

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON FIRE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE

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January 24, 2011

Start: 6:00 pm

Recess: 7:58 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:

ELIZABETH S. CROWLEY
Chairperson, Fire and Criminal
Justice Services

JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS, not present
Chairperson, Oversight and
Investigations

PETER F. VALLONE, JR., not present
Chairperson, Public Safety

LETITIA JAMES
Chairperson, Sanitation and Solid
Waste

A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Maria del Carmen
Arroyo

Council Member Fernando Cabrera

Council Member Helen D. Foster

Council Member G. Oliver Koppell

Council Member Annabel Palma

Council Member Larry B. Seabrook

A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Letitia James
Chairperson
Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste

James Vacca
Chairperson
Committee on Transportation

Council Member Vacca thanks:
Council Member James, Council Member Palma

Elizabeth Crowley
Chairperson
Committee on Fire and Criminal Justice Services

Annabel Palma
Chairperson
Bronx Delegation

Council Member James acknowledges:
Ruben Diaz
Borough President
Borough of the Bronx

Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Chairperson
Committee on Health

Council Member Arroyo thanks:
Hostos Community College for hosting the hearing
All the Committee staff for their work

Council Member James thanks:
Hostos Community College for hosting the hearing

Fernando Cabrera
New York City Council Member

Council Member Cabrera thanks:
Speaker Quinn, Council Member James and Hostos
Community College for organizing the hearing

A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

G. Oliver Koppell
New York City Council Member

Council Member Koppell thanks:
Sanitation workers in his district for their work
Andrew Sandler, Council Member Koppell Staffer for his work

Council Member James acknowledges:
Representative from Council Member Joel Rivera
Representative from Council Member Larry Seabrook

Iggie Terranova
Community Affairs Unit
Department of Sanitation

George Torres
Mayor's Office of Community Affairs

Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Borough President
Borough of Brooklyn

Herman Francis
Community Board 1

John Rosenkowsky
Bronx community resident

Linda Pedrosa
Concerned citizen, visually impaired

Steven Bailey
Vice Chairman
Concerned Residents Organization, Inc.

Howard Gisky
Concerned citizen

Alvin Rodriguez
Concerned citizen

A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Barbara Gibson
Concerned citizen

Walter Nessler
Concerned citizen

Abraham Jones
Executive Director
Claremont Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Bonita Johnson
Recording Secretary
Local 100
Transport Workers Union

Doni Walker Santiago
St. Andrews Home Owners

Professor Hetty Fox
Longtime Bronx Resident
Sociologist and Author

Carl Jimenez
Concerned citizen

Angelo Vega
Concerned citizen

Mike Pacolli
Concerned citizen

Kenny Agosto
District Leader
80th Assembly District

Joseph Garber
Director
Civil Service Merit Council

Kevin Harvey
Local 100
Transit Workers Union

A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Camilla Jackson
Throgs Neck and northeast Bronx

Christine Williams
Brooklyn resident

Deborah Meyers
Bronx resident
CERT team member

Mr. Almonte
Concerned citizen

2 [Background conversation]

3 MR. EDDIE RENTO CORIASO: Today's
4 an offsite hearing, today's Committees are going
5 to be Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, the
6 Committee of Public Safety, the Committee on Fire
7 and Criminal Justice Services and the Committee on
8 Oversight and Investigations. Today's date is
9 January 24, 2011 and it's being recorded by Eddie
10 Rento Coriaso.

11 [Gavel banging]

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening
13 and welcome--is this on? Thank you. Good evening
14 and welcome to the Joint Hearing of the New York
15 City Council. I am Letitia James from the
16 Council's Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste
17 Management. I am joined this evening by Council
18 Member Helen Foster who's just joining us, Council
19 Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo, and to my left
20 Council Member Jimmy Vacca and Council Member
21 Cabrera all representing the Bronx delegation.

22 On December 26th and 27th in the City
23 of New York was hit by a blizzard. In a span of
24 less than 24 hours the entire city was blanketed
25 with snowfall ranging from 14 to 29 inches. We've

2 also been joined by Council Member Annabel Palma.

3 The City's snow removal services
4 and infrastructure for reasons not yet totally
5 clear completely failed to keep up with the storm.
6 When most New Yorkers awoke on the morning of the
7 27th a significant number of roads were untouched
8 by plows, making normal roads of transit nearly
9 impossible. In conjunction with and as a result
10 of that failure to remove snow from City streets,
11 emergency response including fire, police and
12 ambulances were crippled. Mass transit which
13 typically technically continued to run through the
14 storm was paralyzed.

15 The result of these failures were
16 very real and very tragic consequences. These
17 failures raised questions about the City's
18 preparedness for and response to this storm.
19 Furthermore these questions also extend to our
20 preparedness for other and greater disasters.
21 These questions should and must be answered. New
22 York City has dealt with plenty of storms of
23 similar scale. And I, like many other Council
24 Members, have often sung the praises of
25 Commissioner Doherty and the Department of

2 Sanitation for their excellence response and hard
3 work in addressing those storms.

4 But not this time. In this time
5 the City failed to meet its own high standards or
6 even the basic needs of its citizenry. And we are
7 here today to hear from residents in the Borough
8 of the Bronx about how this failure impacted your
9 lives and what you think we can do to prevent
10 those impacts in the future. At a Council hearing
11 last week or the week before, Commissioner Doherty
12 testified in a very constructive and open manner
13 about what took place during the Christmas
14 blizzard. At that hearing we focused on the
15 larger systematic and operational issues that
16 impacted the City's preparation and response to
17 the storm.

18 We also heard administration
19 testimony from Deputy Mayor of Operations, Steven
20 Goldsmith, the Commissioner of the Office of
21 Emergency Management, Joseph Bruno and Fire
22 Commissioner Salvatore Cassano. In addition we
23 heard from a variety of unions and civic groups
24 impacted by the storm and its cleanup. I believe
25 that most viewers and participants in that hearing

2 found it both constructive and respectful.

3 Today we are continuing the second
4 phase of hearings which involves gathering direct
5 testimony about the storm and its aftermath from
6 the public on a Borough by Borough basis. We have
7 already begun. We've already had hearings in the
8 City's other four Boroughs. Today we will hear
9 from the people of the Bronx. I know that many
10 of us endured experiences that were painful and
11 caused us real harm. We want to hear about those
12 experiences but I request that everyone strive to
13 make constructive comments to add to what we know
14 about solving what went wrong. No one knows as
15 much about what happened during and after that
16 storm than all of you residents of the Bronx. So
17 educate us but please keep it civil and please
18 keep it to at least three to four minutes.

19 Finally I'm glad to note that we
20 are joined by representatives of the Department of
21 Sanitation, the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit.
22 But from what I understand as has been the
23 practice, these representatives will make brief
24 remarks after my colleagues have concluded their
25 opening statements and will remain at tonight's

2 hearing to listen to the testimony provided by the
3 public. Unfortunately they will make a statement
4 but will not answer any questions which I believe
5 and I cannot speak for my colleagues is
6 outrageous, unacceptable and an act of disrespect
7 to the residents of the Bronx. The fact is that
8 at that initial hearing a number of my colleagues
9 wanted to ask pointed questions. And they should
10 have. And those questions should have been asked
11 and answered here at the Borough hearings. And to
12 have a representative, a very fine representative
13 who has been at every hearing but nonetheless
14 someone who was not in a position to answer the
15 questions of my colleagues and your questions,
16 again is a slap in the face to this body as well
17 as to the residents of the Bronx.

18 The Mayor of the City of New York
19 failed us during the blizzard and again once again
20 is failing us this evening. And last but not
21 least when the Mayor of the City of New York gave
22 his State of the City address, my position is that
23 he should have said two words. I'm sorry. Well
24 actually it's three. He failed to. And to me
25 that says a lot about what he feels about the

2 residents of the City of New York who were
3 inconvenienced and some who lost their lives
4 during the blizzard.

5 At this time I'm going to turn it
6 over to the Chair of Transportation, Council
7 Member Jimmy Vacca.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you
9 Tish and thank you all for coming. I know you all
10 have snow on your minds because we got a snow job
11 on December 26th and the days after that. As
12 Chairman of the Committee on Transportation I
13 address the failures of the MTA. We had an
14 Oversight Hearing at City Hall and the MTA
15 failures were very significant. Those of you who
16 looked for a bus on all those days after the storm
17 know what I mean. Bus service was stranded. We
18 waited and waited. Busses never came. The MTA
19 was not prepared. We had busses with no chains
20 going up and down Bronx streets getting stuck.

21 And then when those busses got
22 stuck, what happened? More busses were sent after
23 the busses that were stuck and they all end up,
24 and you know what they all had in common, they
25 were all stuck. Does this make sense? How are we

2 communicating within the MTA to tell other bus
3 drivers don't come on this street it's not been
4 plowed. We have one bus stuck. We don't want
5 other busses stuck. Trains not running. Trains--
6 in Queens, was there for seven hours, seven hours,
7 people were not saved for seven hours in the cold
8 without use of facilities. This is unacceptable.

9 And then in the midst of the storm
10 of December 26th, on December 30th the MTA raises
11 the tolls, raises the fares. It goes to the heart
12 of what are we paying for. Why don't we get the
13 service we pay for? Why wasn't the MTA declaring
14 a snow emergency of their own to clear the tracks
15 and get the busses onto our blocks? And I think
16 you'll be learning in the weeks to come how much
17 money did the MTA lose in lost revenue from people
18 who could not access trains and busses and how
19 much money did they spend on overtime.

20 So I thank the Council. I thank
21 Chairman Tish James and of course the Bronx
22 delegation, Annabel Palma our Chair for convening
23 this hearing. I know we will get your testimony.
24 We at the City Council are determined to get
25 answers because what happened December 26th, in the

2 Sanitation Department, Department of
3 Transportation, Office of Emergency Management, or
4 the MTA, can never happen again. We cannot be
5 left stranded ever again. We have to make sure
6 that all hands are on deck whenever we have a
7 blizzard. And that this City does its best to
8 cope with even the most difficult of weather
9 conditions. Thank you Chairman James.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So the Bronx
11 are kind of quiet. Is the Bronx in the house?

12 AUDIENCE: Yea [clapping].

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you. Are
14 you just--do you need to defrost, is that it?
15 Could you warm up a little bit? I came all the
16 way from Brooklyn. Could you clap? Could you
17 clap? Thank you. Let's clap for Council Member
18 Vacca's opening statement. Thank you very much.
19 The next speaker is Council Member Crowley, the
20 Chair of the Fire and Criminal Justice System.
21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON CROWLEY: Thank you
23 Madam Chair James. Council Member Elizabeth
24 Crowley, I chair Fire and Criminal Justice on the
25 City Council. I also represent parts of Queens.

2 So it's a pleasure to be here in the Bronx with
3 you tonight. When we had our hearing on January
4 10th the Administration told us they were
5 unprepared. They made a mistake. They did not
6 call a snow emergency. And because they did not
7 call that snow emergency they failed us as a City.
8 They didn't move the people at the right time and
9 we had implications in the communities that were
10 felt for days. Out in Queens we were paralyzed.

11 We couldn't get out of our homes
12 and when it comes to emergency services we need to
13 make sure that an ambulance can get to an
14 emergency situation within minutes not hours. And
15 the situation with so many ambulances getting
16 stuck in the snow is simply unacceptable. So like
17 my colleague Jimmy Vacca said we need to make sure
18 we get to the bottom of this dysfunction so we can
19 assure you, the people of the City of New York,
20 that this will never happen again. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you. And
22 now we will hear from the Chair of the Bronx
23 delegation, Council Member Annabel Palma.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Thank you.
25 Good evening everyone. I'm Council Member Annabel

2 Palma and I want to thank Speaker Quinn, Council
3 Member James, Vacca and Crowley for convening
4 these hearings across the City of New York. I
5 know it's been a daunting task but nevertheless I
6 think that's the least that we owe the public to
7 make sure that we are able to go to them and get
8 their suggestions and ideas on how helpful the
9 City can be so this doesn't happen to them again.
10 You know, I know that we all experienced the same
11 difficulties across the City and in some areas
12 worse than others.

13 It's something that should have not
14 had happened. It's something that I know the
15 Council along with the Administration, once we
16 convene all the information, is going to work hard
17 on making sure that if there's a next time around
18 or when the next time comes around and hopefully
19 it's not tonight with the snow that's being
20 announced that we are prepared to make sure that
21 we can continue to move the citizens of New York
22 swiftly and making sure that services continue to
23 run. It was an unfortunately event that we had to
24 endure. We're still, in some of our neighborhoods
25 still have mountains of snow from that first

2 blizzard that fell.

3 And so we want to make sure that
4 that's not repeated, that the City is prepared, in
5 making sure that this City is able to function
6 under any weather conditions that we may be faced
7 with. So I want to thank you for coming out
8 tonight. I think it's extremely important. I was
9 listening to a segment on Channel 4 last week
10 where, you know, the reporters were sort of
11 chuckling and said, you know, it's great that
12 they're having these hearings but I hope these are
13 not just venting sessions.

14 And I can tell you that the reason
15 these hearings were convened, they're not to be,
16 you know, they're not venting sessions for us. We
17 really want to hear suggestions from you the
18 people that were affected by this blizzard and the
19 lack of services that were not delivered to you on
20 that day. And some are still experiencing some of
21 the impact that we were hit with that day. So I
22 really take these hearing seriously. And I really
23 hope that you use the time to really voice your
24 concerns and give us your suggestions so that
25 we'll be able to help the Administration put a

2 plan together to avoid a situation like this in
3 the future. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

5 We've been joined by Council Member Oliver Koppell
6 from the Bronx as well as the Borough President of
7 the great Borough of the Bronx. Let's give him a
8 round of applause, Ruben Diaz.

9 [Applause]

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Borough
11 President, you can either sit here or we'll hear
12 from you shortly, whatever you prefer. Okay we'll
13 call you shortly. Next we hear the Chair of the
14 Health Committee, Council Member Maria Carmen del
15 Arroyo.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Is it on?
17 Yes. And the Council Member that represents the
18 Council District where we're in so I want to
19 welcome you all to Council District 17. I want
20 to, at the risk of repeating myself, I would just
21 thank also Community College for hosting this
22 event for us this evening. I want to say an
23 incredible thank you to the Chairs of the
24 Committees that have had this conversation across
25 our City over the last month. And I think Council

2 Member James if you remember you asked us to be
3 civil so that I think we're just trying to
4 practice to be civil. That's why we're so quiet.

5 [Laughter]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So welcome
7 all of you. We look forward to hearing from you
8 and hearing your concerns and some of your
9 personal stories about the experiences that you
10 had or someone close to you had and how we as a
11 city can better prepare for the even that would
12 inevitably hit us. I don't know about you but I'm
13 sick of snow. And it's only the first real month
14 of the season. I'm not sure what lies ahead for
15 us but we need to be much better prepared to
16 address the needs of our constituencies in the
17 event that we experience a storm of the magnitude
18 that hit us around our holidays. So thank you
19 Council Member James and the Co-Chairs of this
20 Committee. And the Committee staff who have
21 worked so hard to put all of the documents
22 together. Who are the people who are going to
23 take the notes and make sure that we have all of
24 the details and the points that you make to us and
25 help us focus our energy to prevent this from

2 happening again.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you. I
4 too want to thank Hostos College for hosting us
5 and thank them for their hospitality. Council
6 Member Cabrera.

7 [Background noise]

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: No? Okay.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Anyway...
10 good evening everyone. I'll sit close to my Dean
11 of the delegation. I want to give a special
12 thanks to the Speaker as well and to the Chairs
13 and to all the Council Members here and our hosts
14 but most important to everyone that came out
15 tonight. I know it's cold. We could have stayed
16 home. But by showing up, you're showing that you
17 truly care. I tell you I recount that night when
18 we had the blizzard I was coming out of Ewing
19 [phonetic] College after doing a television show.
20 And I drove right by, right on Heath Avenue, and I
21 was driving on my 4 by 4, barely making it through
22 the street. I came across something I had never
23 seen right here in the Bronx. A wall of snow
24 about eight feet tall. I couldn't even get
25 through. I barely was able to get back out. Then

2 I relied nobody's driving tonight. I'm one of the
3 few drivers. I probably seen one other driver.

4 And I mention that because one of
5 the things that the Administration has told us is
6 that part of the problem or the biggest problem
7 was that there was no snow emergency that was
8 called upon. But there's nobody in the streets.
9 There is nobody driving around. And so it wasn't
10 that we had massive amount of people in the
11 streets, massive amount of people especially in
12 the evening time driving. I believe that it was a
13 failure of action. And we had a failure of
14 communication, communicating to our constituents,
15 especially when it came down to the MTS. It was
16 mentioned by Chair Vacca.

17 And it was just a failure of really
18 of stepping up and doing what was required and
19 what is expected. And so let me just make this
20 last point. Last June in one of the hearings with
21 Sanitation and Finance Committee, I made mention
22 of the fact that why is it that when there is
23 snow, and I go to Manhattan, it seems that it's
24 always clean but then when we're in the Bronx, the
25 streets seem to be neglected when it comes to snow

2 removal. And I just hope that this is going to be
3 a wakeup call. And I believe there is a wakeup
4 call taking place here on the Administration's
5 part. Thank you so much and thank you for coming
6 out tonight.

7 [Applause]

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.
9 Yes, Council Member Koppell. Is it on?

10 [Testing mics]

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Here you go.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I may not
13 pretend to be you... since you take your pictures.
14 So I want to thank you Chair Vacca from the Bronx.
15 I want to particularly thank Tish James and
16 Elizabeth Crowley for coming from other boroughs
17 to be with us this evening. And I recognize that
18 the snow emergency was indeed a major disaster in
19 other parts of the City and parts of the Bronx as
20 well. And we'll hear tonight and I'll be
21 interested to hear. I know that there are City--
22 I'm sure that there are City officials here and
23 Sanitation Department officials here.

24 And if they're going to say
25 something that is somewhat contrary to what others

2 say but that's not to say, and I want to emphasize
3 this, that any of you may say I doubt in any way
4 and I acknowledge that the situation was truly
5 horrific in many parts of the City. And we've
6 heard about that already and I don't need to go
7 into that. But I do want to say because I've got
8 to thank those people who served my district, that
9 they were well-responsive. Our office was open.
10 Andrew Sandler [phonetic] who is here this evening
11 was there all day.

12 We got relatively few calls which
13 usually is an indication that it isn't so bad
14 because I hear that colleagues got dozens or even
15 hundreds of calls. We got very few calls in my
16 district. And when we called the Sanitation
17 Department and called particular--'cause it wasn't
18 perfect, when we called particular problems to
19 their attention, they responded. So I want to be
20 frank about it and say thank you to those who
21 served my district.

22 There is a lesson to be learned
23 though. Because if they could do it in my
24 district and we don't normally--we don't have just
25 broad wide streets but a lot of narrow streets,

2 windy streets, we have hills. We have all these
3 conditions and yet we managed to get through
4 pretty well. So if they could do it in the 11th
5 Council District which goes all the way to
6 Riverdale all the way over to White Plains Road,
7 they could do it other places. And so it sort of
8 illustrates it, the job can be done reasonably
9 well and it wasn't in so many parts of the City.
10 But I do want to acknowledge the folks who worked
11 in my district for the job they did for us. Thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I just want to
14 acknowledge the fact that we have a representative
15 from Council Member Joel Rivera's office who could
16 not join us and Council Member Larry Seabrook's
17 office as well. And let me just say that this is
18 not a therapy session. We will conclude these
19 hearings with a series of recommendations
20 including but not limited to clarification on
21 chain of command as well as protocols for snow
22 emergency declarations as well as a series of
23 legislation.

24 And let me also say that in defense
25 of Manhattan, when we attended the Manhattan

2 hearing there were residents there north of 96th
3 Street, residents from Chinatown in the Lower East
4 Side who also complained that their streets were
5 not plowed. So when we talk about Manhattan we
6 have to be very specific. But if they can do it
7 for Council Member Koppell then they should do it
8 for the entire City. Thank you Council Member
9 Koppell. Our next speaker is Iggie Terranova from
10 the Community Affairs Unit of the Department of
11 Sanitation. He's also joined by George Torres
12 from the Mayor's Office, also from Community
13 Affairs. Mr. Terranova?

14 MR. IGGIE TERRANOVA: Good evening
15 Council Members. I am Iggie Terranova and I am
16 here tonight representing the Department of
17 Sanitation on behalf of Commissioner John J.
18 Doherty. I am here tonight to listen to the
19 community's concerns regarding the Department's
20 response to the December 26th blizzard. Despite
21 our efforts our snowplowing operations did not
22 meet the standards to which New Yorkers have come
23 to expect from the Department which is also what
24 we have said is not acceptable.

25 We are continuing to assess the

2 storm's response with other City agencies and will
3 implement changes necessary to enhance interagency
4 coordination as well as communications with the
5 public. Some of those changes were already
6 implemented during the last two snow storms and
7 the impending snow storm coming the next couple of
8 days.

9 We take pride in our work and will
10 continue working hard to restore the Department's
11 reputation for being the world's best snow
12 fighters. I will now listen to your comments and
13 take them all back to Commissioner John J.
14 Doherty. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
16 Terranova. Again my message to the Mayor of the
17 City of New York, I hope that you would not--you
18 would take this in the spirit that this is offered
19 and not as a personal attack. I think that I'm
20 glad that you were here but I believe that Borough
21 Superintendents from each respective Borough
22 should have been here to answer questions. That's
23 the least that the Mayor of the City of New York
24 could have offered to the residents of the Bronx.
25 It's unacceptable that there is no one here to

2 answer the questions of my colleagues as well as
3 the questions of the residents of the Borough of
4 the Bronx. And I thank you for attending.

5 [Applause]

6 MR. TERRANOVA: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: The next
8 speaker is, and I guess I say this at every
9 Borough, every hearing, the greatest Borough
10 President [laughing] in the Bronx. Let's give it
11 up for Borough President Ruben Diaz.

12 [Applause]

13 BOROUGH PRESIDENT RUBEN DIAZ, JR.:
14 Thank you Chairwoman James and to all of the Chair
15 members and City Council Members. Welcome for
16 those of you, for the two of you who are not from
17 God's country. Welcome to God's country. I love
18 to see the Bronx delegation here as well and to
19 all of my fellow Bronxites, thank you for coming
20 out even though this blizzard was on December 26th
21 and we saw on the 27th and the 28th the poor
22 response from the City, and there's been two
23 subsequent snowfalls since that we really can't
24 complain too much about. I think that it is
25 important that we are all here tonight. And I

2 want to thank you and the Speaker of the City
3 Council. I want to thank the City Council as a
4 body for being as diligent as you are, as to what
5 occurred on December 26th and the 27th and the 28th.
6 We know and I know that there was a comment made
7 earlier about us being mindful and respectful in
8 terms of other Boroughs.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: It didn't apply
10 to you.

11 [Laughter]

12 MR. DIAZ: But the reality is that
13 first let me just say that I think it's
14 disrespectful that none of the Commissioners are
15 in the Bronx. I think that it's disrespectful
16 that none of the City Hall Administration's
17 leadership is here and they were at other hearings
18 in another Borough. Okay so we are taxpayers as
19 well. We here in the Bronx are so upset and the
20 Council Member Koppell said that he didn't receive
21 a lot of telephone calls, naturally I did. I not
22 only received telephone calls in my office but I
23 received telephone calls at home. And my dogs, on
24 a persona note, my dogs, I live at 820 Boynton
25 Avenue, my dogs ran out of dog food.

2 And I thought that after the snow
3 had fallen I was going to be able to get in my car
4 and go to K-Mart which is down the strip on Story
5 Avenue and I could not, two days after the
6 snowfall. So when traditionally when we get major
7 streets like Story Avenue and White Plains that
8 are plowed, that was not the case, myself and my
9 two sons had to walk from Story Avenue to K-Mart
10 to get dog food and come all the way back. Now.
11 I'm not complaining about that. I'm still young
12 and strong and so are my children.

13 But what I am complaining about is
14 the fact that you have senior citizens who could
15 not get medication, who had Bronxites who could
16 not go to doctors' appointments. We received a
17 telephone call, Madam Chair, from a family who had
18 lost a loved one and they drove me to the funeral,
19 it made the event even more so because they were
20 getting stuck out in the snow. We heard, we had,
21 of course, we also had our fair share of emergency
22 units that were stuck and ambulances and fire
23 trucks.

24 And I thought it was pretty
25 pathetic that on one hand you had the Mayor of the

2 City of New York in one of his press conferences
3 saying that everything was okay. And then during
4 the press conference there was literally a split
5 screen and one of the news stations where he's
6 saying everything is okay don't panic and on the
7 other side, you had sanitation trucks and
8 ambulances literally spinning their tires and
9 stuck in the middle of the street.

10 The reason why we're so outraged
11 here is not just because of what occurred during
12 this blizzard. We know for the most part that the
13 City has done something well and we hope and not
14 to have anything personal against the gentleman
15 who testified earlier, it helps to have the City
16 come and admit that something went wrong. But we
17 want to know why did it go wrong, why wasn't there
18 an emergency call, and who is responsible. And
19 what's going to happen to those individuals?

20 We as elected officials we're
21 always held to be responsible when something
22 negative happens. And in this case somebody
23 really dropped the ball. You know I hate to say
24 it but what happened during this blizzard was what
25 happened last night with the Jets. The City just

2 came up short. And we as New Yorkers, just the
3 same as we are heartbroken today over the Jet's
4 loss, we'll continue to be heartbroken.

5 But here in the Bronx where we have
6 the outrage is that this blizzard was just
7 symbolic of the overall treatment that we get in
8 terms of the lack of services in the Borough.
9 Remember when we have snow storms with, of course,
10 less footage or inches that fall, we always get
11 train stations where the snow is not taken off the
12 staircases.

13 We always have streets that aren't
14 plowed. And that continues to be the case time
15 and time again whether for instance the MTA is
16 coming out with a report on the different stations
17 that are going to be done over and, you know, it
18 always seems like the Bronx does not get its fair
19 share. And we're sick and tired of it. We're
20 sick and tired of being treated as we're not
21 citizens of New York. We're sick and tired of
22 being the stepchild of the City. We're not going
23 to tolerate it. I'm so proud as the Borough
24 President that all of the Bronxites have come out.

25 [Applause]

2 MR. DIAZ: And in the future, not
3 only do we want you to come up with
4 recommendations as to how is it that the City is
5 going to declare emergencies, in the future we
6 also want your body as a City Council delegation
7 to look at to how was it that you're going to have
8 equity, parity and equal treatment and a fair plan
9 for snow removal as well as other services, not
10 just to Manhattan, not just to the more affluent
11 sections of New York City but to all of New York
12 City.

13 We are taxpayers. We're raising
14 our families here. We are Bronx proud. And we
15 love our Borough and we're not going to tolerate
16 this from this Mayor who wants to run for
17 President of the United States and can't even have
18 a plan of action for a blizzard. So I don't know
19 if he wants to manage something nationwide or
20 international, in this case he can't even manage
21 what's happened right here at home. So.

22 [Applause]

23 MR. DIAZ: I think that you guys in
24 the City Council have been just amazing. I would
25 urge you to continue to ask the questions that

2 need to be asked, to hold peoples' feet to the
3 fire and hopefully in the future what comes out of
4 the blizzard of 2010 is something that will
5 prevent not only the poor cleanup or the poor
6 plowing but equitable, fair treatment for all New
7 Yorkers. So thank you very much for coming to the
8 Bronx. Thank you Bronxites for allowing me to go
9 first. I respect you all.

10 [Applause]

11 MR. DIAZ: And, you know, we just
12 need to keep on going until we here get our fair
13 treatment and people know that the Bronx is not to
14 be messed with. Thank you.

15 [Applause]

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you
17 Borough President. Thank you for warming up the
18 crowd. Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: The next
21 speaker is Herman Francis representing Community
22 Board 1. Could you please put on the clock?
23 Three minutes for every speaker thereafter.

24 [Pause]

25 MR. HERMAN FRANCIS: Good evening.

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mr. Fran--good
3 evening.

4 MR. FRANCIS: A man once said that
5 history is a great teacher. All we have to do is
6 look in the archives of previous administrations
7 and the plan was already in place about snow
8 removal. This is not an issue of snow plowing.
9 Of course we're not in the country. We are on a
10 land area of the metropolis of the state, build
11 that--people are stacked on top of each other.
12 During the Radner [phonetic] administration, the
13 plan was in place.

14 All snow was to be put on what we
15 call snow streets. Then the worker would come by
16 and pick it up, put it in the truck and take it to
17 the river and dump it. And then a crew came
18 behind them, over the fire hydrants and the rest
19 of the snow was pushed down the sewers or the
20 manhole covers. Somebody got the idea of salt, so
21 the snow was now pushed down there.

22 The former Mayor of New Orleans,
23 Ray Nagin, learned this lesson the hard way when
24 Katrina hit. Where he made decisions based on
25 pure economics not to shut the city down. He left

2 a whole bus fleet and most of the police
3 department was bailed out because they wanted to
4 take care of their families. He then--even George
5 Bush had to get rid of his fellow in FEMA because
6 of the incompetence.

7 Ray Nagin knows that the next time
8 when he gave his police department time off a week
9 ahead of time to take care of their families and
10 close the city down. The decision last time of
11 December 26th was made based on pure economics. My
12 understanding is they'll all declare a snow day.
13 City workers get paid who do not show up and those
14 who do show up get time and a half. Ever since
15 Ragmore [phonetic] and Roberts got to get and
16 eliminated the Lines Law [phonetic], services in
17 this state have been slowly going down step by
18 step by step.

19 The Sanitation Department, I did
20 not blame them at all because they have a rule put
21 in place since that they need 24 hours notice to
22 do whatever they're going to do. The only one who
23 can sign off on that is the Mayor. And this was
24 just he created as head of Emergency, well the
25 Federal government has a statute there that any

2 emergency that comes up due to an act of God's
3 natural, all city vehicles, all public vehicles
4 are to be used to assist the public.

5 That's why the Mayor of New Orleans
6 lost his bus fleet 'cause he did not use it to
7 assist the public. And that's why every time
8 something happens around here in New York City
9 that comes with an act of God or Mother Nature,
10 the MTA does not abide by that, - - that common
11 sense.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Hum.

13 MR. FRANCIS: 'Cause they all do is
14 follow new rules and bureaucrats and it's above -
15 - sign off on it. That Sunday December 26th, I got
16 a phone call a little after 9:00, about joining
17 the demonstration that day. I looked out my
18 window and heard the wind out, now moaning, and I
19 apologized to my colleagues for not joining them,
20 but after I heard the wind hit the door I said no
21 way. If I can look out my window and hear that
22 wind and see that snow coming I've got to ask, why
23 wouldn't have had--why do we need a head of
24 Emergency for whatever?

25 H: Um-hum.

2 MR. FRANCIS: Well to add to what
3 he did was he laid the groundwork for a suit of
4 malfeasance and gross incompetence by jeopardizing
5 the public by his refusal to act from the safety
6 of the public. My saying is what can you do as
7 public citizens, I know the City Council now will
8 deal with it. Those we can organize, put some
9 funds together and hire an attorney and take these
10 public officials, take the Mayor to court for
11 malfeasance.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
13 Francis. Next speaker is Bonita Johnson,
14 representing the Transport Workers Union, Local
15 100, the Recording Secretary. Not here yet? Next
16 is John Rukowsky [phonetic], I apologize if I
17 butchered your name. How d you pronounce your
18 name Sir?

19 MR. JOHN ROSENKOWSKI: Rosenkowski
20 [phonetic].

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Rosenkowski, I
22 apologize. He's done this before.

23 MR. ROSENKOWSKI: Oh yes I have.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Oh yeah.

25 MR. ROSENKOWSKI: [Speaking too

2 close to the mic, lots of reverb] Good evening.
3 I'm John Rosenkowski, Bronx community resident.
4 At the January 4th City Council hearing you have
5 experienced the same arrogant and dangerous
6 attitude from the MTA that we have know for over a
7 decade. The MTA has solved their budgetary
8 problems on the backs of the people and - - .
9 They - - - station agent. Paralyze the City
10 during - - to announce the Mayoral cuts. They
11 were even considering fees such as using stimulus
12 money for operations, - - on their boondoggles
13 and - - massive debt. The MTA - - by their - -
14 examples - - but the point - - all station agents.
15 And simply - - safety. The MTA - - but refuses
16 to work with - - and rejects any idea which
17 doesn't allow any input from the - - only. With -
18 - the MTA has no public support, no public - -
19 ability and has - - of the people and their own
20 employees. These provisions came up before a
21 superficial - - of changes. The MTA is a public
22 authority which means that you who live in New
23 York City, who use the subways, who - - the people
24 have no authority over last - - policy and how our
25 hard-earned money is spent. This is the height of

2 absurdity. The solution is obvious. It's time to
3 get the MTA - - out of our way. Treating - - that
4 we - - tolerate and have - - city - - subways
5 and busses as it does everywhere else. And it
6 must be - - and continued - - that the bare
7 incident [phonetic] have a pain cost to - - .
8 this is the only way to rectify this poor - - . -
9 - . Which is - - far to go. You are in a
10 position to effect real change by empowering
11 yourself and empowering the people, the community,
12 the -- system that is seems to - - of the people
13 of New York City. Thank you very much.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
15 Rosenkowsky, thank you very much. Linda Pedrosa?

16 [Pause]

17 MS. LINDA PEDROSA: Good evening
18 Madam Chair--

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
20 Good evening.

21 MS. PEDROSA: --distinguished
22 members of Council. I'm just a concerned citizen.
23 What I experienced, I live in the foreign section
24 of the Bronx. In the years that I've been living
25 in the City of New York I have never, ever seen

2 Fordham Road which is one of the main arteries
3 where traffic flows. I saw busses stuck. I saw
4 cars stuck. It was difficult for me as a legally
5 blind and vision impaired person to walk. And I
6 had to cross the sidewalk. I have to jump over
7 that pile of snow. It was so difficult for me.
8 Imagine me who is still young, what about the
9 senior citizens? But really what disturbed me
10 from Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Doherty that
11 he would give an A-plus to the sanitation workers.
12 In my personal opinion I would give them a D-
13 minus.

14 But I notice that Mayor Bloomberg
15 said everything is fine. Of course for him
16 everything is fine. But not for us here in the
17 Bronx. Because we as citizens, we have the same
18 equality as anybody else. We are still taxpayers.
19 We work to pay--to improve our quality of life. I
20 feel sad for most people who had to go to work,
21 especially for those emergency vehicles who
22 couldn't go through to carry out the sick people.

23 Ladies and gentlemen of City
24 Council, I please urge you so that in the future
25 look for ways so the emergency management office

2 of the Mayor will take care of these problems but
3 most of all, the most important thing, if Mayor
4 Bloomberg would be out of the City, don't come
5 with excuses.

6 And even though he would be far
7 away, don't come with excuses. And he'd still be
8 in charge. And leave somebody else in the City to
9 be in charge when the Mayor is not around. The
10 only way to be is having integrity, honesty and
11 truthful because the truth sets us free. And
12 that's what it's all about for all of us as
13 citizens and me, our native burns [phonetic]. I
14 love the City and I wish these things would be
15 improvements in positive ways. Thank you so much.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Ms.
17 Pedrosa. Thank you very much. Thank you. A
18 number of individuals also join you. One of the
19 things that we heard throughout all of our
20 hearings is about chain of command. Another issue
21 was about local control. So I thank you for your
22 testimony. Steven Bailey? Representing the
23 Concerned Residents Organization, Inc. Are they
24 only from the Bronx?

25 MR. STEVEN BAILEY: No we're

2 concerned residents. Yes, good evening everyone.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening.

4 MR. BAILEY: My name is Steven
5 Bailey. I'm the Vice Chairman of the Concerned
6 Residents Organization located in the southeast
7 section of the Bronx. In April I'm going to be 65
8 years old.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: God bless you.

10 MR. BAILEY: The point is that you
11 look at me and you see that I can get around. I
12 can walk. I can talk. I can do a lot of things.
13 But there are people in my neighborhood, in our
14 area, in the good Councilwoman Arroyo's and
15 Palma's districts and Mr. Vacca too who don't have
16 the facilities that I have, that don't have the
17 facilities that a lot of people don't have.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

19 MR. BAILEY: The snow on Story
20 Avenue, White Plains Road was 2.5. 3 feet high.
21 People had to stand at least 10 feet away from the
22 curb in traffic looking for a bus. Senior
23 citizens were held captive in their apartments
24 because the crosswalks weren't clean, the bus
25 stops weren't cleaned and you'd see two sanitation

2 trucks going up and down Story Avenue, going
3 [making noises] and they were shoveling nothing
4 but hard concrete. No one cleaned the bus stops.
5 No one cleaned the pedestrian walkways. The snow
6 was so high.

7 And I mean you can make a claim
8 that okay you make a small hole in a mound of snow
9 and you can get out to the street. There was no
10 small hole. A lot of people were held captive.
11 The City lost a lot of money because seniors go
12 out and spend when they have to. The City lost a
13 lot of money because the gypsy cabs, the
14 unlicensed cabs that run down Story Avenue and up
15 Story Avenue took money away from the MTA for the
16 simple reason is that a lot of people couldn't
17 wait for the bus because the bus stops were
18 inaccessible.

19 You had to either climb two feet of
20 ice and snow to get out into the street, if you
21 didn't get run over, so you could catch a bus that
22 might not have come. So my plead, my request is
23 that you take this back to whoever you have to
24 take it back to and let them know that the senior
25 citizens of which I am one, the senior citizens

2 are not going to take this any longer. If we have
3 to march on City Hall, if we have to march on
4 somebody, we are going to march and we are going
5 to get our just due. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
7 Bailey. Mr. Bailey let me just say that all,
8 again through the other four boroughs we heard
9 about pedestrian walkways not being shoveled, bus
10 stops, crosswalks as well as curb cuts. And one
11 of the recommendations that I am pushing for is a
12 study with respect to the economic impact of this
13 blizzard, a census of all of the people who have
14 died.

15 In Brooklyn we heard about a death
16 of a woman who was--her husband was left in the
17 apartment with her body for four days. We heard
18 about a similar circumstance in Queens as well.
19 And so there has been no census of the number of
20 deaths. And last but not least the impact to
21 senior citizens, senior citizens in all four
22 Boroughs talked about how they were prisoners in
23 their own homes. I thank you for your testimony.
24 I thank you for your remarks.

25 MR. BAILEY: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Howard Gish?

3 How do you pronounce your last name Sir?

4 MR. HOWARD GISKY: Gisky

5 [phonetic].

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Gisky, I

7 apologize.

8 MR. GISKY: I---

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

10 Take it easy.

11 MR. GISKY: Okay. Hi I'm Howard

12 Gisky. Other than the comments that Mr. Koppell

13 said earlier and I would note that on 238th Street

14 the snow was not cleared over the major degan

15 [phonetic] which has always been cleared before.

16 So we did have some problems in Mr. Koppell's area

17 as well.

18 I also note it's common knowledge

19 in our area through a press organ there that Mayor

20 Bloomberg with the GPS in his jet was in Bermuda.

21 So we know that. Everybody knows that. Okay.

22 It's proven. Okay. Now the thing is because of

23 budget cuts in Sanitation we know that Sanitation

24 members were laid off. We know that Sanitation

25 leadership was demoted. Okay. We know there we

2 demoralization because of the budget cuts.

3 The budget cuts have continued in
4 all areas. The situation will get worse. The
5 only thing that we can do to appeal to the
6 situation is appeal to our government in New York.
7 But our government in New York does not seem to
8 want to bail us out. So the government in New
9 York State has to appeal to the Federal
10 government.

11 And up to now our Federal
12 government, our President, US Congress have let us
13 down because they have bailed out the financial
14 system to \$17 trillion and have not bailed out New
15 York City, have not bailed out Sanitation, have
16 not bailed out the snow. All right. So what we
17 need is a law which I can give to everybody who
18 wants called Glass Steagall [phonetic]. Glass
19 Steagall was from Franklin Roosevelt--

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
21 Do we have a copy of that Sir?

22 MR. GISKY: Yeah sure.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Sergeant at
24 Arms, he'll? Thank you. Continue.

25 MR. GISKY: Okay. Glass Steagall

2 was from Franklin Roosevelt which was to separate
3 the commercial banks from the deposit banks.

4 That's how we got Morgan Bank separate from Morgan
5 Stanley. This is been widely circulated and this
6 would end the bailout of the derivatives which is
7 destroying the United States. If we let the
8 states go bankrupt, if we let the City go
9 bankrupt--

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
11 Mr. Gisky, can I ask you to stay on point with
12 respect--

13 MR. GISKY: [Interposing] Okay--

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: --to the
15 blizzard?

16 MR. GISKY: --all right, all right,
17 listen--

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: --I understand
19 your point. I got you.

20 MR. GISKY: --okay. Okay. The
21 thing about the blizzard--

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
23 Yes.

24 MR. GISKY: --is that an
25 organization called LaRouchepac.com has gotten out

2 this legislation for the Glass Steagall
3 legislation.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes.

5 MR. GISKY: If we do not pass the
6 Glass Steagall legislation everything that we're
7 saying tonight is lies. Because we are not going
8 to be bailed out.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I got you--

10 MR. GISKY: [Interposing] We're
11 only going to get bailed out by the Federal
12 government by having Glass Steagall to stop the
13 bailout of the banks.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

15 MR. GISKY: If you bail out--no,
16 no, I'm not finished. Because if you want, would
17 like to look at LaRouchepac.com--

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
19 Yes.

20 MR. GISKY: --you could also look
21 at the works of Franklin Roosevelt who was the
22 Governor of New York State as well. You can look
23 at the works of Alexander Hamilton. Alexander
24 Hamilton had the US Constitution promoted, bailed
25 out [starts shouting louder] I mean - - the New

2 York's government - - the states. The states are
3 being asked - - you are destroying the United
4 States. Where--I want everybody on the City
5 Council to say we want a resolution for the Glass
6 Steagall - - congressman--

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
8 Thank you for that--

9 MR. GISKY: --and if you want any
10 more details about Glass Steagall, I can tell you
11 to look at LaRouchepac.com.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

13 MR. GISKY: Thanks. If you want to
14 save the United States as a patriot, I hope you
15 will too LaRouchepac.com.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Sir,
17 thank you Sir. Thank you. Alvin Rodriguez?
18 Thank you. Are you going to stay on point?

19 MR. ALVIN RODRIGUEZ: Oh well, yeah
20 I think so.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I think so.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I'm not here as
23 merely a Bronx resident. I don't think any of us
24 are. I know Howard. I happen to agree with
25 Howard so it's not really about a snow storm per

2 se but it's about what I think most people would
3 have to agree is the collapse that New York is
4 experiencing on many fronts. And that is of deep
5 concern. And action is required. There's a
6 fellow by the name of Ferdinand Pecora [phonetic]
7 who established a Pecora condition which led to
8 the Glass Steagall Act.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mr. Rodriguez.
10 We all know about the Glass Steagall Act. We all
11 get information from LaRouche. This is about a
12 blizzard that occurred over the holiday. And the
13 question is what recommendations, if any, we can
14 put forward to prevent it from happening again.
15 Do you have any recommendations Sir--?

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: [Interposing]
17 Right, I want to put forward again that people
18 look into this Glass Steagall, citizens too that
19 are here.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I heard the
21 last gentleman and we will take into consideration
22 putting forth a resolution. Do you have anything
23 else to add?

24 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Hum, no, not
25 really--

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
3 Thank you very much. We've been joined by Larry
4 Seabrook. The next speaker is Barbara Gibson.
5 Barbara Gibson? Thank you.

6 [Pause]

7 MS. BARBARA GIBSON: Good evening
8 panel. My name is Barbara Gibson. And I'm here
9 representing the God Country. I'm from the
10 boogey-down Bronx. And I've never experienced
11 this before. And I have some suggestions for you
12 all. I don't have no reason to tell you that I
13 don't think you should do certain things.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay.

15 MS. GIBSON: But starting with the
16 workers that's supposed to be cleaning the
17 sidewalks.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

19 MS. GIBSON: And I want to know
20 who's supervised them. I have observed eight
21 workers standing around looking at each other. I
22 think you need a new system and having a
23 designated location for each one that's going to
24 be doing the sidewalks. And at the bus stop, you
25 need to clear just about the whole sidewalk. Now

2 up at White Plains Road and Gun Hill, we're
3 servicing the 40--it's the 41 bus and the 39. And
4 for you to have just a little pathway for those
5 people to get on and off the bus--

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
7 Yeah.

8 MS. GIBSON: --It's ridiculous.
9 Regarding the area where the children go to
10 school, I observed that some of the workers are
11 store owners, they're not even coming out to clean
12 in front of their stores. So we need a little bit
13 more supervision to see that the workers are doing
14 what they are supposed to do and then maybe we can
15 have a better input for the seniors to go out and
16 to be those that like to go like I do. So
17 hopefully you will take that into consideration.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Ms. Gibson can
19 we give the exact locations to Mr. Terranova with
20 respect to those employees? We would appreciate
21 it.

22 MS. GIBSON: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: He's right
24 there. Thank you Ma'am. Thank you for your
25 testimony. Mr., I think this is Walter Nessler?

2 Walter Nessler?

3 [Pause]

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. [off mic
5 conversation]

6 MR. WALTER NESSLER: Good evening
7 Council Members.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening.

9 MR. NESSLER: Thank you for the
10 opportunity to provide some testimony on the most
11 recent snowfall. Jim Vacca, how are you? Good to
12 see you. Oliver Koppell I'm very happy to
13 understand that Riverdale has gotten such good
14 attention up in your district in Riverdale. Well
15 let me tell you about our district down here in
16 District 18, Community Board 9. We host three
17 sanitation facilities on Zereeger [phonetic]
18 Avenue.

19 To this day, as I sit here, giving
20 you testimony, Pugsley Creek Park has not had one
21 of its sidewalks shoveled. We have over a mile's
22 worth of sidewalks that haven't seen a shovel
23 since December 27th storm. So I'm glad that your
24 district is getting the attention. But Annabel,
25 our district is not. If we're hosting the

2 Department of Sanitation with two of their
3 facilities, the least that they and Parks
4 Department should be able to do is maintain their
5 sidewalks so my mother who's 86 years old can walk
6 to church safely, so our students can go to school
7 without having to walk in the middle of Macomb
8 [phonetic] Avenue.

9 This is unconscionable that the
10 treatment that we get, particularly in our
11 district, is unacceptable. Oliver Koppell maybe
12 we should all move to Riverdale. Okay but I will
13 tell you know those of us who live in Clausen
14 [phonetic] Point get totally underserved and have
15 been for the three generations that my family has
16 lived in Clausen Point.

17 And I here will give you that
18 testimony as an eye witness. Okay. And
19 unfortunately this is continuing to happen. Okay?
20 And I'm not only here upset with the Mayor, okay,
21 but clearly our City Council people are not
22 representing our district to the level that I
23 think we should be.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: I would like
25 to respond to you. I've been working with the

2 Department of Sanitation. I unfortunately cannot
3 go out and plow every single street in the
4 district. You have a different opinion on how my
5 office runs. I believe that I just--we're not
6 here to disagree on whether you believe, whether
7 I'm doing a good job or not. The majority of the
8 district believes that they're being represented.

9 Obviously the issues that we are
10 experiencing with this snowfall and the topic that
11 we're discussing here today have been throughout
12 the City, not only in District 18. So if you
13 don't like the way I represent you I particular,
14 that's something that you and I have discussed in
15 the past. Something that you and I will continue
16 to discuss until the day that I'm no longer in
17 office. And you then maybe can get elected into
18 office yourself.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Council Member
20 Koppell do you have something to say or no?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: No I just
22 think it's an unfair comment.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I--I agree.

24 MR. NESSLER: [Interposing] Well I
25 retract the comment--

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
3 Mr. Nessler? You've had your opportunity. Thank
4 you Sir.

5 MR. NESSLER: I still have a few
6 seconds left, thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. Oh okay.

8 MR. NESSLER: Thank you I
9 appreciate that--

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
11 12, go ahead.

12 MR. NESSLER: This is a democracy.
13 Okay. I apologize if you're taking that
14 personally. But--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA:
16 [Interposing] This is not a back and forth. I
17 don't take it personal, the topic is on the snow--

18 [Crowd reacting, shushing]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: --on the
20 snow removal. And we asked...

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Excuse me
22 [banging the microphone]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: And we have
24 asked people to stay on the topic of the snow
25 removal. Obviously you and I will continue to

2 have our differences but this is not, this is not
3 the forum to do it in--

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

5 No--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: --to--

7 MR. NESSLER: [Interposing] Can you
8 explain why we do not have our sidewalks shoveled
9 on Macomb Avenue or our students are walking in
10 the street and our seniors can't go to church or
11 to the stores--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA:

13 [Interposing] And I will make sure that again I
14 reach out to the person I was working with in the
15 Administration on the snow removal and bring it to
16 them again--

17 MR. NESSLER: [Interposing] Okay
18 and--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: --because we
20 have been working since that day to make sure that
21 folks in our district get the same services that
22 the rest of the City deserves.

23 MR. NESSLER: All right apparently
24 according to Oliver Koppell we are not. Now in
25 closing one final note--

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

3 Okay excuse me, excuse me--

4 MR. NESSLER: --I still--

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing] I
6 just want to say something--

7 MR. NESSLER: --I had seconds taken
8 away from my testimony.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: --I just want
10 to respond and you can respond in like kind--

11 Mr. NESSLER: [Interposing] Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: --excuse me.

13 Excuse me. No one is talking to you. I am
14 talking. I have the floor. Thank you.

15 [Audience shouting]

16 Mr. NESSLER: I thought I had the
17 floor--

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
19 Let me just say, you--you will--I just want to--

20 MR. NESSLER: --my three minutes
21 but I've been interrupted.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: --Sir. You
23 will have an opportunity to respond but let me
24 just tell you what I would like to say. As Chair
25 of the Sanitation Committee I represent the 35th

2 Councilmatic District and my District in fact was
3 not plowed. You would think as the Chair of the
4 Sanitation they would have addressed the issues I
5 was on the phone very early in the morning and it
6 appears as I put out a call to all of my
7 colleagues.

8 It was an issue which was not just
9 related to Council Member Palma's District but in
10 fact throughout the entire City of New York. And
11 I just want to say that the Administration, there
12 was a complete breakdown in communication with the
13 Administration. Every individual was out of town
14 for the most part. And they had to regroup and
15 had to address the conditions the day after the
16 storm.

17 And in fact the Emergency Command
18 Center was not open until 4:00 o'clock that
19 afternoon or going into the evening. So I
20 understand. I don't want this to be a back and
21 forth but understand the--I don't think the
22 responsibility falls on the shoulders of Council
23 Member Palma. We did not elect her to be
24 Commissioner of Sanitation. I think you should
25 redirect your anger at--to the proper source. You

2 may respond.

3 MR. NESSLER: Okay in response
4 Honorable James.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes.

6 MR. NESSLER: Okay. We are
7 citizens of this city. We have homeowners shovel
8 their own sidewalks. We as business people shovel
9 our own sidewalks. The Board of Education shovels
10 its schools. Our churches shovel their schools.
11 Everyone shovels their schools with the exception
12 of Parks Department--

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
14 Right.

15 MR. NESSLER: --and the Board--and
16 the Sanitation Department.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I agree.

18 MR. NESSLER: I agree. Exactly.
19 You agree. Now whether who's in town or not in
20 town, it really falls on the Council people also
21 to make sure that this shouldn't have happened,
22 not that it did happen, that it shouldn't have
23 happened. And the last point which I brought out,
24 we're still sitting there a month later after this
25 storm and we still do not have sidewalks shoveled.

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I understand.

3 Make your--

4 MR. NESSLER: [Interposing] Okay?

5 And we're all--

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

7 That was--

8 [Crosstalk]

9 MR. NESSLER: --and the media was
10 very well - - you made all the points--

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
12 Valid--valid points and those should be taken care
13 of--

14 MR. NESSLER: [Interposing] There
15 is one bright spot to this.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes. We're all
17 here today.

18 MR. NESSLER: Yes. The Borough
19 President--

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
21 Thank you.

22 MR. NESSLER: --would be happy to
23 know that we all have \$12 an hour living wage jobs
24 shoveling snow in this Borough.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

2 Thank you Sir. Thank you very much. Abraham
3 Jones? Claremont Neighborhood Centers, Inc.? Mr.
4 Jones?

5 MR. ABRAHAM JONES: Good evening.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening.

7 MR. JONES: My name is Abraham
8 Jones. I'm the Executive Director of the
9 Claremont Neighborhood Centers located at 489 East
10 169 Street right off 3rd Avenue which happens to be
11 in Councilwoman Helen Diane Foster's district. I
12 live in the Bronx and work in that borders
13 Councilwoman Arroyo's district and Councilwoman
14 Helen Diane Foster's.

15 And I would just like to, you know,
16 we all know what the issue with the problem was.
17 On that particular day my wife who is relatively
18 healthy but was experiencing some heart
19 discomfort. And so listening to the reports she
20 really did not want to go to the hospital. And so
21 thankfully my staff as a resident and also as the
22 Executive Director of a community based
23 organization I was in the dual role of being a
24 resident but also knowing that my center needed to
25 be open.

2 I happened to have one of my
3 employees who as--two of my employees had 4-wheel
4 drive vehicles so I really had no difficulty
5 getting my wife to a hospital, an emergency room.
6 But in retour I happened to notice something and
7 that's going to be one of my recommendations. As
8 a community center I felt very strongly that we
9 needed to be open. And so despite some of the
10 challenges we were open.

11 Staff reported and we opened,
12 recognizing that especially after my experience at
13 the hospital, realizing people were doing double
14 shifts, that we needed to be open because folks
15 that are employed and work in medical facilities
16 needed to get to work. And so we struggled. We
17 opened the centers. Well it's two daycare
18 centers. And of the five people who brought their
19 children, which was okay, two of them were
20 hospital workers.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

22 MR. JONES: So I feel very, very
23 good about that as a community organization doing
24 my part in this storm. Two recommendations I
25 would like to make. One of the things that I

2 noticed in my travels is that those busses that
3 had gotten stuck were the double busses.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes.

5 MR. JONES: Because the busses
6 couldn't navigate. I think one of the
7 recommendations need to be that in the event that
8 we have these kind of emergencies, that those
9 busses need not be on the road.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

11 MR. JONES: The second thing is I
12 felt that as a community based organization I
13 called 911, I called 311, 317, on several
14 occasions and never did I hear anything saying
15 well even that folks that would be needed to
16 report to Sanitation for temporary work. I think
17 that as a community based agency that there needs
18 to be a temporary or emergency workforce. That
19 people who have already been identified so that in
20 the event that there is an emergency like that
21 it's the one telephone call telling them where
22 they need to report.

23 As a community based organization
24 we deal with things, we deal with individuals that
25 would have loved to go out and earn a day or two's

2 wages. And I spoke to Council Member Foster. The
3 other thing I want to say is even today in front
4 of the park located on 157, 158th Street, in front
5 of a small park, today, getting on the bus,
6 yesterday getting on the bus, you still have to
7 travel across ice and snow to get on the bus. And
8 I think some of the difficulty is that where
9 they're local parks, small parks.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

11 MR. JONES: It's the trouble still
12 even today getting on the bus. The other thing is
13 since you are looking at it I'd be interested to
14 know just how many of those double busses were
15 actually stuck.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That's an
17 excellent point. We heard and I'm sure we will
18 hear from members of Transport Workers Union. We
19 heard about it in Manhattan how the rapid transit
20 busses were all stuck. They cannot handle snow
21 beyond a certain feet. I'm sure Transport Workers
22 Union will speak to that when they testify but
23 that's an excellent recommendation, particularly
24 with respect to the community centers, the CBOs,
25 I'm sure you provided those recommendations to

2 Council Member Foster.

3 MR. JONES: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And they will
5 be included in our report. And last but not
6 least, you're absolutely right, as of yesterday in
7 my district, Parks Department, some of the parks
8 still had not been shoveled. And I left a message
9 for Commissioner Benepe to address that. I thank
10 you for your comments here today.

11 MR. JONES: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you. And
13 Council Member Vacca.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Just let me
15 clarify. We had 650 busses stuck according to the
16 MTA. Most of them, a lot of them were double-
17 decker busses and at my hearing we pointed out
18 that the double-decker busses, what we call
19 articulated busses are not--well I don't know,
20 they're articulated busses.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That's right.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: They are not
23 able to make turns or to go up hills during ice
24 and snow. They probably should not have been
25 used. The other busses didn't, non-articulated

2 busses should have chains. And by having chains
3 they can navigate much better. So that is I think
4 one of the mistakes in the process that the MTA
5 made. And I expect that they have learned their
6 lesson. I hope they--

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
8 You hope. And that was sort of my point with the
9 chains but it got lost in the drama. Anyway,
10 Bonita Johnson, Recording Secretary of the
11 Transport Workers Union, is Ms. Johnson here?

12 MS. BONITA JOHNSON: Yes I am,
13 thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

15 [Off mic shouting]

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: We're going to
17 get to that. Sir, sir, sir, sir?

18 [Off mic shouting]

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Sir. Sir. Let
20 me just say this. No I got you. We got you.
21 Thank you Sir but snow emergency in every Borough
22 every people talked about the failure a snow
23 emergency as being point number one. But I thank
24 you for your testimony--

25 [Off mic shouting]

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: We got you.
3 You already testified. It's now Ms. Johnson's
4 turn. Let's be respectful, thank you. Ms.
5 Johnson.

6 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you - -
7 Council, thank you--

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
9 Boy they're warming up now. My goodness.

10 MS. JOHNSON: I have prepared a
11 small statement after questions I can answer on
12 behalf of the Transport Workers Union Local 100,
13 I'll be glad to do so.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

15 MS. JOHNSON: All New Yorkers know
16 what happened on the 27th when mass transit in this
17 city simply failed. [Speaking too close to the
18 mic, reverb] While some blame the blizzard - -
19 demand that this Council focus on the real problem
20 regarding transportation. That problem is always
21 at the top of MTA. Deputy - - is present at this
22 hearing today, many of our neighbors and our
23 riders to state clearly that we must not ever
24 allow this to happen again. Not to our riders,
25 not to us.

2 Our transportation service of this
3 city of the city that we - - . Let's go over a
4 few facts really quickly. On December 24th, the -
5 - Weather Service forecasted a chance of snow in
6 excess of five inches. This gave transit more
7 than enough time to implement what it calls Plan
8 4. Under Plan 4 thousands of workers report at
9 special times to special locations for emergency
10 duty at the ready to respond to whatever the
11 weather brings. During this visit no such order
12 was ever issued.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

14 MS. JOHNSON: Transit's top
15 managers failed - - in responding to this city's
16 needs. It failed horribly in providing adequate
17 assistance to its own workers. - - were left
18 stranded on the busses and trains for hours. And
19 in some instances for days. No communication, no
20 food, no nothing. Transportation access did not
21 exist for most of us and - - did exist it was
22 extremely dangerous.

23 At the January 14th hearing, MTA
24 dispatched Mr. Pendergrass as a seasoned operation
25 manager to be the Transit Authority's official

2 poster boy for - - . We've -- that a real
3 critical look - - cast at his boss Mr. Walter. An
4 individual that has already demonstrated a
5 dismissive approach to the needs of this city by -
6 - hundreds of transit workers when first he held
7 from - - could have been used to retain jobs and
8 help keep this city safe.

9 Clearly this does not appear to be
10 a manager who cares one iota for the riders of
11 this city or TWU Local 100 transit workers. It
12 isn't as though transit hasn't been through
13 repeated snow storms. In the past, we hear today
14 of the December 27th blizzard, transit and its many
15 dedicated workers coped just fine.

16 An example would be the snow fall
17 of February 26th to the 27th, 2010 which by the
18 record book is a little bit more than we just
19 received. At that time Plan 4 was in effect.
20 Thousands of us transit employees were dispatched
21 and with the help of operational manager we both--
22 we worked collectively to keep the city moving.

23 - - City Council, let's truly
24 implore our government to reflect on - -
25 accountability - - . It comes from the top. From

2 this point, at most of these hearings, MTA has
3 continued to be a no-show. Not even bothering to
4 concern itself with the consistent needs of the
5 riders or even some locals. I urge everyone of
6 us, New York City riders, Bronx Councilmen and
7 Women, Transportation leaders, all of us here at
8 this hearing today to take our demands right to
9 the face of the MTA.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Could you
11 conclude Ms. Johnson?

12 MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

14 MS. JOHNSON: The next MTA board of
15 - - January 26th at 9:00 AM. The location is 367
16 Madison Avenue between 44th and 45th. Let's let the
17 MTA know that we are not a bunch of - - sheep
18 which will just quietly tolerate depraved
19 indifference. Our - - is much more important than
20 anybody knows. Thank you for listening.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.
22 Thank you. Thank you for letting everyone know
23 that the next MTA board meeting is on January 26th
24 at 9:00 AM. The address is 347 Madison between
25 44th and 45th. The next speaker is Donnie Walker

2 Santiago. Doni?

3 MS. DONIE WALKER SANTIAGO: Donni
4 [phonetic].

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Donni, thank
6 you.

7 MS. SANTIAGO: Even though my
8 mother did say Doni.

9 [Chuckling]

10 MS. SANTIAGO: So we have a
11 disagreement. Good evening.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening.

13 MS. SANTIAGO: Honorable Council
14 Members, my first time getting a chance to speak
15 before you all. I'm from the District of
16 Honorable Annabel Palma. And I want to speak to a
17 couple of issues in our district as well as other
18 issues. One--the thing that I would like to say
19 is the Bronx is always considered, as everyone has
20 said, like the stepchild.

21 And whenever you hear the comments,
22 the outer Boroughs, that's putting us in a
23 stepchild thing. I mean I think the language
24 matters and in this case when we keep hearing the
25 outer Boroughs, you know it's very much like of

2 you go to Cuba they have Afro-Cubans, Afro-Cubano,
3 there's real--there's a real divide that really
4 exists. And I'm not trying to pick on Cubans but
5 there you go there, if you go there and you can
6 actually if you can go to Cuba you can actually
7 get to the real African roots which is nice one
8 hand but it also has this kind of separation--

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
10 We got you.

11 MS. SANTIAGO: --and when we get
12 this outer Boroughs, we know we're getting bad
13 news. So that's one of the things that I want to
14 say. We do need to look at, in my area, we--I'm
15 with St. Andrews Home Owners. And where we are
16 everyone is a homeowner. They've done a lot of
17 shoveling. I can tell you right now I've got a
18 big mountain in front, the sidewalks going over to
19 where the busses are now have been shoveled but
20 getting across the street is a chore.

21 I've seen some workers out there,
22 not enough, they're not hiring enough people.
23 They need to bring people in. They need to do
24 training so that those people are at the ready
25 when something happens such as this kind of thing

2 so that they can be called. You know, there
3 should be a team of people in each person's
4 district, maybe it should be run by the Council
5 Members office, somebody distinctly who can be in
6 charge of that.

7 This has been an unacceptable
8 failure at all levels. And, you know, to say well
9 it's this person's fault, it's that person's
10 fault, obviously there's a lot of hands. And
11 everyone needs to take responsibility. There were
12 no coordination of services. I've heard things
13 that they were blaming Sanitation workers, that's
14 a copout. I mean I'm going to just put it out
15 there.

16 We have some of the best of New
17 York City employees who are blue collar workers
18 from EMS people who suffered tremendously not
19 being able to get to their destination. A New
20 York City Police Department did an excellent job
21 with the resources they had available. Bus
22 operators, heroes.

23 I mean being out there, getting
24 stuck, they should not have been sent out. They
25 should have been kept back because if the roads

2 are not clear a bus shouldn't go out. Salters,
3 plows, should be before the bus. Articulated
4 busses should be able to be out there and if they
5 can't then it's a problem with the plowing.

6 You know, New York City Sanitation
7 workers, they were out there. They weren't
8 directed correctly, that's a different problem.
9 Just I want to just say two things with regard to
10 the Mayor. In my family, in my household people
11 couldn't go to work. They lost days of work.
12 They don't get that made up and the Mayor was
13 suggesting people go to the theater. Not a good
14 suggestion. Just want to out that out there.

15 And I want to say that I'm hoping
16 that out of this that this is not taken lightly,
17 that this is given the due respect it does
18 deserve, and that something progressive does come
19 out of this. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Ms. Santiago I
21 really appreciate that. Thank you.

22 [Applause]

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Professor Hetty
24 [phonetic] Fox? Professor Fox?

25 [Pause]

2 PROFESSOR HETTY FOX: Well good
3 evening Council Members.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening.

5 PROFESSOR FOX: Members of the
6 public, of the Bronxites, glad to see you. Mr.
7 Seabrook, foster, everybody else, I can't say all
8 the names. In any case thank you so much for
9 coming. Many of you may know that I'm one of the
10 longest Bronx residents on the same block since
11 1943.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Hum.
13 [clapping].

14 PROFESSOR FOX: And I'm a home
15 owner and I'm a sociologist. I came back from
16 teaching college and had to spend the last 40
17 years saving my block. I'm appalled that we're
18 the poorest part of the United States because we
19 had little geniuses running all over the place.

20 So I've designed a new education
21 system, wrote a book called Neighborhood Rules of
22 Order, Jealousy Be Gone and it's relevant because
23 I didn't like the comment that Sadik-Khan made
24 when she attacked Ray Kelly for the error that she
25 made in that whole process. I thought that that

2 was pretty crummy. And I think it has a lot to do
3 with some of the jealousies that are happening--

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
5 We all agree.

6 PROFESOR FOX: --preventing people
7 from being able to make the right decisions. I'm
8 really upset that we didn't have the top
9 leadership that should have been there. A Mayor
10 is a city's father. I cannot understand a father
11 leaving his family in the middle of one of the
12 biggest blizzards that New York has ever seen. I
13 was here in 1947 for that 5-footer. And we had a
14 lot of fun. But my dad and my uncle had to shovel
15 the snow from the corner down into the sewer
16 because the oil truck had to come and deliver oil
17 because we were out of heat.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Hum.

19 PROFESSOR FOX: So I mean it was
20 great. We made tunnels and it was so much fun
21 because I was 10. It's not fun for many people
22 who are older. It's still fun for me. I'm only
23 73.

24 [Laughter]

25 PROFESSOR FOX: Because I still

2 love to shovel and I still love the City, I still
3 love the City--

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
5 It must be something in the water in the Bronx
6 because you look fabulous.

7 PROFESSOR FOX: Well, thank you.
8 Well I run a Play Street every summer but every
9 four years because, you know, the neighborhood is
10 the main focus that we should be, you know,
11 endeared to, and this is what I think the Mayor
12 misses totally. If he understood that family and
13 neighborhoods are very important to protect, he
14 would have been there on the spot. He would not
15 have been, you know, trying to protect himself by
16 having gone and saying that he's entitled to his
17 private life. We all are, you know, but not in a
18 situation like that. I just don't agree that that
19 should have happened.

20 Sanitation has been marvelous.
21 Having to keep that street clean for a play street
22 so that children can play up and down and, you
23 know, how we used to drop the gum on the block and
24 kiss it up to God so that we didn't get germs
25 [laughing] well that's how clean the street should

2 be and Sanitation has been fantastic to keep their
3 job going as well as they have over the years.
4 I'm very, very supportive of Sanitation because
5 they have helped us in 34 years of keeping that
6 play street. So keeping healthy and keeping well
7 is extremely important.

8 I'm not as pleased to know that
9 we've had Mayors but not many city mothers. We
10 need someone to whisper in somebody's ear and say,
11 darling, this is not right. Right? Okay. And we
12 need the money that we're supposed to have in the
13 Bronx. All right, 'cause we've got little
14 geniuses as I said. Thank you so much.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you
16 Professor Fox. We've had some mothers, not
17 whisper in his ear but sort of yell at him but.

18 PROFESSOR FOX: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Carl Jimenez.
20 Mr. Jimenez?

21 MR. CARL JIMENEZ: Yes. Hi. Thank
22 you very much.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: You're welcome.

24 MR. JIMENEZ: The blizzard of
25 December 26th or 27 or whenever it was, was huge,

2 it was bad. But I've been through worse blizzards
3 than that.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yeah.

5 MR. JIMENEZ: And what it threw,
6 and so the blizzard was not the problem. The
7 problem was the Sanitation Department and Mayor
8 Bloomberg. They didn't tackle the issue when they
9 were supposed to. They, they did not properly,
10 they did not on time, and so the city drowned in
11 two flakes of snow. We had some snow but, you
12 know, I seen worse in my lifetime.

13 I lived in Chicago for many years
14 and I seen much worse blizzards there. And the
15 city never stops because of that. Here the city
16 stopped totally. I mean it was totally paralyzed.
17 I called 311 at least 3 times, twice I waited
18 almost an hour before someone answered. And when
19 finally someone answers they said we can't take
20 this call and hang up.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Hum.

22 MR. HIMENEZ: I called again after
23 waiting an hour, they said the same thing, we
24 can't take this call and hang up. The third time,
25 nobody even answered even though the phone was

2 ringing and ringing for a long, long time.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Hum.

4 MR. JIMINEZ: And no one even
5 answered. So how is it that, you know,
6 everything, when everything is fine and dandy, all
7 the busses are running fine and dandy, the trains
8 are running fine and dandy, but we got two flakes
9 of snow so the city drowns. Bare ice [phonetic].
10 So what is the taxpayer's money, where is it going
11 to? I thought the taxpayer's money was going to
12 Sanitation.

13 So Sanitation can deal with the
14 issues. Where is it? Where is Bloomberg when
15 this is happening? So, you know, I mean, unless,
16 you know, I think Bloomberg - - but in the way he
17 handled how to run the city. Rather than taking
18 off and going to Bermuda or wherever he went, he
19 should have been right here looking at the
20 situation. And get on top of the Sanitation
21 Department and not promote them or demote them
22 later on, deal with the problem at hand. Thank
23 you very much.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
25 Jimenez. Thank you very much. You're absolutely

2 right, this was a man-made disaster. Angelo Vega.
3 Mr. Vega? Followed by Mike Rico, Mr. Rico if you
4 can move up to the front that would be greatly
5 appreciated. After Mr. Rick, Mr. Agosto.

6 MR. ANGELO VEGA: This is going to
7 be short and sweet.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

9 MR. VEGA: This is--nothing--

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
11 We appreciate that.

12 MR. VEGA: -- - - Segal - - .
13 Snow. Who takes care of the snow in the City?
14 Sanitation. They got the plows. They've got the
15 equipment. What happened to the equipment? I was
16 reading and if it's correct they didn't have the
17 proper equipment. They didn't have the belts, the
18 chains that are going around the wheels.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

20 MR. VEGA: So they don't get stuck.
21 They were missing pieces to their shovels that
22 they needed to get out. So they shoveled. I've
23 seen how Sanitation works. They're not a bad
24 operation. But if you don't have the supplies,
25 you don't have the tools, what can you do? Now

2 the Mayor, the Mayor, oh my god, the Mayor, where
3 was the Mayor?

4 The Chief, the chief CEO of New
5 York City. He was out to lunch. Okay he was out
6 to lunch. Where's his second in command and third
7 in command? They were out to lunch. Who's
8 minding the store? Nobody. Now. You're going to
9 want to--you going to run a store like that? No.
10 you going to run a city like that? Absolutely
11 not. Now who's--who takes responsibility for
12 that? I haven't heard anybody get demoted.

13 I haven't heard anybody get--I mean
14 the top guys, the guys that are supposed to tell
15 the Sanitation who's got this command and you've
16 got those guys, you've got these guys. I haven't
17 heard anybody of that jurisdiction and that
18 authority getting fired or demoted. No I haven't.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Nope.

20 MR. VEGA: I've--what I heard was
21 the little guy, oh he's the responsible--no, no,
22 no, no, no, no, no. We don't start at the bottom.
23 Every time--this is all I've been listening to
24 throughout this whole society. Everything is the
25 bottom. You've got a financial problem on Wall

2 Street, go to the guy on the bottom. Excuse me?

3 Go to the guy on the bottom, why don't we try up

4 on the top. The top. Let's got to the top first

5 and then start from there. Now my experience as a

6 professional driver for 17 years, driving around

7 Manhattan, the 5 Boroughs, is guess what, who gets

8 cleaned first?

9 AUDIENCE: Manhattan.

10 MR. VEGA: Manhattan. That's

11 right. Good. Manhattan gets cleaned first. And

12 particularly Rockefeller Center. They get cleaned

13 first, absolutely, around there. Wall Street gets

14 cleaned first. Now let me see, I've got a list of

15 things here. Now this is, you know, the woman was

16 talking about sociology. This stuff is all

17 stratified.

18 You look at whose head is rolling

19 first, the little guy's. That's, you know,

20 stratification, you see the way we do this whole

21 thing is going, it's that they get the small guy,

22 why not the big guy? Why not the big guy? And as

23 far as the neighborhoods who get cleaned first,

24 guess who gets cleaned first. All--the wealthy

25 people.

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
3 Vega.

4 MR. VEGA: Okay.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And thank you
6 for that audience participation. Mike Rico?

7 MR. MIKE PACOLLI: Mike Pacolli
8 [phonetic].

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mike Pacolli, I
10 apologize. Mr. Pacolli I apologize. After Mr.
11 Pacolli, Kenny Agosto the District Leader of the
12 80th Assembly District, followed by someone from
13 Brooklyn, Joseph. Joseph Garber.

14 [Pause]

15 MR. PACOLLI: I'm not going to read
16 from my thing. I gave it to my Councilman Vacca--

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
18 Thank you.

19 MR. PACCOLI: I'm going to read one
20 paragraph at the end. Just a couple of things. I
21 did call to complain to Sanitation after speaking
22 with 311 and I also called to complain to MTA.
23 Sanitation had a message. They had a message
24 saying they're not taking any complaints because
25 they're working to remove the snow. That's not an

2 answer. I went back to 311, they said but that's
3 how it is. And MTA and Sanitation does their own.

4 I called MTA to complain. I did
5 get a person. I was shocked because I thought
6 they were on 24 hours. But they would only tell
7 me information about where to go to get a bus and
8 they couldn't tell me if the bus was running. So
9 maybe 311 should take over or be another line to
10 call.

11 So how are you going to document
12 emergencies if you have Sanitation emergencies and
13 MTA emergencies and you can't give them the
14 emergency? And you can't give it to 311 because
15 311 says you've got to go to MTA and Sanitation.

16 Another thing is I had to go to
17 training that particular day for the agency I work
18 for which was in Brooklyn. And I live in Pelham
19 Bay. Now I'm not going to say the streets weren't
20 plowed because 138th Street, 3rd Avenue, right off
21 of here was. They put down a lot of salt and it
22 was pretty good actually. The side streets were a
23 terror. And I'm not going to say in Brooklyn that
24 the main streets, you know, Schermerhorn,
25 Livingstone, right in the downtown area of Hoyt

2 weren't plowed, they were.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: They were.

4 MR. PACOLLI: But again when you
5 come out of Nevins, huh, at the train station,
6 it's--to go half a block to get on Livingstone, it
7 was quite an ordeal, huh. And even though the
8 city building wasn't shoveled, there was a lot of
9 ice. So and also when for Council Member Vacca
10 especially to take this up, until this new person,
11 Mr. Waller, came, there were no rats on the 138th
12 Street train station. It was really funny
13 because--

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
15 [Laughing]

16 MR. PACOLLI: I mean you saw them
17 on the tracks. Once in a while they pop up. But
18 I mean you've got rats running around a lot of
19 stations including 138 actually running on the
20 platform with the people.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Ooo, geeze.

22 MR. PACOLLI: And it was really
23 funny because that particular day there was a lot
24 of snow and ice on the platforms. So even the--I
25 don't know if the rats were having a bad time of

2 it or if they were having some fun going up and
3 down, but, you know, I mean, you know, and I'm
4 going to read this.

5 The Teflon Mayor is finally losing
6 his coating. In my book he has always been
7 inadequate and any Mayor that chooses City Time
8 over an automated system we already had called
9 Auto Time is either corrupt or incompetent. The
10 bad old days are coming back to the MTA with its
11 new director and chairman.

12 And the Honorable Councilman who
13 was opposite my great union leader and chief and I
14 also saw him on New York 1 and very time he talks
15 he says something to stick up for the Mayor,
16 should also put in an investigation on who ordered
17 the streets of the Mayor and other dignitaries
18 taking away those big Sanitation trucks away from
19 their route because I think that caused a lot more
20 than a couple of supervisors telling people not
21 to--

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
23 Mr. Pacolli, let me just understand your
24 recommendation. Your recommendation on 311 is
25 that whenever we have an emergency they should

2 take the calls--

3 MR. PACOLLI: [Interposing] They
4 should take the call.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Got it.

6 MR. PACOLLI: --and not so go to--
7 anyway.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
9 Thank you, that's a good one. Thank you. I
10 appreciate that. Kenny Agosto? Hey.

11 MR. KENNY AGOSTO: Hey.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Augusto
13 [phonetic] my buddy.

14 MR. KENNY AGOSTO: Good evening
15 Chairwoman James.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening.

17 MR. AGOSTO: Crowley, Vacca,
18 distinguished members of the Bronx City Council
19 delegation, fellow Bronxites. My name is Kenny
20 Agosto. And am District Leader of the 80th
21 Assembly District in the Bronx and a lifelong
22 resident. I represent parts or whole parts of the
23 neighborhoods of Alex [phonetic] and Bedford Park,
24 Bronx Park East, Bronxdale, East Chester Gardens,
25 Fort Independence, Indian Village, Jerome Park

2 Reservoir, Laconia, Morris Park, Norwood, Pelham
3 Bay, Pelham Gardens, Pelham Parkway, Van Cortland
4 Village [phonetic], Van Ness and Westchester
5 Square, from - - time.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Laughing]

7 MR. AGOSTO: The storm began before
8 10: 30 AM on Sunday December the 26th. Our
9 transit workers, our EMS workers, our Sanitation
10 workers were doing their jobs. I have an issue at
11 the top. And I love what the Mayor does in our
12 neighborhoods with our walls getting painted and
13 doing service of bringing trees but there's a
14 critical failure here. People died.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

16 MR. AGOSTO: Okay? Yvonne
17 Freedman, 75, woke up with chest pains. Her
18 daughter tried to reach 911 for almost half an
19 hour to no avail. After 3 long hours, Mrs.
20 Freedman was dead.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yep.

22 MR. AGOSTO: A 22-year old college
23 student after 9 excruciating hours in labor gave
24 birth to a baby.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That's right.

2 MR. AGOSTO: She called 911. her
3 water broke, she called 911. She didn't see
4 anyone for almost 12 hours. The baby was
5 pronounced dead. Mr. Ishmael Vasquez [phonetic],
6 82 years old, lifelong worker, he worked hard.
7 For his city to respond to him if he needed it,
8 his time, God called his time and he died. His
9 body was in the house for 27 hours. That is
10 disgusting. It is hurtful. The Mayor of New York
11 City is the person we elect to represent us. If
12 any of you or any of us here were on call and we
13 didn't respond to the call we would be fired.

14 AUDIENCE: That's right. Exactly.

15 MR. AGOSTO: I'm not saying we're
16 supposed to know where he goes on his private time
17 but if he's on call he needs to be here. He needs
18 to be basically on his cell phone in Bermuda or
19 wherever he's at. People died. People couldn't
20 get to their appointments. People couldn't
21 travel. And where - - where people get demoted,
22 people get over there, what's going on in OEM, the
23 Office of Emergency Management.

24 What's going on with the
25 Commissioners? I'm not saying that they have to

2 have their heads roll but there needs to be
3 something that's more than a 15-page, 15-point
4 plan after the fact. We can't do this. I want to
5 thank particularly the Council Members here
6 because I know I sat down the 29th with the
7 Honorable James Vacca and we spoke about the
8 neighborhoods and everything. So I want to thank
9 each and every one of you for being here and thank
10 you for--but take it home, take it home, that we
11 cannot let this happen again. Thank you very
12 much.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
14 Agosto. Thank you very much. Thank you very much
15 and thank you for acknowledging the young lady who
16 lost her baby. That was a family friend. I
17 really appreciate and thank you for all of that.
18 Joseph Garber? Mr. Garber you're an out of
19 townner, what are you doing here?

20 MR. JOSEPH GARBER: Out of townner
21 is a - - slang. Okay? It's not--okay. Good
22 evening members of the Council, staff members,
23 Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Terranova. Okay my name is
24 Joseph Garber I'm a community leader and a
25 Director of the Civil Service Merit Council. I

2 came here this evening to finish--

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

4 Yes.

5 MR. GARBER: --remarks that I
6 couldn't make in Brooklyn because I stuck to my
7 three minutes. Number one, you're very correct--

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

9 You honored your word, you said you were going to
10 come to the Bronx--

11 MR. GARBER: [Interposing] Yeah.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: --you did say.

13 MR. GARBER: I want to reiterate, I
14 was not happy the way homeowners and store keepers
15 were cleaning streets in Brooklyn North 1, Wee
16 [phonetic] Avenue, Bedford Avenue, Division
17 Avenue.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

19 MR. GARBER: I almost slipped and
20 if you go now you will see that the ice situation
21 is getting worse. I think there has to be a local
22 law or revision of the snow protocol by DSNY to
23 include what happens when the snow becomes ice.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

25 MR. GARBER: And how we deal with

2 that. I think there has to be some amendments.

3 Now the average person thinks that the Department
4 of Sanitation is solely in the Bureaus of - - and
5 Collection, snow removal, recycling, etcetera. I
6 therefore want to call your attention to the
7 official directory of the City of New York known
8 as the New York City Green Book and read pages 286
9 to 292 and you will be educated as to the diverse
10 bureaucratic structure--

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

12 Okay what paragraph--what paragraph Mr. Garber?

13 MR. GARBER: No, read the pages.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okey-dokey.

15 MR. GARBER: Okay? The pages.

16 Okay. Now. I think, I would suggest that the
17 Department of Sanitation and the City Council
18 possibly hire the American Society of Public
19 Administration, the American Management
20 Association to do an oversight study on the
21 structure. I believe there are duplicate
22 functions in the Department of Sanitation or
23 functions that do not have to occur, especially
24 with uniformed members of the service. If you
25 delete that function you could have a civilian.

2 Okay.

3 Areas that are problems. When city
4 property is affected, it's not working. I have a
5 street that has both parks and a public school.
6 And I had to call Rosemary Thayer [phonetic] the
7 Brooklyn head of Brooklyn North Parks and she
8 didn't even return my call. The Department of
9 Education, I had to call the Tweed Courthouse.
10 Now we have a problem, we have a problem as far as
11 the bus terminal. I was just there this
12 afternoon. That whole bus terminal at Washington
13 Plaza is one block, they don't clean the
14 sidewalks. So we have to look at--this has to be
15 looked at. Okay? Now let me, I prepared notes
16 here. The Housing Authority is a problem.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes.

18 MR. GARBER: The last snow storm,
19 the last snow storm in February '10, February '10,
20 I called Gloria Finkelman [phonetic] to tell her
21 it's an icy condition. And she screamed at me.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Hum.

23 MR. GARBER: She screamed at me and
24 I still have the message if any of you want to
25 hear about it. Okay? So if we're in a city there

2 has to be better coordination. Better
3 coordination. I've studied the Department of
4 Sanitation through various courses at John Jay.
5 I've written term papers. I read Sweep. But
6 we've got to be organized better. We've got to
7 have a better structure on the district level.
8 I'll continue, god willing, at the Brooklyn, but I
9 said I'm going to comment here. Thank you.

10 [Applause]

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mr. Garber I'll
12 see you on Wednesday. I can I see your Green book
13 and I just want you to know that the Chairwoman of
14 NYCHA, the public hearing, Council Member Rosie
15 Mendez is considering a hearing with respect to
16 NYCHA because NYCHA was not activated.

17 And you're absolutely right. An
18 amendment to the snow and ice removal protocol is
19 absolutely--286 to 292, pages. May I see it?
20 Thank you Mr. Garber. I'll see you in Brooklyn on
21 Wednesday. Thank you Sir.

22 Kevin Harvey representing Transport
23 Workers Union Local 100. Do you know the bus to
24 take to the school Mr. Garber? Yeah I'm sure you
25 know how to get to the school on Wednesday, right?

2 I know you will. Kamala Jackson after Mr. Harvey.
3 Ms. Jackson followed by Christine Williams and
4 then our last speaker is Deborah Meyers. If all
5 of those individuals could move up closely that
6 would be greatly appreciated. Mr. Harvey?

7 MR. KEVIN HARVEY: Good afternoon.
8 Good evening Councilwoman.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good evening.

10 MR. HARVEY: I had talked last
11 time, I was going to continue what I mentioned--

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
13 [Laughing]

14 MR. HARVEY: --now you remember me,
15 right?

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Oh yeah.

17 MR. HARVEY: I live on the
18 northeast part. I do 270, last week I'm a worker
19 of MTA in Manhattan. Today I'm a resident of the
20 Bronx. And I received that - - he was the state
21 senator. I live in Boston Road in East Chester.
22 East Chester Garden. My mother lives in Dutomore
23 [phonetic] Projects. So those streets was
24 untouched. And I left between 8:00 and 8:30, East
25 Trust [phonetic] and Boston was unwalkable.

2 People was walking in the streets.

3 Usually a snow storm like this, the
4 magnitude, the would pull the busses off the
5 streets. If you know the Bronx, the Bronx has a
6 lot of hills. So a lot of the busses cannot make
7 it up the hill, whether it's short busses or the
8 long busses. We've also got Westchester's busses
9 coming through especially on Boston Road. They
10 were pulling their busses off. East Chester--not
11 East Chester, East Tremont, now 180th Street around
12 West Forum Depot [phonetic] wasn't plowed. Got
13 distressed busses stuck. So they get stuck, those
14 busses don't carry chains. They just go. So they
15 get stuck in - - and wider. So that becomes a
16 problem.

17 As far as communication I expressed
18 to Ms. James last week for the MTA, it comes from
19 the top. It starts with the governor. You know
20 the MTA is under the governor's jurisdiction, not
21 the city.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

23 MR. HARVYE: The governor said
24 listen all busses off the road 'cause there's
25 nothing you can really do about it. You've got to

2 pull the busses off the road like in 1996 we had a
3 snow storm in January around this month. Governor
4 Pataki calls WAC [phonetic] the busses got pulled
5 off the road.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That's right.

7 MR. HARVEY: End of story. There
8 was nothing the Chairperson can do about it. To
9 the lack of communication, was weak. Even though
10 Governor Paterson should have called it. He
11 should have called it. That's what you should
12 know, he should have called it. As far as the
13 housings, I could go into the housings. Any old
14 projects, my mother say, there's - - . I can go
15 on my head, Lincoln Project [phonetic], that's my
16 home project which is 132nd Street which is
17 Governor Paterson's neighborhood. Those streets
18 wasn't touched.

19 So Sanitation must have got some
20 specific order to hit certain streets, below Times
21 Square, that gets hit first. Clean that up.
22 Everybody else can wait. The outer Boroughs is
23 going--the northeast part of the Bronx that was--
24 and you covering the depot, go to the depot. I
25 ain't seen no busses. It appears right now the

2 bus stops about 8--

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

4 Mr. Harvey--

5 MR. HARVEY: --yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mr. Harvey can
7 you talk because you educated me about the
8 articulated busses, can you say a sentence about
9 that?

10 MR. HARVEY: I could - - .

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Just--

12 MR. HARVEY: [Interposing]

13 Articulated busses are the long busses which now,
14 usually, in Manhattan, my depot on 26th Street,
15 Hunter Street [phonetic], my core depot has those
16 busses. In the Bronx, Gun Hill [phonetic], Kings
17 Bridge and West Forum, those depots have those
18 busses. Those busses can be fitted with chains.
19 But at that particular time those busses didn't
20 have no chains. And they did have chains still
21 sitting on the ground. They pop off. So those
22 busses get stuck.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

24 MR. HARVEY: That's it. Now. This
25 is what I should have been to last week

2 [phonetic]. Due to the fact that those busses get
3 stuck, those busses move, you could be a driver,
4 you step on the gas - - you stand behind in the
5 back of the busses, the way those busses would
6 slide, like jackknife.

7 And if you're not looking, you're
8 not--you're looking somewhere, those busses just
9 slide into you. You will slide. Now we get run
10 over. They would turn around and say we'll blame
11 us for moving those busses. Why didn't you turn
12 around so those busses should have never been out
13 there. Now they're facing a lawsuit. That's just
14 a person. It could happen with cars, the busses
15 could slip up a whole around against a car, just
16 like they're lined up here. That's a lawsuit.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Well had
18 Governor Paterson declared a snow emergency would
19 those busses have been on the street?

20 MR. HARVEY: No. They wouldn't
21 run.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And Mr. Walter
23 did not reach out to Mr. Paterson, correct?

24 MR. HARVEY: No.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Has anyone been

2 disciplined as far as you know?

3 MR. HARVEY: Yeah, they left us--
4 they - - people been stranded, that was the
5 discipline.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: You mean,
7 stranded, the workers.

8 MR. HARVEY: Yeah, the rest of us
9 just -- as no communication, we called counsel, it
10 took forever to call back. Now we're out there,
11 we're on our own like I explained to you last week
12 we was on our own. My chairman, he came and
13 picked--the other person, the next day.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And we also
15 heard from a worker who unfortunately wanted to--
16 had no facilities--

17 MR. HARVEY: [Interposing] Yes. I
18 was just about to--that was one of my coworkers.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That was rather
20 unfortunate. She had to use facilities on the
21 bus.

22 MR. HARVEY: And I talked to her
23 Friday 'cause we went out Friday and she said it
24 was a shame. Even in the sun, bus size, size, I
25 mean one plus one equals two.

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Mr.
3 Harvey.

4 MR. HARVEY: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Ms. Camilla
6 Jackson? Followed by Christine Williams, followed
7 by Deborah Meyers. Go ahead Ms. Williams, I mean
8 I'm sorry, Ms. Jackson. Ms. Jackson.

9 MS. CAMILLA JACKSON: Good night
10 dignitaries.

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Good night.

12 MS. JACKSON: I represent Throg's
13 Neck area of the Bronx. And I also represent the
14 northeast Bronx in which I worship. I have lived
15 in the Bronx most of my 23 years here. And I
16 thank you in time for your advance in listening to
17 me. For all of our loyalty, let me just say first
18 and foremost, we deserve better quality.

19 We constantly pay our tax money,
20 our hard-earned dollars for the inflation of all
21 these prices, especially at the height of the new
22 year and we deserve better quality. Where is the
23 quality? My goal is that I would like to see a
24 consistency in services justly disbursed
25 throughout the metropolitan area. That is my

2 issue. I don't believe, just like the other
3 gentleman said, that people should have died. I
4 was really disheartened to learn that people died.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes.

6 MS. JACKSON: And no fatalities
7 should have happened especially if hospitals were
8 open. That should have been thorough, especially
9 these areas that are densely populated with
10 hospitals around the area, you know? Also I
11 wanted to say that it is truly an unfortunate
12 circumstance and I hope it will never happen
13 again. I hope we learn from here on.

14 I also wanted to say that in short
15 it is my hope that during subsequent inclement
16 weather days that we will witness a more thorough
17 level of quality throughout the metropolitan area
18 not just okay, you know, Throg's Neck are just,
19 you know, this, you know, I hope there will be a
20 continuity that could be very evident. That we
21 don't feel, you know, deprived and feel like we're
22 being ticketed for not being able to park
23 correctly and all these things.

24 I just feel like it's a form of
25 injustice that we're being ticketed. I mean I

2 know some people were ticketed and, you know, in
3 areas where it was heavily, it was densely, you
4 know, populated with a lot of snow and there was
5 no where to put it. You know? Also in relation
6 to the subsequent trash removal, I had a question,
7 if the sanitation would be willing to possibly--I
8 was a little lost in the--as far as when they were
9 resuming trash pickup and what they were picking
10 up.

11 So for weeks, you know, I would
12 just see me or my neighbors just piling up garbage
13 and it's just like when are they coming, what are
14 they coming for. It needs to be more thoroughly
15 addressed. And you know just like you have
16 service advisories, you know, some means of
17 reaching out to us and letting us know, even if
18 it's via the media. Just letting us know when
19 you're going to resume it, what you're picking up
20 and what we are to do. And also there's currently
21 right now what I must say as I take two busses to
22 get to work. Over by the Williams Bridge and
23 Astor Avenue area.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

25 MS. JACKSON: It is really, it's

2 really disheartening that a lot of home owners and
3 a lot of people just in general on a whole aren't
4 being as thorough with the cleanup as well and
5 doing their part as well, you know. There--I mean
6 there's a bus stop right outside of my house and
7 it's really just a sheet of ice. And so we're
8 waiting in the street and the curb, right there at
9 the curb so the bus is pulling up, it's not really
10 pulling up to the stop, you know, so that poses a
11 significant danger, a possible danger.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Ms. Jackson, if
13 you can give that address to the gentleman here so
14 they can remove the ice as soon as possible we
15 would greatly appreciate it. And I believe--

16 MS. JACKSON: [Interposing] I can
17 give them a section of the--

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
19 Okay.

20 MS. JACKSON--where the--yeah.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And we all
22 agree that they should have done a better outreach
23 with respect to recycling, resuming recycling and
24 garbage collection.

25 MS. JACKSON: Yes--

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

3 Thank you so much--

4 MS. JACKSON: --thank you so much
5 for your time.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: --thank you
7 Ma'am, thank you for coming out.

8 MS. JACKSON: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Christine
10 Williams?

11 MS. CHRISTINE WILLIAMS: Yes I'm
12 from Brooklyn.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yea....

14 MS. WILLIAMS: Yea. It's like you
15 look familiar, right?

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Oh but we're
17 outnumbered so let's be quiet.

18 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. I'm going to
19 just make this one quick 'cause I'm the last
20 speaker.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: No you
22 actually--there's two more.

23 MS. WILLIAMS: All right. I'm make
24 it quick anyway.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay.

2 MS. WILLIAMS: I said enough at the
3 other one so I just wanted to bring out a point
4 that I left out the last one in Brooklyn about how
5 the MTA actual workers were treated that day,
6 especially--and my heart goes out to the bus
7 drivers who were out there, hours, days, no change
8 of clothes, no bathroom, no food. I'd also like
9 to bring out in the subway side of the house, the
10 station agents have in the booth it's called an
11 EBCS system, emergency booth communication system.

12 Now the main part of this is
13 emergency booth communication system. The key
14 word is, phrase, is emergency. Okay? That,
15 whatever happened on the 26th fiasco was definitely
16 an emergency. Those boxes were silent. People
17 were in the booths, hours, tours on end, no
18 communication from station command. They didn't
19 know whether they were getting relieved, they
20 didn't know what was going on, no trains, no
21 busses. They were like trapped in that box for
22 like hours.

23 One lady told me she didn't--she
24 worked that night, she didn't get out until like
25 the next afternoon. And they expected her to come

2 back. When she was leaving the booth, that's when
3 her tour was supposed to start again. So they
4 expected her to come back and they--don't you know
5 they marked her AWOL for that? I'm like come on.
6 They're marking people AWOL for you can't even
7 make it because there is no transportation and
8 it's like ridiculous. But I just wanted to bring
9 out the actual systems they have in place to "use
10 in emergencies".

11 I'm not saying they weren't working
12 but nobody bothered to say anything on them. And
13 then when they tried to call down at station
14 command all they got was a busy signal like they
15 took the phone off the hook 'cause they didn't
16 want to be bothered and they were overwhelmed but
17 there were people out there stranded. I did want
18 to just say that.

19 And I also wanted to say about the
20 conditions of the stations' steps. That when you
21 don't call a snow emergency, they don't hold the
22 people back to clean the steps. You know what I'm
23 saying? They never called it so they didn't say.
24 You should have called it. Have the people come
25 in, clean the steps, the steps were so bad. I've

2 got pictures on my cell from right now, you
3 couldn't even see the steps. It was like a slide.
4 People were just getting on it, taking their
5 chances and sliding down rather than waling down
6 and breaking their neck.

7 And then people were saying, oh,
8 why didn't the MTA clean the steps. I'm wrapping
9 it up. Because there weren't--it wasn't a snow
10 emergency being called to hold the people back so
11 they left. If they were able to leave. But I
12 just wanted to give a, you know, a clearer on what
13 those working for the MTA because I was actually
14 at that MTA, when they testified.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes.

16 MS. WILLIAMS: Shocking.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Ms.
18 Williams.

19 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Let me, let
21 me clarify what happened. The MTA was--the MTA
22 waited much too long to declare a level 4
23 emergency.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Exactly.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: They

2 announced a level 1 emergency but a level 1
3 emergency is no where near the scope of the
4 blizzard that we faced.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Exactly.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: So they
7 announced a level 1 which really does not entail
8 the use of any additional resources beyond what
9 they would normally have out there.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Exactly.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: So they
12 waited too long to declare the level 4.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: The MTA
15 never set up an emergency command center. We had
16 this as part of the testimony before my Committee.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I was there.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: And it was
19 alarming that--

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
21 Yeah.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: --that in a
23 situation like this you do not even have an
24 emergency control center--

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

2 Comm--um-hum.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: --for the
4 largest transit system in the country.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: In the world.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: And probably
7 in the world. So there were major errors made
8 which I think ended up to the detriment of the
9 riders and the staff. And I do feel that the--you
10 know, no pun intended, that there were a lot of
11 people asleep at the switch at the MTA. And we
12 know from past--

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
14 That's right.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: --hearings,
16 we know from past history that there was similar
17 storms in the past.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Um-hum.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: The MTA did
20 not learn from those lessons--

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
22 Right.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: --and
24 repeated the lessons again this year.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you,

2 exactly right, thank you.

3 FEMALE VOICE 1: Deborah Meyers?

4 MS. DEBORAH MEYERS: Good evening
5 everyone. My name is Deborah Meyers. I want to
6 thank you all for coming to the Bronx. I want to
7 recognize my Councilwoman, Council Member Helen
8 Diane Foster, Happy New Year to you darling.
9 Since I'm the last, I'm not going to talk about
10 everything that happened in the past.

11 I just want to say to you, hello my
12 friend, I live in the 16th Council District in the
13 Bronx here and the 14th Council District is
14 opposite on the Grand Concourse. Because I live
15 near Bronxwood - - Hospital we seem to get a lot
16 of services pretty quickly. I think the
17 Sanitation Department in the Bronx, Distinct 7,
18 not Distinct 7, District 5 and District 4 have
19 done a pretty good job in our Borough.

20 My only--one of my major concerns
21 with the Sanitation Department is because we have
22 snow laborers that come out, an emergency is being
23 called, we don't have enough slots. Each
24 Sanitation district is given 36. And there are
25 100's of people who come out, they leave their

2 house at 4:00 o'clock in the morning to get those
3 jobs. But I don't know where the money's at in
4 the budget but I will ask the City Council to
5 increase that budget for the Sanitation Department
6 to hire those snow laborers.

7 If you need 100, you need 100 in
8 certain districts. You can't use just 36 people
9 to go and clean the crosswalks, the fire, you
10 know, hydrants and the bus stops to make sure the
11 people are able to get on in the front and also,
12 you know, a spot for the wheelchair handicap
13 people. And I just want you to know that many of
14 the handicapped people were very much affected by
15 this snow storm.

16 And we really need to look into
17 where we went wrong. Let this be a lesson that
18 this--we're a team, there's no I in team. We are
19 all responsible for what is happening in not only
20 our Council District but within the whole City.
21 And that's why I'm happy you're here. The other
22 thing I want to say to the City Council, when the
23 Sanitation was unable to pick up garbage right
24 after Christmas, a lot of, you know, I know in my
25 building, the garbage was left piled up near my

2 emergency exit. Now I'm on the CERT [phonetic]
3 team for my district here also. We have--

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
5 Could you explain to everyone what a CERT member,
6 team member is?

7 MS. MEYERS: Okay yeah.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Because that's
9 really important.

10 MS. MEYERS: All right. It's very
11 important and I will hope many of you will join
12 your CERT team.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

14 MS. MEYERS: The CERT team is a
15 volunteer group under the Office of Emergency
16 Management. It's called the Community Emergency
17 Response Team.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

19 MS. MEYERS: We attend 11 weeks of
20 training under Office of Emergency Management,
21 headed by the Fire Department, the Police
22 Department, the Ambulance Corps, and we learn
23 about medical emergencies, how to help someone,
24 light search and rescue, about if there's a power
25 failure or, you know, like--

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

3 Um-hum.

4 MS. MEYERS: --the wires fall, we
5 know what to do. I know my time is up but this is
6 very important.

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Go ahead.

8 MS. MEYERS: Every member of the
9 community can go and join the community CERT team
10 and take this 11 weeks of training for free. And
11 then you will be empowered to know what to do to
12 help the first responders when they come out. And
13 if they can't make it, we're there to go out and
14 work in our community.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Ms.
16 Meyers, because the CERT teams were not activated
17 during this blizzard--

18 MS. MEYERS: [Interposing] No they
19 were not active and they should have been
20 activated because we're volunteers.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Right.

22 MS. MEYERS: It's not like we're
23 there--

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
25 Exactly.

2 MS. MEYERS: --just to do it for
3 free. I mean we do it but we're volunteers.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And so one of
5 the recommendation is obviously to work closely
6 with the CERT teams and to activate them and to
7 establish protocols when you should be activated.
8 Particularly giving a list of all the seniors in
9 the neighborhood because there were a number of
10 seniors, we heard from testimony, went without
11 food for a number of days because the volunteers
12 could not get to them.

13 MS. MEYERS: Not only did they go
14 without food, you know, some people are living on
15 high--you know--

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
17 Yes.

18 MS. MEYERS: --in the NYCHA
19 buildings on top floors. How are they supposed to
20 come down the elevator if the--

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
22 Exactly.

23 MS. MEYERS: --elevator is broken
24 or getting out of the building. And I want to
25 thank you all for coming here tonight but it's

2 not--what I'm saying here tonight is really
3 serious. Just think about the fact that we're in
4 the post-9/11.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes.

6 MS. MEYERS: And this was a snow
7 blizzard and we're still looking out for terrorism
8 and what happens. And we need to really think
9 closely about how we are going to protect our
10 City. Not only during a blizzard but just in case
11 of a terrorist attack at the same time that we
12 have a snow blizzard. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you Ms.
14 Meyers. Thank you Ms. Meyers. The last speaker--
15 [Audience shouting]

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: We understand.
17 Our last witness is Mr. Almonte. But just let me
18 say this, Mr. Almonte, you have testified at two
19 previous hearings. You testified with respect to
20 LaRouche. Are you going to say the same thing
21 that you said in the previous, the two previous
22 hearings?

23 MR. ALMONTE: More or less.

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So we're not
25 going to allow you to testify because it's not

2 relevant to the issue at hand.

3 MR. ALMONTE: Yes it is because I
4 said more or less so the part that's less is the
5 part that's going to be relevant to this hearing.

6 [Laughter]

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: You may come
8 and testify but if it's not on--if it's not
9 relevant Sir, we are going to recess this hearing.
10 So it should be relevant.

11 MR. ALMONTE: All right.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay? Thank
13 you Sir.

14 MR. ALMONTE: And with all due
15 respect I think that what I said last time was
16 relevant to--

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]
18 Let's hear it.

19 MR. ALMONTE: All right.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Begin.

21 MR. ALMONTE: So all right,
22 obviously the Council Members aren't happy with
23 that I did the last two, so I'll do something that
24 I didn't do the last one and I'll express an
25 opinion.

2 --

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

4 Okay.

5 MR. ALMONTE: --I think I have a
6 right to that. Everyone does. All right. So
7 I'll read a passage, I'll read the Preamble to the
8 Constitution. I think people are familiar with--

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [Interposing]

10 Mr. Almonte--

11 MR. ALMONTE: --this. All right.
12 This is just related to what I'm going to say.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Go ahead.

14 MR. ALMONTE: We the People of the
15 United States, in order to form a more perfect
16 Union and establish justice, ensure domestic
17 tranquility, provide for the common defense,
18 promote the general welfare and secure the
19 benefits of liberty to ourselves and to our
20 posterity, do ordain and establish this
21 Constitution for the United States of America.

22 Now I'd like to think that Mayor
23 Bloomberg is bound to this promises, right? Why
24 is it that people are dying in the streets when
25 this happens and all these things seem to be

2 falling into place to kill the people that are
3 supposed to promote the general welfare? That's
4 my opinion.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Excellent
6 point. Thank you Mr. Almonte, this hearing is now
7 recessed.

8 [Gavel banging]

9 [Audience shouting, conversations
10 in the background]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Laura L. Springate 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 "Laura L. Springate". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Signature _____Laura L. Springate_____

Date _____January 31, 2011_____