

Testimony before the NYC Council
The Blizzard of 2010
Evaluating the City's Response
Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Good evening, Speaker Quinn, Boro President Markowitz, members of the NYC Council, I am Annette M. Robinson, Assembly woman of the 56th AD representing the communities of Bedford Stuyvesant, Bushwick and Crown Heights.

As a native New Yorker residing in Brooklyn all of my life I have come to express the outrage distress and helplessness experienced by the constituents of the 56th AD during the aftermath of the blizzard.

After the snow had stopped falling I went outside to see what the conditions were only to find that the traditional operation of the salt spreader had not spread any salt to begin the melting down of the snow. I could not go anywhere because there were mounds of snow in the middle of the street two day after the snow had stopped falling. I called 311 No! Response. I left a message in the office of the Chairperson of the Sanitation Committee of the Council and I called my Councilmember Al Vann. He advised me that his street had not been plowed as well.

As an elected official I was disappointed that I was unable to provide my constituents who called my home and office with a timeframe for when their streets would be cleared. There was no definitive word coming from the administration. It appeared that no one was in charge –

New Yorkers are wonderful, resilient caring people and should not be taken for granted or marginalized. They were abused ignored and disrespected during the Blizzard of 2010.

It is hoped that upon the compilation of the expressed concerns that the New York City Council would put in place a system that would allow for elected officials to directly contact the Emergency Response System to ascertain updated information regarding their districts.

Thank you Speaker Quinn, and Councilmembers for holding these hearings to hear the people's response.

Annette M. Robinson

Member of the Assembly

56th AD – Kings County

RUBENSTEIN & RYNECKI

**ATTORNEYS AT LAW
16 COURT STREET, SUITE 1717
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11241
Tel. (718)522-1020
Fax. (718)522-3804**

**SANFORD A. RUBENSTEIN
SCOTT RYNECKI***

**ROBERT H. PETITT
KLIOPATRA VRONTOS*
ROBERT MIJUCA
RICHARD M. LEVY
ALLEN C. GOODMAN
JERA RANDESI**

*** ADMITTED IN NY & NJ**

STATEMENT OF ATTORNEY SANFORD RUBENSTEIN WHO REPRESENTS THE FAMILY OF YVONNE FREEMAN WHO DIED OF A HEART ATTACK ON DECEMBER 27TH 2010 WHILE WAITING FOR AN AMBULANCE TO GET THROUGH UNPLOWED BLIZZARD COVERED STREETS

Attorney Sanford Rubenstein states "A 20 million claim was filed today against the City of New York for damages for wrongful death on behalf of the family of Queens woman Yvonne Freeman who died of a heart attack on December 27th 2010 while waiting for an ambulance to get through unplowed blizzard-covered streets. The negligence of city agencies including the Sanitation Department, Transportation Department, Police Department, and Fire Department caused this tragedy. The failure to declare a snow emergency was inexcusable as was the breakdown of the 911 system. Yvonne Freeman's daughter was unable to reach a 911 operator as her mother gasped for breath, all she got on the other side of the phone line was a recorded message and a buzzing tone that sounded like a fax machine. By the time the EMS medics arrived 3 hours later it was too late. Yvonne Freeman had died. This family does not want the tragedy they suffered to happen to any other family. The City of New York needs to correct the deficiencies that caused this wrongful death, but it also must improve its preparedness for all types of emergencies in the snow. If fire trucks can get to fires in the snow filled streets certainly the city can have vehicles that can get through snow filled streets for medical emergencies as well".

TO: Vincent Gentile, Council Member, New York City Council

Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., Council Member, New York City Council

DATE: 01-19-2011

FROM: Michael Marquez, Bensonhurst Volunteer Ambulance Service

SUBJECT: VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE RESPONSE DURING THE 12-26-10 STORM.

I am writing to inform the New York City Council of the difficulties encountered by the membership of Bensonhurst Volunteer Ambulance Service while engaging in emergency response operations during the winter storm on 12-26-2010 and 12-27-2010. I am also requesting that the New York City Council address these issues and bring them to the attention of both the Fire Department of New York and the New York City Office of Emergency Management. The winter storm conditions that deposited 20 inches of snow over the south Brooklyn area had a severely negative impact on the ability of Bensonhurst Volunteer Ambulance to respond to medical emergencies within our community.

There are several problems that we have identified that need to be corrected in order for community based volunteer EMS/Fire organizations to respond effectively. I have listed these problems below and our organization is requesting that the New York City Council address these issues as quickly as possible to improve response during this winter season.

1- The New York City Office of Emergency Management and the Fire Department of New York did not issue an alert to volunteer EMS agencies about the storm until 12:21am on 12-27-2011 AFTER the storm already started.

2-The New York City Department of Sanitation did not clear the street next to our base of snow. Both of our ambulances were stranded and had to be dug out by hand. The street that our base is located on is across from Holy Family Nursing Home. The inability of our ambulances as well as other ambulances from FDNY and Midwood prevented EMS personnel from responding to medical emergencies at that facility. The Department of Sanitation has designed this street as a "secondary" priority for snow removal. We are requesting that the Department of Sanitation designate streets where volunteer ambulance corps and medical facilities are located as priority locations for snow removal. (Photo attached)

3-The New York City Department of Transportation did not declare a snow emergency during the storm. The failure of DOT to declare this emergency allowed individual citizens to drive during the storm, even if their vehicles were not properly equipped to travel in winter weather. As a result several cars were stranded on 86th Street, which is designated as a snow emergency route, and these vehicles prevented our crew from moving our ambulance out of the snow.

4-On December 28, 2010 Bensonhurst Ambulance attempted to provide mutual aid to the Fire Department of New York, but we encountered several problems that prevented us from helping our fellow citizens. These problems included not having compatible portable radios that would allow us to contact NYC Emergency Medical Dispatch.

5-The Mutual Aid Radio System(MARS) has been used in the past by volunteer EMS agencies to communicate with NYC EMS Medical Dispatch while responding to 911 calls, however we were advised by FDNY that a separate portable radio would be issued during this activation..

I would like to thank both Council Member Gentile and Council Member Recchia for their continued support of volunteer ambulance and fire organizations in New York City. I look forward toward working to resolving these problems so that the membership of Bensonhurst Volunteer Ambulance will be able continue to provide high quality patient care during disasters as our organization has in the past. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Good evening, I am Iggy Terranova, representing the Department of Sanitation on behalf of Commissioner John Doherty.

I am here tonight to listen to the community's concerns regarding the Department's response to the December 26th blizzard. Despite our efforts, our snow plowing operations did not meet the standard which New Yorkers have come to expect from the Department which as we have said was not acceptable.

We are continuing to assess the storm response with other agencies and will implement changes necessary to enhance inter-agency coordination, as well as communication with the public. Some of those changes were already implemented during last week's snow storm.

We take pride in our work and will continue working hard to restore the Department's reputation for being the world's best snow-fighters.

I will now listen to your comments and report them back to Commissioner Doherty. Thank you.

January 19, 2011

To : All Members of NY City Council

TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF HOMELESS NEW YORKERS

My name is Pat Senior. I am a homeless female, of African Ancestry, Tax Payer, human being and have lived in Kings County, Brooklyn for over 25+ years.

Do you know what it feels like to be homeless with over 34 inches of snow covering the streets of Brooklyn over the week- end of December 26, 2010? For those who are homeless and have to use a hand cart to collect bottles or to transport their property, how can you maneuver this cart or walk over 34 inches of snow and ice on the streets and on the subway platform?

“So Who Was On The Job” ask New Yorkers? Mayor Bloomberg and his top honchos as employee of the People of the City of New York were no where to be found. Mayor Bloomberg believes he has a Right to his privacy and the people who employed him should not ask such a question as this is an invasion of his privacy.

City Council Member David Greenfield wrote in the New York Daily News on Tuesday, January 4, 2011, **“Incompetent? Corrupt? This Mayor will have your back. Thanks to Mr. Greenfield for having the courage to speak out.**

Can a New York City Marshal break into your home and change the locks to your door without a valid Warrant of Eviction signed by a Judge of any Court in the State of New York? Of course Not. That is what you thing.

On January 28, 2005 with over 22inches of snow and ice on the ground, while away from my home, Bruce Frankenberg a Marshal from Queens County broke into my home, a Rent Stabilized fully furnished 2 bedroom apt in University Towers. He did not have a valid Warrant of Eviction. He not only change the locks to my home but stole almost the entire content which includes my Mails, clothing, furniture, TV's, books, private documents, monies, valuable, pots, pans, art and all that I had in my home. I have not seen the inside of my home since about January 24, 2005. I have not been able to file a Police Report with the 88th Precinct nor the 77th, 79th, 107th, 84th, 019th that I have gone to file a Complaint. Many of the elderly resident all of whom that I have known were female were taken to a Nursing Home with the clothes on their backs and their homes and property stolen by the alleged landlord Michael Rothenberg who has connections in the various City Officials Office including DA Charles Hynes Office..

With help from NYPD, AG Eliot Spitzer, PA Betsy Gotbaum, the New York State Unified Court System including the Eastern Federal District Court, Marty Markowitz and other Public Officials including DA Charles Hynes and his Staff there have been no arrest nor prosecution of this gang only because my life and property has no **value**.

Why have Bruce Frankenberg and his gang been above the Laws and the Constitution of the State of New York and the Laws and the Constitution of the United States of America?

Pat Senior, Human Being
PO Box 20252, Brooklyn, NY 11202

Incompetent? Corrupt? This mayor will have your back



David Greenfield
BE OUR GUEST

Last week, the nearly 200,000 people I represent were left stranded by their mayor — a mayor I have supported for years. In fact, his nonsense approach to government is what I have always sought to emulate. Yet, the man who convinced me that I needed his leadership for a third term failed me. Because of his failure, millions have suffered. Politicians, pundits and everyday people are already pointing fingers, blaming commissioners and deputies across the administration. I, however, place the blame squarely where it belongs. On the mayor who is always in charge.

When the City Council holds its oversight hearings on Jan. 10, my goal will be to examine where there were failures, whether they were avoidable and how to prevent this type of catastrophic breakdown in emergency response in the future. My colleagues and I will, undoubtedly, make countless recommendations to the mayor. However, if history is any guide, he will ignore them.

This is a man who shuns criticism and vests his commissioners with a degree of trust and autonomy unseen by any other mayor in our history. While I appreciate the benefits that come with knowing you have the support and protection of your boss, I believe that his persistent defense of seemingly indefensible acts is inexcusable and directly led to the events of last week. In essence, the mayor sends a message to all of his staff: It is okay to

Every single person responsible for snow failure must lose their job.

screw up, because I will never fire you. In 2006, Nixzmay Brown's death shocked and outraged the city, and there were fervent calls for Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner John Mattingly to resign following a breakdown within his agency that was appalling. The mayor stood behind Mattingly and both made promises to reform an obviously broken system. In 2009, three years later, the City Council held hearings that showed the deficiencies at ACS persisted and, in 2010, history repeated itself when 4-year-old Marchella Pierce, who was under ACS supervision, was found beaten and starving to death in her home. Mattingly remains at the helm of ACS because even having children die on your watch is not enough to get Mayor Mike to fire you.

In a December 2009 City Council hearing, my colleagues highlighted spiraling costs and irregularities with a program called CityTime. Despite mounting evidence that corruption was afoot, the administration did not pursue the Council's claims that the program was in trouble.

A year later, the CityTime scandal erupted, nearly \$80 million in fraud was uncovered and federal prosecutors arrested city subcontractors. It seemed like a no-brainer that Joel Bondy, the head of the payroll-administration office responsible for overseeing the project, would be fired immediately. Not so. In the Bloomberg administration, Bondy was only suspended and, just days later, resigned on his own terms. Apparently, having the greatest modern fraud perpetrated under your watch is also not enough to get Mayor Mike to fire you.

When I announced my City Council run one year ago, I was deluged at the time to have the mayor's support. I believed then, that the mayor has a unique ability to run government efficiently. However, his unwillingness to hold his staff accountable has become the fatal flaw of his administration. Mr. Mayor, it is not too late to rectify the mistakes that you made. But, it will require you to hold individuals at the highest levels of your administration accountable for their mistakes, as well. Accountability only means one thing: every single person responsible for the snow failure must lose their job. Until every single person who failed this city is fired, you will not regain my confidence or the confidence of millions of other New Yorkers.

David Greenfield is an attorney and Democratic New York City Councilman from Brooklyn.

PEOPLE

Submit your letters by email, with "VOICE" in the subject field to BrooklynNews@nydailynews.com, or send fax to (212) 643-7831, or mail them to Voice of the People, c/o Brooklyn News, 100 Nassau St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10038.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Elliott Abogh (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 3047 Brighton 70 St

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: MARCOS MASRI (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 75 WILSON ST.

I represent: WIL

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/19/11

Name: George Murden (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 67 Hanson Pl

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/19/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rev. Dr. Miriam Ukaegbu

Address: 2353 Dean St, Bklyn NY 11233

I represent: CB #16, and Community

Address: Sanitation Committee

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: K. Harriwotton TWU local 100

Address: 3975 Sedgwick Ave 11-C

I represent: Twu local 100

Address: 1700 Bway 2nd floor NY NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 01-19-2011

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Marquez Bensonhurst Ambulance

Address: President @ Bensonhurst v.s. org.

I represent: 1

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Allen BORTNICK (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: BAY RIDGE

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: William Boyle (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 147 11th St.

I represent: Myself

Address: 147

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name: James O'Connell (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 160 SCHERMERHORN ST

I represent: N/A.

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Walter Mosley

Address: NYS Committeeman

I represent: _____

Address: 57th Assembly District

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: NELSON M. STOUTE

Address: 55 HALSEY STREET BROOKLYN 11216

I represent: CHAIRPERSON OF THE INTERSTATE

Address: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION / SUSTAINABLE

COMMITTEE OF COMMUNITY BOARDS

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sharon a Jones

Address: 455 Carlton Ave, Bklyn, NY 11238

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 01-19-11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: YVONNE MURPHY

Address: 2242 Blandford Pl.

I represent: My Community

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 01-19-11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: YVONNE MATHIAS

Address: 4582 14th Ave. Bklyn.

I represent: My Community

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 1

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dunton Beach

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. BL1224212 Res. No. INT 2202

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: JAN 19 2012

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Fiore Simeone

Address: 901 St MARKS AV

I represent: St MARKS Ave Independent Block Assoc.

Address: 901 St MARKS AV Bklyn NY 11213-1539

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Linda Sanders

Address: 289 Blake Ave. Apt 5D

I represent: myself

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bo Samatopoulos

Address: _____

I represent: CCSS

Address: 16th ST

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Daniel Goodine

Address: 2015 Union Street

I represent: MEL of Brooklyn CB 16

Address: Same as above

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Iggie TERRANOVA DSNY

Address: Citywide Community Affairs

I represent: Officer

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Stanford Rubenstein

Address: 16 East St Mktg B.

I represent: A victim who died

Address: as result of failure of City

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK 10

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christine Williams

Address: 573 Van Sicken Ave.

I represent: Two local law

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK 8

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 1/19/84

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lucy Koteen

Address: 138 Lafayette Ave

I represent: myself

Address: Same

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK 7

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JAMES JOGLEW

Address: 6846 MANHATTAN ST. JERSEY CITY NJ 07311

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 11/19/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Debra Greif

Address: _____

I represent: Brooklyn Family Support Advisory Council

Address: angry at city responses to snow storm

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PAT SENIOR

Address: PO Box 20252 Bklyn 11202

I represent: Homeless NYers

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anly Almante

Address: _____

I represent: La Roche Organization

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

4

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ronald J. Dillon

Address: PO Box 080144 Bklyn NY 11208-0144

I represent: self

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

5

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 1/19/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Blanche Louise Pettibush

Address: 3803 43rd Street

I represent: _____

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

6

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MAMNUNUL HAQ

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

9

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/19/11

Name:

JOSEPH (PLEASE PRINT) GARBON

Address:

121 WILSON ST. APT 45 BROOKLYN NY 11211

I represent:

CIVIC ACTIONS, DIRECTOR CIVIL SERVICE UNIT.

Address:

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name:

HON. ANNETTE (PLEASE PRINT) M. ROBINSON 56TH AD

Address:

1360 FULTON ST

I represent:

SELF

Address:

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

Name:

Lincoln Resler (PLEASE PRINT)

Address:

District Leader, 50th AD

I represent:

Address:

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms