their borough to get top notch quality cancer screening, treatment, support and care. That's why we have been proud to partner with the Queens Cancer Center and the entire HH system to provide much needed assistance, treatment and care to cancer survivors, including those currently undergoing treatment.

The onset of the pandemic two years ago changed our world, especially for cancer survivors, who are among the most vulnerable populations being effected by COVID. We, as an organization have seen a

tremendously increased need for our services over the past two years. Specifically the need for individual and group counseling, as well as emergency financial assistance.

People who pre-COVID would have been considered employment secure, housing secure, food secure, were no longer and they turned to us for help and we have helped them to the best of our ability. Due to the increased need that we have experienced, which is 25 percent from 2019, we are seeking \$200,000 under the Council's Cancer Services Initiative.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

LAURA JEAN HAWKINS: Is that my time?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, if you could just wrap up with a sentence or two.

LAURA JEAN HAWKINS: Okay, yeah, so due to our increased need, we're asking for the Council's continued support and to consider allocating \$200,000 to Astoria Queens Sharing and Caring. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and just to remind everyone, testimony should be emailed to testimony@concil.nyc.gov. So, anyone that is speaking today and has not emailed their testimony, they should do so. We collect it up to 72 hours

after close of this hearing. Next, we will turn to Janiah Ding(SP?).

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next we will turn to Meghan Chappell.

MEGHAN CHAPPELL: Good evening Chairperson Brannan and members of the Committee on Finance. My name is Meghan Chappell and I am the Program Manager at Empire Liver Foundation.

The New York City Council Viral Hepatitis Initiative funds 34 organizations to provide the most innovative and effective Hep B and C treatment, prevention and linkage to care education initiatives in the country. There are currently approximately 230,000 New York City residents effected with chronic hepatitis B and 116,000 believed to be infected with chronic hepatitis C.

Since 2014, the Council funding, City Council funding has enabled community health organizations to hire and train Hep B and C patient and peer navigators, healthcare providers and Hep B and C screening care treatment and healthcare navigation and educate New York City communities at risk to promote, prevention and care.

1 Empire Liver Foundation was established by
2 leading liver specialists dedicated to improving
3 health in New York City communities at a time when
4 New York City needed expert guidance on the novel
5 hepatitis C treatment regimens. We've developed
6 evidence-based clinical trainings for over 3,000 of
7 New York City's frontline primary care providers who
8 serve communities most impacted by viral hepatitis.
9 With the introduction of the first ever New York City
10 Viral Hepatitis Elimination Plan by 2030, continued
11 support of this initiative is vital to the health and
12 wellbeing of New York City's most vulnerable.
13

14 For funding in 2023, we are asking for a minimal
15 investment of \$2 million to support the necessary
16 work in order to achieve elimination. Our
17 organizations members lead in the latest medical
18 advances for care of liver diseases. We recognize
19 the stark gaps in healthcare access and work to
20 expand viral hepatitis treatment. Prescribers and
21 New Yorkers can access these life saving treatments.
22 With your support we can continue to offer care,
23 treatment and education to protect the health and
24 lives of our New York City communities and eliminate
25 viral hepatitis together. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And next, I will call on Debra Ack.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

DEBRA ACK: Uh, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

DEBRA ACK: Hi, good afternoon Chairman Brannan. Good afternoon Council Members. My name is Debra Ack and I am a Board Member of the East New York Community Land Trust. We are a grassroots non-for-profit boots on the ground volunteer resident led CTL fighting for community control of land, so that what is built in our community meets the needs of truly low-income Black and Brown residents forever.

East New York CLT and approximately 19 partner organizations and growing, are part of the citywide CLT initiative that seeks \$3 million in City Council discretionary funding in FY2023. We ask the Committee to recommend renewed funding for the citywide CLT initiative in the FY 2023 budget. We rely on the CLT. We, the CLT, rely on initiative funding to move our work forward. We have done so much with the Council funding in the past and there is much more work to be done.

1
2 East New York CLT has given me my every day
3 senior life meaning in assisting my community with a
4 voice. We need this funding to continue to move
5 forward in educating and bringing the community into
6 the visions of CLTs. Some of our accomplishments
7 are: We've grown our steering committee to 30 plus
8 active members who move our work forward in three
9 committees that meet weekly over Zoom. All steering
10 committee members are East New York and Brownsville
11 residents, volunteer residents.

12 We've held multiple virtual community events and
13 multiple in-person events to educate residents about
14 the Community Land Trust and model -

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

16 DEBRA ACK: And as - I'll finish shortly. And as
17 we ask the community residents what they would like
18 to see on these vacant lots that would uplift the
19 community. We have deepened our community
20 relationship through full giveaway, lot cleanups,
21 rallies and an upcoming Take Back the Block, block
22 party. We have surveyed 255 vacant publicly owned
23 lots in East New York every other Saturday morning.
24 Seeking input from the residents. Nothing should be
25 built in our community without the residents input.

Who better to know what is needed in our community but us. Our slogan is, Our Land, Our Community, Our Decision. We need the City Council to invest in –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

DEBRA ACK: Our city and the citywide CLT movement. Please renew funding for the CLT Initiative at \$3 million. Thank you for this time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call Albert Scott.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on my list is Beverly Pabon.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

BEVERLY PABON: Good afternoon. Okay, thank you. Good afternoon City Council Committee of Finance, members and its Chair. My name is Beverly Pabon and I'm the Officer of 2 East on 27th Street Tenant Association and we were contracted into the Tenant Interim Reach Program at 1997 at the behest of HPD with the goal and promise of becoming home owners at the end of three to five years.

I'm here asking the City Council approval for Fiscal Year 2023, \$200 million in the city capital to be allotted to the Tenant Interim Lease Program, also

known as TIL for the total construction rehabilitation of TIL buildings. Committee of Finance members, some of you have already heard about the flight and plight of the TIL buildings and its struggle with the lack of support under HPD financially. But let me tell you why it's important for you to fund the TIL program as it originally was.

One problem that it is with the ANCP program that HPD has committed to having us go into since 2012, is that there will be a debt, a large debt on the building once the rehabilitation is done. If you fund the TIL program, there will be no debt, private debt for the TIL buildings, their tenants, then perspective home owners of low income.

Another benefits of this is that we will be able to decrease the profit dollars in tax dollars that the developers get and which is under the ANCP program. It started out with a flat fee that they would get under the ANCP program but now, it's ten percent of whatever the construction cost is. That's a lot of money and incentive for them to spend as much money as they can and then put it on the backs of the tenants and perspective tenant owners of low

income. There will be no need for no third party management company under you guys funding the –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

BEVERLY PABON: Tenant program, because the tenant buildings have 25 years of experience of monitoring and management buildings under TIL. We ask that you please stop funding the ANCP program and fund the TIL program in totality for the construction work that need to be done for all the buildings that are suffering right now under the TIL program. Please fund \$200 million for the year and it will go a long way and save the city a lot of money and homelessness in the future for buildings that are – and people that are in these buildings and not in homeless shelter. Thank you so very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call Jeremy Caplan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

GIGI VERKAIAK: Good evening, I am not Jeremy Caplan but I'm speaking on his behalf and on my behalf. My name is Gigi Verkaik and I am the Senior Director of Development at Encore Community Services. A nonprofit providing life saving support to older adults in Manhattan. We're known for our home cooked

1 scratch, delivered, home delivered meals which go to
2 about 1,000 seniors every day and we also provide 70
3 percent of the city's recovery meals. An emergency
4 food program that was assisting about 12,000 seniors
5 who were or became food insecure during the pandemic.
6 This program ends at the budget, the end of this
7 budget season. There is nothing in place to provide
8 for the thousands upon thousands of seniors who will
9 go hungry. Right now, there's \$8.8 million in the
10 budget and it's estimated to keep meals running is
11 about \$40 million.
12

13 Sadly, it has often been the case when it comes
14 to city budgets including this year's executive
15 budget. It's being balanced at the expense of human
16 service organizations like Encore and even more
17 concerning, at the expense of our Asian population.
18 This despite that we are in an era where the 65 plus
19 population is growing at a rate 12 times faster than
20 those under the age of 65.

21 You may have heard this budget touted as generous
22 and that may be the case in some areas but for
23 organizations like Encore and other nonprofits, it
24 barely allows us to stay afloat. This, as we take on
25 more and more responsibility to ensure that our

growing population of older adults is not going to
bed hungry. The DFTA budget continues to make up
less than one half percent of the overall budget.
However, organizations like Encore get it done
anyway. We find ways to make sure seniors get their
meals, whether we're tested by the extreme obstacles
of the pandemic, be it the lack of working building
buzzers or elevator. In spite of it all, Encore and
other nonprofits deliver on sweltering days of
summer, the snowiest days of winter, climbing up
numerous flights of steps to reach those who are
homebound, hungry and in need.

Encore will always come through but we cannot
continue to cover the funding gaps in places -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

GIGI VERKAIAK: On the backs of our overworked
workers and our dedicated staff. Hashtag Just Pay;
we call on every member of this Committee, every
Council Member and the Mayor to do right by our older
adults and our human service workers. Thank you for
the time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will
turn to Valerio Orseli(SP?).

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, we will call on Boris Santos.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Boris, you're unmuted if you can begin your testimony.

BORIS SANTOS: Hello, can you hear me? Good evening. Thank you so much to the Council, to Mr. Chair. I appreciate you and we at the East New York Community Land Trust appreciate you dearly as well for this opportunity to speak, as my colleague Madam Debra Ack the Secretary said, I am the Treasurer of the East New York Community Land Trust and hello?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sorry, go ahead.

BORIS SANTOS: Oh, yeah. Hope I can get recompensed for that time but we at the East New York Community Land Trust use community-based urban planning or what we call planning for us, by us to collectively determine what will be developed on vacant and underutilized land.

As the secretary said, we operate on our board, three part model. Five of us are East New York residents. Five of us hear from the community at large. East New York and Ocean Hill Brownsville, excuse me and then, five of us are skilled

1 technicians and business owners and so forth. Since
2 the Council first funded the CLT Initiative funds
3 from \$1.5 million, we are asking for a doubling of
4 that, \$3 million and that's why I'm here for. Of
5 that \$1.5 million, we've only gotten as a CLT,
6 \$98,000. That only covers money for one staff. So,
7 we're looking to expand to at least three staff and
8 we've helped generate and actually secure 1.5 times
9 the city amount of allocated funding that you all
10 have given us.
11

12 And I just quickly want to talk about one project
13 that's a mixed use development that we're planning
14 for. Two mixed use developments we're planning for.
15 One on Hinsdale and Blake and one on Sutter and
16 Elton, which will amount to 124 units of affordable
17 housing, rental and homeownership.

18 Our land report, which I'll provide forward or is
19 provided in my written testimony, the link to,
20 details all the lots that we want to go after and
21 seek to target for ownership. And we beyond that, we
22 are doing other revitalization, such as in the Jewel
23 Streets, which lays 20 feet below regular grading.
24 I'll just finish up.
25

And then beyond just supporting our operating costs, the city needs to invest its capital dollars on CLT led projects. In the long-term this means creating a CLT acquisition fund because we know to truly remove speculation off the market, we have to take over costs, the private land.

And in the short term, we must increase investment to HPD's capital budget to further increase production of affordable housing. The numbers reported and the numbers even given after Adams made an increase is just simply not enough.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

BORIS SANTOS: I'll leave it at that and thank you so much again Council and Mr. Chair.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll call now Panel 48, Randy Dillard, Alejandro Corieat(SP?), and Stephani Espinal. We'll start with Randy Dillard.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will call Alejandro Corieat.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on the list is Stephani Espinal.

STEPHANI ESPINAL: Good afternoon.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

STEPHANI ESPINAL: All the brave people here.

[INAUDIBLE 7:37:32].

My name is Stephani Espinal and I am an Organizer with Family Immigration Services based in Queens. We are a nonprofit legal service provider with a community-based organizing. I want to do this really quickly and I'm here because it's an urging this community to immediately and fully implement Local Law 53 and to work with the courts to ensure that no case move forward without [INAUDIBLE 7:38:03].

Immediately and fully implement Local Law 53. The intent of Local Law 53 is clear. To fund, trust tenant organizing groups working in low-income communities of color to lead. Outreach and education efforts through community meetings, workshops, tenant association meetings and more. This is the vital work of tenant organizing and ensuring that tenants are informed of right to counsel and supported prior and eviction case fighting.

For tenants to exercise their rights, they need to know they have them. Local Law 53 was signing into -- in -- sorry. Local Law 53 was signing into law in May 2021, with an effective date of November 2021.

It has required the city to work with trusted tenant organizing groups to engage and educate tenants about their right to counsel. We were told the city allocate 3.6 million stores built had it. We know that the mayoral and City Council Administration take time to transition but now, the evictions protection four months ago and hundreds of tenants are being denied right to counsel.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

STEPHANI ESPINAL: We can't wait. The city is now out of complaints. It is a law and needs to implement this now. Please, the city needs this and it is urgent. Call on Mayor Adams to fully fund and implement Local Law 53 and ensure that the Office of Civil Justice is allocate \$5 million. We're looking forward to working with you on this.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

STEPHANI ESPINAL: Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 48. Panel 49 is Karen Asner, Rachel Barkley, Damion McShane, Sarah Williams and Ivan Falkner. I'll first start with Karen Asner.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

New York City parks are critical city infrastructure but they are not funded that way. In our park, we lack the staff and resources to achieve even the basic level of maintenance. We hold volunteer cleanups every other Saturday from April to October just to pick up trash and do other maintenance projects in the park. Large areas of our park do not get mowed during most of the summer. Our park is overwhelmed with invasive weeds that are four to six feet high along the pathways and throughout the park. And this is not a cosmetic problem. We smother other plants and they block site lines and they make our parks unsafe.

Just last summer, I personally intervened a domestic violence situation where a man had pushed

1 his companion into those weeds and was assaulting
2 her. He thought he was invisible and could assault
3 her there without any worry. And lack of maintenance
4 in our parks is also just bad policy. It's pennywise
5 and pound foolish. Growing weeds on park stairs for
6 example, break up the stairs and lead to million
7 dollar capital projects to repair those same stairs.
8 We in our park in St. Nick have one main set of
9 stairs that has been fenced off for more than ten
10 years because it was broken and dangerous and now
11 it's estimated to cost almost \$3 million to repair.
12 Basic maintenance could have prevented this problem.

13 And the impacts of these funding shortfalls for
14 New York City Park funding are most acutely felt in
15 communities like ours in Harlem, which lack the
16 extensive private funding that supports parks in
17 wealthier parts of the city. This is not how it
18 should be done and it's not how other large cities do
19 it. They generally allocate closer to two percent of
20 their budget to city parks. So, equity here
21 absolutely demands increased funding –

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

23 KAREN ASNER: For our community parks and so I
24 ask the City Council to please push back hard on the
25

Mayor's Executive Budget and increase the funding for all New Yorkers and their parks. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next I will call on Rachel Barkley.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

RACHEL BARKLEY: Uhm, hello and good afternoon. My name is Rachel Barkley and I'm a law student at Benjamin and Cardozo School of Law. I'm also the partner of a member of the stewardship team at NYC Parks. I'm testifying today to ask that the Council push Mayor Adams to commit to providing one percent of the city's budget to parks. Personally, the city's park provided a refuge to me through the strenuous work that is the first year of law school. I've taken time to visit the parks to relieve stress and get involved in my community.

At these volunteer events, I've seen New Yorkers from all walks of life and equity backgrounds coming together and forming community by cultivating the land, planting trees and doing their parts to keep our city green and clean.

Additionally, as the partner of a park, we had gotten a close connection to the parks team and I have had the immense pleasure of getting to know the

wonderful people who keep our city's green spaces safe and beautiful for all. Without this funding, so many parkee's will lose their jobs, which is a terrifying prospect knowing that these people have dedicated time and effort to the parks.

These parkees have jeopardized their safety through the pandemic for the sake of maintaining our parks. They put their livelihoods on the line and now it's up to you all and the Mayor to repay these parkees for their service by fulfilling Mayor Adams promise to dedicate one percent of the budget to parks. Thanks for the opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will turn to Damian McShane.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on our list is Sarah Williams.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SARAH WILLIAMS: Hello and thank you for your time. I'm Sarah Williams, Executive Director of Green Guerillas. A nonprofit organization that supports community gardens across the city.

We use a mix of education, organizing and advocacy to help people cultivate community gardens,

engage youth in historically underrepresented neighborhoods and advance food and environmental justice.

Our vision is for a sustainable, equitable communities across New York City. I'm here to speak in support of the budget request of the Play Fair Coalition as well as the New York City Food Policy Alliance. We are requesting one percent of the city budget for NYC Parks. A number that Mayor Adams repeatedly committed to and the funding of \$6.5 million for the Parks Equity Initiative and \$4.5 million to protect and conserve our natural areas.

New York City's park system has been underfunded and inequitably funded for 40 years, operating with just .5 percent of the city budget. We ask the Council to invest in Green Thumb by hiring more outreach coordinators providing youth with compensation for their work and compensating community gardeners for taking leadership roles within programming and mentoring the youth in Green Thumbs Youth Program.

We urge the Council to utilize food systems as a catalyst for building community wealth. Among other things, this would include allocating \$5 million to

1
2 establish a new food justice grant program housed
3 within the Mayor's Office of Food Policy that
4 supports community led projects to grow food justice
5 and build wealth in BIPOC and low income communities.

6 We request that the Council fully restore funding
7 for NYC composting programs. We were disappointed to
8 see that the Administration cut funding for the
9 reintroduction and plan expansion of the curbside
10 composting program. If NYC is to meet its climate
11 goals and waste goals and take the burden off of
12 CBO's that have stepped in to fill this gap, the city
13 must reinstate and fully fund the city's composting
14 program.

15 Community gardeners provide their neighbors with
16 tangible resilience, create food access, foster life
17 giving connections between people and nature -

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

19 SARAH WILLIAMS: Strengthen community bonds,
20 engage youth and foster biodiversity and
21 environmental resilience. The Council's investments
22 in programs will help advance equity across the city.
23 Thank you for your time.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next I will
25 call on Ivan Falkner.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, we're going to call Suzette Simon.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SUZETTE SIMON: Okay great. Hi, my name is Suzette Simon. I have an organization called NY Laughs and what we do is we use the power laughter to change New York City.

For the last 15 years, we've been producing events in city parks, museums; like the Brooklyn Museum Lincoln Center. And so, what we do is we basically believe that we use the power of laughter to heal and to bring happiness to New Yorkers. We've entertained over 27,000 New Yorkers in three boroughs and so, we put in a request because we really would love to come to the Bronx and be able to produce an event in the Bronx.

So, we're hoping that we've gotten funding already for Staten Island and so, we were hoping that the City Council would see you know some of the work that we do. That we serve seniors, we serve people of color. You know, people come to our shows from Access A Ride and so, basically we serve all of New York. And so, we're hoping that we can get funding

1
2 for the Bronx, as well as we're going to be
3 partnering with the Staten Island and New York Public
4 Library for an educational series on comedy, because
5 right now, Staten Island is the center of comedy in
6 New York.

7 And so, it's not just about performing but it's
8 also producing and uhm, and everything that goes
9 behind it, producing, writing, the technical skills
10 behind putting together things like that. So, we
11 want to serve the underserved community in Staten
12 Island as well as take it online. And so, we're
13 hoping that the City Council can see that you know
14 comedy is such an important business in the city. We
15 have the late night shows. It's a tourist
16 attraction. All of the top comedians. We have the
17 comedy capital world and it's not recognized and it's
18 under represented and so, we just really want to be
19 able to utilize comedy as a force for good in the
20 city. And so, that's what we're hoping.

21 You know like, you know you are our super heroes.
22 We even invite Council Members out to even tell jokes
23 and it's a great way for Council Members to engage
24 with their constituency in a different way. We've
25 had Council Member Rosenthal come out and tell a

joke. We had Council Member Brewer when she was a Manhattan Borough President come out and tell jokes. So, it's a great time for all. We invite New Yorkers to get out of the subways, get out of their homes. Put away their knives.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

SUZETTE SIMON: Come out and get your emotional support pigeon. Yeah, just come out and laugh. That's all. We really want to just make New York healthier and happier through laughter and build community. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, uh, that concludes Panel 49. So, I will now call on Panel 50. Brian Carmichael, John Paris Govoculous(SP?), Michael Pope, Amanda Porch, Ari Silver, Rosalyn, Chauncey T. Young, Rasheedah Brown Harris, Crystal Rodriguez, and Erica Bravo.

We'll first start with Brian Carmichael.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will call John Paris Govoculous.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will turn to Michael Pope.

1 MICHAEL POPE: Good evening, my name is Mike
2
3 Pope, I'm the Executive Director of Youth Represent.
4 We're a legal services nonprofit that supports young
5 folks 26 and under after a criminal system
6 involvement. Thank you for the opportunity to
7 testify here tonight.

8 As we all know the city's at a crossroads. We
9 are not yet out of the pandemic. Gun violence has
10 surged over the past two years and the humanitarian
11 crisis at Rikers is just getting worse. Opponents of
12 Raise the Age and Bail Reform have tried to blame the
13 surge in gun violence on those reforms but the data
14 tells a different story.

15 For the first 18 months, 18 months after Raise
16 the Age went into effect, shootings in New York
17 remained the lowest that they had been in decades.
18 Only months into the pandemic did gun violence
19 increase in New York City. Young people are looking
20 at the elected leaders to lead us out of this
21 pandemic and into a just recovery.

22 We've heard from many of these incredible young
23 people here today. They are looking for a lasting
24 community-based solutions to gun violence and not for
25 policies that blame and criminalize youth. As of

thig week, there were over 1,200 young people 18-25 incarcerated in New York City jails. And as you all know, the annual cost to incarcerate one person in DOC's custody over a year is over a half of a million dollars. Many times the cost of even the most expensive college.

Over those half million dollars per year and they can't even provide basic safety. There are so many better ways to spend this money. The city must divest from systems that surveil police arrest and incarcerate young people and invest in housing, education, green spaces, healthcare, living wages and employment opportunities and yes, legal services. We detail these investments in the Raise the Age Campaign 2022 and the Youth Justice platform that are in my written testimony.

Youth represent profoundly appreciates the support from Council this past year. This year has brought an overwhelming demand for our legal services and we deeply hope the Council will consider a new area of funding and supporting our request for an enhancement. Thank you and good night everyone.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Amanda Porch.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

VICTOIRE: Hi, I'm Victoire and I'll be reading a statement on behalf of Amanda Porch. Amanda is a Community Organizer who dedicates a lot of her time to helping the houses community. This is her statement.

Hello, my name is Amanda and I am a New York resident. I'm here today to talk about the NYPD Strategic Response Group. The Strategic Response Group is a violent unit of the NYPD that police protest. Since 2020, the SRG has been deployed to protests where they've abused protestors who are exercising their First Amendment Rights. Recently, the SRG has been deployed to make arrests at homeless encampment sweeps. On May 4, 2022, 50 SRG officers were sent to arrest me and seven other people who were standing on the sidewalk at an encampment sweep, trying to save the belongings of the unhoused people living there.

After the SRG arrested us, they ripped an unhoused person out of his tent. Five SRG officers were on top of him when they carried him away for arrest. After my arrest, I was mistreated in the holding cells. I was aggressively patted down to the

point where I felt like I was being assaulted. The SRG has traumatized community members time and time again. When the SRG shows up, we know that our safety is at risk. The SRG has no place in our communities for protests.

I'm asking the Council to disband the unit and reinvest its funds fully back into our communities. That the end of statement. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Ari Silver.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ari Silver we have -

[UNIDENTIFIED]: Sorry, I think that there is error with the Zoom, you unmuted the wrong account. Go ahead Ari.

ARI SILVER: Hello, my name is Ari Silver and I'm a New York City resident and I'm here to ask that the City Council remove the funding of NYPD to Strategic Response Group from the police budget. I've spent the last two years volunteering with ACLU of New York as a Protest Monitor. During these last two years, I have consistently seen first hand the brutality inflicted by the NYPD's Strategic Response Group, which was created at 911 to help supplement New York

1
2 City's Police Departments Counter terrorists and
3 efforts. I have seen first hand peaceful gatherings
4 of marginalized New Yorkers turn into unprovoked
5 beatdowns of the hand of the SRG.

6 In addition to the violence that the SRG has
7 inflicted upon activists, predominantly folks of
8 color. Fellow protests monitors and I have
9 experienced harassment, coercion and threats of
10 violence towards ourselves. Last summer, while the
11 SRG was enforcing a crackdown, or as they like to
12 call it curfew of gatherings at Washington Square
13 Park, a fellow protest monitor and myself were
14 threatened with the arrests for multiple SRG officers
15 for simply executing our duties.

16 Which aren't allowed according to the NYPD's
17 handbook. We even saw the SRG that night arrest
18 bystanders on their first date. Simply for being
19 near the NYPD made chaos. Even more recently, we
20 have seen the SRG assist the DHS sanitation and other
21 city agencies and their constantly recurring sweeps
22 of unhoused encampment. Where folks are simply on
23 the sidewalk and not blocking any traffic.

24 During one protest two years ago, after a car
25 rammed into a group of protestors outside the UN

headquarters, good Samaritans who were delivering first aid to the injured were brutally arrested by the SRG. They simply do not serve the needs of the community and instead, are directly responsible for inflicting harm and trauma against peaceful civilians just trying to exercise their first amendment rights.

You, the City Council have a great opportunity here to help serve the community and ensure that there is an end to this violence and to ensure that New Yorkers feel safe being able to exercise our first amendment rights. Just like every other American should be able to. So, that's why I'm here asking you, the New York City Council to disband the SRG and to help reinvest those funds, the billions of dollars which we are spending in this police department, to help ensure that -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

ARI SILVER: And I thank you for the opportunity. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Rosalyn.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will call on Chauncey T. Young.

1
2 CHAUNCEY T. YOUNG: Good evening all. My
3 apologies that I cannot undo my video this evening
4 but my name is Chauncey Young, I'm the Director of
5 the Parent Action Committee. I am a resident in the
6 Hybridge neighborhood in the Bronx and the Parent
7 Action Committee is a part of several coalitions that
8 have been testifying this evening including part of
9 Dignity in Schools, part of the New York City
10 Coalition for Educational Justice and part of the
11 Healing Centered Schools Working Group.

12 We'd like to address the way that the New York
13 City's Budget is going and ensure that funding is
14 going to support our students and families socially
15 and emotionally, put additional funding into
16 counselors and social workers for our students and
17 not fund punitive things for our students. We don't
18 need new metal detector technology in schools. We
19 need social emotional supports for students in
20 crisis. We also want to remind the City Council that
21 our last Administration put forward an incredible
22 goal of a culture responsive curriculum that they
23 called Mosaic that either was \$500 million or \$200
24 million depending on what you hear. But we want to
25 ensure that this current administration devotes time

1 and energy to develop that. We also would like for
2 the city to ensure that funding for the mental health
3 consortium, \$500 million is made permanently part of
4 the budget as well as \$6 million for our immigrant
5 families and language access programs. These are all
6 essential as well as restorative justice programs if
7 we want our schools to be safe and responsive places
8 for our youth.
9

10 I recommend everyone listens to our youth this
11 evening. It's hard for you to get out and speak as
12 well as parent leaders and we do of course want for
13 the parent ambassador program, which is a one year
14 program that we've done in collaboration with the DOE

15 —

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 CHAUNCEY T. YOUNG: With private funds to be
18 something that the city implements fully in years
19 going forward. So, thank you so much and we
20 appreciate you listening to us.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chauncey. Next,
22 we'll turn to Rasheedah Brown Harris.

23 RASHEEDAH BROWN HARRIS: Okay, can you all hear
24 me.

25 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can ma'am.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

RASHEEDAH BROWN HARRIS: Peace and blessings. My name is Rasheedah Brown Harris. My pronouns are she, her, hers and thank you for the opportunity to testify Chair Brannan, other City Council members and uhm, hey Malcom.

I'm proud to represent Legal Services NYC LSNY for this testimony. LSNY's mission is to fight poverty and seek racial, social, and economic justice for low-income New York City residents. Through litigation, advocacy, education and outreach, LSNY has advanced the interest of our clients and created systemic changes that strengthen and protect low-income communities. Thank you City Council for many years of your support. The Education Rights Practices at LSNY assists hundreds of New York City school children and their families to ensure equitable access to education.

I'm here today speaking not only as a legal services advocate but as a parent leader in education reform. Specifically with LSNY's Ed unit with the Healing Centered Schools Working Group. Me and my two siblings were raised by a single Black man, my father. He is a Vietnam Veteran suffering with

substance abuse issues, PTSD and other mental illnesses. We struggled as children. We moved around a lot. Living with friends, family members and neighbors. I was in a different school every year, sometimes two or three different schools with the one school here.

When I say the services we provide at LSNY, I wish we were able to get a hold of these services for myself and my family growing up. The schools should have been a safe place for me. It was not. The unjust education system that did more harm than good for us, still exists to this day. Therefore, the need for LSNY's education services are great. But our capacity is limited. We ask that you provide \$500,000 to support our access to education project, which delivers legal services to help children get the support they need to catch up and keep up with their education and support families with their social, emotional -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

RASHEEDAH BROWN HARRIS: Thank you, I'm going to finish. The support and advocacy we provide at LSNY takes a holistic wrap around approach with our families. That is nontraditional but very much

needed. Providing empathy and dedication to our community members like no other organization. We ask that you please support us so we can continue to support our school community. Thank you and peace.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Rasheedah. Next we will turn to Crystal Rodriguez.

Okay I will turn to the final panelist for Panel 50 Erica Bravo.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, that concludes Panel 50. I will now turn to Panel 51 Ruwee Lee, Yaka Yatzillo(SP?), Justin Pascone and Chris Langfield. We will first turn to Ruwee Lee.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on the list, I have Yaka Yatzillo. Next, we'll turn to Justin Pascone. Next on my list is Chris Langfield.

CHRIS LANGFIELD: Hi, thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Chris, I'm a longtime New York City resident and I'm the member of the New York City DSA. I want to talk about the completely inadequate and unacceptable affordable housing provision in the Mayor's revised budget. After all the hardship and death we've gone through

1
2 as New Yorkers, we're now faced with a housing
3 catastrophe as evictions cases are piling up and
4 property owners are squeezing us for even more rent.
5 I know people who live with four or five people in
6 one apartment who are still being forced to move
7 because of thousands of dollars of rent increases.

8 I worked as an emergency medical technician in
9 the city for three years, two of those years during
10 COVID. I've seen the shelter facilities that the
11 city claims are adequate and safe. I've seen the
12 state of NYCHA buildings and I've met many people in
13 New York who fell through the cracks and have nowhere
14 to live. This proposed budget shows that we still
15 have a city government which is completely
16 unresponsive to the needs of most New Yorkers,
17 especially the most vulnerable and especially the
18 100,000 school children. School children that don't
19 have a stable home.

20 If we continue along this path, we're going to
21 see more and more people evicted or forced into worse
22 living conditions. New York already caters to the
23 privileged and ignores the needy and Eric Adams seems
24 determined to continue that policy. I'm urging the
25 Council to invest \$4 billion into permanent and

affordable housing, which Eric Adams promised to do in this campaign.

Failure to do this would be devastating for millions of us. The only thing we want is to live in a safe affordable apartment, in our home city and we want the same thing for our neighbors. And my final statement to the Council Members is, don't sacrifice our future for developers and speculative real estate owners. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Dahlia Forte.

DAHLIA FORTE: Hi, my name is Dahlia Forte. I'm a New York City resident and a member of DAC's NYC Chapter. I'm here to voice my opinion by opposition to Mayor Adams Executive Budget and to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID-19 cases are surging, landlords are raising rents and families struggle to stay in their homes but the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over everyday New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and

education while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

Today, I urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing, including \$1.5 billion for the New York City housing authority and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and funding DOE mental health counselors and social workers rather than filling school police vacancies.

I also urge the Council to act on the two deadly crisis facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$1.3 billion for the streets plan, \$1.8 billion for green public schools and \$250 million for Fair Fares and \$10 million to expand lifesaving safe consumption sites to all five boroughs.

Finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's progressive return to law in order. I urge the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of new CO's for solitary confinement, a practice that the UN defines as torture. I urge the Council to

demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization programs like the ineffective and violent plain clothes units and the so-called Subway Safety Plan and ending all NYPD resources to mental health calls.

Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan for hearing my testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 52. I will now turn to Panel 53 Indira Martinez, Benjamin Spierman, Carlye Eckert and Scott Daly. We'll first start with Indira Martinez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

INDIRA MARTINEZ: My fellow New Yorkers and members of the Council, I was not born in New York City but like so many others, I've chosen to make it my home. As a young woman of color in rural Georgia, New York City represented a kind of safety for me. A place I could be myself, those accepting of people from all walks of life.

Since the Mayor took office, we've seen what safety means to him. It means, authorizing the NYPD to violently remove unhoused New Yorkers from public spaces. Last year was the deadliest year on record for unhoused New Yorkers.

1
2 It also means cutting the DOE budget by \$1.2
3 billion while simultaneously increasing the already
4 \$10 billion NYPD budget by \$690 million. This is the
5 Mayor's vision of safety. I am here to echo my
6 fellow constituents Rakia McKay, Katherine Clyde,
7 Christina Rodriguez Harts and others and voice my
8 vivamente opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive
9 Budget. I believe in the possibility of a truly safe
10 New York. One in which every single person has
11 access to safe housing and healthy food every single
12 day, schools that provide all children with what they
13 need to thrive. Clean parks where we can spend our
14 time without spending our dollars, carbon negative
15 infrastructure that actively fights against the
16 rising sea level lapping at our shores, land returned to
17 Lenape stewardship.

18 This future is possible and it is not idealistic
19 to ask for it. Government was created to meet the
20 needs of people and we have the resources, technology
21 and skills to accomplish all of these things and so
22 much more. What you lack is political will. Listen
23 to the people here representing community based
24 organizations. Why? Because they are doing your
25 work for you. On this very call, New Yorkers are

1
2 begging for their lives, then thanking you for the
3 opportunity to speak about it. About seven hours
4 ago, a Council Member joined the call and told us
5 that we needed to organize and rise up and I
6 appreciate the sentiment. But I can't help but find
7 it ironic that we're being asked yet again to do your
8 jobs for you.

9 Those who are most marginalized are being held
10 responsible for enduring and solving all of NYC's
11 most egregious injustices. Do your jobs, fight for a
12 budget that prioritizes the millions of New Yorkers
13 that are struggling to survive.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

15 INDIRA MARTINEZ: You report to us and
16 respectfully, I will not be thanking you for my time.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we're
18 going to turn to Benjamin Spierman.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

20 BENJAMIN SPIERMAN: First of all, good afternoon
21 to Chair Brannan and Council Members. I'm Benjamin
22 Spierman, a New York City resident, General Director
23 of Bronx Opera and a Board Member of the New York
24 Opera Alliance. Off topic, I also urge the Council
25

to adjust the Mayor's budget as requested by so many people and including Ms. Martinez a few moments ago.

Bronx Opera has received city support via the cultural development fund and through Council initiatives, using that support to work with kids after school with the Bronx's immigrant community and the senior citizens in addition to presenting 55 years' worth of opera performances.

Though my organization has needs, today I'm here to talk about our alliance and the impact our members make. Pre-pandemic, the 45 organizations in the New York Opera Alliance provided over 2,000 jobs to New Yorkers, providing these arts workers with over \$30 million in salaries each year. This includes people on stage and backstage, instrumentalists, administrators and more.

Organizations in our alliance usually bring in over \$90 million in revenue each year but obviously, that economic power has been challenged since March 2020. Most of survive thanks to a combination of creativity, and the support of our faithful funders very much including the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Men in small size opera companies all over New York City are an under appreciated source of economic power and we all know how to spend our money wisely but wise spending does not preclude the need for greater support. In that spirit, the New York Opera Alliance asks that the City Council support the request laid out in the 2023 New York Culture Vibe ask, particularly the \$50 million increase to the cultural affairs baseline budget.

At the least, we think and ask that the Council should hold the cultural affairs budget harmless for Mayor Adams three percent across the board cut. As we recover from the pandemic, we've all seen live audiences that are reduced from pre-pandemic levels. Your funding will help our community remain the bang for the buck industry that its always been and will help our producers keep working in the community and keep the music echoing in places and spaces all over New York City, outside of the —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

BENJAMIN SPIERMAN: And allow us to continue raising our voices as we help provide entertainment to audiences and dollars to the people who bring

opera to life in New York. Thank you for the chance to speak today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Carlye Eckert.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

CARLYE ECKERT: Hello, my name is Carlye Eckert.

Thank you for hearing my testimony today as a representative of Dance Parade, a nonprofit arts organization in New York City. I'm the Community Engagement Director for Dance Parade and my responsibilities are to coordinate year around dance education in schools and community centers across the boroughs, which culminate in the annual dance parade on Broadway and Festival in Tompkins Square Park.

That event took place this past Saturday. We held the 16th Annual Dance Parade and Festival in NYC and our theme was Back to the Streets. This was our first live event in two years with 10,000 dancers representing over 100 styles of dance. The Dance Parade and Festival was covered by ABC and BCCBS Telemundo and New York One and dozens of others, including a print addition of the New York Times as the number one pick in their weekend roundup.

On Saturday, Folk Dance Club Kaleidoscope, a bright and beach based childrens dance group led out the parade with a display of Ukrainian and Russian dances. This beautiful poignant performance shared with the public, the similarities and differences of these two peoples and cultures embodied side by side and unified in dance.

Our mission is to celebrate diversity inclusion and cultural equity through the promotion of dance in all its forms. Throughout the year, we serve the dance community by employing scores of teaching and performing artists based in New York City, which 94 percent are BIPOC artists and immigrants. And through our programs, we reach over 150,000 New Yorkers each year. We believe that live dance performance has the potential to awaken communal spirit, help the public and dance community heal from the pandemic and creates more vibrant and equitable society.

This year, through our community engagement programs, we've worked closely with 12 schools across the five boroughs to bring back in-person ten to twenty week dance education programs for K-12 students. And our teaching artists work in senior

centers March through June thanks to a partnership with the Department of the Aging.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

CARLYE ECKERT: Offer joyful, physical activity that supports coordination, flexibility, improved circulation and honors life experiences, strengthening connections between older Americans and vibrant NYC Arts and Culture.

Through our continued efforts and experiences at this time, we pledge to continue our work of bringing the joy of dancing in all its forms to New Yorkers. We're grateful to the DCLA and the Council's effort to support the cultural sector. We ask City Council to approve the request of NYC Culture Vibe. \$100 million in additional investment to the cultural sector and bring us closer to our goal of 100 percent for culture in NYC. Thank you very much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will turn to Scott Daly.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

SCOTT DALY: Good evening Chair Brannan and all members of the Executive Budget Committee. On behalf of the Board and the staff of the New York Junior

1
2 Tennis and Learning, NYJTL, I want to thank you all
3 for allowing us to testify today.

4 I also want to thank you all for hanging in there
5 for these past eight hours. It's been a long day for
6 all of us and I want to particularly thank everyone
7 here.

8 I am the Senior Director of the free community
9 tennis programs of NYJTL. NYJTL is the largest,
10 free, youth and teen tennis program in the country.
11 This year, we are seeking \$1 million, an increase of
12 about \$200,000 under the Council's Physical Education
13 and Fitness Initiative. Over the past years, we
14 believe we've seen it, the talent, the kids have the
15 talent and it's universal but the opportunity is not
16 and that's where the City Council comes in through
17 these initiatives.

18 We allow tenants to be played; you allow it to be
19 played in all 51 Council Districts throughout the
20 entire City of New York. Kids get the opportunity to
21 become physically fit. They have the opportunity to
22 reach new educational heights. The opportunity to
23 make friends. The good, the character development
24 that comes out of sports can not be understated.

Through the community chance programs throughout the city, we annually reach over \$85,000 kids in schools and parks throughout the City of New York. The overwhelming majority of these kids are Black, Latino, and Asian. The registration in each group is about 25 percent each. Two-thirds of each of the groups —

SCOTT DALY: Two-thirds of the group are ten

Again, I just want to say that I want to thank
for your time. We just ask and we join with

other youth providers in urging that the upcoming budget not be balanced on the back of the city's youth. Thank you very much everyone. I'm grateful for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and before calling Panel 54, I will announce Panels 56 through 60. Panel 56 Usara Tavares(SP?), Shannon O'Neill Fonseca, c(SP?), Eisha Ervin Joans(SP?), Yanni Sanchez. Panel 57, Barry Weinberg, Annette Robinson, Lorraine Collins, Randy Dillard, Uraldi Perez, July Colone(SP?). Panel 58, Darlene Jackson, Grace Ortez, Michael Pearls, Jeff Lau, Justice Laboy. Panel 59, Ella Wheel, Ken Mi Ung, Natasha Cappers. Panel 60, Clenintine Palmberg, Ethan Cyrus, Faith Catherine Jones, Leslie Gomez Rivera, Samantha Vargais(SP?). I will first now turn to Panel 54 Kimberly Olsen, Richard Bronner, Athena Bernkopf, Beverly McFarlin, and Cassondra Warney. We'll start with Kimberly Olsen.

KIMBERLY OLSEN: Great. Good evening everybody. First a huge thank you to Chair Brannan, to fellow Committee Members and to City Council staff. We are so grateful for your passion, your leadership, your

endurance, as well as your support of arts education here in New York City schools.

My name is Kimberly Olsen and I'm the Executive Director of the New York City Arts and Education Roundtable. New York City's public schools have been through a lot over the past two years. Lost learning time, suffering from the mental and emotional strain of remote learning, processing the trauma associated with the pandemic and racial injustices in our city and country.

Transforming our city schools starts with the arts. That's why I'm here today to call on our city to invest in dance, music, theater, visual arts and media education in the DOE budget. The arts provide evidence-based solutions for engaging students in learning, for increasing our parents engagement, improving academic outcomes, supporting student mental health and promoting well-being. We know that excellent arts education is the foundation and a launch pad for success in school and life. However, underinvestment in arts education in New York City has been recurrent.

Prior to COVID, a majority of principals, 67 percent said that funding for the arts was generally

insufficient. Only 34 percent of middle schoolers are meeting state arts learning requirements and now 17 percent of schools still lack a certified arts teacher, not to mention almost 30 percent of schools no longer partner with the many wonderful arts and cultural organizations that our city has to offer.

We want inviting, vibrant, colorful and thriving school communities and again, that starts with the arts. The Roundtable recommends that the city make sure that all schools, every neighborhood across all boroughs can provide recommended arts instruction to every single student by guaranteeing at least \$100 per student in dedicated funding to support sustainable arts ed for all. Continuing to devote 20 percent of academic recovery funding for standard based arts instruction –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

KIMBERLY OLSEN: In the summer and school year programs and restoring and baselining \$24 million for arts services. The arts are an essential part of every students academic program and the very fabric of New York City. Thank you so much for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we will turn to Richard Bronner.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next on our list is
Athena Bernkopf.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

ATHENA BERNKOPF: Hi, good afternoon all.
Apologies for my slow get up here. So, thank you for
the time to offer testimony today. My name is Athena
Bernkoff, I'm here representing the East Harlem El
Barrio Community Land Trust. We are part of the
Community Land Trust Initiative and we're asking for
\$3 million in support of CLT's growing and expanding
across the city.

So, East Harlem El Barrio CLT is one example of
what is possible through the Community Land Trust.
Since acquiring our first properties in November of
2020, we have been in the process of renovating
buildings that have been neglected for decades. The
rents of the four buildings in the project have been
projected – protected excuse me, at a range of 35-100
percent AMI, including four units set aside for
people experiencing homelessness. These rents are
stabilized for the long term future through a 99 year
ground lease built into our ownership structure.

At the same time, through ongoing trainings and relationship building with residents, we've been building out infrastructure for sustainable resident led governance of these buildings to ensure that those whose well-being are directly impacted are at the forefront of any decision making on the properties.

All of our residents are Black and Brown working class people, immigrants, elders, and people with disabilities who have been most vulnerable to the intersecting housing, health and environmental crisis that are devastating our communities right now. This work demands immense people power and organizational resources. Since what we are building on the larger scale is community capacity to sort our land, in addition to creating and preserving truly and permanently affordable housing.

As some of my colleagues have testified here today, Community Land Trust across the city are doing this work in different ways. From building out affordable commercial spaces to green spaces in environmental justice neighborhoods. We don't have time to waste on temporary and wasteful policies that

put people over profit – excuse me, that put profit over people in our communities.

Putting control of land and housing in community hands is racial justice strategy, is community safety strategy, is anti-displacement strategy and economic and environmental justice strategy. We are asking that the city's resources be directed to transformational work of community control of land. We're also asking that capital funding for the acquisition and preservation of community land be added to this –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

ATHENA BERNKOPF: Please sustain and expand the CLT Initiative. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll turn to Beverly McFarlin.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next we will turn to Cassondra Warney.

CASSONDRA WARNEY: Good evening. My name is Cassondra Warney, I work for the Corporation for Supportive Housing. I'm here to talk about how the city needs to invest in supportive housing as a

strategy to de-incarcerate Rikers Island and end homelessness.

My organizations mission, CSH is to advance solutions that use housing as a platform to deliver services, improve the lives of the most vulnerable people and build healthy communities. It's important to note that through the borough-based jail plan points of agreement in 2019, city leadership agreed to expand justice involved supportive housing, JISH, which is overseen by DOHMH, which has not yet happened.

We thank City Council for formally requesting the Adams Administration add, \$28.4 million to the existing funding dedicated to JISH. Supportive housing for the justice impacted. Review of the latest budget request has not been incorporated.

For background, we are urgently looking to improve access to supportive housing for those currently on Rikers Island with significant behavioral health needs and are homeless. In a recent analysis, we found several thousand people on Rikers Island, approximately 2,500 people in a given year are experiencing homelessness and struggle with ongoing behavioral health needs. When released, they

1 don't find adequate support, they cycle through
2 crisis systems. It's costing the city \$1.4 billion
3 annually just to incarcerate this group of 2,500
4 people. This group needs an intervention of
5 supportive housing. A combination of affordable
6 housing with voluntary individualized services.
7

8 We know supportive housing works as a solution.
9 It reduces jail recidivism. It will cost the city
10 \$108 million annually to provide supportive housing
11 to this group of people. So, \$108 million versus
12 \$1.4 billion.

13 So, I want to elevate two essential budgetary
14 elements. We need to expand JISH and increase the
15 annual commitment to supportive housing. For JISH,
16 the rates are so low, no provider has stepped forward
17 to apply for the RFP in the last three years. We
18 need more funding to increase the rates. Further
19 detail is available in the written testimony I've
20 submitted. Looking forward to working with you on
21 this.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll
23 turn to Anna Pestoresa.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.
25

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, we'll turn to Victor Herrera. Okay, next, I'm going to call Elizabeth Langer. Next on our list is Donna Hilton. Okay, next we're going to call Lisa Gitelson.

LISA GITELSON: Thank you very much. Thank you Chair Brannan and distinguished members of the City Council for the opportunity to testify during this virtual hearing. We applaud the Council and youth services Chair Stevens for prioritizing programs and services for young people and are thrilled by the commitment for summer programming and SYEP.

To that end, summer camp and recreational experiences are vital to the well-being of young people and we hope that the City Council can support programs like those offered by the Fresh Air Fund.

I'm Lisa Gitelson and I'm the CEO of the Fresh Air Fund. For 145 years, we've provided the city's children with summer experiences that help them thrive and succeed, emotionally, academically and socially. Despite having to suspend our traditional camp and visiting host programs for the past two summers due to the pandemic, the fund ensured that New York City's children were able to have the summer experiences they deserved and needed.

1
2 Last summer, the funds served over 2,400 children
3 in New York City based on in person and virtual
4 programs and we employed over 200 youth ages 18-24 as
5 counselors across our programs. We continued our
6 summer spaces programming working with the Department
7 of Transportation and the Open Streets Program to
8 give children ages 5-12 across four boroughs safe
9 places to play outdoors under the guidance of
10 counselors and mentors.

11 Our summer team academy for teens ages 13-17, was
12 a stipend program that gave young people insights
13 into possible careers, work experience and through
14 four partnership skills and a credential and
15 certificate. Although we did not have traditional
16 camp, families were able to visit our camps for three
17 day, two night overnight trips to relax and enjoy
18 time together and we had additional virtual programs
19 to keep children engaged, learning and having fun.
20 This summer, we are delighted to be returning to our
21 camping and visiting host family programs while
22 continuing some of the new programs we developed
23 during COVID. Children will have the opportunity to
24 go to four of our six camps and to reunite with
25

volunteer host families they visited prior to the pandemic.

In addition, we're excited to continue our stipend summer team academy and will have the opportunity to provide more in person programming.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

LISA GITELSON: The past two years have been especially difficult to the children in our city. We are asking and encouraging the City Council to support and fund organizations that will provide essential summer programming to New York City's children this year. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call on Salma Mohamed.

Okay, that concludes panel 55. I will now turn to Panel 56, Usara Tavares, Shannon O'Neill Fonseca, Mirna Aparicio, Eisha Ervin Joans, and Yanni Sanchez. First start with Usara Tavares.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next we'll turn to and call on Shannon O'Neill Fonseca. You can go ahead, thank you.

SHANNON O'NEILL FONSECA: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is

Shannon O'Neill Fonseca, my pronouns are she and her. I'm a Senior at Hunter College studying psychology and I'm also an Education Organizer with the Parent Action Committee in Bronx School District 9 and with the Healing Center Schools Coalition. I have been blessed to work with and be in community with our powerful healing ambassadors and parent leaders in the Bronx and citywide. Now, more than ever it is necessary to have spaces that are trauma informed, culturally responsive and centered in healing.

We must support initiatives where we can built community of students, parents, families and community advocates and community members. I am here to urge the city and the New York City Department of Education to continue investing and expanding the Healing Ambassador program and in addition, to develop a Youth Ambassador program as well.

We must invest in programs for our students that are supportive and not punitive. This includes restorative justice practices, culturally responsive and sustaining education, language access and providing mental health services and support for hiring additional social workers and counselors to be in your schools.

We are also asking for a \$5 million budget for mental health continuum and a baseline \$6 million budget for immigrant families and language access.

Inclusivity starts here. It starts with us and accessibility is caring, is healing, is letting our community members that no matter what, they are seen. They are supported and they are loved just for who they are, no matter our race, where we're from, the language that we speak, our gender identity or our sexuality. We are deserving of support, love and care and we will not stop until this is how every single person feels in all of our spaces.

And I'm going to repeat that again. We will not stop doing this until every student, parent, family member, community member feels included, loved and supported. Thank you and once again for allowing me to speak today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Shannon and next, I'll call on Mirna Aparicio.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on our list is Eisha Ervin Joans.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will call on Yanni Sanchez. Okay, that concludes Panel 56. We're at Panel 57, so I'm going to announce 61-65 because I announced up to 60 and for folks, if people have been coming and going from this Zoom all day. When I called your name, you were not on the Zoom, there is still an opportunity to speak after we have concluded the panels. I will make an announcement at that point.

Panel 61, Katelin Wong, Liz Accles, Shivani Shah, Katelin Degear(SP?) and Ameer Ahasser. Panel 62, Anna Lilla Araiza, Ashley Yang, Alexander Reijo Martinez, Ashley Liu, Alisha Vardes(SP?), Aliza Porcello(SP?). Panel 63, Tracey Fu, Yuri Kavalierchik, Kim Noble Houston, Melanie Gruveles, Jamila Elder. Panel 64, Jennifer James, July Bowen, Kay Gabriel, Melissa Kagle, Araceli Mena and Rob Katz. And the number we messed up, that was 64 and 65 and I apologize if I'm mispronouncing names. I know how it feels.

Next, we're going to turn to Panel 57. We're going to start with Barry Weinberg.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, going to call on
Annette Robinson.

ANNETTE ROBINSON: Whew whoo, thank you Jesus.
Greetings all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Don't break me Annette, we
got more to get through.

ANNETTE ROBINSON: Oh my goodness. I come before
you this evening on behalf of Harlem's Community
Board 9's Housing Land Use and Zoning Committee.
Thank you for this opportunity to share Community
Board 9's budget priorities for the residents of
NYCHA's Manhattanville Grant and Audubon Houses.

Community Board 9's priorities are a reflection
of their needs and our belief that the residents of
Manhattanville Grant and Audubon Housing deserve
better and more.

The priorities forwarded to OMB address the
following: The privatization of Manhattan Borough
Houses. For the record, packs outreach to the
residents has been abysmal and is lacking
transparency or inclusion. CB 9's act is simple, the
voices of Manhattanville residents must be heard, in
its present state at Manhattanville Houses must be
paused until its residents are given a front and

center seat at the table. Under this umbrella, nor can NYCHA be allowed to sell the air rights of 1450 Amsterdam Avenue, located on the ground of Manhattanville houses. Attention must immediately be given to the deliberate understaffing of Manhattanville Houses management office and its maintenance workers.

Our asks: Provide the fully functional staff required that will meet the needs of its residents and fulfill NYCHA's responsibility to provide decent housing. Invest the capital. Manhattanville Houses is also in dire need of capital repairs with proper oversight. Our ask, implement the repairs, invest the capital.

Last but not least is our Audubon Houses, which is home to our seniors, where renovations are to begin. Our ask –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

ANNETTE ROBINSON: Please provide the oversight required, which ensures our seniors are protected, comfortable and not displaced. CB 9's NYCHA residents deserve better and more. We at CB 9 stand in support of them.

Thank you Lord. You all have a good one.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Annette. Next, we will turn to Marine Collins.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, we will turn to Randy Dillard. Next on the list, Uraldi Perez (SP?). Next, I have Julie Colone.

Okay, I'm now going to turn to Panel 58, Darlene Jackson, Grace Orteza, Michael Perlis, Jeff Lau, Justice Laboy. So, we will start with Darlene Jackson.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

DARLENE JACKSON: Sorry, uhm, thank you Chair Brannan and the Finance Committee Members. My name is Darlene Jackson and I'm a member of Freedom Agenda and the Parent Leaders Live Action Network. I am echoing every New York who calls for City Council to reject the Mayor's Executive Budget proposal that ignores the needs of his constituents and prioritizes a carceral system.

A punitive system that continues to invest in job that perpetuates mass incarceration. Overall, we want to continually make the point that New York City runs the most richly funded and richly staffed jail system in the country yet delivers the worst results.

Those resources would be far better used outside of the jail system to meet peoples needs and prevent interaction with the justice system and correct allocation of funds is urgent.

There are other urgent opportunities in this years budget to shift from criminalization to support prevention. For example, New York City must stop funding nonprofits contracted through ACS, which essentially is a conservation of surveillance towards Black and Brown families and communities. We need to reallocate funding towards trauma informed community led solutions that addresses systemic racism and inequality for our communities to thrive.

City Council cannot ignore the mismanagement of our taxpaying dollars and the disinvestment of our communities. I urge the City Council to shift funds out of both the Department of Corrections and the Administration Services and invest in a just transition to expand and better compensate jobs outside of the carceral and punitive system.

In addition, while lastly, expanding funding to public defense organizations to adequately provide a client center and holistic approach to effectively advocate for a reduced caseload and a deeper

investment and early defense to prevent ACS filing a petition in family court that separates and destroys family and communities. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and I hope that the Finance Committee is actually here presently and listening to the constituents and New Yorkers and I hope that they have the political will and the political courage to do what's right and not what's easy. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Grace Orteiz.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

GRACE ORTEZ: Hi, good afternoon everybody. My name is Grace Orteiz. I am a member of Freedom Agenda. I'm also a community organizer, reentry specialist, a peer supporter and somebody living with complex, post-traumatic stress disorder due to being a survivor of pretty intense violence.

Everything I've heard today so far has really enlightened me further in understanding how the budget is absurdly misused. There's so many incredible community projects going on and passionate people waiting to be heard with such great ideas that the city should and needs to invest in.

1
2 Earlier this year, a young woman died when she
3 was pushed onto the train tracks. The transgressor
4 that committed this murder was somebody who had been
5 cycled through shelters and jails for many, many
6 years. He has now been found unfit to stand trial
7 and is being held indefinitely in a psychiatric
8 facility. All this to say that our city continues to
9 fund the outcome of violence, rather than preventing
10 it. This is someone who is now in a psychiatric
11 facility after having taken a life and he had a
12 background of instability and not being taken care of
13 because of his mental health needs. And that's the
14 outcome of not investing in resources. People will
15 die.

16 Our city does not need more CO's, Correction
17 Officers. It's an absurd plan that the Mayor has to
18 again, only invest in the outcome of violence and
19 trust me, people will continue to die and I encourage
20 people to not wait until it's them or somebody that
21 you love. Because if you wait for that, trust me,
22 that hearing that there's more correction officers
23 and police officers responding to violence, it won't
24 make you happy. It won't return you to your loved
25 one. It won't undue the harm and damage that you've

endured. So, we need to start caring about victims before the violent transgression occurs and that happens through supporting people -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

GRACE ORTEZ: With mental health needs who are in desperate need of community support. And as a reentry specialist, I know that those organizations exist and they do incredible work and all they need is to be funded. And that is the right way to address the community violence that we're all so urgently worried about. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will call on Michael Pearlis.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will turn to Jeff Lau.

JEFF LAU: Uh, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

JEFF LAU: Okay. Alright, hello everybody. Let's support our human service workers with livable wages and cost of living adjustments. New York City needs to just pay.

Good evening everyone. Thank you to Speaker Adams, Chair Brannan and members of the Finance

Committee for this opportunity to testify today. My name is Jeff Lau and I'm the Director of the Adult Literacy Program at the Chinese American Planning Council. We call on the city to increase the baseline funding for adult literacy programs to \$13.5 million. Restore the \$1.7 million cut in the prelim budget. Extend the Adult Literacy Pilot Initiative with \$5 million and renew the \$4 million discretionary funding citywide.

Like so many adult literacy programs throughout the city, CPC relies on city funding to provide programming to our communities. It is meant providing much needed wrap around services to our community members too. Students learn English to better assist their children's education, find meaningful work and build relationships throughout our community.

Students learn American Civics, learn how to register to vote, what rank choice voting is and very soon, learn about municipal voting in New York City. Students learn about healthcare assistance and if needed, receive services for domestic violence. Classrooms provide information regarding rental and food assistance and as Asian hate crimes ravage our

communities, students learn how to recognize discrimination, racism and how to report crimes to the authorities.

Through the Adult Literacy Pilot Initiative, we've been able to triple the outreach of wrap around services to our students, meaning more hours dedicated to students seeking childcare, senior care, housing, food assistance, insurance, college access and workforce counseling. Modernizing aging, technological and digital infrastructure has allowed students to access our classrooms remotely and learn digital literacy skills needed to be competitive. This is not the time to cut.

Our communities are rebuilding out of this pandemic. I urge the continued funding for adult literacy programs. Schools are often the heart of the community and adult literacy classes have stepped up. In order to meet the needs of today and tomorrow, we need to invest. Our students are ready to lend their voices, eager to join the workforce and ready to participate in our city with our vote and so much more. I thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Jeff and next, I will call on Justice Laboy.

JUSTICE LABOY: Hello, thank you so much for your time everybody. Time starts I believe, yeah, okay.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

JUSTICE LABOY: Okay, uh, I'm here representing CBC Extension Project Reach. I am a Community Board Member. I was once an employee and at one point, a youth participant of Project Reach and I'm here to speak of their graces. Project Reach has been since 1985 through the extension of CPC working with the lower east side and beyond there. All five boroughs of New York City to basically host social justice clinics and they've been hosting clinics since around that time but also providing young people, young queer and trans youth with retreat space and safe spaces throughout the year.

I'd like to go over some of their more prolific events. They were the first ever citywide LGBT youth retreat hosted at the [INAUDIBLE 8:50:25] Farm, upstate New York giving young people refuge from the city and a time away.

Also, also hosted in 2014, the first ever citywide trans-youth retreat. That was in 2014. Project Reach has been at the forefront and was even given money last year to work with CPC and hosting

all over New York City anti-Asian violence trainings and that includes Asian American history training, which I feel has changed many lives. And I think that kind of information needs to be supported, not only needs to be supported by tooted to the highest abilities.

With 20-seconds left, I also want to say that Project Reach invites everyone here today to a social justice clinic that will be hosted monthly throughout the summer. We also plan on holding a summer camp this summer with again, LGBTQ youth and older people who are going to be organizing around anti-Asian violence.

Also, Project Reach has been working across New York City and schools to do anti-hate trainings across many isims around racism, homophobia, sexism –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

JUSTICE LABOY: Thank you so much for everyone's time. Have a great day.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Justice and now, I will turn to Panel 59, Ella Wheel, Ken Mi Ung and Natasha Cappers. I will first turn to Ella Wheel.

Okay, I will turn to Ken Mi Ung.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we will — our final panelist Natasha Cappers. Okay, I don't see those persons on. I am now going to turn to Panel 60, Clenintine Palmberg, Ethan Cyrus, Faith Catherine Jones, Leslie Gomez Rivera, and Samantha Vargais. We will start with Clenintine Palmberg.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will turn to Ethan Cyrus.

ETHAN CYRUS: Uh —

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I heard you Ethan but I don't hear you anymore.

ETHAN CYRUS: Hi, sorry.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: There we go.

ETHAN CYRUS: Hello, my name is Ethan Cyrus. I am a member of the Youth Food Advocates. I am in 10th grade at George Westinghouse Career and Tech High School in Brooklyn. Today, I am here to ask for your support to change the school food program and improve the presentation of school food by investing in the cafeteria redesign.

Currently, a big part of the issue is how lunches look in schools. For example, in my school, the school lunch is usually food that looks unappealing

1
2 or looks undercooked. I usually see people just grab
3 a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch and
4 avoid the other food due to how it looks. If
5 students don't like what they see, they are less
6 likely to try the food. School food is important
7 because most kids cannot bring food from home due to
8 varying reasons. This problem has been happening
9 even before the pandemic.

10 I care because on the days that I need to eat
11 school lunch, then I would hope that the food is
12 appealing for me to eat. This matters for me and for
13 all the students in my school and all the students in
14 New York City because there could be the chance that
15 one day we're depending on the schools lunch to eat
16 during this whole school day. The investment in
17 school cafeterias could change our lives by giving us
18 better options for us to eat when we can't bring our
19 own lunch and changing the way students see school
20 lunch.

21 This is why I'm here today to ask the City
22 Council to ensure that the budget includes an
23 investment in our school food program to invest in
24 our future by investing in the cafeteria redesign for
25

all middle school and high school cafeterias. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I'm going to call on Faith Catherine Jones.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

FAITH CATHERINE JONES: Hello, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes we can, go ahead.

FAITH CATHERINE JONES: Okay. Hi, my name is Faith Jones and I am a current 9th grader at Brooklyn Technical High School and a member of Youth Advocates. I'm here today in support of the Enhance Cafeterias in middle schools and high schools across NYC. All students are to have enhanced cafeterias as it allows for an important improvement when it comes to current circumstances faced in most school cafeterias.

I've seen many students opinions that have been published online criticizing the environment of the cafeteria. With most of the criticisms being aimed at the cafeteria side. Students have expressed the present stigma in the cafeteria as the lunch rooms are seen as outdated and they are foreseen as insufficient for eating.

As a result, students are belittled when being seen getting lunch at the cafeteria. Consequently, students may go hungry to prevent ridiculed. Fortunately for me at Brooklyn Tech, we don't have to experience that stigma thanks to the enhanced cafeteria at our schools. I've that in our cafeteria, participation increase from below 30 percent to an average of almost 50 percent. I've asked a friend of mine about their thoughts about the modern design cafeteria and they had told me that it lead to an improvement and then compared to the feeling that they get in the older lunch rooms. They explained that they enjoyed the upbeat mood in contrast to the feeling that they get in the outdated cafeterias.

Additionally, the enhanced cafeterias allowed them to be able to socialize with their peers and friends because of the improvement and mood. Calls for the visual aspects of their environment. My friend explained how it is important that students are able to socialize and make sure of the cafeteria as a break in the academic school day.

Overall, voicing the opinions of scholars that came before them, they have benefits of an improved

lunchroom environment. All in all, enhanced cafeterias are needed to ensure that the students attending school are able to experience a segment in their day where they can feel relaxed. Take a break from academics and socialize with their friends.

Based on the day at schools already with enhanced cafeterias, it is proven that these benefits lead to increase in school participation, which in turn lead to a positive impact on the students academic achievement —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

FAITH CATHERINE JONES: And better mental health. I hope to see the City Council Members support improving the experience for all students in NYC for allocating the \$250 million funding needed to be able to update the cafeterias. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll call on Leslie Gomez Rivera.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Leslie, you're unmuted, you can go ahead.

LESLIE GOMEZ RIVERA: Sorry, uhm hi, I'm Leslie Gomez Rivera, I'm a senior at [INAUDIBLE 8:57:49] School and I'm a food advocate. I'm here to ask for

your support to fund the cafeteria enhancement in New York City Schools.

I've been a part of New York City education system for all my life and I've come to realize the importance of school food for children in our education. When my father was sick and my mother would be at the hospital with him, I had to rely on school food and I would make sure to get to school early and get breakfast and make sure in my last period class to ask permission to leave early to get lunch before they close the kitchen. I didn't want to be another burden on my mother.

This opened my eyes to the importance of school food because it was accessible to me at the time that I needed it the most. My freshman year at cafeteria was the standard normal. There was the long white tables, they are faced next to each other and the experience with this cafeteria wasn't the most pleasant because it was usually crowded and unappealing. After the cafeteria design, we had a booth where you could sit across from friends and it was a much more inviting and comforting environment. There were seats for just two people or the tables went into individual seats.

So, just imagine the changes that all of you could create for all middle schools and high schools by supporting the redesigned cafeterias. More and more children would feel better about eating school lunch and it would overall improve mood, attention and the quality of education across the board. Thank you for your time.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, not seeing her. Sorry, just bear with me one moment. Okay, not seeing her

in there. I will turn to Panel 61, Katelyn Wong, Liz Accles, Shavani Shah, Katelyn Agear(SP?) and Ameer Ahasser. We will start with Katelyn Wong.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KATELYN WONG: Good evening honorable members of the City Council. My name is Katelyn Wong.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KATELYN WONG: Good evening honorable members of the City Council. My name is Katelyn Wong, I'm a Junior at Brooklyn Technical High School, the Event Coordinator for Active Community Teamwork Club and I'm also involved with Advocacy on Voting Rights, Education Equity and more outside of school.

I'm here in partnership with youth food advocates to support efforts to redesign school cafeterias and enhance the lunch time experience for all high school and middle school students in New York City public schools.

In 2017 with the start of Universal Free School Lunch citywide, the participation of Brooklyn Tech – the participation at Brooklyn Tech was about 36 percent. When the enhanced cafeteria layout was implemented in March 2018, participation increased an average nearly 50 percent in the first year. These

enhanced cafeterias bring a more welcoming environment for students and add a wide variety of foods of that allow students to have hot and cold options for lunch every day.

Personally, the cafeteria layout at Brooklyn Tech has allowed me and my small group of friends to sit in booths and have small and intimate conversations during the lunch period while bigger groups are able to occupy the longer lunch tables. I have made long lasting friendships in our cafeteria. During my freshman year, I knew no one in my lunch period. However, the cafeteria fostered a welcoming environment to socialize with other students which led me to make new friends to sit with during lunch every day.

Friendships made during my freshman year of high school are friendships I still keep today. All in all, I believe that having enhanced cafeterias for all high school and middle school students schools in New York City will increase the school lunch participation in all school cafeterias by a significant percentage.

Universal free school lunch was the first step to lunch equity. The redesign cafeterias are the big

next big step to equity in New York City school food.

Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and a name that I always mispronounce but I should know how to pronounce it, Liz Accles is next.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

LIZ ACCLES: Yes, you got it right Accles. Thank you. It's like apples I say, just - thanks Malcom.

Thanks Chair Brannan and members of the Committee and other members of the Council that are here today. Thanks for the opportunity to testify. As you've heard from our student partners, I'm here to talk about the cafeteria enhancement and to thank Chair Brannan for being a champion on this issue and thank the Council Members. We've spoken to many of them on your enthusiasm about scaling up the cafeteria enhancement model to all high schools and middle schools. As you know, we're asking for \$250 million, which would cover the remaining \$500 cafeterias and we want that included in the adopted budget.

The three key point are it's highly effective. There's a 35 percent increase in participation. It's cost effective only \$500,000 per school and it's quick. There's a lot of preplanning but students

1
2 leave on a Friday once it's planned, students leave
3 on a Friday and they come back Monday and the
4 cafeteria is completely transformed.

5 I just wanted to point out, we as community food
6 advocates spearhead the Lunch for Learning Campaign
7 and work with many partners and have for many years.
8 That you've heard from DC37, UFT and CSA that this is
9 a priority issue for all of the school-based unions
10 and I also wanted to point in the testimony that I'm
11 submitting is that the Chancellors Parent Advisory
12 Committee has a letter of support as does the
13 American Academy of Pediatrics local district.

14 So, thank you for your time in this long day. I
15 appreciate it very much.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will
17 turn to Shavani Shah.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 SHAVANI SHAH: Hi, I'm Shavani Shah and I'm a
20 Junior at Stuyvesant High School and I'm a member of
21 the Youth Food Advocates. So, today, I'm here to
22 advocate and secure the \$250 million funding toward
23 cafeteria enhancement in all of New York City middle
24 schools and high schools. Kids and teens eat with
25

their eyes, so the appeal of the school food matters as much as the taste.

The appeal of the cafeteria matters as much as the options. So, kids need fuel but what type of fuel can they get. My schools an open campus and many students go out to eat at the local fast food chains such as McDonalds, Shake Shack, Subway and Chipotle. Please launch decisions might look like the choices of the students but really based on the circumstances and opportunities, these decisions are dictated by the traditional service line, limited menu options and lack of seating.

Most students go out for lunch not because of a better taste but because of the lack of options within the daily menu. The cafeteria does not have enough seating forcing many students to sit on fence that outline the cafeteria does not have enough seating forcing many students to sit on the fence that outline the cafeteria and we'll wait until the seat opens up.

Students cannot take lunch outside of the cafeteria as eating in the hallways is prohibited. This leaves students who don't appreciate a crowded and overwhelming space with no place to go other than

outside. Many complaints from my peers such as, I couldn't find a table or the food doesn't look appealing would be resolved with cafeteria enhancement. Cafeteria enhancement is crucial for my school because it would add more daily hot and cold menu options to the menu that students want to see and make the food line more appealing. And it is even more crucial for schools with lower funding to ensure equity across all our schools.

Increasing lunch participation rates in middle schools and high schools, helps nurture our young minds. We are the same minds that will be battling crisis's such as climate change, cancer, poverty, etc. in the future. Through funding the cafeteria enhancement, you are supporting our academic success, empowering the youth and investing in our future. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call Katelin Degear.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, not seeing in the Zoom. Our final panelist, Ameer Ahasser.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

AMEER AHASSER: Hi, my name is Ameer Ahasser and I'm a Junior at Stuyvesant High School and a member of Brooklyn [INAUDIBLE 9:07:03]. I'm here in support of youth food advocates on behalf of all students in New York City.

I am asking for your support in securing \$250 million in the budget for the cafeteria enhancement in New York City for all middle and high schools. From a young age, school lunch is always meant to be a time for eating healthy and good food, as well as socializing with others. However, as I have gotten older, I've noticed that school lunches are no longer enjoyed by my peers and it has been very disappointing seeing so many students ditch school to get some type of other food outside.

Our building is a fantastic cafeteria but without appealing menu options and an overhaul, it does not get used. For being outside during lunch hours, I witness so many students that shut out cafeteria food and I did the exact same thing. At times, if I forget my wallet at home, I'd rather go home hungry. If there was a modernization of the cafeteria system in schools, I believe that the cafeteria would be a better place for us to get healthy food quickly.

1
2 Instead of being forced to eat the food provided
3 for us, allowing for more choices would help the
4 cafeteria continue to be a place for friends. As a
5 member of a lower privileged community, I also
6 recognize that there are many people who cannot
7 afford the people who are eating outside. Due to
8 this, allowing for more options in the place, would
9 allow for the lower income students to enjoy lunch.
10 The healthier the student is, the healthier member of
11 the community and if we allow so many students to go
12 outside to eat lunch, we are opening the door to food
13 that are significant less delicious than the
14 possibilities in school. With your support for
15 funding, school cafeterias across the city will
16 become modernized and the school food less
17 stigmatized. As school food becomes more nutritious
18 and more for the students. Thank you for your time.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes
20 Panel 61. I will now turn — I'm going to announce
21 Panels 65 and on, so folks know where — 66 and on, so
22 folks know where they are. Panel 66, Merble Regen
23 but I think I already called you, Cristy Teal, Brenda
24 Temple, Benjamin Holda.

Panel 67, Thomas Gogan, Molat Saum, Onsu Nujen, Peggy Herrera, Keven Chone. Panel 68, David Jenkins, Justin Yenki, Justin Wood, Kandra Clark and Martha Larson. Panel 69, Marlow Boettcher, Melissa Magara, Robert Gereski, Charlotte Ombretch, Christopher Ashley. Panel 70, Natasha Santos. I already called that name, Sammy Disu, Chamere Tanna, Arthur Strogus. I will turn to Panel 62 Anna Lilla Araiza.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ANNA LILLA ARAIZA: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Anna Lilla Araiza, I am the Director of Youth Leadership at Community Food Advocates and you've heard from a lot of our youth. I won't take up too much time, since Liz has already spoken about the enhanced cafeterias as well and you'll continue to hear from our young people. Some of them who had to have off, you're going to get their written testimony, so I do encourage everyone in the Council to read through their testimonies as well.

The one thing that I want to add is that I don't only work with the young people you see here. I do visit schools around the city and talk to middle schoolers and high schoolers across the city. And what I realize is that as much as we know that there

1 is young people, I mean that the Office of Food
2 Administration Services is doing a lot of hard work
3 behind the kitchen counters, our young people are not
4 seeing that happen. They don't realize all of the
5 work that's going into the food and all of the
6 modernization that's been happening in the Office of
7 Food and Nutrition and we do want them to be able to
8 see that as well. The cafeteria should be a student
9 centered space and the enhanced cafeteria is really a
10 way of signaling to young people all of those changes
11 that are happening in their kitchens are coming
12 through for them in the cafeteria space. Thank you
13 for your time. I'll yield the rest of my time.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will
15 turn to Ashley Yang.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

17 UNIDENTIFIED: She has stepped off.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, she has, okay. I will
19 next go to Alexander Reho Martinez.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will turn to
22 Ashley Liu.

23 ASHLEY LIU: Hello honorable members of City
24 Council. My name is Ashley Liu and I'm a Junior at
25

Brooklyn Technical High School as well as the President of Active Community Teamwork and Activism Club Ed Tech.

Our school cafeteria was redesigned in 2018, a year before my Tech. I remember my first day seeing the cafeteria and being in shock of how much cleaner and organized it was compared to my middle school. I was surprised that there were hot and cold lunch options and I was most of all shocked by the communal dining arrangement.

At Tech, I regularly see students racing to the cafeteria to claim a booth or roundtable before putting down their bags and getting school lunch. For students at Tech, lunch is a time to refuel, recharge and catch up with friends. This is largely because of our enhanced lunchroom. Our enhanced lunchroom helps create a sense of community and helps students see school lunch in a new light. School lunch is often stigmatized but students at Tech have a much more positive association.

In preparation for this hearing, we asked students at our school about their experiences with our enhanced lunchrooms and one student said, "I've been more willing to go to the cafeteria and actually

eat. I'm happy with the variety of choices the cafeteria provides."

Another student said, "[LOST AUDIO 9:13:27] space regardless of if you're alone or with friends." Our enhanced lunchroom has helped increase lunch participation and this is reflected in the data. Lunch and tech is an integral part student life and academic success. Good food is vital once students are at Tech for seven or more hours a day. Lunch is absolutely necessary to ensure that my peers and I can be our best selves.

Students have the right to access resources needed to succeed including destigmatize and enjoyable school lunch. Students at Tech have greatly benefitted from and enjoyed our enhanced lunchrooms and I stand here in partnership with youth food advocates to support access to enhanced lunchrooms for all students in New York City. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call on Alisha Verbes.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. Next on my list is Aliza Porcella.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ALIZA PORCELLA: Hi, I'm Aliza Porcella, a current 11th grader at the International Baccalaureate School for Global Education and a member of the Youth Food Advocates. I'm here to advocate for the \$250 million in funding to be used for cafeteria enhancement in New York City public schools. It is imperative to a successful school day for the average student and the New York City public system — public school system boast 1.1 million students. Many of which do land school food. Aside from just eating school lunch, cafeterias are also supposed to be a safe and comfortable environment where students can take a break from thinking about classroom assignments. Students deserve an environment where they're able to focus on eating their lunches and socializing.

As someone who often relied on school food and my single mom didn't have time to pack me a lunch, I really always wanted to see improvements that allowed for the next generation of students who need school food to be happy and not hungry. There's a lot of stigma surrounding eating school lunch and the quality hasn't been preferable making it so that many

1 students go hungry during lunch. I personally never
2 have enough time to eat in the morning and often find
3 myself waiting for lunch. It's incredibly
4 disappointing when I finally get to sit down and eat
5 and the school lunch lacks options and doesn't look
6 appealing.
7

8 I'm distracted for the rest of the day and have
9 trouble focusing on my assignments. Increasing food
10 participation isn't just for the physical health of
11 students, it's for our mental health too. Students
12 have to stress about their meal. Students won't have
13 to stress about their meals and will be able to focus
14 on furthering their education. With this, I want to
15 advocate for the needed funds to transform all middle
16 and high school cafeterias to enhance cafeterias.
17 Enhanced cafeterias will give hungry students the
18 ability to choose what they get to eat and allow them
19 to eat enough to sustain through the rest of the
20 school day. This could improve focus, health and
21 happiness for so many students. Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes
23 Panel 62. I will now turn to Panel 63, which was
24 Tracey Fu, Yuri Kavalierchik, Kim Noble Houston,
25

Melanie Gruveles, Jamila Elder. We will start with Tracey Fu.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TRACEY FU: Hi, my name is Tracey Fu. I live in Queens and I am a member of DSA's New York City Chapter. I am here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive Budget and to call the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years of the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID crisis are surging, landlords are astronomically raising rents and families are struggling to stay in their homes. But the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and the powerful over every day New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

Today, I urge the City Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing, including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams

cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and funding DOE mental health counselors and social workers, rather than filling school police vacancies.

I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crises facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the streets plan, \$1.8 billion for green public schools and \$250 million for Fair Fares and \$10 million to expand life saving safe consumption sites to all five boroughs. And finally, the City Council must reject the mayors aggressive return to law and order. I urge the City Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of new CO's for solitary confinement, a practice the UN defines as torture.

I also urge the Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting the failed NYPD criminalization programs like the ineffective and violent plain clothes units, the so-called Subway Safety Plan and ending all NYPD response to mental health calls.

Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan for hearing my testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Tracey. Next, I'll call on Yuri Kavalierchik.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

YURI KAVALERCIK: Hi, I'm Yuri, I'm a New York City resident. I'm also a member of the DSA's New York City Chapter. I also want to voice an opposition to Mayor Eric Adams's Executive Budget and I want to call on the City Council to pass a budget that will meet the needs of all of us New Yorkers.

Two years we're in crisis. COVID cases are still surging, landlords are still raising rents and people are struggling to stay in their homes. But our city and our Mayor are still favoring wealthy and powerful over every New Yorkers. His budget is making devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education. And he's leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

Today, I'm urging the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent, affordable housing, including \$1.5 billion to NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for the HPD. The Council should also reject Adams's cuts to our public education system and

invest \$22 million into CUNY and fund the DOE mental health counselors and social workers, rather than filling school police vacancies.

Also, I urge the Council to act on two deadly crises facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the Streets Plan. \$1.8 billion for public schools, \$250 million for Fair Fares and \$10 million to expand lifesaving, safe consumption sites to all five boroughs.

And finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's regressive return to law and order. I urge the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of new CO's for solitary confinement, which is a practice the UN defines as torture. I also urge the Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization programs, like the ineffective and violent plain clothes units, the so-called Subway Safety Plan and also, I want them to end all NYPD responses mental health calls.

Thank you Council Members and Committed Chair Brannan for hearing my testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Kim Noble Houston.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I have Melanie Gruveles.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on my list I have Jamila Elder.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, that concludes Panel 63. I'm going to turn Panel 64, Jennifer James, Julie Bowen, Kay Gabriel, Melissa Kagle, and Araceli Mena. I will start with Jennifer James.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JENNIFER JAMES: Hello, my name is Jennifer James. I am a Substitute Teacher at New York City Schools and I'm also a member of the DSA. I'm here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive Budget and call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID cases are surging. I see it every day in my classrooms. As a Substitute Teacher, I am the one filling in when teachers are out. Families are struggling. I see it in the students. The students are struggling but the Mayor

continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over every day New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation, education and while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

Like others, DSA members before me, I urge the City Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the City Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing, including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and funding the DOE mental health counselors and social workers, rather than filling school police vacancies.

I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crisis's facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the Streets Plan and \$1.8 billion for green public schools, \$2,500 million for Fair Fares and \$10 million to expand lifesaving safe consumption –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will turn to Julie Bowen.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will turn to Kay Gabriel.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KAY GABRIEL: Hi Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan. My name is Kay Gabriel. I am a Queens resident. I'm also a member of DSA and I'm an Adjunct Instructor at NYU. I'm also calling on the Council to reject Mayor Adams's Executive Budget. You've heard a lot about austerity today and it's not just a buzz word. Austerity in budgets means that people will die. People die because of bad budgets. They die because they don't have adequate housing. They die because they don't have access to overdose prevention clinics. That's what this means. That's what this is about. This is about New Yorkers lives. It's about like failing to adequately prepare for the climate catastrophe. It means that people will die.

So, when we say, please reject this awful budget that slashes desperately needed programs, it's not abstract and it's not just moralistic. It's because people — it's because New Yorkers deserve a budget

1 that meets our needs. So, I just want to echo
2 everything that my comrades and neighbors have said.
3 I want to echo things that people have said all day,
4 desperately asking for the City Council to
5 demonstrate principle and pass a budget that meets
6 New Yorkers needs. I want to especially ask the
7 Council to reject Mayor Adams's proposal to increase
8 corrections officers for to staff solitary
9 confinement units, which the solitary confinement to
10 the UN defines as torture.
11

12 We need a budget that actually meets our needs
13 and I want to say thank you for hearing my testimony.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will
15 turn to Melissa Kagle.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

17 MELISSA KAGLE: Melissa Kagle, I'm a New York
18 City resident. I'm also a member of DSA's New York
19 City Chapter and a 20 plus year educator. I'm here
20 to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive
21 Budget and to call on the City Council to pass a
22 budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers. This
23 budget gives the most money to the people and
24 entities that need it the least.
25

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID-19 cases are surging, landlords are raising rents and families are struggling to stay in their homes but the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over every day New Yorkers. This budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation, education, while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion total budget intact.

I urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent, affordable housing, including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams cuts to our public education system. He should invest \$122 million into CUNY and fund DOE mental health counselors and social workers rather than filling expensive police, school police vacancies.

Finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's regressive return to law and order. I urge the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of new CO's for solitary confinement. This is a practice the UN defines as torture. We absolutely cannot set

ourselves up to go back to such barbaric practices through a hiring practice like that.

I also urge the Council to demonstrate the commitment to racial justice by cutting failed, NYPD criminalization programs like the ineffective and violent plain clothes units, the so-called Subway Safety Plan, and ending NYPD response to mental health calls. Thank you Council Members, Committee Chair Brannan for hearing my testimony. Please, please reject this horrific budget.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call Araceli Mena.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 9:27:38-9:29:43]—

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 09:29:44-29:49].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Steven, could you — we didn't know she was going to need translation services. Could you ask her, we'll go ahead and unmute you, hold on. Sorry, could you ask her to start again and if you can provide and just let her know that that's what's happening please?

2 STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
3 9:30:05-9:30:08].

4 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
5 LANGUAGE 9:30:09].

6 STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
7 9:30:09-9:30:25].

8 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
9 LANGUAGE 9:30:26-9:30:32]

10 STEVEN MALDONADO: Good afternoon. My name is
11 Araceli Espejel Mena. I am a mother.

12 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
13 LANGUAGE 9:30:41-9:30:43].

14 STEVEN MALDONADO: Of four kids.

15 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
16 LANGUAGE 9:30:46-9:30:52].

17 STEVEN MALDONADO: I am a leader and parent, uh,
18 leader for parents in District 9 in the Bronx.

19 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
20 LANGUAGE 9:30:58-9:31:02].

21 STEVEN MALDONADO: And parent leader for the
22 Community of Action for a New Settlement.

23 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
24 LANGUAGE 9:31:09-9:31:16].

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2 STEVEN MALDONADO: I am an Ambassador for healing

3 in the school of my kids and I work in group for

4 healing.

5 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER

6 LANGUAGE 9:31:24-9:31:32].

7 STEVEN MALDONADO: I think the ambassador program

8 is very important because for me personally, this has

9 helped me a lot.

10 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER

11 LANGUAGE 9:31:39-9:31:45].

12 STEVEN MALDONADO: And my family has helped us

13 easier to identify the move that my kids and my

14 husband are going through.

15 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER

16 LANGUAGE 9:31:54-9:32:00.

17 STEVEN MALDONADO: We have better communication

18 and can easier – can express our feelings a lot

19 easier.

20 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER

21 LANGUAGE 9:32:07-9:32:09].

22 STEVEN MALDONADO: And the mood that we are

23 feeling.

24 ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER

25 LANGUAGE 9:32:13-9:32:18].

STEVEN MALDONADO: The workshops in the schools that we have gone to have also helped us to get to know ourselves.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 9:32:25-9:32:31].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Just like the other parents have expressed that it has helped them also with their own families.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 9:32:38-9:32:46].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Furthermore, parents that have gotten to know each other just by site, by seeing each other at the schools.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 9:32:54-9:33:01].

STEVEN MALDONADO: We did not speak to each other considering that we spoke different languages.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 9:33:07-9:33:13].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Now we great each other and we help each other with telling us, have a good day. How are you feeling? How has everything been? Good morning, good evening, good afternoon.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:33:26-9:33:29].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I think it's also a way for
creating like a brotherly unity within other races
and ethnicities.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:33:38-9:33:44].

STEVEN MALDONADO: It's been an incredible
experience being part of this ambassador program
concentrating and healing.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:33:52-9:33:58].

STEVEN MALDONADO: And I ask the city as well as
the DOE of the City of New York —

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:34:03-9:34:08].

STEVEN MALDONADO: For this year to continue the
investment and expanding it, this program, the
Ambassador program for parents.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:34:17-9:34:20].

STEVEN MALDONADO: To develop an ambassador, a
youth ambassador program.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:34:27-9:34:31].

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:34:32.

STEVEN MALDONADO: The finance programs that
support and don't punish the students within the
schools.

ARACELI ESPEJEL MENA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER
LANGUAGE 9:34:44].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and thank you
Steven, appreciate it.

STEVEN MALDONADO: Muchas Gracias.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That concludes Panel 64. I'm
now going to turn to — oh, there's one more person, I
apologize, Rob Katz.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ROB KATZ: Hello and thank you for having me. My
name is Rob Katz. I am a member of the New York City
Democratic Socialists of America and a member of
Ridgewood Tenants Union. I'm here to voice my
opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive Budget and
to call on the City Council to pass a budget that

invests in all New Yorkers. Uhm, the budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services that working class New Yorkers use every day. That's housing, that's our healthcare, sanitation, our parks department and education.

While still stuffing \$10 billion a year into the NYPD and its needless to say that the community is hit the hardest by COVID-19. Largely communities of color are the ones who need those defunded services the most. Today, I urge the Council respectfully to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment and instead chart a rave path forward for the rest of the country. Instead of cutting funding for housing, investing \$4 billion into permanent, affordable housing.

Instead of cutting our public education who investing into CUNY and into our public schools, funding DOE mental health counselors and social workers, not more school safety officers. We need \$3 billion for safe streets. We need \$2 billion for green public schools. We need a quarter of a million dollars for Fair Fares. We need to expand safe consumption sites across the city and we need to get one percent of the budget to our parks department at

1 least. So, I am also demanding forcefully that the
2 Council reject the Mayor's return to law and order
3 demagoguery. Reject the proposal to add hundreds of
4 new corrections officers for solitary. Cut VICE, cut
5 the SRG. Make transformative investments in all of
6 New York City's wellbeing and that is what will make
7 our community –

8
9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 ROB KATZ: Thank you Council Members and
11 Committee Chair Brannan for hearing my testimony.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and I'm going to –
13 before I turn to Panel 66, I will announce Panels –
14 I've already announced 69. 70-75. Panel 70 Natasha
15 Santos, Peggy Herrera, Sammy Desu, Shamere Tanna and
16 Arthur Scrogus. Panel 71, Dash Sammy Nemere
17 Olivares, Zade Haobsh, Brian Kepple.

18 Panel 72, Lucas Osmian, Paul Lee, Bracish
19 Cheriman. Panel 73, Eric Seligman, Glenn Valaski,
20 Glenny Renosos and Kennan McClone and Crystal
21 Gooding. Panel 74, Madeleine Jackson, Mimi Shelton,
22 Willie the Genius, Deigo Brown, Torren Fenally. And
23 Panel 75, Jessica Marshal, Charaya Hardy, Joy Clarke,
24 Amy Tsai, Deloris Cannella. Starting with Panel 66,
25 we'll start with Merble Regan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sorry, that's a duplicate, Merble already testified on Panel 22. Next, we are calling on Cristy Peel.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

KEVIN WOLF: Cristy actually had to step away, so I'm going to be speaking in her place. My name is Kevin Wolf and I'm the Senior Government Affairs Manager at the Center for New York City Neighborhoods and we are one of the largest homeowner service organizations in New York City. We're here today because we have two very important issues that we wanted to address at this hearing.

The first is that we want to restore existing, affordable, homeownership funding that has been cut out of the Mayor's Executive Budget and then the second is that we'd like to implore the Council to continue its long time support of my organizations home service efforts.

The COVID-19 crisis actually continues to destabilize thousand of New York City homeowners and foreclosure is still a major threat. Two years after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, mortgage delinquency rates actually dwarfed those that were

seen at the height of the 2008 financial crisis. 80 percent of the homeowners that we serve are Black and Brown and Black and Brown communities are among the hardest hit by the pandemic and we actually see – they're also most vulnerable to loss of income, which precipitates the loss of a home.

So, we must fight and preserve affordable homeownership at a time in the city where the racial wealth gap and income inequality have actually increased over the past decade. So, we're asking the City Council to call on the Mayor to restore critical funding before closure prevention or climate resiliency and for home repair and in addition, we'd like for the City Council to fully fund the centers budget request in order to make sure that homeowners can keep their homes and make their homes green, safe for them and their families and their tenants. We have three programs that we provide as our flagship that conduct outreach as well as home repair that the City Council funds directly. Our homeowner hub which serves 3,000 homeowners annually. Our homeowner help desk, which meets homeowners directly in their communities and finally, our home fixed repair program that provides low interest to no interest

loans to homeowners. So, once again, we're asking you to fully fund affordable homeownership in New York City and thank you very much for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call Brenda Temple.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I have Benjamin Holda.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

BENJAMIN HOLDA: Good afternoon, thank you so much for allotting me this time to speak Council Members. It has been a very long day for you I am sure, so I appreciate that. I am here specifically to speak about diverting funding from the SRG unit of the NYPD. I'm speaking about this as somebody with substantial academic and personal experience working with human rights. The SRG, both through its intention and practice exists to brutalize protestors in a way that completely dismantles their ability to share their political opinions to associate political society and their ability to really just flourish and direct the course of this punitive democracy.

In a more grand census, I've sat through the testimonies of various other organizations. It is unconscionable that New York City continues to fund

the SRG to the degree that it does. We've seen a seven fold bloat in its budget since 2015 while so much demonstrable good could be done by diverting those millions of dollars into our schools, into our public transit, into economic initiatives, into nutritional initiatives. These are things that have demonstrable, positive impacts on the society and as has been said, a budget is a profoundly moral document.

So, the decision at hand is one to divert those funds into a system that exists to cause pain and to subdue or one that promotes flourishing for New York City as a community. And I hope you will make the choice to divert that funding and fight against Mayor Adams budget. So, thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Thomas Gogan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on the list, I have Malat Seyoum.

MALAT SEYOUM: Good evening honorable Chairperson and distinguished members of the New York City Council Committee on Finance. My name is Malat Seyoum and I'm the Worker Co-op Policy Advocate for

the New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives, also known as NYCNWC, the local trade association representing worker cooperative businesses and democratic workplace in the New York City metropolitan area.

I am here alongside my colleague from the Democracy at Work Institute and the NYCNWC Advocacy Council Members representing nine other organizations that make up the Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative.

Asking New York City Council Members to continue supporting the expansion of Worker ownership in next years budget and firmly into the future. Since the inception of the initiative, we have created over 175 new cooperative businesses and approximately 1,000 new jobs that are not only providing higher hourly wages but also building wealth and assets for individuals who are overwhelmingly BIPOC women and immigrants. We have seen firsthand how the initiative has served to bolster our sector, strengthening existing cooperative businesses and creating new ones, which are overwhelmingly immigrant and women owned.

The initiative partners have collectively worked to create a comprehensive ecosystem of support for cooperative businesses that not only ensures the creation of new cooperatives in low-income areas, but also the technical assistance needed to sustain businesses and create jobs as well as the education and outreach needed for communities, interested entrepreneurs and allied organizations.

We ask the City Council to enhance our funding to five million twelve thousand in order for our initiative to double down on the essential long-term economic recovery for cooperative businesses that we will need to claw ourselves out of this crisis.

We thank the City Council for the opportunity to testify and we hope that you will consider our budget priorities and recommendations during this years budget negotiation process. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call on Onsu Nucha(SP?), Democracy at Work Institute.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will call on Peggy Herrera.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next on the list, we have Kevin Cho. Okay, that concludes Panel 67. Next, I will call Panel 68, David Jenkins, Justin Yankwee(SP?), Justin Wood, Candra Clark, Martha Larson. I'll first turn to David Jenkins.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

DAVID JENKINS: Hello, my name is David Jenkins. I'm a lifelong New York resident living in Flatbush, a union member and a member of NYC DSA. I'm here to voice my opposition to Mayor Adams Executive Budget and to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers. Right now, working class New Yorkers are in crisis and the Executive Budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education while leading the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

Today, I urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million

1
2 into CUNY and funding DOE mental health and social
3 workers, rather than filling school police vacancies.
4 I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crises
5 facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose
6 epidemic.

7 We need \$3.1 billion for the streets plan, \$1.8
8 billion for green public schools, \$250 million for
9 Fair Fares and just \$10 million to expand proven,
10 lifesaving safe consumption sites to all five
11 boroughs. Finally, the Council must reject the
12 Mayor's regressive return to law and order. I urge
13 the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of
14 new CO's for solitary confinement, a practice as
15 we've repeated the UN defines as torture.

16 I also urge the Council to demonstrate their
17 commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD
18 criminalization programs like the ineffective and
19 violent plain clothes units, the so-called Subway
20 Safety Plan, ending all NYPD response to mental
21 health calls and to disband the brutal strategic
22 response group used primarily to suppress protest and
23 abuse the unhoused rather than its original mission
24 of keeping us safe from terror.

Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair
Brannan for hearing my testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we will
turn to Justin Yankwee.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we have Justin Wood.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I have Kandra Clark.
Next, I have Martha Larson.

MARTHA LARSON: I'm a New York City resident.
I'm a member of DSA. I'm a city worker and I'm a
social worker in the public hospital system.

So, I'm also here to speak about against this
austerity budget that keeps the astronomical NYPD
budget while cutting the vital city services. As a
public hospital social worker, I keep having patients
come in my office every day that are losing their
housing or at risk of losing their housing and it is
a crisis and it's unacceptable. We can't just keep
putting these people in shelters. It's just not
acceptable, so we really need an investment in
affordable housing and to adequately fund the public
hospital system.

The idea of cutting any funds from the public hospital system during a pandemic is unacceptable. I see cops everywhere I look in the city at this moment. They're on the subway, everywhere. This is not what keeps us safe. You know, we need investment in the things that actually keep us safe like, everybody having a safe home. Having fully funded schools, hospitals, etc..

So, I want you to you know, just urge you to vote against this austerity budget. Thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Marlowe Boettcher.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MARLOWE BOETTCHER: Hi, my name is Marlowe Boettcher. I am a New York City resident, attorney, a member of DSA and proud graduate of CUNY School of Law. I am also here to speak against Mayor Adams austerity budget. It's simply unconscionable to be adding more CO's to solitary confinement. I have worked with victims of torture as a part of CUNY School of Laws legal point and I can tell you that there is a reason the UN declares that solitary confinement is torture.

Moreover, just generally, at a time when so many New Yorkers are struggling to stay in their homes, to have proper access to healthcare, to simply maintain the NYPD's budget while sacrificing all of that, is terrible. A budget is an important thing. This is peoples lives that this City Council holds in balance and I urge the Council to do the right thing. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call on Melissa.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: [INAUDIBLE 9:53:32].

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Malcom, can you repeat that? You were cut off.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Charlotte Ombretch (SP?). The final panelist I have on 69 is Christopher Ashley.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will now turn to Panel 70, Natasha Santos, Peggy Herrera, Sammy Desu, and Shamere Tanna and Arthur Scrogus. Natasha Santos.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Peggy Herrera. Sammy Desu. Shamere Tanna. Arthur Scrogus. Okay, I am next

going to call Panel 71, Dash Sammy Nemere Olivares, Zade Haobsh, Brian Kepple. We'll first start with Dash. Okay, next, turning to Sammy Nemer Olivares. Next on the list is Zade Haobsh.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ZADE HAOBSH: Hi, I'm Zade and I am a Brooklyn resident and a member of DSA's NYC Chapter, as well as a Hunter College Graduate and John Jay College Staff member. I'm here to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID cases are surging, landlords are raising rents, and families struggle to stay in their homes. This budget makes it clear that the wealthy and powerful are favored over every day New Yorkers. This budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion intact.

Today, I urge the Council to fight against the Mayor's program of austerity and punishment. Instead of cutting funding for housing, the Council must invest \$4 billion into permanent affordable housing

including \$1.5 billion for NYCHA and \$2.5 billion for HPD. The Council must also reject Adams's cuts to our public education system by investing \$122 million into CUNY and funding DOE mental health counselors and social workers, rather than filling school police vacancies.

I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crises facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the Streets Plan, \$1.8 billion for green public schools, \$250 million for Fair Fares and \$10 million to expand lifesaving safe consumption sites.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If you want to wrap up your thought Zade. Okay, going to turn to Brian Kepple.

BRIAN KEPPLER: Hi, my name is Brian Kepple. I'm an independent budget analyst and member of New York City DSA.

My parents both grew up in the city. My father is from the Bronx, where he drove a cab and went to night school to teach special education. He doesn't vote anymore. He doesn't participate because he's convinced that our elected leaders simply don't care about people like him or my family or my mother, who

1 will never be able to retire. And so, I'm here today
2 to say that the actions that the Council Members
3 take, it actually matters. It's more than just a
4 political game about who gets to advance the next
5 piece of legislation if they vote yes. Some of you
6 are going to be casting your first ever votes on the
7 city's budget and a lot of you were elected because
8 the people of this city are tired. All we get is
9 less, you know if we have deficits, we get cuts. If
10 federal funding expires, we get cuts.

12 Even when we have \$6 billion in rainy day funds,
13 we get cuts and the police just get bigger and bigger
14 and bigger, combined it's - they have a larger
15 headcount than sanitation health, CUNY Parks, DHS,
16 DYCD, Department for the Aging, Social Services and
17 HPD combined. It's become unmanageable. It's too
18 much. So, I'm urging the Council Members to remember
19 that they have to go back up for reelection in a year
20 and you were voted to bring change to change the
21 direction of this city. That is what the city wants.

22 So, even if you don't care about the city, you
23 should care about yourselves because we'll remember
24 the budget vote in a year. So, \$4 billion for
25

affordable housing, overdose prevention and a budget that prioritizes New Yorkers.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

BRIAN KEPPLER: Because it's bad out here. It's bad uhm, and we need help and we need you to help us. Thank you for listening and thank you for the Council Members who made it through all these many hours.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and that concludes Panel 71. I will now call Panel 72, Lucas Osmian, Paul Lee, Bracish Cheriman. I'll start with Lucas Osmian.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I'll next turn to Paul Lee. Next I will turn to Brachish Cheriman. Okay, before I turn to Panel 73, I will announce Panels 76-80. Panel 76 Jazzy Rivera, Judith Bautista, Naomi Williams, Nicki Mia Brownfield, Sirameni Obulal and Donna Bunilla.

Panel 77, Alma Rocha, Ava Thompson, Deborah Humes Jorden, Denise Frederick, Harriet Mugwuji. Panel 78, Jacque Ori, Ludy Delva, Marissa Senteno, Sunita Hamal, Daniella Contreras. Panel 79, Naja Ugecka(SP?), Robert Jereski. Sorry everyone, the screen froze.

Carol Verdi, Dave Tallivan(SP?). Panel 80, Gloria Manzano, Joy Clark, Rosa Rodriguez, and Jeremiah Schlotman. I'll first turn to Panel 73 Eric Seligman, Glenn Valaski, Glenny Renosos, Kennan McClone Crystal Gooding. We'll first turn to Eric Seligman.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ERIC SELIGMAN: Hello, my name is Eric Seligman, I am an Economics Professor at CUNY's John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a New York City resident and a member of DSA's NYC Chapter. I'm here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams Executive Budget and to call on the City Council to pass a budget that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

Two years into the pandemic, working class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID-19 cases are surging, landlords are raising rents and families struggle to stay in their homes, but the Mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over every day New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services like housing, healthcare, sanitation and education while leaving the NYPD's \$10 billion budget intact.

I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crises facing our city, climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the Streets Plan, \$1.8 billion for Green Public Schools, \$250 million for Fair Fairs and \$10 million to expand lifesaving, safe consumption sites to all five boroughs. Finally, the Council must reject the Mayor's regressive turn to law and order.

I urge the Council to reject the proposal to add hundreds of New CO's for solitary confinement. A practice the UN defines as torture. I also urge the Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization programs, like the ineffective and vibrant plain

clothes units. The so-called Subway Plan and ending all NYPD response to mental health calls. Thank you Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ERIC SELIGMAN: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next, we'll turn to Glen Velaski.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will turn to Glenny Renosos.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will call Kennan McClone. Next, Crystal Gooding. Okay, I'm now going to turn to Panel 74, Madeleine Jackson, Mimi Shelton, Willie the Genius, Deigo Brown, Torren Fenally. I will first call on Madeleine Jackson.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MADELEINE JACKSON: Can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can. Go ahead.

MADELEINE JACKSON: Okay, evening. Uhm, I and my two siblings are college educated, second generation public housing resident. We support the full funding of Section 9. While I support the funding of Section 9, I feel I need to speak to the

1 why and the how. Two generations are still living in
2 public housing, which was supposed to be temporary.

3 We can't talk about this unless we talk about
4 systemic racist practices that has kept Black and
5 Brown communities within the public housing system.
6 According to our own government, research shows that
7 African Americans have historically been denied
8 financial resources, competitive jobs and have been
9 locked out of neighborhoods that would help sustain
10 us.

11 Section 9 is the answer to the pushback to all
12 forms of economic hostility of the Black and Brown
13 communities. One way to fund NYCHA is to access the
14 funding scheme devised by Battery Park City. There
15 is money from their tax revenue since 1998. Where is
16 that money?

17 Instead of using the Preservation Trust, which
18 depends on building luxury development, which will
19 further push surrounding community prices up, I
20 advise that you look into the history of Battery Park
21 City, which started out with the same vision as the
22 Preservation Trust. Battery Park City is now one of
23 the most expensive places to live. Market rate
24 apartments on the lower east side where I live is
25

\$3,725, which you would have to make \$150,000 to live. Way over the means of most city workers.

My fear is when the funding is shifted from the federal government to the state, NYCHA will be at the mercy of changing policies and schemes from whatever political party, a politic politician is elected. Federal government would be and is the safeguard. I support the Citywide Council President –

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MADELEINE JACKSON: For the proposal for the full funding of NYCHA through Section 9 and stop privatization to the preservation trust. Thank you very much and have a good evening.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Madeleine and next, we will turn to Mimi Shelton.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MIMI SHELTON: Awesome, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

MIMI SHELTON: Okay, awesome. Good evening Council Members. My name is Mimi Shelton and I'm a Black transgender woman and a New York resident living in Greenpoint Brooklyn and working in the South Bronx. I moved to the city in August of 2017 and I was born and raised in Virginia.

1
2 I, like many before me, disagree with Mayor
3 Adams's current city budget and ask that you all
4 consider reallocating funds toward housing
5 initiatives. Like Audrey Lorde Project's Trans-
6 Justice Initiative. One that was mentioned earlier
7 by a colleague of mine, a partner of mine, a roommate
8 Akong and away from unreasonable NYPD and school
9 police expenditures.

10 As a trans man to this city, I've witnessed an
11 already over expensive exclusionary and problematic
12 housing system, that come even more so when the
13 aftermath of mandated quarantine and an evolving
14 global pandemic. In my occupation as Director of
15 Transgender Initiatives and Services at Destination
16 Tomorrow, the LGBTQ Plus Center of the Bronx, I am
17 exhausted daily by the economic, educational, social
18 and medial disadvantages our clients rustle with in
19 the city and state that begrudgingly and often
20 performatively provides inadequate housing protection
21 and an institutional support to its LGBTQ plus
22 populations.

23 We are living in a context of global suffering
24 and an epidemic of violence against trans and gender
25 expansive BIPOC communities. Watching individuals,

many of whom identify as BIPOC LGBTQ plus navigating substance use on the streets, sleeping on trains with poor hygiene, due to the lack of systemic care and adequate housing they're offered, begging for change and food on subways and also my own clients, trying to utilize our services for a better opportunity while also having to suffer in their personal lives, is a devastating —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MIMI SHELTON: That I will never unsee and not remember. I call on you Committee Members to offer housing equity for all New York City citizens, especially those that are BIPOC, LGBTQ plus members to offer housing equity for all New York City. Oh, excuse me, because in doing so and supporting initiatives like Trans Justice with the Audrey Lorde Project, the foundation of any flourishing life can then actually begin with a reliable home and a space to call that home. Thank you and have a great one.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and I also just want to say for the record, we have been joined by Council Member Cabán. Next on the list is Willie the Genius.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 WILLIE THE GENIUS: Good evening to all of you,
3 my distinguished members of City Council. My name is
4 Willie Dean and I am an Entertainer, a Producer, and
5 Community Resource Advocate, professionally known as
6 Willie the Genius. I'm also a graduate of the Trans
7 Justice Community School, hosted by the Audrey Lorde
8 Project.

9 I think we can all agree that adequate access to
10 affordable housing is one of those essential and
11 alienable rights afforded to each of us by the US
12 Constitution. For seven years, I suffered from an
13 addiction to crystal methamphetamine that threatened
14 to take my life, as well as my housing security.
15 Crystal meth is currently a rising epidemic among
16 Black, queer and trans community.

17 In 2016, the US Center for Disease Control
18 reported that in their lifetime, one out of every two
19 Black, gay men will become HIV positive. Thanks to
20 programs like HASA, which provides low to no cost
21 housing for people living with the HIV virus here in
22 the City of New York, I was able to remain housed
23 while in the addition and climb from under the
24 unbearable weight of oppression and marginalization
25

long enough to achieve being two years and 11 months sober.

Openly HIV positive playwright Donya R. Love, wrote his 2019 stage play one and two, to raise awareness while living with me in our Bedstuy apartment, located within the 36 District. I am crystal clear that my former drug addition was directly linked to my contracting the HIV virus. I am asking that you, Chi Ossé, as well as everyone else voting on this Committee, to vote to allocate funds to affordable housing for more LGBTQ 2IA folks, so that others who may be suffering in any capacity can have their lives saved as well.

This is not hyperbole. Thank you for your time and attention.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will turn to Deigo Brown.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

DEIGO BROWN: Hello, I'm Deigo Brown. I live in Woodside Queens and I am a Real Estate agent in the town Manhattan. I am a member of the Audrey Lorde Project, helping to serve the BIPOC and LGBTQ community.

The result of the high levels of homelessness in our community has resulted in increased levels of depression and anxiety and these factors can lead to things such as increased drug use, unsafe sexual practices and higher rates of suicide for our communities.

It is important for us to have equitable housing to do this because giving vulnerable members of our community a place to be rooted in and our home to feel safe, allows them to better improve themselves and to better connect and serve their communities.

So, housing equity isn't just important for the LGBTQ community, but it's important for a healthy society.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

DEIGO BROWN: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, uh, our final panelist on Panel 74 Torren Benaly.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I'm going to turn to Panel 75, Jessica Marshal, Charaya Hardy, Joy Clarke and Amy Tsai. We will first turn to Jessica Marshal.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next I have Charaya Hardy.

CHARAYA HARDY: Hi, good afternoon everyone. My name is Charaya Hardy. Can anyone hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

CHARAYA HARDY: Okay, my name is Madam C. Hardy. I am the Recording Secretary for the CEC, the Community Education Council of District 23, Acting Vice President of Presidents Council and PTA President of PSIS 155.

valid and real using the mirror method I learned in my training.

Being a reflection for your children helps them just as much as it helps the parent. I am so blessed to continue this work. I am asking for the City Council to please support the initiative and the budget to keep it going and growing for all our school community members citywide.

Thank you for allowing me to testify. With love
Madam C. Hardy.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I'll turn to Joy Clarke.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JOY CLARKE: Good evening to the Committee Members left. My name is Joy Clarke, I'm a tenant and member of the TIL Interim Lease Coalition. I'm here to request your assistance in helping the tenants of the TIL program realize their home ownership dreams by funding the TIL program.

The TIL program was established in 1978 as an agreement between the City of New York and its tenants residing city owned buildings. Under the TIL program, tenants did a work of managing and

1 maintaining these properties in exchange for the
2 State of New York fully funding the conversion of
3 these buildings into cooperatives with the tenants
4 purging the apartments for a low cost. Tenants enter
5 into this program with the understanding that in
6 exchange for their work and managing and maintaining
7 the property, the City of New York would fully fund
8 the cost of rehabilitations but we have upheld our
9 end of the bargain by maintaining our buildings with
10 little to no help from HPD.

12 We maintain these buildings and contribute to our
13 neighborhoods when no one else would live here, long
14 before these neighborhoods were gentrified. Despite
15 the decades of work put into maintaining these
16 buildings by the tenants, the City of New York and
17 HPD has now decided to remake on this agreement and
18 forcibly replace the TIL program with the affordable
19 neighborhood cooperative program, ANCP. ANCP is
20 anything but affordable. Sadly low-income Black,
21 Brown and senior residents with insurmountable debt
22 via mortgage and no clear path to home ownership.
23 ANCP was not created for the benefits of tenants,
24 your constituents but with the interest of third
25 party developers who track on exorbitant understudy

fees in addition to providing construction rehabilitation.

As you are aware, home ownership is a path to generational wealth, which is what the intention of the TIL program. Without your help, ANCP will not honor the agreement, as they are waiting for us to die off so these buildings can be a money grab for developers.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JOY CLARKE: We ask that the abuse of ANCP program be defunded and monies be transferred into the TIL Program creating affordable home ownership, something severely lacking in New York City.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Joy. I know you've been here almost all day waiting to testify. So, thank you so much. We appreciate your patience and thank you.

JOY CLARKE: Thank you for staying. Have a good evening.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Joy. Thank you Chair. Next, I will turn to Amy Tsai followed by Deloris Cannella but we'll first turn to Amy.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

AMY TSAI: Can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

AMY TSAI: Thank you. Evening Chair and Members of the Committee on Finance. My name is Amy Tsai and I'm a parent leader of the New Settlement Parent Action Committee. At today's hearing, I would like to touch on two points, very important campaigns on education, CRSE Cultural Response and Sustaining Education and Healing Centered Schools.

The engagement and involvement with students, parents, educators, community experts and the New York City Department of Education are necessary in reimagining a better, healthier and stronger public school system in each and every neighborhood of New York City.

The work around CRSE and Healing Centered Schools, began several years before COVID. The systemic issues of racism, gender biases, inequities and language access, lack of diversity in school faculties, non-existent cultural stories in books in diverse authors and so much more.

The unprecedented pandemic of COVID-19 simply highlights and earmark these symptoms in reality. As COVID-19 effected everyone across the city and nation, we parent leaders recognize there is more we

can do to contribute to our communities that are grieving from the loss of a loved one and financial stability and self-health and emotions.

Leaders and advocates collectively came together to demonstrate a culture response towards a diverse curriculum for students that can relate to their identity, nationality, ability and more. Bring students to light on being interested to come to school and learn. The DOE has committed \$500 million between this school year and the next two school years to co-create a CRSE, Cultural Responsive Sustaining Education and an implementation of the plan. The DOE refers to the mosaic curriculum. Personally no movement is happening with mosaic.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

AMY TSAI: Now, the human centered schools working group has grafted a portfolio to DOE, Department of Culture Climate and Wellness. We, a coalition of healing ambassadors are asking for funding and the implementation of the program to support social, emotional and mental health wellbeing.

The Healing Centered Schools members will include Public Advocate Williams and City Councilman Riley in

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, our final panelist for Panel 75 Deloris Cannella.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next I will turn to

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

I am the President of Presidents Council of District 32, the Treasurer of Brooklyn High Schools Presidents Council and the CPAC Recording Secretary.

I serve as PTA President in PS123 IS383 and Nelson Mandela's School for Social Justice. My Councilwomen are Jennifer Gutierrez and Sandy Nurse. I would like to thank the DOE for their support in launching the healing ambassador program. Working collectively with all healing ambassadors in the 19 schools in my district, as well as in my school community, it was and is a great pleasure to work with the school administration to be able to provide the parents with different workshops, support groups to assist them with their mental health and having a space to be able to talk and gain ideas from others on activities and events. We may participate and to find our own wellbeing.

During the pandemic, I have learned from my community that most just need guidance assistance and a safe place to get to where they feel supported and assisted. Personally, I am a single mom of four boys who during the pandemic, received knee and neck surgery due to an accident that took place right before lockdown. And before the launch of this program, I took it as an opportunity to move forward and assist my families and my community with resources to maintain and provide them the mental

health and wellness. And so that they know that they were not alone.

Extending this program with parent ambassadors and youth ambassadors will allow us as a community to be with each other and support and with the support of everyone, including staff, students, parents, we would know that moving forward we often face issues that are similar as others and we can share strategies to help us as we may help others with things that they may also feel like they are alone. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, we'll turn to Judith Bautista.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:27:38-10:10:27:41]—

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:27:42-10:27:43]. Steven, I unmuted you.

STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:27:51-10:27:59].

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:28:00-10:28:08].

2 STEVEN MALDONADO: My name is Judith Bautista; I
3 am a Leader for the Alliance of Workers. [SPEAKING
4 IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:28:14].

5 JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
6 10:28:15-10:28:20].

7 STEVEN MALDONADO: And a great leader for Will
8 Rise, We will Rise in Spanish.

9 JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
10 10:28:25-10:28:31].

11 STEVEN MALDONADO: Four years of struggling to
12 correct the great error that happened in the past.

13 JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
14 10:28:37-10:28:41].

15 STEVEN MALDONADO: Where they excluded the home
16 workers of their human rights.

17 JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
18 10:28:46].

19 STEVEN MALDONADO: On purpose.

20 JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
21 10:28:51-10:28:54].

22 STEVEN MALDONADO: And finally, the approved
23 Intro. 339.

24 JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
25 10:28:59-10:29:01].

STEVEN MALDONADO: But this is only the beginning of the travel of the path.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:29:06-10:29:11].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Like I told my son, an umbrella only works if you open it when it's raining.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:29:17-10:29:21].

STEVEN MALDONADO: The same thing with this law, it works only if it's open to the public.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:29:26-10:29:30].

STEVEN MALDONADO: And the homeworkers are recognized for the work that they do.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:29:36-10:29:40].

STEVEN MALDONADO: 20 years as a professional babysitter and I never knew that I had rights.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:29:45-10:29:49].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Home workers are essential.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:29:52-10:29:55].

STEVEN MALDONADO: We are the ones that move the economy for this country.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:29:59-10:30:03].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Making it possible that other work is possible.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:30:07-10:30:09].

STEVEN MALDONADO: While each of you go out to work —

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:30:13-10:30:19].

STEVEN MALDONADO: A nanny or someone or home healthcare worker that takes care of the adults, allows you to be able to do your work that you do without any concern.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:30:29-10:30:30].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Which are your loved ones.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:30:34-10:30:40].

STEVEN MALDONADO: I also suffered something the time when I chose to become a mother.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
10:30:46-10:30:53].

STEVEN MALDONADO: And that's why I'm here, so
that it doesn't happen to someone else what happened
to me, if this law is approved.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
10:31:03-10:31:07].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Thank you for allowing me to
give testimony today.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
10:31:11-10:31:15].

STEVEN MALDONADO: And I ask all of you at the
City Council who are present -

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
10:31:20-10:31:24].

STEVEN MALDONADO: To please approve the budget.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
10:31:28-10:31:40].

STEVEN MALDONADO: And so that the homeworkers
are aware and as well as the employees that are aware
of their rights and there are laws that protect us.

JUDITH BAUTISTA: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE
10:31:49-10:31:51].

STEVEN MALDONADO: Thank you very much to everyone and have a good night. Gracias.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Judith. Steven, don't go anywhere, I have to call a few more names but they're not on the Zoom but I have to call them anyway and then we're going to go to [INAUDIBLE 10:32:05].

STEVEN MALDONADO: No problem.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uhm, Naomi Williams is next on our list.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Nickie Mea Brownfield. Sarah Mane [INAUDIBLE 10:32:36] and then Donna Bonilla. Okay, I'm going to move onto Panel 77. Panel 77 has Alma Rocha, Ava Thompson, Deborah Humes Jordan, Denise Frederick, Harriet Mugwiji. But we're first going to turn to Alma, so Steve, if you could let her know that we'll go ahead and unmute her and she can begin her testimony please. Uh, I think we remuted you, sorry. Okay.

STEVEN MALDONADO:[SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 10:33:30-10:33:36].

ALMA ROCHA: Yes, I'm ready but I would like to speak in English. Thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, thank you. You can
uhm, give us just one more – just give us one moment
please.

ALMA ROCHA: Hello, good evening.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hold on one – hold on one
moment. Everybody just bear with us one moment.
Okay, can we go ahead and reunmute Alma please.
Okay, go ahead Alma.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ALMA ROCHA: Okay, thank you. Thank you, good
evening. My name is Alma Rocha, I am a proud member
of the National Alliance Domestic Worker and I have
been a nanny since 15-years-ago. Last year, domestic
worker to be included in the New York City Human
Rights Law. Many domestic workers in New York City
still don't know about their basic rights. We have a
this right but we want to make sure that other
workers and especially employers, know about the
rights of domestic workers.

We want all the domestic workers to be treated
with dignity and respect. We cannot do it in the
city with 3,000 domestic workers if we don't have
this funding and ongoing support.

1
2 Today, we need a city, an activity joint campaign
3 with the Mayor and [INAUDIBLE 10:34:56]. And
4 together with the organization, hand and hand. Thank
5 you very much and I hope that you give it all your
6 support. Thank you.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Alma. I'm - next
8 on Panel 77, Eva Thompson.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

10 EVA THOMPSON: Good evening. My name is Eva
11 Thompson. I'm a proud member of the National
12 Domestic Workers Alliance, NDWA and a nanny for over
13 24 years. I am also a leader worker with NDWA. As a
14 caregiver, we fought so hard to ensure domestic
15 workers have human rights. So, last year, domestic
16 workers like myself, fought to be included in New
17 York City's Human Rights law.

18 I have seen what happens when workers go to work,
19 not understanding their rights. I talk to workers
20 all the time who are too scared to speak up because
21 they don't know where to go or who to talk to. Many
22 don't know that the city has offices and agencies
23 ready to help them. Worse, when they get there, they
24 feel powerless to tell their story.

Alliance and of *We Dream in Black*, the Black domestic

workers organizing program of NDWE. I have been a home caregiver for 15 years.

Last year, domestic workers like myself, fought to be included in the human rights law. And so many domestic workers in New York City still don't know about their basic rights. We want this right but we want to make sure that other workers and especially employers know about domestic worker rights.

In 2021, I was doing organizing work to teach domestic workers about their rights and helping them come forward with their cases of wage theft. I was learning that there was so many domestic workers that still didn't know about their rights and needed someone who had experienced what they had experienced in order to trust the next step in exercising their rights.

I will take the time to have long conversations. To build that trust. I would have to help explain the process of sharing their story with government agency.

I would also be there to advocate when they did not know how to advocate for themselves. With the City Council funding National Domestic Workers Empowerment Initiative there could be more domestic —

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

DEBORAH HUMES JORDEN: Leaders like myself.

Reaching out to domestic workers, teaching them about their rights and resources. Please, please pass the Domestic Workers and Empowerment Employment Initiative. We can do much more for all the workers who take care of New York City. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next we'll turn to Denise Frederick.

DENISE FREDERICK: Hello, good evening. My name is Denise Frederick and I'm a proud member of the National Domestic Workers Alliance and I'm also a professional nanny currently working in Brooklyn. Last year, domestic workers like myself fought to be included in the New York City Human Rights Law and so many domestic workers in New York City still don't know about their basic rights.

We won this right but we wanted to make sure that other workers, especially employers knew about domestic worker rights. During the middle of the pandemic, when so many domestic workers lost their jobs all at once, I was part of a group of worker leaders who reached out to several thousand of domestic workers to let them know about possible

resources and financial in available today. So many new information and I was so grateful to have the connection.

We weren't able to reach out to everybody and eventually our reach as a group of worker leaders was limited. With the city's ongoing support, we can make sure there is funding to education and outreach. I was having conversations with hundreds of workers who just wanted to know what their rights were. Who needed someone to talk to and needed support during such a critical time. The crisis is not over. We are going to back to work but that doesn't always mean back to good work conditions. The Domestic Worker Employer Empowerment Initiative can be a step in the right direction for connecting workers with support and resources. Please fund the Domestic Worker Initiative for \$300,000 so we can see even more domestic worker initiative groups. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and our final panelist on Panel 77 is Harriet Mugwuji.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

HARRIET MUGWUJI: Uhm, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

HARRIET MUGWUJI: Good evening. Thank you for the space. My name is Harriet Mugwuji and I'm a proud member leader of the National Domestic Workers Alliance and a [INAUDIBLE 10:42:19] organization.

I have been a nanny for 12 years. Last year, domestic workers like myself fought to be included in the New York Human Rights Law and so many domestic workers in New York still don't know their basic rights. We want this right but we want to make sure that other workers and especially employers know about domestic worker rights. We want all domestic workers to be treated with dignity and respect. We can't do that in a city with 200,000 domestic workers if we don't have the funding and ongoing support.

Last year, I was part of the New York Coalition Domestic Workers and I was given the opportunity to educate Council Members about care work and domestic workers – about care work and domestic workers rights.

This year, I would like to ensure that we are educating everyone about care work and domestic workers rights. The pandemic has shown us how we as care workers are important to many families and as some families decided to have their nannies live with

them and not have them go to their respectful homes.

I would like the City Council to approve the Domestic Worker and Employer Empowerment Initiative. I live in Queens and there are over 50,000 domestic workers. Queens is very big, so we would like funding to reach out to all of them. Thank you kindly.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and now, I will just read out the following remaining panels before we turn to those who were not on when we called their name to use the raise hand function in Zoom. So, Panel 78 and I apologize if I'm messing up names. Jacque Warry, Ludie Delva, Marissa Senteno, Sanita Hamal, Daniel Contreras.

Panel 79, Naja Ugecka, Robert Jereski, Carol Verde, Dave Talivan. Panel 80, Gloria Manzato, Joy Clarke, I already called on you and you spoke. Rosa Rodriguez, Jeremiah Schlotman. Panel 81 Nudita Kumar, Angie Perez, Richard Perez. Numrata Pradhan, Rosa Pinya. Panel 82, Kieran Clarke, Gail Haywood, Debra Jones, I already called on you. Judith, I already called on you. Fred Recardi, Marcque Jenkins, Lonnie Portis and Diverse [INAUDIBLE 10:45:47]. We'll first call on Jackie Orie. Sorry if I mispronounced that.

1
2 JACKIE ORIE: It's correct. Thank you. For this
3 opportunity to testify today. My name is Jackie Orie
4 and I am the We Dream Black New York Organizer for
5 the National Domestic Workers Alliance, NDWA. We
6 Dream in Black is NDWA's organizing program for Black
7 identifying domestic workers. I am also a former
8 domestic worker of over 20 years' experience. I am
9 here to testify in support of the Domestic Workers
10 and Employers Empowerment Initiative in this years
11 Schedule C budget proposal.

12 NDQA is the nations leading voice for domestic
13 workers in building power, dignity, and raising
14 standards for the nannies, house cleaners and care
15 workers across the country. In New York alone, we
16 have over 200,000 domestic workers who provide
17 essential care to an estimated \$1 million employers.
18 It is so important to invest in domestic workers.
19 Invest in our care economy and to provide the
20 resources for employers of domestic workers to be up
21 to date with the latest standards and laws for
22 domestic employment.

23 We are urging the New York City Council to
24 support the passage of the Domestic Worker and
25 Employer Empowerment Initiative introduced in the

2023 New York City discretionary budget. Our coalition is only asking for \$300,000. It will provide much needed funding to support outreach, education and direct services to thousands of domestic workers and employers in our city.

Last year, we won historic changes in the domestic worker rights with the passage of Intro. 339 Human Rights Inclusion of Domestic Workers and Legislation to obtain the city's paid safe and sick leave to bring domestic workers up to the city's standards. All of this would be for nothing if we don't also ensure the resources to implement, educate and reach out to the thousands of workers and employers, getting them connected to city agencies and understanding the new standards of domestic work.

We urge New York City Council to pass this initiative and to place value in the workers that care for all of us. Thank you so much for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call on Ludie Delva.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will call on Marissa Senteno.

MARISSA SENTENO: Good evening. Good evening Committee Chair Brannan and member of the Finance Committee. Well, we just sort of decided to bring the energy back to the Finance Committee because we're really passionate about ensuring that domestic workers voices are seen and heard. My name is Marissa Senteno and I'm representing the National Domestic Workers Alliance as our New York Director and representing the New York Chapters Domestic Worker base. NDWA works for the respect, recognition and right for nannies, house cleaners and home care workers who do the essential work caring for loved ones in our home, uhm in our homes. NDWA and NYC Coalition for Domestic Work are present here today to ask for \$300,000 to create what would be in New York City's first ever Domestic Worker and Employer Empowerment Initiative in this years discretionary fund.

And we already heard some stories about how these funds would be used and why. And what I wanted to really express is that you know, why do we want to make sure that domestic workers and employers across the city are educated about rights and about the much needed services. Well, there are over 200,000

domestic workers who live and work in New York City and their families total about 680,000 people. That's about eight percent of the city's overall population. Domestic workers do the work that makes all the other work possible. They care for our children, the aging, and the disabled. Over one million households across the city depend on domestic workers and one in eight women of color in New York City is a domestic worker.

One in six immigrant woman of color is a domestic worker. And so, I will provide a more nuance analysis of who are domestic workers across the city but I want to say that there isn't a household that doesn't need care, care work and when we're thinking about initiatives and funding that is going to address gender, pay gap and pay disparities, we need to think about like how are we framing the resources for women of color.

And in one solution that we have, is to really support and invest in our care future and in domestic workers. So, by passing this initiative, we can fully bridge the gap with the wage disparity, the gender wage disparity because for every domestic worker that is educated in power, just like you've

heard from our members here tonight. We have workers that can more effectively raise standards in the domestic workplace. In a city that upholds the right to standards of domestic workers is also investing in its care, the future of care work and the future of all of us. Thank you and good night.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and the next panelist I will call on Sonita Hamal.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, next, I will call on Daniella Contreras.

DANIELLA CONTRERAS: I already testified earlier.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I thought so, thank you. The names are starting to blur but I thought so. Okay, uhm, next, Vishna Vugika. Uhm, next is Robert Jereski. Okay, next Carol Verde. Okay, next I will call on Dave Tallivan.

DAVE TALLIVAN: Hi guys.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You're unmuted. We can hear you.

DAVE TALLIVAN: Can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

DAVE TALLIVAN: Okay, mainly calling whatever for the SRG. They need to be disbanded, defunded,

1
2 whatever. I'm working right now, so I'm a little
3 distracted but uhm, I was going to say, look on Page
4 22 of the manuals that came out like last April.
5 There's like planned arrests. This is not about
6 public safety. Uhm, they do talk about budgets on
7 Page 21. Like, they seem to have a lot of overtime
8 if you ask me.

9 Uhm, but I've been a protest Marshal at tons of
10 protests and I'm talking about safety. Nothing in
11 that manual indicates anything about safety or crowd
12 control, protecting any people who are you know may
13 have mobility problems. Uhm, the other thing is
14 that, like the way they ride their bikes, it's
15 designed to terrorize people.

16 As for uhm, you know like I've seen horrific
17 stuff. Uhm, at that same thing that Victoire was
18 mentioning, I saw a guy fall on the back of his head.
19 It could have been like that guy in buffalo who
20 cracked his skull open. I mean, it's ridiculous and
21 there's no need for it. I've seen them pull
22 journalists onto the sidewalk and you know to arrest
23 them. I've seen them club and beat people, so it's
24 whatever but I'm going to spend money, spend it on
25 Right to Counsel Local Law 53 and uhm, yeah, that's

it for now. I'm sorry, I'm on a deadline but whatever. But disband them, it's just not worth it and they can't fight for shit.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, Gloria Manzano.

GLORIA MANZANO: Hi, good evening. I'm speaking on Family Healing Ambassadors. I just wanted to say that being a Family Healing Ambassador for District 31 here in Staten Island. First of all, I've seen -- I've been on the meeting with your guys since ten o'clock off and on and I've seen very few people speaking on Staten Island in general and I just want to say for District 31, we absolutely need the Family Healing Ambassadors Program to continue. Our kids really need mental health. COVID came in and they have really been traumatized and damaged in ways that they don't even recognize.

So, I would just really ask that Family Healing Ambassador Program does stay in effect or does be considered for next year as well and continue on with the DOE. That's all I had to say.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and just bear with me everyone. Next, I'll turn to Rosa Rodriguez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, Jeremiah Schlotman.
Okay, next, uhm, Nudita Kumar. Okay, next on the
list, Angie Perez. Next, I have Richard Perez.
Okay, next I have Namrata Pradhan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

NAMRATA PRADHAN: [INAUDIBLE 10:57:58].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, okay, there we go. I
just wanted to make sure we could hear you, sorry.

NAMRATA PRADHAN: Thank you so much, yeah. Hi,
my name is Namrata, I'm an Organizer at Adhikaar,
working as a nanny. I was a previous nanny and I'm
here testifying on behalf of our leader. [INAUDIBLE
10:58:21-10:58:23].

So, yes, my name is Namrata Pradhan, I'm an
active domestic worker of Adhikaar. A community and
a worker center that solves and organizes the Nepali
speaking community.

Today, I am here representing the 200,000
domestic workers working NYC. I have been working as
a domestic worker for 21 years and I face many
injustice at my workplace. For example, employees
telling me things like, you are a person from a poor
country. You are a servant and you have to listen to
whatever we tell you. You're not supposed to sit on

the sofa and all, it made me feel small and less than human. I couldn't even take a day off when my child was sick and I had to find someone to take care of him so I could go to work.

This is not my story. This story is similar to 200,000 domestic workers working NYC. Our work is just anyone else on the road. Someone's home is my workplace. Our work is important as many other work. That is why we formed organization Adhikaar NDWA Association and Hand and Hand. The Domestic Employees Network raised our voice and were successful in passing the Intro. 39 in NYC last year as part of the NYC Care Campaign.

With this bill, we now are protected under NYC Human Rights Discrimination Law. I feel like we are now recognized as domestic workers like any other jobs. I'm thankful to each one of you who voted in favor of this bill and support to pass the bill but our work is not finished. Just passing a bill is not enough. As we, Adhikaar have learned throughout our experience, organizing for workers and human rights.

Our bill is only as good as if it's enforcement and implementation.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

NAMRATA PRADHAN: Just give me one second. So, I strongly urge the City Council to invest resources from the body to the NYC Coalition for Domestic work and create a new initiative, the Domestic Worker Employer Empowerment Initiative. With this new initiative, we will be able to continue and most importantly expand our fight for domestic worker injustice and for justice and for rights. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. And next on the list, we have Rosa Peña.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I have Kieran Clarke.

KIERAN CLARKE: Good evening everyone. My name is Kieran.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting.

KIERAN CLARKE: Good evening everyone. My name is Kieran Michelle Clarke. I am a Member/Leader of the National Domestic Workers Alliance and a member leader We Dream in Black New York, New York. NDWA's organizing program for Black identifying domestic workers. I have worked for the care sector for 21 years and I have many domestic worker colleagues throughout the City of New York.

I have been actively involved in the Domestic Worker Campaigns to ensure human rights protections for domestic workers. It is good to see the changes in New York City's legislation. It is a good step forward. I also saw that during the pandemic, domestic workers were left without resources and knowledge of their rights. As many of them became unemployed all at once.

In New York City, one in eight women of color are domestic workers. We want the laws that we passed to have real effect in the homes where we work. That means the city should pass the Domestic Worker and Employment Employer Empowerment Initiative. I want all domestic workers in New York City to know their rights and have the kind of access to information that I have had.

I teach other workers about their rights and we can teach so much more with the support from New York City Council and administration. I have experienced workplace conditions that do not respect my humanity as a domestic worker and I know what it means to be connected with resource and to feel empowered.

We care for all of you and it is time for you to care for us too. Please pass the \$300,000 proposal

for Domestic Worker and Employer Empowerment Initiative.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

KIERAN CLARKE: Thank you so much for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call on Gail Haywood.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

GAIL HAYWOOD: Good night everyone. My name is Gail Haywood and I am a member with the National Domestic Workers Alliance. In the past few years, I have become highly involved in NDWA and have served as a facilitator and has newly been elected to the Board of Cleaners Council to serve all of New York City.

I have worked as a housekeeper for over five families in the past 20 years. I have also had extensive knowledge of the nanny industry, having worked as a nanny for over two decades. In the last 12 years, I have focused on house cleaning solely for my survival. In March of 2020 when the pandemic strike, I had witnessed house cleaners all across the city lose their jobs and had no money for basic necessities such as putting food on their tables, rent, utilities, etc..

I also became a victim of this tragedy. Domestic work is hard work period and we deserve fair pay and better wage treatments. We should not have to fight time and time again for this. It is high time that employers keep up with the loss around domestic workers. Funding is needed for domestic workers like myself to thrive.

I am asking all of you, please, please, pass 300,000 proposal for domestic workers and Employer Empowerment Initiative. Thank you so much and God Bless you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and next, I will call on Fred Recardi.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, I will call on Marque Jenkins. Okay next, uh next, I will call on Lonnie Portus. Next, I will call on Diverse Wuton(SP?). Okay, that represents all of the panels. There are still people in the Zoom and there are those who were not on the Zoom when we called their name or if we had missed anyone, now is the opportunity to use the raise hand function in Zoom. I will call on you in the order with which you raised your hand. If you have already spoken, there is no second round of

testimony, so we will only be calling on those hands for persons who have not had an opportunity to speak this evening and bear with me one moment, I want to make sure.

Steven, I just unmuted you. Sorry, Steven. We hadn't unmuted you in time, so if you could just let folks know that for anyone who was not called on or who may have missed their name, if they could use the Zoom raise hand function now and we will call on them to give testimony.

STEVEN MALDONADO: [SPEAKING IN SPANISH 11:07:19-11:07:53].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Steven. Uhm, the first hand I have up is Jennifer Downes.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uh, op, there you go. You're unmuted now, sorry.

JENNIFER DOWNES: Thank you. Thank you City Council Members for the opportunity to testify. Hello, my name is Jennifer Downes. I am a New York City resident and I am here to urge the City Council to remove the funding of the NYPD's Strategic Response Group entirely from the police budget. The Strategic Response Group was founded in 2015 with a

budget of \$13 million. It's budget ballooned to \$90 million in its first year. The unit has been a consistent presence at protests across New York City ever since known for escalating and bringing violence to protestors in our streets.

In 2020, the units brutality was in public view as members of the unit deployed militarized tactics against protestors in the highly documented and visible protests. I personally witnessed violent escalations by the SRG unit. I witnessed a multitude of unjustified escalations at nonviolent protests from disproportionate number of officers deployed, military grade equipment including the LRAD to unprovoked physical violence against individual protestors.

I will never be able to scrub the visceral image of a nonviolent protestor being slammed face first into the ground, less than a foot in front of me from my mind and my experience is not unique. The SRG has been central to many lawsuits and investigations related to the NYPD's abuse of protestors throughout 2020. The SRG's violence isn't a coincidence. The units training overwhelmingly focuses on use of force

and members of the unit are trained to treat racial justice protestors as enemy combatants.

In the SRG Bike Squad's manual, protest groups are divided into two categories, peaceful and violent. Examples of violent protestors are Black Lives Matter Movement, Occupy Wallstreet and Anti-Trump demonstrators. The SRG is an unbearable source of sanctioned, racialized violence in our city and they inflict this trauma on New Yorkers with impunity.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

JENNIFER DOWNES: The City Council must put an end to the SRG's abuse by disbanding the unit and removing its funds from the hands of the NYPD and reinvesting those funds into our communities. Thank you for your time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. The next hand for those who have not spoken, Natasha Kappers will be next.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

NATASHA KAPPERS: Hello, I am Natasha Kappers, the Director of the New York City Coalition for Educational Justice and a mother of two Black public school students in high school.

As a nation, we have witnessed and lived through the mass murdering of Black, Latinx and Asian people across the country daily for nearly two weeks. From church goers in California to the elderly buying groceries in Buffalo New York and countless more from coast to coast. All of these murders were racially motivated. The Buffalo shooter wrote a manifesto on how Black and Brown people are replacing White then murdered them while livestreaming on Twitch.

But what does this have to do with public education in New York City? Public education and curriculum is a major lever in ending systemic racism and White Supremacy. Nearly a year ago, the New York Department of Education pledged to create the universal Mosaic curriculum. It was to be built by educators, parents and students, be culturally responsive, anti-racist for ELA, English Language Arts and from K-12 to date.

The new administration has done little to nothing to bring this curriculum to fruition. This Council ensured that they had over \$200 million needed to make this happen and they have done nothing. They have not even released a public plan or promise not to reallocate that funding.

We are pleading with the Council to hold the Department of Education accountable for two very simple things. One, ensure that no money is reallocated from the universal mosaic curriculum, even if it is to go to things like ethnic studies, which is social studies curriculum.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

NATASHA KAPPERS: And for them to publicly release a multi-year implementation plan for the universal mosaic curriculum for ELA and math, along with a family engagement plan.

This Council must hold them accountable to their promises and to do the right thing for our children in the future. Thoughts and prayers are not nearly enough. In fact, it's nothing. It is time for the Department of Education and the Council to do its part to end systemic racism and this is one clear and concrete way to create our new powerful and equitable future. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you and the final hand that we have up for persons who have not testified today from the Cypress Hills local Development Corporation Ryan Chavez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

RYAN CHAVEZ: Good evening Chair Brannan and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Ryan Chavez, Program Director of the Basement Apartment Conversion Pilot program at Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation. We're a nonprofit community development organization and Settlement House based in East New York Brooklyn.

I am here to request that \$250,000 of expense funding be allocated to the FY23 budget to support ongoing work on the Basement Apartment Conversion Pilot Program. This program launched in early 2019 to help small homeowners in East New York convert their basements into safe, legal and affordable rental units.

This pilot was also designed to demonstrate the feasibility of basement conversions in New York City and lay the foundation for a citywide program. However, in Spring 2020, all remaining expense funds, around \$2.3 million were eliminated from the program forcing us to scale back dramatically. Now, we did manage to successfully file several plans at the DOB last year and are currently working through out challenging approval process. We expect these

properties to receive the required approvals by early fall so construction can begin, however, no expense funds have been allocated to cover the programs most basic administrative costs.

The program needs \$250,000 in FY23 to cover its essential staffing, overhead and insurance costs through the end of construction. This will allow us to finish our work in East New York while providing the city with lessons for how basement conversions can be done on a larger scale. As we saw during tropical storm IDA last year, the city can no longer afford to ignore the existence of basement units. This is now a matter of life or death.

We repeat our request for FY23 expense funds to complete our work in East New York and thank you once again for the opportunity to comment.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Chair Brannan, that concludes the public portion of our hearing. Everyone who has not spoken, received an opportunity to by raising their hands and just so we have it for the record, I want to make sure that we have all the Council Members that we've been joined by today. Brannan, Farias, Louis, Kagan, Hudson, Joseph, Barron, Sanchez, Carr, Brooks-Powers, Moya, Ossé,

Powers, Brewer, Velázquez, Ayala, Cabán and I'll let you announce the last one.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Council. Before we close out, I want to give Speaker Adams a chance to speak.

SPEAKER ADAMS: My goodness. Thank you Chair Brannan and thank you to our Committee Counsel Malcom Butehorn for an amazing job today. In this final day, which is to us on the Council, the most important day out of all of them that we have spent in these joint Council hearings over these past few weeks. You have been heard and before I talk about — before I thank you all, I just want to thank my colleagues who have hung out all day long. This hearing begun at approximately 10 a.m. this morning and it is an annual event, my 5th time in this annual event, which I figure is one of the greatest honors in being a part of this City Council. Thank Council Member Joseph, Council Member Cabán. Those are the two that I see that are still hanging out with your Finance Chair this evening. Thank you for hanging out all day long. Thank you to all of our amazing advocates, our nonprofits, all of our partners that continue to make your wishes known to this historic

1 City Council. We hear you. We trust that you will
2 continue and have done your due diligence in speaking
3 up to your Council Members, just as you have taken
4 this time today to make sure that you were heard. As
5 a part of this Panel, make no mistake about it, your
6 testimony goes in the history books for the New York
7 City Council for this 5/25/2022 today, you have been
8 heard across the City of New York and you, are in the
9 history books for your testimony. We appreciate you
10 so much for all of the work that you do. For all of
11 the causes that you continue to champion.

12 Most importantly for your stamina, your
13 commitment to your causes that you truly believe in
14 and the fact that you took enough time to bring it to
15 this Council and to this hearing at this almost 9:30
16 hour on tonight. I appreciate you all so very much
17 for your testimony, for your words, for your
18 heartfelt commitment to all of your causes and like I
19 said, this Council hears you. This Council hears
20 you. We ask for you to continue to reach out. For
21 your individual Council Members continue to reach out
22 to us and we will try our best to meet your needs as
23 you have brought them to this Finance Committee this
24 evening.
25

Thank you again to all of the Finance unit staff. Thank you to all of our Sergeants at Arms. Thank you Malcom once again. Thank you to all of our Council who have been here and who stuck it out. Thank you Rasheeda, I see you snapping up there. Thank you for that, we need that too. We need that too, we're human too. Thank you for that.

So, we just want to thank you all again for sticking it out with us. We are going to continue to do our very best for you, for the City of New York. I am going to give it back to our Chair Brannan, who I know, if he hasn't been drinking coffee all day - I don't know but I trust that he has had a cup or two over these hours.

So thank you for an amazing job Finance Chair Brannan. I yield back to you and good night.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Speaker. Over the last ten days, this Committee has heard from 20 agencies, authorities, boards and offices but today, like the Speaker said, it was really the most important day because it's when we hear from the people of the city. The people that put their trust in us, their faith in us to do the right thing and we are their neighbors and they elect us to deliver for

1
2 them and that's why today is so important because
3 we're hearing directly from you and now, as we turn
4 to budget negotiations and we work towards not only a
5 balanced budget but a budget that's guided by
6 fairness and equity for every New Yorkers in every
7 zip code. And I think we heard from people from just
8 about every neighborhood today, which was really
9 meaningful and powerful.

10 And also, of course, I want to echo the tireless
11 work of the staff and especially Malcom for stepping
12 up and stepping up to really be our captain here over
13 the past month. We started these hearings back on
14 May 6th and here we are now on May 25th, almost 12-
15 hours after we started this hearing this morning.

16 And uhm, and with that, I will close out this
17 first series of hearings for the FY23 budget. The
18 first series of hearings under Speaker Adams and with
19 this historic Council. Thank you all so much. Thank
20 you everyone for your patience. Everyone that stuck
21 around today to make their voices heard. With that,
22 I will adjourn this hearing. Thank you. [GAVEL]
23 Good night everybody.
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date August 14, 2022