

COMMITTEE ON FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FIRE AND EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT

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June 5, 2023  
Start: 10:42 a.m.  
Recess: 12:38 p.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Joann Ariola, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

David M. Carr  
Carmen N. De La Rosa  
Oswald Feliz  
Robert F. Holden  
Ari Kagan  
Kevin C. Riley  
Kalman Yeger

A P P E A R A N C E S

Haley Fumiko Sato, Fire Department of New York  
Emergency Medical Technician

Michael Cavanaugh, Fire Department of New York  
Emergency Medical Technician

Jordan Tymony, Fire Department of New York  
Emergency Medical Technician

Barbara Dannenberg, Deputy Commissioner for  
Human Capital at the New York City Fire  
Department

Paul Miano, Assistant Chief of Emergency  
Medical Services

Thomas Tanzosh, Battalion Chief of the Office  
of Uniform Personnel

Joe Cavaretta, Battalion Chief of the Office of  
Uniform Personnel

Page Miller, Fire Department of New York  
Emergency Medical Technician

Dominick DeFranco, Fire Department of New York  
Paramedic

Tabitha Schneff, Fire Department of New York  
Emergency Medical Technician

Brandon Rodriguez, Fire Department of New York  
Emergency Medical Technician

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Michael Greco, Fire Department of New York  
Paramedic

James Daly, Jr., retired three-star Assistance  
Chief Operations Fire Department of New York

Regina Wilson, President of the Vulcan Society

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone  
3 check for the Committee on Fire and Emergency  
4 Management, recorded on June 5, 2023, located in  
5 Chambers, by Nazly Paytuvi.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and  
7 welcome to the Committee on Fire and Emergency  
8 Management.

9 At this time, please place all phones on  
10 vibrate or on silent mode.

11 If you want to submit testimony, send it  
12 to [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). Once again, that's  
13 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov).

14 At any time during this hearing, do not  
15 approach the dais.

16 Thank you for your cooperation.

17 Chair, we are ready to begin.

18 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: [GAVEL] Again, thank  
19 you for your patience.

20 Good morning. My name is Joann Ariola,  
21 and I am the Chair of Fire and Emergency Management  
22 Committee.

23 Today, we are holding an oversight  
24 hearing on New York City's Bureau of Emergency  
25

Medical Services' career paths and the Fire Department's promotional opportunities.

I would first like to acknowledge Members of the Fire and Emergency Management Committee who are here today as well as being joined by Council Members Carr, Kagan, Gutierrez, Riley, Yeger, and Feliz.

I would also like to thank those from the public as well as representatives from the Administration who are here to provide testimony.

As we all know, our City's EMS personnel is tasked with providing emergency medical care for individuals in need. These men and women deal with stressful work environments, long hours on shifts, and relatively low pay when compared to other City first responders. EMS employees often find themselves needing to work a second job and maximizing overtime pay to ensure they earn a living wage. Today, the Committee will explore ways in which the Department has provided career advancements for our EMS workers as well as an update on when the Department plans to administer the next promotional examination which enables those who are currently age-eligible EMS members as well as those who were eligible during the

2 COVID-19 shutdown to take a civil service test and be  
3 appointed as firefighters.

4 As Chair of the Committee, I expect to  
5 hear testimony from representatives of the FDNY and  
6 EMS on promotional opportunities within the Bureau.  
7 Further, I'd like to hear how the Department will  
8 help ensure that the most qualified and experienced  
9 EMTs and paramedics are retained within EMS so that  
10 we as a City are able to deliver the highest quality  
11 emergency medical services to our residents and our  
12 visitors.

13 Again, I thank you all who are here today  
14 and will now ask for representatives from the EMS to,  
15 actually I'm going to just turn it over to Counsel  
16 and note that Council Member De La Rosa has joined  
17 us.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL KINGSLEY: Good morning.  
19 Today, we're going to start with members of the  
20 public. The first panel will be Michael Cavanaugh,  
21 Haley Sato, and Jordan Tymony. Please step up.

22 HALEY SATO: Good morning. First and  
23 foremost, I would like to thank Council Woman Ariola  
24 for hosting this hearing. I would also like to thank  
25

my friends, family, and coworkers who came out to show their unwavering support.

My name is Haley Fumiko (phonetic) Sato, and I've been an Emergency Medical Technician for the FDNY since 2020. After graduating college with a degree in nutrition and exercise science, I found myself unfulfilled and unsure of what to do next. I wanted a career that would not only be physically demanding but that would also allow me to selflessly serve my community. While working in a local gym, I met a very special individual who gave me career advice that I am thankful for each day, join the FDNY. I never grew up with firefighters as role models as that isn't a typical career path in a Japanese American household. The idea of learning new skills, connecting with diverse individuals, and having a career with a history like no other, all while creating my own legacy strongly appealed to me. I entered the EMS Academy in February 2020 as the first member of my family to join the Department. No one could have predicted that a global pandemic would bring the world to a halt the following month. Classrooms went virtual, restaurants were limited to take-out, major league sports were suspended, and

almost any job could be done remotely. However, the work of a first responder could not be done from home. With a mere six weeks of training under our belts, my classmates and I were sent the streets early to be the first responders that the citizens of New York City so desperately needed. As EMTs, we took an oath to dedicate our lives to the service of humanity. This oath was fulfilled during the City's darkest times. Due to the state of emergency, myself and my coworkers were mandated to work 16-hour shifts for multiple days in a row. Many of us would sleep in our cars in fear of bringing the virus home to our families. Many of us contracted the virus ourselves. Many of us showed up to work grieving the loss of friends, family, and coworkers. Nonetheless, we persevered, remembering that oath we took. Since joining the FDNY, I am proud to say I have looked for every opportunity to better serve the Department. I've worked in the Lower East Side, Washington Heights, and Jamaica Queens. In May of 2022, I became a drill instructor at the EMS Academy. This position not only allows me to help shape the future of the Department but also to take my background in health and fitness and apply it to our physical training



sessions. On the streets, we advocate for our patients, and at the Academy we advocate for our students. If the unforeseen circumstance of COVID-19 were to never happen, a promotional exam from the rank of EMT to firefighter would have been slated for 2020 given the four-year cycle it runs on. Many of our members including myself who would've qualified to take the promotional exam in 2020 will no longer qualify as we have aged out. I was 25 years old when I joined the Department, and I turned 29 in March of this year. We do not feel that we owed an exam or deserve a handout. We simply would like to have the opportunity that we would've had in 2020 if a global pandemic did not shut down the world. We seek a one-time age extension for this upcoming promotional exam so that we may have that opportunity. We believe that a minimum of a three-year extension is fair since we are now a little over three years due on the exam. I would like to note that the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, Washington, D.C., and the City of Philadelphia have no maximum age limit in regards to becoming a firefighter. For the cities of Chicago and Houston, you cannot have reached your 36th birthday by the day of hire. Roughly 10 years ago, a federal

2 court monitor was hired to oversee diversity within  
3 the New York City Fire Department. Many of our  
4 current EMS members would like to take the  
5 opportunity to be promoted to the rank of  
6 firefighter. We are a highly motivated and diverse  
7 group of people. Our members took many steps that  
8 eventually brought us to this hearing today. We've  
9 met with our union, Local 2507, who stated they  
10 support a one-time extension given the unforeseen  
11 circumstance of a pandemic. We also received the  
12 backing of multiple affinity groups within the FDNY  
13 including the Vulcan Society, Hispanic Society, and  
14 Phoenix Society. As FDNY EMTs, we are already trained  
15 to make life and death decisions in high-stress  
16 emergency situations. Medical responses make up  
17 roughly 50 percent of the calls the FDNY's busiest  
18 engine companies respond on. Many EMTs who are now  
19 New York City firefighters raise the bar of patient  
20 care when working in a fire company. An experienced  
21 FDNY Captain recently described to me a cardiac  
22 arrest he responded to for a 13-month-old girl. A  
23 firefighter, who was a former FDNY EMT, took the lead  
24 in this harrowing situation. I was once told that you  
25 can either choose to be on this job or in this job.

By continuously learning and taking every opportunity that has been given to me, I choose to be in this job. I hope that one day I am able to call myself the first New York City firefighter in my family. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your testimony.

MICHAEL CAVANAUGH: Good morning. My name is Michael Cavanaugh. I've been an EMT for the FDNY since February of 2018. Before I start, I'd like to thank Council Woman Ariola for taking the time to previously meet with us to discuss the promotional exam to firefighter and for also hosting this meeting today. I'd also like to thank the members of the Firefighters Eligibles Group, my family, friends, and coworkers for taking the time to come support our efforts today.

For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to be a member of the FDNY. My family has been in the Department since 1919. I take pride in the fact that I've been given the same opportunity to serve my community as an FDNY EMT. After getting comfortable with the solid basic life support foundation, I decided to pursue paramedic school and

will graduate as an FDNY paramedic in the coming months. This is just one of many career advancements I am looking to make. Over the past five years, FDNY EMS has gone above and beyond for this city. We have taken time away from our families, worked 16-hour shifts, and stepped up for overtime when needed. We all have made numerous sacrifices and selflessly served the communities in New York City. In 2020, the world shut down due to COVID-19. While the whole world was staying indoors afraid of a new and deadly virus, my brothers, sisters, and I answered the call to serve our city. For months, most of our Department ran on fumes. Whether it was staffing issues due to over 50 percent of the Department contracting this new virus, myself included, or members stepping up to pick up additional shifts, we answered the call. This was during one of the most difficult times in FDNY history. We did our best to deal with the grief of people losing family members and the dread of potentially infecting our own families. The Bureau of EMS shined brightest in one of our city's darkest times. We served the city then, and we hope to serve the city in the future. Ironically, had COVID not impacted the City's hiring capabilities and finances,

many of our members would've had the opportunity to take a promotional exam to firefighter in 2020. Now, three years later, the same people the media and our City hailed as heroes are still awaiting an opportunity to advance their careers in the FDNY. We have the experience, skillsets, and ability to serve the City of New York as ffs. Now, FDNY EMTs and paramedics who have been eligible since 2020 are all in limbo. All we are seeking is clarity for a pathway to career advancement in the Department. We are asking for a one-time age extension for the members of the Department affected by the pandemic. We seek your support in making this happen. In the past, the City has allowed a one-time age extension due to extenuating circumstances. I believe the COVID-19 pandemic is a valid reason to allow a one-time age extension. I thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your testimony.

JORDAN TYMONY: Good morning. Thank you, Department and Council Members as well as supporters, for being here today and allowing us this opportunity.

My name is Jordan Tymony. I am currently an active FDNY EMT in the Borough of Brooklyn. I am here today in regards to the FDNY EMS to firefighter promotional exam to help support the members that are in jeopardy of missing out on a future promotional opportunity due to their current age.

In this testimony, you may or may not hear a slight accent in my voice. If you do, that is because I'm not from New York. I was born and raised in Wichita, Kansas. Today, would like to tell my story on how a Midwest kid ended up in the Big City.

In 2011, after 18 years, I finally moved away from Wichita to a small college town. My first year of college at the University of Kansas was a struggle. I knew I needed to be in school, but I had no idea of what I wanted to study. From 2012 to the next few years, I became a volunteer firefighter in Douglas County, Kansas. I obtained all the necessary firefighter certifications, and I finally conquered the intimidating EMT course that I had long put off. I graduated in December 2015 with a degree in communication studies even though my passion was the fire service. February 2017, I was hired by the Olathe Fire Department in the suburb of Kansas City.

During my early career, a coworker had gotten me in touch with an FDNY lieutenant in the Bronx. I had a special connection to him. He is also from Kansas. He inspired me, and he helped point me in the right direction to applying and getting on the EMS exam (INAUDIBLE) to New York City. November 2019, I made the decision to leave the Olathe Fire Department after almost three years and returned to work in my hometown of Wichita. January 2020, two weeks from graduating the Fire Academy, I got the call from FDNY EMS. I now had a life-changing decision to make. I got my official FDNY offer. Five days later, I was on the road to New York. I left everything I knew, my family, my friends, my dog, my career. I was finally pursuing my dream of becoming a New York City firefighter. I started the EMS Academy February 2020. All of a sudden, the world changed. Due to the pandemic, everything was put on hold. The only thing that wasn't put on hold was my age. I moved here when I was 26 years old. I'm now 30 years old, still hoping for an opportunity to become a New York City firefighter. We worked through the toughest times of the pandemic when health and safety was crucial. Our families constantly worried for us every day,

confronting the uncertainties lying before us. The last promotional opportunity from FDNY EMS to firefighter was in August 2016. On a four-year schedule, the next promotional exam should have been in the fall of 2020. The only chance I have of that dream now is for an age extension to be placed on the next promotional exam.

I believe that age does not define our mental or physical capacity for the duties necessary to perform the job as a firefighter. Not only does our EMS experience enhance fire operations in regards to medical treatment in the field, it also brings diversity into the Department. As of December 2021, between the ages of 29 and 35, there are 359 female members, 213 black members, 293 Hispanic members, and 59 Asian members, all eligible to become firefighters. This would be a huge potential to increase diversity in the Department so I, as well as others have shared similar story in pursuing the dream of becoming New York City firefighters, are here today in solidarity to ask that we are not denied that opportunity in the unforeseen circumstances of the pandemic. Thank you.



CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL KINGSLEY: Now we're going to call representatives from the FDNY. Deputy Commissioner Barbara Dannenberg, Assistant Chief Paul Miano, Chief Joseph Cavaretta, and Chief Thomas Tanzash.

Will you please all raise your right hand?

Do you promise to tell the truth in answer to the questions to the best of your ability?

ADMINISTRATION: (INAUDIBLE)

COMMITTEE COUNSEL KINGSLEY: Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Good morning, Chair Ariola and all Council Members present. My name is Barbara Dannenberg, and I am the Deputy Commissioner for Human Capital at the Fire Department. I am joined by Chief Paul Miano, Assistant Chief of EMS as well as Battalion Chief Thomas Tanzosh and Battalion Chief Joe Cavaretta, both of the Office of Uniform Personnel. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about EMS career paths and promotional opportunities at the Fire Department.

As our members will tell you, the Fire Department is an exciting place to work. Each year, hundreds of individuals of varied backgrounds and experiences join a team of public servants and commit themselves to protecting the people of New York. Many join the FDNY by entering the ranks of firefighters or emergency medical technicians. However, there are a variety of ways to enter the Department and numerous paths to advance one's career. I'll discuss some of those options today.

Members of the Committee are probably already familiar with some of the options available to firefighters. One path of advancement after gaining experience is to study for and take a civil service exam to be placed on a list to be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. Subsequent opportunities include the ability to be promoted to the rank of Captain and Chief. A member may also take a promotional exam to obtain the rank of Fire Marshal, which then affords the member the opportunity to be promoted to Supervising Fire Marshal.

Firefighters may qualify for other paths for advancement and promotion as well depending on a member's interests and skills. After obtaining some experience, a firefighter may pursue the Special Operations route, joining a Hazardous Materials Operations unit, a Squad Company, or a Rescue Company. Similarly, a member may join specialized units such as Marine Operations or the Robotics unit. Other pathways create opportunities for members to serve beyond their everyday roles, such as training on Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements and becoming qualified to be dispatched as part of Urban Search and Rescue teams.

EMS members also advance in their careers in a variety of ways. They also have civil service paths to promotion, including to the ranks of Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Paramedic. EMS members may also advance their careers through non-civil service paths. Examples of that include obtaining New York State certifications and applying to become a Certified Lab Instructor, which a member may do via completing a written exam and demonstrating skills such as trauma

2 assessment and bleeding control, or a Certified  
3 Instructor Coordinator, which may be done after  
4 auditing lectures and passing a state exam.

5 Another career path available to EMS members is to  
6 become an Alarm Receiving Dispatcher, or ARD. This  
7 is obtained by completing training including a 12-  
8 week course.

9 I also want to draw your attention to  
10 programs that the Fire Department has created to  
11 provide exposure and employment opportunities for  
12 younger New Yorkers. Students at the FDNY Captain  
13 Vernon A. Richard High School for Fire and Life  
14 Safety enroll in FDNY elective classes including  
15 EMS 101 and FDNY Prep. Firefighters, EMTs, and  
16 Paramedics serve as instructors, providing  
17 academic and hands-on education, giving students a  
18 firsthand view into the benefits of a career at  
19 the FDNY. The Department also operates the EMS  
20 Youth Academy, which provides didactic and  
21 practical skills training, and many who complete  
22 the course go on to become New York State  
23 Certified EMTs, joining the Department as EMTs and  
24 firefighters. We also operate the FDNY Leadership  
25 Academy, which is an elite, discipline-driven

program to help enrollees discover their potential and develop leadership skills that last a lifetime.

The Department operates a Fire and EMS Exploring Program, which takes place at eight locations throughout our five boroughs. FDNY Explorers between the age of 14 and 20 receive fitness training, citizenship training, and character-building instruction, and they are exposed to both the Fire Academy at Randall's Island and the EMS Academy at Fort Totten. Members gain insight into FDNY careers, make contacts to broaden FDNY employment opportunities, and develop a roadmap to potential careers within the FDNY.

In addition to these broad areas of potential career paths and promotional opportunities, I would like to address a topic that I know is of great interest to the Council. The COVID-19 pandemic foreclosed the Department's ability to develop and graduate classes from the existing firefighter civil service list. This, in turn, disrupted the firefighter exam cycle, delaying the next Open-Competitive firefighter exam as well as the next Promotional Exam, which

is a test that enables members of EMS to be placed on a civil service list to become firefighters. Unfortunately, this delay has created an issue for some members of EMS who are planning to take the exam but, due to the delay, are at risk of becoming ineligible due to their age. Under Section 15 of the Administrative Code, to be qualified to become a firefighter, an individual must not have reached their 29th birthday on the date of the filing for the exam. Some members of EMS who may be affected have expressed disappointment and have asked for ways to stay eligible despite aging out as a result of the delay. The Department understands this position, and we are interested in finding a solution that is fair to these members. We have also heard from concerned Council Members, including Chair Ariola, who has advocated for resolving this issue in a way that would enable EMS members who were cut off due to this delay to be able to take the next exam and qualify to be placed on the resulting list. These are valid concerns, and the Department is interested in working with the Council to develop a potential legislative solution that is equitable

and would create a path for the members who age out due to this delay. We know that there are potential legal and civil service issues that could present challenges for any such solution. Those issues will have to be resolved to the satisfaction of all interested parties, including the Law Department and DCAS, which administers the exam, but we would like to work with the Council to explore potential solutions.

Thank you, and I'm happy to take your questions at this time.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner. Thank you for stating that the Administration understands and is open to positive solutions for those who have aged out.

When was the last EMS to firefighter promotional exam given, when will the next exam be administered, and can you describe for the Committee the process for someone going through this promotion phase and how long it takes?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Certainly. Thank you for your question, Chair. The most recent promotion to firefighter exam was administered in December 2016, and the upcoming

promotional exam for firefighter is scheduled for October 2023 so October of this year.

The process for promotion is the same test-taking process as the Open-Competitive examination where members will prepare to take the written exam, which for the next round should be administered in February 2024 so they'll prepare to take that written exam. They will take and pass that written exam, and those that pass the written exam then move on to the next aspects of the testing which includes physical testing, medical screening, and then at that point they are placed on the eligible list and then are available for hire.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: All right. Thank you. During the past two exam periods, how many individuals took the exam, passed the exam, and subsequently became firefighters?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you. For the most recent promotional exam, there were about 1,400 test-takers that took that exam, and, from that exam, about 900 people were promoted into the ranks of firefighter.



CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Okay, great. What training does the FDNY provide for the candidates, and how does this training compare to those individuals who are already in the Fire Academy.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you for your question. The Fire Department offers several different opportunities for our test-takers and our employees in order to move into the rank of firefighter. Those opportunities include test-taking prep where we offer classes for folks to receive tips in order to take the multiple choice written exam. They also receive some classes in reading comprehension, basic math skills, the ability areas that are found on that multiple choice exam. Another opportunity is for physical testing, we offer training and class work. It's a 10- to 12-week program in order for our employees to become familiar with the physical test called the CPAT to become a firefighter, which they must pass in order to become eligible for that job.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: All right, thank you. How many women were promoted during the last two exams?

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2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I don't  
3 have that information in front of me, but I can  
4 certainly get that information for you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: I'd appreciate that.  
6 Thank you. When EMS personnel are promoted to  
7 firefighters, how does that affect their time  
8 served with the Department as it relates to their  
9 pensions?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank  
11 you for your question. I'm not an expert in the  
12 area of pension, but City employees' time counts  
13 towards the pension, and, for any specific  
14 questions about pension, certainly refer to the  
15 pension.

16 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: All right. I know  
17 that you went over this in your presentation and in  
18 your testimony, but I can't hear it enough times so  
19 for individuals who have aged out from taking the  
20 promotional exam during the COVID-19 pandemic  
21 suspension, what is the Department planning to do  
22 to allow these individuals the opportunity to take  
23 the exam? I know you're repeating yourself, but I  
24 just want to hear it again.

25

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I will say it again. As you're aware, we are so thankful to partner with Council and particularly with you in order to find a fair solution for these members that were impacted by the delay.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you. I will at this point yield to my Colleagues.

COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: Thank you so much for this opportunity. Thank you, Chair, for hosting this very important hearing, and, of course, my gratitude to all EMS workers here. You are heroes. You worked before the pandemic, during the pandemic, after the pandemic. You are risking your lives and saving lives every single day. Thank you so very much.

I have a few questions. Number one, what is the number of vacancies at the Fire Department right now? How many job opportunities do we have? Do we have the total number of vacancies at the Fire Department?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you for your question, Council Member. I do not have that information, but I can certainly make sure that you receive it.

COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: I guarantee you have a lot of vacancies so we need to do everything possible so our Fire Department does not have vacancies because, again, you're talking about life and death. It's so important that we do everything possible to recruit as many firefighters as possible.

Second question, how many EMS workers apply for this promotional exam last year?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you for your question. For the most recent promotional exam, there were 1,400 who applied to take the job, and, of the 1,400, 900 were promoted to firefighters.

COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: Which means probably if problem will be resolved, you'll get minimum 1,400 more who will apply so, again, do we need a legislative solution or it can be done just by the Department?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you for your question. As the age requirement is stated in the Administrative Code, it's a subject of law, so therefore, again through discussions

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2 with the Council and the City's Law Department, we  
3 are looking to come up with a solution.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: Okay. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Council Member  
6 Yeger.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Madam  
8 Chair. Good morning.

9 What's the practical difference in the  
10 ability of somebody to be a firefighter whether  
11 they're 29 years old or 30?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Good  
13 morning, Council Member. Thank you for your  
14 question. I'm not able to answer that question.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: There's an age in  
16 a Statute. Somebody must've determined that's the  
17 age. Is there a practical difference between 29 and  
18 30 in somebody's ability to be a firefighter?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Again,  
20 the age of 29 in order to become a firefighter is a  
21 subject of the Administrative Code which is law,  
22 and it's not something that I can speak to as far  
23 as how that was developed or where that number came  
24 from.

25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay. I'm not  
3 asking how it was chosen. I'm asking what's the  
4 practical difference, you're sitting surrounded by  
5 three gentlemen who are heroes in New York, have  
6 presumably fought a lot of fires, maybe one of them  
7 can help us out. What is the practical difference  
8 between a 29-year-old's ability to be a firefighter  
9 and a 30-year-old's ability to be a firefighter?  
10 Does anybody know? Can anybody speak to that? Does  
11 anybody have a position on whether or not there is  
12 a difference between somebody's ability at 30 to be  
13 a firefighter versus 29?

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Again, I  
15 would like to remind the Council Member that the  
16 age requirement to become a New York City  
17 firefighter is subject to the Administrative Code.  
18 It is not a Fire Department rule.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I know the law. I  
20 know the Statute. I read the Statute. I know it's  
21 there. I'm asking about practical difference  
22 between someone's ability at 29 versus 30. In other  
23 words, if the Council were to change the law, one  
24 of the things we'd want to know is there a  
25 difference if somebody's 30 versus if they're 29 so

I'm asking if anybody at the table has an idea of if there's a practical difference in somebody's capacity to fight a fire if they're 30 versus what their capacity to fight a fire is if they're 29. Does anybody know?

Okay, all right. Let's move on to something else. You testified, ma'am, that... Okay, I'll wait. Maybe we found an answer. No answer? Okay. You testified that the last EMS firefighter promotional exam was in December 2016 and that the next exam is scheduled to be administered this year, and, obviously there was one as we heard from the first panel, the first witness at this hearing testified that there was one that was unfortunately canceled due to circumstances beyond our control, beyond your control, and that would've been approximately four years from the 2016 exam and now we have one that is three years after the canceled 2020 exam, but, all told, it's about seven years in difference, and the gentleman, my Colleague who questioned you earlier, I believe asked whether or not there are sufficient number of promotions and personnel to do the work. If not, I'm asking it now. Do we have enough firefighters in the City of

2 New York who are moving through the ranks with the  
3 proper experience, and would this test help us out  
4 in filling those ranks?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank  
6 you for your question.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: You're welcome.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Yes, we  
9 are fully supportive of our members advancing their  
10 careers and advancing through the ranks, of  
11 whichever career pathway they choose. We had  
12 planned for classes of both firefighters and for  
13 entry-level EMS workers, there's currently a June  
14 class happening right now, so that we can provide  
15 more candidates and have people move throughout  
16 that pipeline.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Madam Chair, may I  
18 just continue? Okay, thank you.

19 The 2020 exam that was canceled  
20 obviously had a list of applicants who had  
21 registered to take the exam. Do you have the  
22 ability to tell us, number one, how many people had  
23 registered for that exam?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I'm  
25 sorry. Can you repeat that question?



2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Sure. The 2020  
3 canceled exam had EMTs who had registered, in other  
4 words a subset of the people who wanted to take the  
5 exam or to the extent that it was a promotional  
6 exam was all of the people who had registered to  
7 take the exam. Do you know how many people had  
8 registered to take the exam?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank  
10 you for that question. I'm not aware that that exam  
11 actually opened for filing.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: However,  
14 that would be a question for DCAS.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay. Do you know  
16 or are you able to tell us how many EMTs in 2020  
17 who would've taken the exam were at 29 years of age  
18 or under and are now over that age?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Yes. We  
20 calculated and took a look back, and it appears  
21 that there are 324 members who would be eligible  
22 for this upcoming exam.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Who would have  
24 been...

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Who  
3 would have been.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And who are not  
5 currently...

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Correct.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And, if the law  
8 were to change and change the year from 29 to 30,  
9 do you know what the differential would be and how  
10 many more people would be eligible to take the  
11 exam?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I do not  
13 have the breakdown by year, the number.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay. Would you be  
15 able to find that out, by year, just like punching  
16 in a little question into a computer, not now, but  
17 I'm saying get that back to the Chair and see if we  
18 can get that answer?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: We can  
20 certainly provide that analysis.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: All right. Thank  
22 you, Madam Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Before we go  
24 further, Deputy Commissioner Dannenberg, honestly,  
25 you're probably four for four on what you don't

know, and that's just unacceptable at our hearings. Anyone from the Department, I know this is your first hearing before me in this capacity, we're not okay with that so you do have a team here that can find out those answers for you and perhaps Council Member Kagan was not clear in saying EMS vacancies as opposed to firefighter vacancies, but we're here to talk about vacancies, we're here to talk about pensions, we're here to talk about promotions, and you should have every answer that we need so, if you don't have it now on your list, I ask you to please get that while my other Colleagues are asking their questions, and we can always revisit it.

Council Member De La Rosa, you're up.

COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Thank you so much, Chair.

I Chair the Committee on Civil Service and Labor, and we've been digging into the civil service exam. You testified that the Administration was open to exploring with DCAS and the Law Department some possible solutions. Can you speak to that and what the obstacles have been to this

point that has prevented you from already proactively looking into the solutions?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you for your question. As we're all aware, this is a complex issue, and we are working diligently. We have been working diligently with the Council and with the City's Law Department and other oversight in order to come up with a fair and swift solution.

COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Can you describe what that looks like so we have a better understanding of what the challenge is so that we know as Council Members how we can assist in the conversation?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you. This is a complex issue, and it's a complex legal issue so, again, I can't speak to what path would be taken as I'm not an attorney as far as correcting that legal barrier. However, we are fully supportive and working towards gaining that solution with the City's Law Department, with the Council, with other (INAUDIBLE)

COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: I'll just say that I appreciate the fact that you mentioned that the Administration is open to having the

conversation. It doesn't seem like a hard fix here, and maybe I'm missing something. I've been sitting here listening to these heroes testify about their experiences, and I'm like why is this issue, like why can't we fix this, and if it takes us amending the Administrative Code and we have the ability to do that then who is opposed to this? What is the challenge?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you. I'm not aware of any opposition to finding a fair solution for our members who have been affected.

COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Chair, count me as part of the crew of Council Members here that are in favor of us fixing this however we can. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Council Member Carr.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair Ariola, Deputy Commissioner, Chiefs, good to see you all today.

I guess I want to follow a little bit the line of reasoning my Colleague, Council Member Yeger, was trying to get to earlier about the practical difference, if any, based on age at the

Fire Department so I'll try to ask it a different way. There are a number of folks who serve in firefighter and fire officer titles across a spectrum of age ranges. Do you have available the youngest person in a firefighter title and the oldest person in a firefighter title today?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you for your question. I do not have that available, but we can certainly provide such an analysis.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I expect based on the number of years folks work to get a full pension and generally kind of anecdotally that there's a range of folks in their 20s, their 30s, 40s, maybe even early 50s. Do we think that's a fair thing to say for the purposes of this conversation?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: While I can't speak to the actual array of ages, it is fair to say that there is a broad range of ages.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Right, and these folks are acting competently at a minimum, if not heroically in these titles across that spectrum of age ranges. Would that be a fair thing to say also?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: The Department is extremely proud of the work that our emergency medical services staff and our firefighting members perform each and every day for this city.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: That's good to know, but I think what we're trying to establish is is that there's a range of folks who serve in the Fire Department and firefighter and fire officer titles and they do so with distinction despite that divergence in age, so I think in terms of the special allowance we're discussing today, I think the Committee is supportive of it, I'm glad to hear that the agency is open to it and wants to work towards it, but I think it just also lays bare the larger question, which is why some of us here are also supporters of legislation to permanently push back the age for taking the exam and then actually starting with the Department so I think even though we may be able to fix this problem and I hope we can in short order, we need to kind of take a larger look at the bigger picture because I think there's a lot of New Yorkers now and in the future who would love to serve in the Department and

aren't able to do so because of the strict cutoff we have in age. Do you have any comment about that at all at this point?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you. Again, our focus today is for our current members and providing a solution for the current issue, but we are certainly open to other discussions regarding the topic of requirements to enter the firefighting service.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: You mentioned there were legal issues that were being worked on. Who's working on them?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Again, it's a partnership between the Department, this is not something the Department can resolve on its own, the City's Law Department, and, of course, with the support of our Council.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Okay. Appreciate that. I have a number of constituents who have reached out to me for help in this particular category. I reached out to DCAS, but I know that ultimately the answer lies with us hopefully tackling the Administrative Code issue, and hopefully we can resolve this in short order with



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2 the leadership of our Chair and our other  
3 Colleagues. Thank you.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank  
5 you.

6 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you, Council  
7 Member Carr.

8 Deputy Commissioner, since the next  
9 promotional exam will be given in October 2023 and  
10 we're already in June, it's our hope that the Law  
11 Department will come to a positive decision in this  
12 matter so that the people who are here today and  
13 who couldn't be here today and would be eligible if  
14 this particular rule was changed would be able to  
15 take the test in October 2023. Do you see that as  
16 an option for them?

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank  
18 you for the question. Yes, we definitely see an  
19 option for addressing this current situation with  
20 the next promotional exam.

21 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Okay. What is the  
22 average duration of employment for paramedics and  
23 EMTs, and what is the annual attrition rate of  
24 paramedics and EMTs?

25

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank you for your question. I don't have that information...

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Stop, stop, stop. Maybe we need to get someone in your seat that knows how to answer the questions. We did not come here to play. We did not come here, [APPLAUSE] okay, take a moment, thank you for that, we did not come here to hear we don't have an answer. We took time out of our day to be here, everybody took time out of their day, you couldn't have not anticipated the questions so I ask you, and I ask your team, is there someone we can get here in a reasonable amount of time to answer the questions of this Body who has every right to ask questions. They're not difficult questions, and, as the Deputy Commissioner for your Department, you should be prepared. Please, I don't see how we can go further with no answer as an answer.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I have received the vacancy numbers if you'd like to revisit that question.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Absolutely.

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Okay.  
3 Before me, I have the numbers as of last month,  
4 which is May 2023. Our total vacancies for  
5 firefighter is 245, and we don't have any vacancies  
6 for EMT, we have 91 vacancies for paramedic.

7 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: And how many women  
8 were promoted in the last promotional exam?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I do not  
10 have the breakdown by gender.

11 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: I think that this  
12 Council is all about diversity, and I think you  
13 should have the number broken down by gender and  
14 ethnicity, and honestly we'll wait here until you  
15 do so I want to know how many women were promoted  
16 in the last promotional exam. It is not that  
17 difficult. It has been the thrust of this Council  
18 and the Administration from day one since I was  
19 elected, and that's a question you should have an  
20 answer to.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Madam Chair,  
22 perhaps we can recess for five minutes and maybe  
23 they can get together and maybe get somebody over  
24 here or get some answers that they can help us out  
25 with.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: We're going to take a five-minute recess at the request of my esteemed Colleague, Council Member Yeger, five minutes. Thank you. [GAVEL]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you for your patience. If everyone could please find your seats, we will be beginning shortly.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Okay, we're about to resume, and I believe that you have additional information for the Committee.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Good morning. Yes, I do.

You had most recently asked about the number of women who were promoted from EMS into the firefighting ranks from the last exam. The last exam, there were 34 women who were promoted, and most recently there were seven women included in the last firefighter class.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: From what I understand, Council Member Yeger's question, the information has not come back yet, but we are going to that information to the questions he asked.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I do have, I apologize, I can't recall who had requested

the attrition rates, but I do have the attrition rates if you are interested in that.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: That was me. Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Okay. Thank you. The attrition for EMS has remained steady between the last year and this current Fiscal Year, and it's 8.7 percent for EMS.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you. What is the average length of service for an EMS worker and the disaggregated per hour for basic life support, advanced life support, and ambulances, and what are the percentages of EMS workers on the job with less than one year of service?

ASSISTANT CHIEF MIANO: I'm sorry. Can you just repeat the question so I can answer it for you?

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Sure. What is the average length of service for an EMS worker?

ASSISTANT CHIEF MIANO: I'll have to get back to you on that, although you did ask about, the other question you asked was about how many people have less than one year?

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Yes. What are the percentage of EMS workers on the job with less than one year of service?

ASSISTANT CHIEF MIANO: EMS has been actively putting in classes to their Academy starting with 160 students per class. They've been going on about three each year so, if we want to say that 150 of the 160 graduated from those classes, I would say that it would be reasonable to estimate that there are 450 members that have less than one year on the job.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Okay, thank you. What is the average EMS worker shift length?

ASSISTANT CHIEF MIANO: EMS has two schedules. One shift is 12 hours, and the next shift is 8 hours and 45 minutes.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: How does that compare to the national average or best practice?

ASSISTANT CHIEF MIANO: I will have to get back to you on what the national average is of shift work for EMS. Every agency follows different models.

2 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Okay, and how does  
3 attrition within EMS contribute to the overtime  
4 usage?

5 ASSISTANT CHIEF MIANO: With an average  
6 attrition of 8.69, there would be 4,200 members, 10  
7 percent would be, I'm not good in math, I'm sorry,  
8 but it would push the amount of members that we'd  
9 need with that vacancy rate to be able to cover  
10 those vacancies, that 8.7 percent of 4,200.

11 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: What recruitment  
12 efforts has the Department made to attract  
13 individuals to EMS?

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: Thank  
15 you for that question. We hold continual  
16 recruitment events in order to make our community  
17 members of the many career opportunities that there  
18 are within the Fire Department including EMS. We  
19 work with our current officers and members, and  
20 they serve as our ambassadors in our communities in  
21 order to better engage our potential jobseekers  
22 into a career with EMS.

23 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Do you know what the  
24 total annual budget during the past three Fiscal  
25 Years was for EMS recruitment?

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2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I'm not  
3 aware of that number.

4 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Okay. Do you know  
5 what the current salary is for an EMT and  
6 paramedic?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: The  
8 starting salary for an EMT or EMD 39,000,  
9 paramedics 53,000, and then, of course, there are  
10 additions to gross and other on top of that salary.

11 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: What are their  
12 salaries after a five-year period of service?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: I have  
14 the starting salaries. I don't have the five-year  
15 incremental salary increases. Can certainly get  
16 that information for you.

17 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: At this point, my  
18 Colleague, Council Member Carr, has a statement to  
19 read onto the record.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair.  
21 This is on behalf of our Colleague, Council Member  
22 Robert Holden, who couldn't be with us this  
23 morning. He wanted me to just put into the record  
24 of this hearing that he's the author and lead  
25 sponsor of Introduction 395, which I referenced



earlier in my questioning, which would push back the deadline to take the firefighter exam from before one's 29th birthday to before one's 31st birthday and then the time to actually become a member of the Department from before the 34th birthday to the 36th birthday. There are currently 11 co-sponsors in addition to Council Member Holden including Chair Ariola, Council Members Farah Louis, Sandy Nurse, Lynn Schulman, Christopher Marte, Nantasha Williams, Amanda Farias, Kamillah Hanks, Crystal Hudson, David Carr, myself, and Council Member Ari Kagan, and he's asking all of our Colleagues on the Committee and in the rest of the Body to sign onto this legislation so that in addition to hopefully addressing this issue on a one-time basis we can be a little bit more inclusive with FDNY hiring moving forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you, Council Member Carr. At this point, I don't have any further questions. Do any of my Colleagues?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DANNENBERG: In response to your last question about the five-year incremental pay, the five-year salary for an EMT is

2 59,000 and for a paramedic is 76,000 at the five-  
3 year mark.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL KINGSLEY: Thank you.  
5 Okay. Our next panel will be Page Miller, Dominick  
6 DeFranco, Tabitha Schnepf, and Brandon Rodriguez.  
7 You may begin when ready.

8 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Before you begin  
9 your testimonies, I just want to thank all of you  
10 and everyone in this room for your service and for  
11 putting your lives on the line every day. We, here  
12 at the Council, appreciate that, and we want to  
13 make sure that your needs are met, heard, and that  
14 you get the answers that you deserve, and although  
15 the panel prior to this one had no answers for us  
16 we will be sure to follow up, make sure that we get  
17 the answers that we need and to really push to make  
18 sure that people who were ineligible during the  
19 COVID-19 pandemic shutdown become eligible in a  
20 timely fashion so that you can take that test in  
21 October so, please, I would love to hear your  
22 testimony. Thank you.

23 BRANDON RODRIGUEZ: Good morning. First  
24 off, thank you, Council Woman Ariola, thank you,  
25

Council Members, for taking the time to listen to myself and my peers.

My name is Brandon Rodriguez, and I've been an FDNY EMT since 2019. I was born and raised in Brooklyn New York to a Guyanese father and a Trinidadian mother and always had a desire to serve the city that raised me. In 2015, I was a passenger in a vehicle involved in a serious accident. Little did I know at that moment that the EMTs who would come to my aid would also inspire me to pursue a career as a first responder. Later that year, I decided to take a class and worked hard to receive my New York State EMT license, keeping in mind the first responders that provided high-quality patient care the day that I was injured, I knew I wanted to do just that. Between 2015 and 2019, I obtained hands-on experience throughout the five boroughs working as an EMT for various agencies. However, in 2019, I decided to pursue a career with the best agency, FDNY. When citizens are in distress, they call 9-1-1. Since 2019, I had worked as a dispatcher. I am the reassuring voice on the other end of the phone providing step-by-step patient care until an ambulance arrives on scene. When the

pandemic hit, I felt an obligation to pick up extra work on the street, not only for the FDNY but for the various EMS agencies that I worked for at the time. When the global pandemic shut down the entire City of New York, myself and my peers were there to answer the call, whether it was a dispatcher, EMT, or paramedic. Unfortunately, like many others of my coworkers, I contracted the virus. I isolated for weeks from my family and friends as a preventative measure to keep them safe from what I encountered on a daily basis. I eventually made a full recovery and was able to return to work. Although this period of time was uncertain to us all, all I knew was that I had an obligation to uphold to the City of New York to help the sick and injured. The promotional exam for EMT to firefighter typically runs on a four-year cycle. Due to the global pandemic, the promotional exam slated for 2020 was delayed. We are now seven years without a promotional exam. In 2020, I would have fully qualified to take this opportunity. However, I am now 32 years old and no longer qualify because I have aged out. We're here today to ask the Council to grant a one-time extension for those of us who

2 served our great city throughout the pandemic. I am  
3 one of many who have aged out due to the testing  
4 delay and the shutdown of the City and feel that  
5 due to these extreme circumstances, the members of  
6 the FDNY Bureau of EMS should be afforded the  
7 opportunity to become a New York City firefighter.  
8 Thank you for your time.

9 CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your  
10 testimony. Next.

11 DOMINICK DEFRANCO: Good morning. I'd  
12 like to thank Council Woman Ariola for hosting this  
13 hearing and allowing me the opportunity to share my  
14 story. I'd also like to express my gratitude to the  
15 Chiefs, Council Members, and everyone present who  
16 supports this cause.

17 My name is Dominick DeFranco. I'm an  
18 FDNY paramedic in Coney Island, Brooklyn and have  
19 been working for the Department for over six years.  
20 Prior to joining, I became a New York State EMT in  
21 June 2014. For the past nine years, I have  
22 consistently strived to progress throughout my EMS  
23 career and in my own personal well-being. I was  
24 sworn in to the FDNY in March 2017 at the age of  
25 22, became a HAZ-TAC EMT, this entails training to

respond to various chemical disasters in 2019, upgraded to paramedic in November 2021, and finally became a HAZ-TAC paramedic in December 2021. In March of this year, I was accepted into the Dignitary Protection Unit, or DPU, to provide ALS, advanced life support care, to the high-ranking officials of the world such as the Pope or the President when they visit the City. Recently, I participated in the EMS competition where I represented Division 5, Brooklyn South, Staten Island, and came in second place in New York City for ALS with my team. I have also competed for the FDNY boxing team and continue to train with the members. While achieving these accolades, I graduated college in 2019 with my Bachelor of Science in psychology and currently finishing my second degree in nursing. Aside from learning new skills at work and climbing up the ladder in my career, I take pride in going the extra mile for our station, a second home for our members. Every month, I organize and facilitate the station's commissary fund, design station clothing to increase the morale, and speak with my members about improvements. I have planned multiple events

for my members as well, especially for FDNY EMT Ashley Diaz, who has lost her leg to an intoxicated driver in September 2022.

COVID-19 has greatly impacted our City and members' careers. During the pandemic, members operated at the highest call volume while treating patients with improper PPE, or personal protective equipment. Many first responders become infected with COVID, which resulted in multiple areas in the city without EMTs and/or paramedics. The COVID-negative members, like myself, clocked in every day while getting mandated to work 16-plus-hour shifts. I eventually became COVID-positive along with 60 percent of our fellow EMTs and medics. We've experienced some of the toughest jobs and situations over these past few years due to the pandemic. As a result, the firefighter promotional exam for EMS employees was delayed from its scheduled cycle that was anticipated for 2020. I am just one of the many EMS members who have devoted their time and dedication to the Department and City. EMTs and paramedics who have worked through this pandemic will or have aged out by October 2023. I will turn 29 in August, and then I will

unfortunately age out. I started this job as a career at 22, and there has not been a firefighter promotional exam for over seven years. This is the longest period the Department has seen without an exam. It is unfortunate members who have worked for the FDNY for many years will not have this opportunity to file due to the pandemic. As an individual who strives to better myself (INAUDIBLE) Department, I find it unreasonable to be judged by age. This City has the youngest age requirements for the major municipal fire departments in the United States. Back in 2012, the court approved a waiver to allow members under the age of 36 to file for the FDNY firefighter exam, meaning the age extension has occurred before. I believe EMS members should be given the opportunity to file for this upcoming promotional exam with an age extension due to their contributions during COVID and their career. EMTs and paramedics offer our prior experience that cannot be obtained from civilians, especially after the pandemic, and are highly motivated to fulfill the Department's needs. We do so much for so little, and we'd appreciate a one-time age extension for compensation. It would



be a waste to see almost 1,000 EMS members with diverse backgrounds and experiences, ranging from the ages of 29 to 35, not be granted this opportunity. These men and women that were of age in 2020 who were challenged with the unpredictable circumstances are the greatest assets to this Department and City. We deserve a chance. I greatly appreciate your time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your testimony. Next.

PAGE MILLER: Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak to you all today. My name is Page Miller, and I am a 30-year-old FDNY EMT. I have known my entire life that I wanted to help others so, like many others, I have made it my goal to become an FDNY firefighter. First, I became the best EMT I could be. I already had the compassion that it takes for the position but lacked the knowledge. I studied hard in order to provide the best treatment for the sick and injured. Through experience and medical education, I have achieved that objective. Even so, I did not want to stop there. I have plans on entering the FDNY paramedic program in the fall. To become a

firefighter, I have trained my body and mind in many ways. I've competed in CrossFit and Olympic weightlifting for over 10 years. I have worked side-by-side with firefighters, and I have learned many of their day-to-day activities. I know that having five years of experience as an EMT is an enormous benefit to being a firefighter as they play a vital role in emergency medical service. I know I have the drive and passion to become a firefighter. I find it very hard to accept that only being a year or two older than the current age requirement for the position will prevent me from becoming a firefighter, especially when obstacles such as testing delays were the result of circumstances beyond our control. My coworkers and I served the City during the entire COVID pandemic. They were stressful times for many New Yorkers. The long hours, the frequency of calls, the time spent away from our families made Emergency Medical Service a profession tougher than most. The conditions we faced should lead to more opportunities and promotions, not limitations. We have gained a toughness that can only benefit and further the City service. I hope you take in

consideration the hard work we have all provided over the years and grant us this opportunity to apply for the firefighter position.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your testimony.

TABITHA SCHNEPF: Good morning, everyone. My name is Tabitha Schnepf, and I have been an EMT for the New York City Fire Department for the past three and half years. As stated in my peers' previous testimonies, we are all truly grateful for this chance to share our stories and appreciate the time and effort and all parties included to make this day happen.

Today, I stand here with many of my fellow classmates and coworkers asking for the chance to pursue our dream of becoming New York City firefighters. For as long as I can remember, I've lived my life preparing for the day when I would be the first in my family to join the FDNY. February 18, 2020, was the beginning of my story. Here I am lining up for orientation at headquarters to begin my journey. A month into an already challenging and scary yet rewarding path came a new challenge. Three weeks into the Academy we were

informed by our drill instructors that COVID-19 was tearing through our city and the call volume was reaching numbers that haven't been seen since 9/11. Our City needed our help. My peers and I were then informed that our time at Fort Totten would be most likely be cut short so that we can provide aid to our future colleagues. With only six weeks to prepare, our workload was doubled, our days were longer, but we all took an oath for circumstances such as this. I knew the road was long, but I was ready. What I wasn't ready for was finding out that I may not be able to begin the next step of my career because of the uncertainty of the next promotional exam. I turned 29 in January of this year. I joined the Department at the age of 26 with a clear goal in mind, and I am now being told that I may have to choose a new one. If it had not been for COVID-19, myself and many, if not all, standing here would have qualified for the promotional exam that would have been given according to its four-year cycle. This Department promotes diversity and thrives on experience, all of which we bring to the table. We've been trained by the best to be the best, and our knowledge and perseverance has been

put to the ultimate test. All we are asking for is a chance to prove that we can also be a tremendous asset as New York City firefighters. I believe I can speak for all here that we are proud to be a part of this family and have our names stitched onto our uniforms that we wear with pride every day for our City, but this is only the first chapter, and our stories are not finished yet.

I'd like to thank Council Woman Ariola for whom this hearing would not have happened. Also, thank you to everyone standing beside us today for your support and allowing us all to share our thoughts and concerns. I truly hope for a positive outcome.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL KINGSLEY: Thank you. We're going to call our last panel. Regina Wilson, Michael Greco, and James Daly, Jr. You may begin when ready.

MICHAEL GRECO: I usually start out with good morning, but I don't even know what time it is anymore.

First of all, Chairperson, I'd like to thank you for holding this hearing. As always, you do give you an extraordinary time to EMS.

To my fellow coworkers, I'm actually glad I have this many members here today, hearing the Department's uselessness on their answers. They know how hard it is for me to do my job every day. That's the same sort of preparation we get, and you're an elected body in charge of oversight, in charge of figuring out what is going on in the Fire Department, and we can see how much trouble you're getting to answers so I'm glad everybody got to see sometimes how hard it is.

There's a couple of corrections even in the agenda itself. The training on EMTs is not 120 hours. It's 480 hours so that's an important understanding that it's not just three weeks of training. It's actually three months. We look at the salary difference, 60,000 for a top-pay EMT to 92,000 for a firefighter. It's definitely a crazy situation to ask why is the attrition, why is the turnover rate in EMS so bad when you create a position called the promotion, that's highly debated amongst those who are career EMS versus those who want to go over to the Fire side, the fact that it's a promotion for someone, consider myself, 30 years old I started, wanted to be an

1 EMT, I'm a paramedic, it's career. To turn around  
2 and say now that's a promotion, you look at the  
3 1,600 hours to train as a paramedic, you get to  
4 75,000 dollars, then you go over to the Fire side  
5 and get a different training, you have to give up  
6 your certifications or lose all that training, it's  
7 actually a demotion in medical stature while a  
8 promotion in different sort of training. I  
9 understand it. One of my members said that the  
10 union is for a one-time extension. Granted, that is  
11 with a caveat. Everybody who knows me and knows the  
12 union, it's clear that we feel the promotion with  
13 our pay structure is singlehandedly keeping us down  
14 as EMS. However, if you are doing a test this year  
15 and it's going to be in October 2023, well, by all  
16 means, you might as well give these heroes who did  
17 work during the pandemic a chance to get a test  
18 that they would've gotten. We met with them, and we  
19 are in agreement that, if it's 29 now and it's a  
20 one-time extension, I know there is some  
21 legislation to increase that, obviously we'd have a  
22 different sort of answer for that, but a one-time  
23 extension. I watched kids, and some of them are  
24 kids, they came in in 2020 with this three-month

training they were supposed to get and got kicked out early, sent to the streets to deal with one of the worst pandemics the world has ever seen, and they haven't been supported since then. They haven't been given grief counseling. We haven't had debriefing. It's been two years of extended operations so the mental health that they're dealing with. They came out in what we call wartime protocols. Cardiac arrests, we left dead bodies in the street. It was just mayhem. So when I hear about the Fire Department sitting up here and start talking about their training, they're willing to train these members for 12 weeks to get ready for an upcoming promotional exam. I'd like to call them back to ask how much training they give a paramedic to take the promotion exam to lieutenant, supervising emergency medical, the answer is zero. It's up to the unions to try and figure out how to maybe prepare them. They're so for promotion and they're so for taking care of their people. Ask them about their blocking of State law put in about six years ago for civil service exam for captain, chief, division commander. Those are supposed to be civil service exams, but they're ready to sit there



and support, by words because you can see this is probably the first time they've ever heard about it, but there is so much to digest here.

Council Member Kagan, you want to know about vacancies. There are numerous. There are about 150 paramedic vacancies. They claim budgeted 3,000 EMTs, and, oh, we're at staffing level. They're not telling you the amount of unaccounted-for vacancies that we have. We have non-budgeted lines all throughout the Fire Department, whether it be Chief's Aide, 10 percent (INAUDIBLE), 15 percent (INAUDIBLE) at times, sick leave so that takes away about 600 people out of our 2,600. Every member here can tell you how much overtime they do. I sat in this City Council in March 2020 and screamed to this Council that if the call volume went to 6,000, we would be decimated, and sure enough, a month later, we were decimated. We had to call the National Service Ambulance Corps to come over here. EMS is not supported the way it should be if you're talking about retention. Their number they finally got to you, about 10 percent recruitment. My paramedic can't do math, 10 percent of 4,500, that's 450 people that lose every year.

They just told you they train 450 people. We have trained about 500 people per year for the past 10 years, and we haven't gone above head count. There is something fundamentally wrong. Every single person here is talking about they got three, four, five years on the job, and, if they don't get fired, they're probably going to leave, and I don't blame you. This job doesn't support us. This job beats us down every day so it's crazy talk to be sitting here wondering why are we leaving, why do they want to go. 1,200 people left from the last class. It was 1,200 people. I was elected, and I watched them all go out the door. Give me pay parity, I bet you I only lose 600. We can talk statistics, not an individual person. A third of them will go. I heard Mr. Cavanaugh talk about he's got family in the Fire Department since 1919 if I remember that correctly. That member is going to be a firefighter. Tommy Richardson, Chief Richardson, Chief of Department for a time, his son is an EMT. Of course, there's a chance he is going to want to be a firefighter. It's a culture. But out of those 1,200, that's 400 that are going to go to become a firefighter. There are 400 who if you just paid

1    them properly, they would never sniff the job. And  
2    then you're dealing with 400 more. Let them decide.  
3    Call it a lateral transfer movement because that's  
4    what it is. As a lifelong paramedic, we all have to  
5    work eight hours a day, five days a week for our  
6    entire lives. You should be happy doing what you're  
7    doing, and, if you're happy being a firefighter,  
8    then by all means I will support you in every  
9    chance to get you there, but, you know what, I have  
10    thousands of people that are happy being EMTs and  
11    paramedics and they're looking to get out. Mike,  
12    how do I get to this, and that's what they're  
13    asking me to do. So I tell you as my members, I  
14    don't want you to leave. I think the firefighter  
15    promotional exam is the biggest detriment to EMS as  
16    a service, but, until this Council, and you have  
17    supported us, I will say there's a nonbinding  
18    resolution that was put in many years to support,  
19    this Council has always been supportive, until we  
20    get that pay parity that we're currently suing for,  
21    we're talking about diversity, they're talking  
22    about 34 women. I have 35 percent women. I have  
23    over 1,700 of the bravest women, and they're  
24    basically, oh my god, I was about to curse, they're  
25

pooped on, and that's what happens to our service. I have kids who are just not supported. Council Member Kagan, there is no difference. 30, 29, there is absolutely no difference in the physical fitness. I'm 43. You put through the CPAT, I'm going to do a damned good job. I probably don't go to 60, but a 29-year-old to a 30-year-old should have zero issues statistically to take that test. I wrote so quick.

In closing, I just want to say that EMS is supported by you guys, EMS is supported by people here, it is not supported by the City of New York, it is not supported by the FDNY. They train their people on the Fire side extensively, and they leave us to the wolves. Our supervisors are sometimes a joke because of the fact that they're not moving up because of this diligence, which I respect the firefighters command rank for this, their value in wanting to train and teach others and be leaders. Our guys are broken. It's only a 3,000-dollar bump to go to a lieutenant, that's it, and then I think you get like 3,000 more after that to be a captain so I have lieutenants and captains who are making less than a five-year firefighter so

they say, whether you want to attribute it to Einstein or you want to attribute it to anyone in recovery, they say the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. You can have all these Council meetings you want. Until you start to pay us what we're worth and bring parity to the three first responder agencies, I'll see you guys next year at the next budget hearing. Thank you. I'm available for any questions that the Fire Department didn't want to answer. I have no bureaucracy.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Council Member Kagan has a question for you, Mike.

MICHAEL GRECO: Go ahead, sir.

COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: First of all, thank you for your passionate speech. Clearly, you are talking our heroes, like you're trying to defend them as much as you possibly can. If I heard correctly, Fire Department numbers, the starting salary of EMS worker today in New York City is 39,000 dollars.

MICHAEL GRECO: That is correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: I know like it's a rhetorical question, but what in your opinion

should be the starting salary of EMS workers in New York City?

MICHAEL GRECO: 250,000 dollars a year. I mean if you're asking my opinion. Give or take. The Fire Department, what do you value a life, right?

That's the first thing so I'm not going to begin to say what, I'm a paramedic. There's firefighters and there's cops, right. We all have screws loose in the head. They're just different screws so to say that a firefighter deserves more starting

(INAUDIBLE) than an EMT, I don't believe anybody in here would say that. I don't believe I'm one bit better than any firefighter or any cop out there.

What I do know is EMS is of integral three-prong system in the first responder community. Police, Fire, and EMS. Our problem is we're never there at the end. We're always the last line in a paper. EMS took them to the hospital because by the time the video cameras get there, by the time all the politicians get there, our ambulance is gone and actually on our third job by now. We don't have the time to sit around. We have public relations nightmare when it comes to HIPAA. I can't tell you about all the people I've saved. They can't tell

you about all the people I've saved because it's actually against federal law. So while they're out there doing their jobs and other people are out there, the starting salary should be a living wage. It's one thing to say pay your dues. I get that. 250,000 dollars is obviously something that's a joke, but 50,000 dollars is not much in New York City. Forget about these Tier 6 members. They have to pay close to I think it's 12 percent into their pension, then you take away 42 percent for taxes, so you're only taking home about 20,000 dollars. No wonder why, it's a travesty is what goes on so I don't blame any one of them. I've lost some great people to the Fire side, people that I would love to still get back here today, but we should make what we deserve, and we would let the budget people let us know what we deserve, and the problem is they've told us what we're worth. They've told us what they think of us. We're 39,000 dollars to start and 60,000 with the most experience. How would that make you feel, Council Member?

COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: I feel terrible.

Listen, I remember, was it testimony by Police Commissioner, and I mentioned that the starting

salary of police officer was 42,000, and it looks like many people in New York City didn't even know the starting salary of police officers was 42,000 and then everybody is like how is it even possible, and now we know that the City raised it to 55 so same story here. I believe 39,000 is completely, absolutely ridiculous.

MICHAEL GRECO: And they raised it because it was a hard-to-fill title, right. That is the unfortunate problem with the promotion system. I have about 1,500 people on the DCAS list waiting to become EMS. The promotion is part of that. A lot of people come on because of that. We always say get rid of the promotion because let the people not apply because I only have 200 people waiting, and they're trying to hire 500 a year, maybe then they'll start to realize what the problem we have. I have 60 percent of my service with less than five years. I can ask by a show of hands how many of you people who came out for COVID were a mentor six months later, teaching a new person? We don't have field training officers. People who came out with six weeks of experience trained the next class in the field. Experience matters. Ask any firefighter



sitting next to me. I don't think a probie gets trained by a guy who still has an orange visor. We do that all the time so it's a multiprong problem.

COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your testimony and your advocacy.

MICHAEL GRECO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Next.

JAMES DALY, JR.: Good afternoon. You'll have to pardon my appearance. I didn't think I'd be saying anything today, but when I looked in this crowd I felt compelled because it was like looking in a mirror 40 years ago for myself. I took the test in 1982 when I was 19 years old and turned it into a 33-year career. My name is James Daly. I'm a retired three-star Chief from the FDNY, retired as Assistance Chief Operations.

I don't have a horse in this race. I know some of these young men, and Chief Richardson here was my cohort at headquarters, and I felt to show some support. When I saw these young folks and what they're looking to do I felt compelled to talk a little bit. I want to read you a quote. It's from the Chief of Department Edward F. Croker from 1899

to 1911, and it's an old quote so bear with me. "I have no ambition in this world but one, and that is to be a fireman. The position may in the eyes of some appear to be a lowly one, but those who know the work which a fireman has to do believe his is a noble calling. Our proudest moment is to save lives. Under the impulse of such thoughts, the nobility of the occupation thrills us and stimulates us to deeds of daring, even of making the supreme sacrifice."

You have a group of young men and women in this room that I'm sure you realize but I want to reiterate that are an asset to the City of New York. The desire to serve others starts at a young age. This quote hung in a frame in my room when I was a teenager, and I made it a reality, and I did it for 33 years. I'm now 60 years old. Like I said, I don't have a horse in this race, but I feel a familiarity with these young people. You have people in this room willing to give their life for the people of the City of New York, could be your mother, your daughter, your grandchild. That is a rare trait. That is not inherent in all human beings. It is a rare trait. What you have here,

this group, is an asset to the City of New York, and they're serving now, but I would venture to say that not given the chance to move up to firefighters, you're going to lose a large majority of these people to higher paying jobs outside of City service because, like Mike said, the wage that the EMTs make is ridiculous. It's probably slightly above minimum wage. You could be flipping burgers and make the same money, and these young people worked through the pandemic doing CPR 10, 15 times a night, dead bodies, leaving them behind like Mike said, willing to risk their lives now as firefighters to move up in the pay structure of the Department, and you as the City of New York risk losing that asset class because, if they're not given the opportunity to move up and become firefighters, a majority of them are going to leave the City of New York employment and they're going to go for higher paying jobs, and so that's important to think about. I know all the statistics are important too, but that human aspect of what you have now as a group of employees is critical because it doesn't come around every day, people that will give their life for a stranger, and we do

it and we give our lives all too often. In my 33 years, hundreds and hundreds of men have given their lives in my 33 years. I've been at fires where men have given their lives for people they have no idea who they are, and that is not an asset class you want to lose in the City of New York. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you. Please go ahead.

REGINA WILSON: Good afternoon and thank you to the Chair, Council Member Ariola, and all of the Members of the Fire and Emergency Management Committee that are here for the meeting today.

My name is Regina Wilson, and I'm the President of the Vulcan Society. The Vulcan Society is an African American affinity group of the FDNY whose members are uniformed and civilian employees of the FDNY. The subject of the hearing today has a concern of our organization that has been expressed to the current Administration and previous Administration, but there is a serious concern at the Vulcan Society regarding the lack of diversity in the officer and executive ranks for uniformed and civilian employees of the FDNY. There is a

current emergency which I must bring to your attention because it is pressing and will impact the diversity of the FDNY Fire Suppression Workforce for years to come. The current hiring list expires in 2025. Because of the anticipated retirements, the next list will shape the demographics of the Department well into the future. The FDNY is preparing for a critically important recruitment campaign for the next test, and they are not prepared. The City's Recruitment Blueprint which was shared with us leaves the most central questions unanswered. No one reviewing the City's plan could possibly walk away understanding why the City believes the recruitment work and its plan will be enough to achieve the goals of hiring firefighter list that reflects the diversity of the City. As they say, fail to plan and plan on failing. The FDNY cannot be permitted to proceed with the plan to fail our City's residents one more time. The FDNY failed our residents last time it gave the test, and the current list of the City is hiring from the adverse impact against both black and Hispanic test-takers so the City must plan to do better. It proposes doing far less recruiting

without explaining why recruiting far fewer people and attending few recruitment events can expect to yield better results. The City offers generalities when specifics are needed. It is one thing to hope for the best, we all do. It is quite another thing for your plan to be inspirational. You don't win a Council election by hoping to get more votes than your opponents. You review past patterns, estimate future changes, make best guesses, and plan accordingly. You create a plan that could be explained, defended, and tweaked based on new input and information. The FDNY must be required to do no less than what is done by City Council Members. The recruitment and retention offices also into the next recruitment campaign severely understaffed with civilian and uniformed members to accomplish our collective goals. To seize the moment and ensure the next four years of FDNY hires can come from a list that truly reflects the diversity of our city. I would like the Committee to review the attached documents that I have with concerns regarding the Recruitment Blueprint which may give you a better understanding of our position and why this issue is a matter that affects every member of

the Fire and Emergency Management Committee. We need your assistance in making sure the FDNY is truly committed to diversifying the Department as the Commissioner stated on several occasions in press and print. I implore the Council not to allow the FDNY to squander the opportunity of the next hiring list. This list will impact the diversity up the ranks well into the future. Diversity is a probably throughout the FDNY, the Department's leadership ranks remaining disproportionately white. Within Fire Suppression, the problem is twofold. First, you must have diversity to promote into the next rank, and the FDNY's history of discrimination makes this a persistent problem. Secondly, testing procedures must be designed to select the most qualified candidates, and the FDNY relies upon outdated tests for promotions. For Fire Suppression promotions, the FDNY relies upon a simple written test that emphasizes memorization over other critical leadership competencies that cannot be tested into multiple choice questions. The Council should require the FDNY to adopt best practices adding test components that allow it to assess key leadership skills. The Vulcan Society

believes that the FDNY adopts better testing procedure as many other fire departments have already done, and it will result in more diverse and higher skilled officer ranks. I ask the Council to hold a hearing on the FDNY testing procedures so that the Department can implement best practices that will benefit all of New Yorkers. I have provided a copy of the FDNY Medal Day pictures which shows the make-up of FDNY executive staff for your review. I will also urge the Committee to look at the diversity in special operation ranks. These specialized units lack diversity out of all of the units in EMS. These positions allow for specialized training and a 12 percent increase in salary. With all of these great opportunities, there are few, if not any, blacks in these selected units. The favoritism of selected positions within the FDNY must come to an end. We are confident that under the new leadership of Chief Fields these changes can happen but only with your direct support. The FDNY failure to ensure its procedures are designed to promote the most qualified candidates and are free from radical animus has been costly for the City and discriminatory promotional practices



within the civilian workforce. Many black and female employees were passed over for promotions based on race. Now that the FDNY has settled a lawsuit, it is essential to ensure that the hiring and promotion practices change. Civilian employees demand transparency when it comes to understanding the procedures for promotion. It should be made clear to the applicants why they are not selected or the determination made to send employees back to their original rank after a promotional period has nearly been completed. The Vulcan Society continues to hear from civilian staff about managers arbitrarily sending employees back to their lower ranks without explanation, sometimes just stating it just didn't work out. There is no underlying pathway to promotion from upward mobility, no guidance given to employees who do not excel past a probationary period to work on certain skills to better their chances of succeeding in the future. This leaves many employees in the dark and lack the motivation to stay in the FDNY. The promotional problems plaguing the FDNY are present with the EMS as well. To become captain and above in FDNY EMS, you must be interviewed by a panel of high-ranking

officers. Because of this selection process, favoritism can and does influence promotions. Biases from EMS superiors to move black officers into all ranks of the FDNY has always been a problem to promote up in ranks. The FDNY should adopt best practices for all hiring and promotions to ensure the FDNY is led by those that are capable of serving the City.

I would like to also lastly add that the Vulcan Society supports increasing the age limit to all of those EMTs that were denied the opportunity to do so in reference to the pandemic. We've done it before, and I think the Council Members can do it again. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ARIOLA: Thank you for your testimony.

That concludes our hearing today. I think we did a lot. Although we did not get a lot of answers from the people who came from the Administration to give testimony, we did get a lot of answers from those who testified who are EMTs, paramedics, firefighters, from the union, and for that I'm grateful.

As I said before, we will work with the FDNY to get the answers to the questions that were asked, and we will not let up until we do get them, but we have so much more to do. We have to work on diversity. We have to work on pay parity. We have to work on pensions being able to cross over once you do become a firefighter. That would stop the attrition rate for those who want to be paramedics as a career and who want to be EMTs as a career and don't want to go over to be a firefighter, but how can you stay at that salary and provide for your family. 100 percent, I absolutely support that. Council Member Yeger, Council Member Kagan, and many of the Members of this Council do support that, and we do fight for it every day.

Normally, we don't allow clapping in this forum, but we do kind of a thing like this with our hands, but today we allowed clapping because each and every one of you deserve a round of applause and you've clapped many times, and, right now at the closing of this hearing, I'd like my Colleagues and myself to stand and just applaud all of you.

1 COMMITTEE ON FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT 84

2 That concludes the Fire and Emergency  
3 Management hearing for today. Thank you for coming  
4 out. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date June 15, 2023