

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES, AND
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

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Of the

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COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS,
LIBRARIES, AND INTERNATIONAL
INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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February 2, 2023
Start: 9:44 a.m.
Recess: 9:52 a.m.

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HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

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B E F O R E: Farah N. Louis, Acting Chairperson

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COUNCIL MEMBERS:

15

Eric Dinowitz
Amanda Farias
Shahana K. Hanif
Crystal Hudson
Rita C. Joseph
Francisco P. Moya
Sandra Ung
Christopher Marte
Oswald Feliz

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SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
check for the Committee on Cultural Affairs,
Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations.
Recorded on February 2, 2023, by Nazly Paytuvi.
Located in Chambers.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning,
everybody, and welcome to the Committee on Cultural
Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup
Relations.

At this time, we ask if you could please
vibrate or silence your phones. Thank you.

We are ready to begin.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [GAVEL] Good
morning. I am Council Member Farah Louis. My pronouns
are she, her, and hers, and today I have the
privilege of serving as Acting Chair of the Committee
on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International
Intergroup Relations. Today, we are joined by Council
Members Ung, Marte, Hanif, Dinowitz, and Hudson.

Today, the Committee will vote on two
pieces of legislation related to the Lunar New Year,
Proposed Resolution 331-A sponsored by Council
Members Marte and Crystal Hudson recognizing Lunar
New Year as an annual school holiday and as an

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2 official holiday in the City of New York, and
3 Proposed Resolution 424-A sponsored by Council Member
4 Sandra Ung calling on the United States Congress to
5 pass and the President to sign HR430 establishing
6 Lunar New Year Day as a Federal Holiday. Lunar New
7 Year begins on the second new moon after the winter
8 solstice or typically on a date from late January
9 through mid-February and concludes 15 days later on
10 the next full moon. This year, that date was January
11 22nd. Lunar New Year is one of the most important
12 annual celebrations in many East and South Asian
13 cultures, including the Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese,
14 Taiwanese, and Malaysian cultures, and it is also
15 important to us as New Yorkers. The Lunar New Year
16 celebration directly affects more than 15 percent of
17 New York City's population, and Lunar New Year
18 festivals attract New Yorkers of all backgrounds,
19 benefitting small businesses in many communities. In
20 fact, as a Member of this Committee, I want to
21 recognize the compelling testimony we all heard from
22 many witnesses about the importance of this
23 celebration and how important it is to recognize and
24 commemorate it as part of New York during this
25 Committee's joint oversight hearing with the

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2 Committee on Immigration related to New York City's
3 immigrant communities in December.

4 On behalf of myself and Chair Osse who
5 could not be here with us today, I would like to take
6 a moment to thank and recognize all the witnesses who
7 came to share their stories and support for the
8 legislation at that hearing.

9 Before moving on to the vote, I would
10 also like to recognize and welcome the Resolution
11 sponsors who are present today and invite them to
12 provide remarks on their legislation. Council Member
13 Ung, do you want to provide remarks?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Good morning and
15 thank you, Chair Osse and City Council Member Louis,
16 for bringing my Resolution 424 to a vote before the
17 Committee on Cultural Affairs.

18 I urge my Colleagues on the Committee to
19 vote in favor of the Resolution calling on the City
20 Council to support HR430, a bill introduced by
21 Congress Member Grace Meng of the House of
22 Representative that would designate Lunar New Year as
23 a Federally recognized holiday. In Asian societies
24 across the globe, Lunar New Year is the most
25 important holiday on the calendar, which including

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2 the Asian American community here in the United
3 States and in New York City, where we are the
4 fastest-growing ethnic groups. One of the most
5 significant ways we can acknowledge the positive
6 contributions of the Asian American community and its
7 importance to the history of this nation is by
8 designating Lunar New Year as a Federal Holiday,
9 which is why it's important we as a City Council
10 express our support for HR430. This is the most
11 diverse group of City Council Members in this
12 (INAUDIBLE) the Body's history with a historic six
13 API Members so the passage of this Resolution shows
14 lawmakers in Washington there's broad support for
15 making Lunar New Year a Federal Holiday.

16 I look forward to the full City Council
17 passing my Resolution during this afternoon's Stated
18 Meeting. Thank you.

19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you,
20 Council Member. Council Member Marte.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Yes. Good morning.
22 Thank you, Council Member Louis and Council Member
23 Osse who is not here, for bringing my Resolution 331
24 to a vote. Lunar New Year is an extremely important
25 holiday in New York City. More than one out of eight

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2 New Yorkers celebrate this holiday with their family,
3 with their community, with their small business, and
4 it's long overdue that our city recognizes this as an
5 official holiday and that our Department of Education
6 makes this an official school holiday as well.

7 I would also like to thank over the 100
8 members from my community and from Flushing and
9 Sunset who came to the Committee hearing to testify
10 why this is so important to them and their loved
11 ones, and so I would like to thank everyone in this
12 Committee that's going to vote on it today, and
13 hopefully we will vote on it later this evening and
14 pressure the Mayor to make this an official holiday.
15 Thank you all.

16 ACTING CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you,
17 Council Member Marte.

18 We've also been joined by Council Members
19 Farias and Joseph.

20 Finally, I would like to thank my Staff
21 as well as Committee Staff and others who worked on
22 preparing legislation.

23 I think we are now ready for the vote.

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

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2 vote Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and
3 International Intergroup Relations. Both items are
4 coupled. Chair Louis.

5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Before I vote,
6 I just want to also share that Council Member Moya
7 has joined us virtually.

8 I vote aye on all. Congratulations to all
9 bill sponsors.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
11 you. Moya. Council Member Moya. We'll come back.
12 Dinowitz.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Yes.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Farias.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: I vote aye on all
16 and would like to be added on as a co-sponsor to
17 each. Thank you.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hanif.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Aye on all and
20 congratulations to my Colleagues. Today's a historic
21 day.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Aye on all. I
24 would also like to be added to 424-A and
25 congratulations. This is such an important step in

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2 New York City's legacy of honoring and recognizing
3 all of its residents. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Joseph.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Aye on all.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ung.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Aye on all.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Council
9 Member Moya. By a vote of seven in the affirmative,
10 zero in the negative, and no abstentions, both items
11 have been adopted by the Committee, and the roll will
12 be left held open.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Billy, I'm on now if
14 I could vote.

15 ACTING CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We can hear
16 you, Council Member. We'll get the Clerk. One moment.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Okay, thank you.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:
19 Continuation roll call, Committee on Cultural
20 Affairs. Good morning, Council Member Moya.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
23 you, sir. Final vote now on the Committee is eight in
24 the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
25 abstentions.

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: The vote is
officially closed. I hereby adjourn this hearing.
Thank you. [GAVEL]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date February 9, 2023