

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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December 7, 2010
Start: 1:25 pm
Recess: 1:30 pm

HELD AT: Hearing Room
 250 Broadway, 16th Floor

B E F O R E: DEBORAH L. ROSE
 Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
 Deborah L. Rose
 Margaret S. Chin
 James G. Van Bramer

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Good morning.

Today, the Committee on Civil Rights will vote on Proposed Introductory Bill 396-A, a Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to the powers and duties of the Commission on Human Rights.

I'd like to begin by thanking my fellow committee members, especially Jimmy Van Bramer, for attending today's vote. I'd also like to thank Jolene and Damien for all of the work they put forward to incorporate this hearing, and to Council Member Chin, who was here on time and really helped me with my holistic health issues.

Current law requires the Commission on Human Rights to submit annual reports to the Mayor and the City Council. The law, however, does not specify the type of information that should be included in the report. So these decisions are left to the discretion of the commission and can change from one year to the next, or from one administration to the next.

Proposed Intro 396-A would require the commission to submit an annual report by March 1st every year with each report including, at a

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2 minimum, specific information on the inquiries it
3 receives from the public, the complaints filed and
4 its education and outreach efforts.

5 The committee held a hearing on
6 this bill last month, during which Cliff Mulqueen,
7 a deputy commissioner at the Commission on Human
8 Rights, testified on behalf of the commission in
9 support of the bill.

10 Deputy Commissioner Mulqueen
11 further testified that the commission already
12 reports some of the information required by the
13 legislation, but admitted that it is up to the
14 commission to decide what to include in each
15 report and as such, the contents of the annual
16 report could change from one year to another or
17 from administration to the next.

18 Deputy Commissioner Mulqueen
19 testified that there are flaws in the current
20 tracking and reporting efforts, and that it is in
21 the process of repairing these flaws. In
22 particular, the ability to track information on
23 inquiries received. It will take time for the
24 commission to go through old data on inquiries and
25 the new database will not be set up until

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2 September 2011. In light of this testimony, the
3 bill was amended.

4 Under the amended version of the
5 bill, the commission would be required to provide
6 information on inquiries going back to 2009, in
7 order to give the commission, the Council and any
8 other interested parties the opportunity to
9 evaluate this data, but will not make this
10 information due until March 1st, 2012, when the
11 2011 annual report will become due. That report
12 will also have to include data on inquiries from
13 2010.

14 As I said in our last hearing on
15 this bill, I believe that mandating the disclosure
16 of this information can be a highly effective tool
17 in identifying patterns of discrimination and
18 stopping it before they get worse. With that, I
19 will conclude my remarks by urging my colleagues
20 to vote yes on Proposed Intro 396-A. Thank you.

21 Would any of my colleagues like to
22 make a statement or say anything? Hearing none,
23 we will now open the floor for the vote.

24 WILLIAM MARTIN: William Martin,
25 Committee Clerk, roll call vote in the Committee

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2 on Civil Rights, Introduction 396-A. Council
3 Member Rose?

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Aye.

5 WILLIAM MARTIN: Chin?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye.

7 WILLIAM MARTIN: Van Bramer?

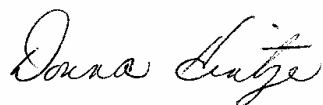
8 COUNCIL MEMBER BRAMER: With great
9 respect for Madame Chair Rose, aye.

10 WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote of three
11 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no
12 abstentions, item is adopted. Members, please
13 sign the committee report.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Donna Hintze certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna Hintze".

Signature

Date December 22, 2010