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COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION 1

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AND WORKER
PROTECTION

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November 22, 2022
Start: 10:42 a.m.
Recess: 11:02 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL
B E F O R E: Marjorie Velázquez, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Shaun Abreu
Erik D. Bottcher
Gale A. Brewer
Amanda Farías
Shekar Krishnan
Julie Menin
Chi A. Ossé
Julie Won

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and
3 welcome to the New York City Council vote of the
4 Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection.

5 At this time, can everyone please silence
6 your cell phones? Thank you for your cooperation.

7 Chair, we are ready to begin.

8 CHAIRPERSON VELAZQUEZ: [GAVEL] Good
9 morning. My name is Marjorie Velazquez, and I am the
10 Chair of Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection.
11 I'd like to welcome you to our vote today on Proposed
12 Introduction 525-B. I'd also like to recognize my
13 fellow Council Members, Council Member Farias,
14 Council Members Menin, Abreu, Osse, Won.

15 Intro 525-B is sponsored by Council
16 Member, aims to curb the exponential rise of
17 catalytic converter theft across the city. The uptick
18 in post-pandemic car purchases means that more
19 residents have a vested interest in protecting their
20 motor vehicles from theft, in particular from theft
21 of a vehicle's catalytic converter as numerous
22 reports have shown that thousands of these parts are
23 stolen each year. A catalytic converter is a device
24 incorporated into a motor vehicle's exhaust system.
25 It is responsible for reducing harmful engine exhaust

pollutants from the motor vehicle's tailpipe. Without a catalytic converter, the vehicle will fail at the yearly emission's test making it illegal to drive.

Replacing a catalytic converter can cost thousands of dollars, sometimes more than the value of the car itself. Catalytic converters are easy to remove and extremely valuable. It takes a little over a minute to remove the device and, because the device contains precious metals such as platinum, palladium, and rhodium, the device can be sold up for 1,400 dollars.

In the past year, the City saw an explosion of catalytic converter theft, which was up by 269 percent compared to figures from the same period last year. With millions of passenger cars registered to residents across all five boroughs, it is critical that we address this issue at the local level. I am proud of the legislation we are voting on today, which would improve the City's ability to track and trace secondhand catalytic converters by expanding the reporting requirements for dealers in secondhand articles. Intro 525-B would require that any dealer in secondhand articles who purchases a secondhand catalytic converter obtain and retain information about the vehicle from which the secondhand catalytic

2 converter was removed. The purchaser would be
3 required to obtain information from the seller to
4 verify legal ownership of the vehicle from which the
5 part was removed. Additionally, the purchaser would
6 be required to maintain an electronic record of this
7 information available to law enforcement in real time
8 for at least six years. Motor vehicle owners and
9 prospective buyers want to know their catalytic
10 converters will be protected. This legislation
11 demonstrates our commitment to this effort.

12 Before I hand it over to Council Member
13 Brewer, I'd like to thank the administration and
14 Council staff for the work they have done finalizing
15 this legislation. Now, I'll turn it over to Council
16 Member Brewer.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very
18 much, Council Member Velazquez and to the Committee.
19 I also want to thank Leo Bullaro who has left our
20 staff but who was the one who got this issue started.
21 I think you've outlined the bill extremely well. This
22 came to our attention because of so many people
23 expressing concern about how fast their catalytic
24 converter was removed from their car and then we
25 learned how quickly it is sold and we know that this

2 this is, I think, an example of when passed the City
3 Council expressing their ability to make change so
4 that one more I would say immense challenge to car
5 owners and New Yorkers alike will be no longer
6 hopefully a problem, and that's what the City
7 Council, the People's House, is all about so I thank
8 you for enabling us to have this vote. I want to say
9 that for those who are purchasing, this will not be
10 something that you will be hopefully doing in the
11 future and to those who quickly, within seconds, take
12 the catalytic converter out of a car you will no
13 longer be able to sell that product. New Yorkers have
14 enough challenges. There are many that we could list
15 all day, but this is one that should not be available
16 to be a moneymaker. Those who are purchasing should
17 know better, and we hopefully will have an end to
18 this opportunity for those who are not doing the
19 right thing. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

20 CHAIRPERSON VELAZQUEZ: Thank you, Council
21 Member Brewer. I now call on the Clerk to call the
22 roll.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
24 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call

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2 vote Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection,
3 Proposed Introduction 525-B. Chair Velazquez.

4 CHAIRPERSON VELAZQUEZ: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Osse.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Abreu.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brewer.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye and thank you.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Farias.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: I vote aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Krishnan.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Menin.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Won.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote

20 of eight in the affirmative, zero in the negative,

21 and no abstentions, item has been adopted by the

22 Committee.

23 CHAIRPERSON VELAZQUEZ: Thank you. Now it

24 is closed. [GAVEL]

25

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:

3 Continuation roll call, the Committee on Consumer and
4 Worker Protection, Proposed Introduction 525-B.
5 Council Member Bottcher.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Permission to
7 explain my vote. I'm just kidding. Aye on all.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Final
9 vote on Proposed Introduction 525-B is nine in the
10 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
11 abstentions. Thank you. This hearing is adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date November 27, 2022