

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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April 27, 2011
Start: 1:14pm
Recess: 3:53pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
GALE A. BREWER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Council Member Erik Martin Dilan
Council Member Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.
Council Member Vincent J. Gentile

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

Edna Wells Handy
Commissioner, Department of Citywide Administrative
Services (DCAS)
Commissioner, Department of Records and Information
Services (DORIS)

Eileen Flannelly
Chief Records Service Officer, Department of Citywide
Administration Services
Deputy Commissioner, Department of Records

Richard Lieberman
Board Member, DORIS/DCAS Advisory Board
Director, LaGuardia and Wagner Archives
Professor of History, LaGuardia Community College

Henry Stern
Former City Council Member, Former Parks Commissioner
Civic Activist

Christine Ward
Assistant Commissioner for Archives and Records, New
York State; New York State Archivist

Brian Andersson
Former Commissioner
New York City Department of Records

Lloyd Ultan
Borough Historian
The Bronx

Rachel Chatalbash
President
Archivists Roundtable of Metropolitan New York

Lucinda Manning
Professional Librarian, Archivist and Records Manager
Various

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

Gertrude Hutchinson
Co-Chair, 2011
New York Archived Conference

Brian Keough
New York Caucus Chair
Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference

McKelden Smith
President
New York Genealogical and Biographical Society

Teri Koch-Bostic
Chapter Representative, New York Metro Chapter
Association of Professional Genealogists

Cynthia Doty
Member
Park West Neighborhood History Group

[background noise]

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Good morning, my name is Gale Brewer, welcome everyone. And I chair the Governmental Operations Committee. And I'm here with Seth Grossman, who is attorney for the Committee, and Tim Matusov who is a Legislative Policy Analyst. And I think there are folks here, John Russell and Lionel is also here from Finance, so welcome. This is a very important topic to the current and future New York City. And I'm delighted that so many people have found it interesting. Today's hearing is on Intro 486, a bill that has been introduced by request of the Mayor. This legislation, as I think you know, would merge the Department of Records and Information Services, known as DORIS, into the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, known as DCAS. And today we will hear from representatives of the Administration about their reasons for promoting this proposed merger. We will also hear from the patrons of DORIS, including professional associations, representing archivists, librarians, historians, genealogists and records managers, who have concerns about the

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2 potential merger. And I appreciate all the work
3 they've put into this discussion. In addition, we
4 will hear from other esteemed experts, including
5 several of the borough historians, about their
6 views on the merger. DORIS is the agency
7 responsible for the administration, storage,
8 organization, and retrieval of records produced by
9 past and present New York City governments. The
10 agency's comprised of three main components: the
11 Municipal Archives, the City Hall Library, and the
12 Municipal Records Management Division. And I just
13 want to add that we passed a law that I sponsored
14 some years ago to make sure that it includes on
15 its website all reports, official reports, filed
16 by the City of New York, to the--but I can't say
17 that that's 100 percent there, but the notion is
18 there's a place where people can go for present
19 and past information, even regarding current
20 reports. It is one of the smallest City agencies
21 with an annual budget of \$5.1 million, and 38
22 fulltime employees. It was created by Local Law
23 49 of 1977. Prior to 1977, the Municipal Archives
24 and records management functions were part of the
25 former Municipal Service Administration, which has

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2 had many names since. DORIS was split off from
3 the Municipal Service Administration to give
4 heightened awareness on the commitment to the
5 Municipal Archives and management functions. The
6 materials in the Municipal Archives serves as
7 invaluable primary sources for historians,
8 genealogists, community activists, students,
9 patrons conducting family history research,
10 lawyers, journalists, city planners and government
11 agency staff, and everybody else. Dating from the
12 early 17th Century to the present, the Municipal
13 Archives holdings total approximately 160,000
14 cubic feet. The collection includes office
15 records, manuscript material, still and moving
16 images, ledger volumes, vital records, maps,
17 blueprints and sound recordings for more than 100
18 City agencies. I know the photographs are the
19 most popular. The City Hall Library was
20 established in 1913, and it serves as the official
21 depository for all New York City agency
22 publications. The Library contains a collection
23 of over 324,000 books, periodicals, reports and
24 other materials. It provides a rich resource for
25 researchers interested in New York City history,

1 infrastructure, government, politics and culture.

2 The records management is separate. DORIS's
3 Municipal Records Management Division assists City
4 agencies in records management. The Division
5 operates and maintains facilities for the storage,
6 processing and servicing of records for all City
7 agencies pending their disposition in the
8 municipal archives or other disposition as
9 appropriate. DORIS currently maintain 560,000
10 cubic feet of City records, as well as those of
11 the non-federal courts and district attorneys of
12 the City of New York. DCAS is the agency
13 responsible for ensuring that City agencies have
14 the resources and the support needed to provide
15 services to the public. Specifically, to some
16 eyes, the agency one, assists in recruiting,
17 hiring and trading City employees; manages 54
18 public buildings; purchases, sells and leases
19 nonresidential real property; purchases inspects
20 and distributes supplies and equipment;
21 establishes audits and pays utility accounts.
22 It's a large City agency, the agency has an annual
23 budget of \$1.1 billion and 2,000 employees, and
24 I'm sure the very busy Commissioner knows that it
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2 does even more things. The proposed legislation
3 under consideration is a bill today which would
4 eliminate DORIS from the New York City Charter and
5 transfer all of its functions to DCAS. This
6 action, let me be clear, can only be done with the
7 approval of the City Council. So we will now hear
8 from the Administration about their proposal, and
9 we look forward to the Commissioner's joining us
10 at the table. Thank you very much.

11 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Okay, thank you
12 very much for this opportunity. Good afternoon.
13 My name is Edna Wells Handy, and I'm the
14 Commissioner of the Department of Citywide
15 Administrative Services, DCAS; as well as the
16 Commissioner for the Department of Records and
17 Information Services. I am proud to be joined by
18 my colleagues, Eileen Flannelly, Chief Records
19 Service Officer; and Kenneth Cobb, Assistant
20 Commissioner for Records. As many of you know,
21 Eileen began as an Assistant Commissioner for
22 Records in 2002. Ken Cobb has over 30 years of
23 service as records, in records, beginning as a
24 school intern, then later serving as a Director of
25 the Municipal Archives for over 14 years, and then

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2 becoming Assistant Commissioner. We thank you for
3 this opportunity to discuss Intro No. 486, in
4 relation to the transfer of functions from the
5 Department of Records and Information Services, to
6 the Department of Citywide Administrative
7 Services. As you know, and as you identified
8 through the presentation, DCAS ensures that City
9 agencies have the critical resources and support
10 needed to provide the best possible services to
11 the public. To assist City agencies, DCAS
12 provides overall facilities management, including
13 maintenance and construction services for its
14 buildings, its managers, real property and locate
15 space for City agencies, purchases and distribute
16 supplies and equipment, and conducts professional
17 development and employee training. To provide
18 this vital support to City agency, DCAS
19 encompasses significant human capital, asset
20 management, fiscal management, procurement,
21 information technology, and legal expertise.
22 Records is responsible for the organization and
23 retrieval of records, reports, archival documents
24 produced by past and present City governments.
25 The agency is composed of Municipal Archives,

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2 Municipal Records Management, the City Hall
3 Library, and Grant Administration. The Municipal
4 Archives, the Municipal Archives appraises
5 sessions, classifies and arranges and makes
6 available for research invaluable historical
7 records of New York City government. Municipal
8 Records Management ensures the maintenance of
9 records in all City agencies, having continuing
10 administrative and legal value, as well as the
11 retirement or proper disposal of those records no
12 longer in current use. The City Hall Library
13 provides library and information services to its
14 collections which are relevant to New York City
15 governmental matters and is the depository for all
16 official reports and studies published by New York
17 City Departments, Commissions and Divisions.
18 Finally, Grant Administration administers New York
19 State local government records management
20 improvement funds, grants from all agencies. Each
21 year, up to \$1 million is awarded to Mayoral
22 agencies through these grants. This anticipated
23 merger has mutual benefits for both agencies, and
24 there are a number of advantages for DCAS in
25 particular. DCAS and Records are collaborating

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2 and consulting and, sorry, consolidating records
3 management functions, establishing a pilot records
4 management program which we plan to launch
5 citywide. Following meetings with Records and
6 DCAS staff, each line of service within DCAS has a
7 liaison to address Records issues and retention
8 schedules. In conjunction with the DCAS citywide
9 training center, Records is working on providing
10 records management training to educate staff on
11 Records retention schedules and policies. Records
12 also assists DCAS' asset management by providing
13 records storage space for City agencies, that they
14 are relocating. This leads to significant
15 reduction in related lease costs between the
16 relocating agency and does not meet, which does
17 not need additional storage space. Records
18 expertise also enhances DCAS special events with
19 presentations that are, come from the invaluable
20 holdings of the Municipal Archives. I will now
21 turn in a minute to my colleague, Eileen
22 Flannelly, to discuss the benefits of the merger
23 of records. But I will depart just a moment to
24 address some of the concerns that we heard during
25 the course of the planned merger. I think one of

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2 the things that is needed is to get a sense of
3 DCAS. And some of the issues that have been
4 raised with regard to the merger have been why
5 can't, why do we have to have a merger, why should
6 there not be something short of merger service
7 level agreement, or a memo of understanding. And
8 what we have found, and is supported by the work
9 that we're doing, is that there's such an integral
10 relationship, particularly with records. And I
11 want to hasten to add that we see archives and we
12 see the library as standing on a slightly
13 different foot than the records part. And as
14 Eileen will describe, we have hopefully planned a
15 way in which it supports and maintains the unique
16 positioning of archives and library. But we see
17 that the joint collaboration that we have, the
18 day-to-day collaboration that we have, supports
19 the administrative functions of all three aspects
20 of the Department of Records, from the space
21 consolidation to legal which will talk, Eileen
22 will talk more in a minute, to the leveraging of
23 DCAS's existing capabilities, we set, we see this
24 as being supportive this step of merger, as
25 opposed to the shorter episodic, limited ways in

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2 which a MOU or a service level agreement might
3 obtain. So, we, in DCAS, we--we have some
4 memories of our senior staff here, at the open
5 meeting we had other members of our senior staff
6 here, so that you would get a sense of the people
7 of DCAS, and why we support this merger, and why
8 we see it as beneficial to both DCAS as well as to
9 Department of Records. Now you might say, "Well,
10 been there, done that," in that--

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Mm-hmm.

12 EDNA WELLS HANDY: --the, we've
13 been, they've been a part of the predecessor of
14 DCAS. Well, I'm proud to say, we have a new DCAS.
15 Our goal is to provide the kinds of service that's
16 better, faster, cheaper and greener, as we move
17 forward, one goal is to provide that service, and
18 we think that with the enhancements that we can
19 provide to DORIS, you have our commitment of
20 making it go forward. But we don't want to just
21 stand on the commitment because one could say time
22 is limited on this end. We have put in what we
23 consider to be the roots that will provide the
24 opportunities to grow a partnership that will be
25 immune from whoever is at the helm. You have our

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2 commitment that we're going to put those
3 strictures in place to make it work, and to make
4 it so that what we say today, in terms of the
5 benefits, will continue, will continue to be the
6 benefits for years to come. So, I will turn it
7 over, unless you have questions that you want to
8 ask me directly?

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I think we'll
10 wait till the title, current testimony's over, and
11 then I'll have--

12 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --pages of
14 questions.

15 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Thank you, okay.
16 I'll turn it over to Eileen.

17 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Okay, thank you,
18 Commissioner Handy. Good afternoon, Chair Brewer,
19 and all the members of the archival and records
20 management community, as well as the educational
21 institutions, Richard, I see you back there. My
22 name is Eileen Flannelly, I am the Chief Records
23 Service Officer for the Department of Citywide
24 Administration Services, DCAS, and I am also the
25 Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Records.

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2 Until recently, I was Acting Commissioner, as this
3 merger has been going through. So, since November
4 of this year, I have been working in both my
5 Records capacity and with DCAS. Just to give you
6 a little background, on February 10, 1977, my
7 grand-uncle Paul O'Dwyer, and Council Member Henry
8 Stern, who has joined us here today, introduced
9 legislation to create the Department of Records
10 and Information Services. My mother, and Ken
11 Cobb, were the first employees of the Department
12 of Records and Information Services. I give you
13 this background to let you know that for me, this
14 hasn't been a job, it's part of my family's
15 legacy, and it's part of my whole upbringing.
16 It's something I've known since a child. So, I
17 take this very seriously. Why merger? A lot of
18 times, people panic when they hear the word
19 "merger," and they have every right to, because in
20 most cases merger means consolidating, layoffs,
21 two organizational cultures with completely
22 different backgrounds merging together, and it
23 causes a lot of disruption, people are taken out
24 of their homes, relocated. There are many reasons
25 why mergers aren't a good fit. And why mergers

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2 don't work or a lot of people find them to be
3 disturbing. In our case, this is not what we're
4 finding. It's not even what we're finding, but
5 this is something that was discussed previously.
6 We didn't just get a memo and say, "Hey, you're
7 going to merge," end of story, it's something that
8 a lot of the folks at City Hall, after years of
9 trying to find ways around our needs and our
10 inability to do our charter mandated functions, a
11 lot of the folks at City Hall have been helping us
12 for years, but there comes a point where you can't
13 work anymore under the conditions, and though
14 people are trying to assist you, it's a process
15 that just doesn't work. So, the idea came along
16 that we should, maybe it would be a good idea to
17 put us with a stronger, larger agency. And be
18 able to utilize the resources on a daily basis
19 that, moving forward. So, what has happened?
20 What caused us to get to this point? Well, over
21 the years, PEG reductions forced us to allocate
22 special of our, several of our specialized staff
23 to different areas, administration. So we have
24 records managers up in, doing procurement things
25 and archivists, you know, helping out to do

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2 timekeeping and things like that, because we
3 haven't had the resources. And that's not because
4 it's us, and it's because it's the Department of
5 Records; as everybody's aware, this has been
6 citywide, it's been, we're all struggling for
7 funding, and we're all struggling to put the
8 money--we're laying off teachers and firemen, we
9 can't be expected that a bulk of our money is
10 going to be put into digitizing archival
11 collections even though we all understand the
12 importance of doing that. Our limited budgetary
13 funding is being used to sustain our operational
14 costs. And again, taking away from digitizing our
15 collections, and, and improving our records
16 management programs, and our citywide functions.
17 So, this has been a major problem, we're just
18 trying to use the funds to operate. As we advance
19 in our technology and many of you who are visitors
20 to our center know that we've been able to set up
21 a lot of terminals and as we're digitizing
22 collections through grant funds that we receive
23 from the State, that's basically how we've been
24 able to manage doing our collections over the
25 years, many of you are aware. As we've been doing

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2 that, we've been providing them as digitized in-
3 house. And working now to get them online. But
4 in order for us to keep up with the technology,
5 and all of us, for us to keep up with the backing
6 up of these documents, once we have them in
7 digital format, as most of you are aware, it's one
8 of our main concerns, that we have the ability to,
9 to replicate these, store them properly, and have
10 it in the future, once any kind of digital
11 technology changes or advances, that we're able to
12 convert these things. In our present state, where
13 we have one MIS director, one MIS person, for the
14 entire agency, and again, little servers all over
15 the place, and a lot of you know what that's all
16 about. And so we don't have the capability of
17 moving forward. Working together in-house, why,
18 well, what, you know, I think Chair Brewer had
19 brought up at one point, why, why can't they just
20 do shared services. The difference is, with, you
21 know, why can't they just assist you in
22 everything? DCAS does that. And they've been
23 doing that for us for years. But there's a bit
24 difference between reaching out to people and
25 trying to find out, you know, "Who do I get in

1 touch with and who do I do--" than my sitting on
2 this side of a wall, of a computer terminal, and
3 kind of saying to Teresa Ward, "Hey, Teresa,
4 listen, I can clear out this amount of space, and
5 we could cut down the lease costs for, you know,
6 DOI or DOICB, and we can save the City \$250,000,"
7 these are conversations we are now having
8 constantly, daily. So, we're being, our
9 department is a huge asset to DCAS, as well as us
10 getting support services from DCAS that we never
11 had before. So, what kind of things have we seen
12 since November? Budget and fiscal operations.
13 Okay, they have a capital and expense budget in
14 DCAS, and how it works is we all line, lines of
15 service all get together in our meetings with the
16 Commissioner and everybody discusses what projects
17 they're working on, what they have, what they want
18 to push forward. And that money is distributed
19 amongst all the projects. So, for me, I had a
20 space in Bush Terminal that was an empty room, and
21 it fits about 65,000 cubic feet of records. So, I
22 can take that in. My problem, is I didn't have
23 the money to buy the shelving. So, I have an
24 empty room with no shelving. So, DCAS says, and
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2 the Commissioner, and everybody's in agreement,
3 that's important. And guess what? I'm getting
4 shelving, and I'm getting it by June. We have,
5 we've had, because of not enough staff, we've had
6 projects out in Queens warehouse, where we have
7 96,000 cubic feet of records that can be disposed
8 of, but we haven't had the to dispose of them.
9 So, again, you know, if we get rid of the 96,000
10 cubic feet--and these are things that have all
11 been signed off on and approved--what will happen?
12 We can bring in more records from the City, we can
13 clear out more of the space in the file rooms and
14 everything that everybody is spending huge money
15 to keep at this point in time. And it's just
16 anybody who's in records management, you know this
17 is more efficient, this is the way that we should
18 all be going. This is things that we're ca--
19 that's what we're, where our responsibilities are.
20 This is what we're to do. So, with that, the
21 Commissioner approved an overtime project, we have
22 twelve DCAS stock workers, 'cause funny enough, we
23 happen to anyway share the same warehouse in
24 Queens for years and years and years. Just
25 they're upstairs and we're downstairs, and, and

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2 all our staff know each other and have worked
3 together, but, but now, they, we have twelve of
4 them, and eleven of my team, and we're all working
5 together, and they've been, they'll have, by the
6 end of June, they're right on schedule,
7 everybody's working fabulously together. And by
8 the end of June, we're going to have 96,000 cubic
9 feet of space available for other City agencies.
10 This is big. Our visitor center, a lot of you
11 have heard me talk about the visitor center and
12 about finally having a space where we can house
13 and show all of that our agency has to offer.
14 These are our different collections, our vital
15 records, our Mayor's collections, everything--like
16 most of you are aware that we have them. But for
17 the public, and for people coming in that aren't
18 genealogists are archivists and stuff like that,
19 we've never had a display area, like a museum
20 space. And the funny thing is that all of these
21 exhibits, the museum of the City of New York, all
22 of these places that have these, they have our
23 material. We lend it to them so that they can
24 display it, but we've never had a place of our
25 own. Now, we have a nice area that we've cleared

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2 out with the assistance, again, of the DCAS staff
3 and out staff working together. We've cleared
4 this area, they're doing construction on it,
5 they're doing, we're fixing it up, so that we
6 actually can do outreach to the community, and
7 bring people in and show them what we have.
8 Instead of us, you know, once in a while getting
9 requests from different, you know, educational
10 institutions or, or from different genealogical
11 organizations, we're already going to have
12 something set up, so that anybody who wants to
13 bring groups in, we're going to do programs, we're
14 going to, we're going to do outreach, which we've
15 never been able to do before. This is huge. A
16 lot of people say, "Well, why don't they just give
17 you more money?" Even if that was practical, even
18 if saying that, you know, we're laying off
19 teachers and we're laying off firemen, and we're
20 closing this, and we're closing that, but we're
21 going to give the Department of Records more money
22 so that they can, can do, you know, digitize
23 collections or make things more available, why is
24 that not practical? Because once you put that
25 money into the budget, as we all know with the

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2 fiscal problems that the City is facing, going
3 forward, we're going to be, that money is going to
4 hit a PEG target, which is a reduction in all City
5 agencies, when they say, you know, "We all have to
6 cut back four percent" or whatever, the money that
7 goes in is very quickly going to be taken right
8 back out, every time we hit another PEG. And
9 again, that's not a reflection that anybody's
10 coming down on the little guy, it's a reflection
11 that this is the reality of what the whole City is
12 facing. So, that's why that doesn't work. Legal
13 counsel. Our agency, another thing that myself
14 and Ken spend much of our time on is legal
15 matters, that we're not qualified to spend, to
16 handle. We work with Corp Counsel, we, and Corp
17 Counsel is great, but again, we're, we're one of,
18 you know, how many agencies that turn to Corp
19 Counsel for all of the legal matters, and there's
20 much bigger things that what we have on our plate.
21 Even though ours are, are important. But for Ken
22 and I to try to battle for more records from the
23 Health Department for more vital records, to get
24 them into our collections, for us to go out and,
25 you know, battle the GSU, and, and to do issues

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2 with procurement and contracts and things like
3 that, for us to be spending all of our time there,
4 it means that we're actually not involved. All of
5 that time is taken away from the archives and
6 records management and everything that everybody
7 needs. So, what has happened since we started
8 working with DCAS? Ilene Lees is the head counsel
9 over there, and she has a team of people. They
10 have, what we've, they've accomplished in a month
11 is more than what's been accomplished in three-
12 and-a-half years with the Law Department and the
13 GSU. They got right on it, they took over the
14 problem, and, and then, again, that's no
15 reflection on the Law Department, they've been
16 amazing with us, but again, they're servicing the
17 entire City. This is, Ilene has taken this
18 project on herself at the request of the
19 Commissioner, and she's really going to bat for
20 us. This is legal assistance on a one-to-one
21 basis we've never had. Personnel issues, any kind
22 of personnel they're, you know, my personnel
23 officer is going, is working on setting up the
24 visitor center. Again, we wouldn't be able to
25 hire new staff, but we're utilizing our personnel

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2 and our budget directors to actually get things
3 set up and run this project. So, issues with our
4 agency contracts, we've had several issues with
5 our agency contracts, getting our new software
6 program, our offsite storage contract, which is
7 going to be huge. All of these issues are mainly
8 because we don't have any procurement staff, and
9 we don't have trained procurement staff. So,
10 these have been delayed and we almost, we're in
11 danger of losing our software program, purchasing
12 of our software. We're in danger of really losing
13 our offsite storage contract. The legal team and
14 the procurement office came in, took over all of
15 our contracts, and really ran with them and have
16 managed to save all of those contracts which
17 would've gone down the drain. And that's just the
18 facts. Ken's been working on an RFP for
19 digitization, and it's something that, that of
20 different collections, it's something we're going
21 to put out on the street. This is a big thing.
22 But all of this time he's spending doing this,
23 this isn't what he does, it's not what he should
24 be doing. And most of you know, Ken Director of
25 Archives, he's downstairs, he's helping people,

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2 he's working with different organizations. He's,
3 he--the archives reports to Ken. So, this is all
4 stuff, he shouldn't be working on an RFP for day-
5 in and day-out, and hours and everything like
6 that, this is not what he should be doing. Nor,
7 it's not our expertise, and as good as Ken is, as
8 good as any of us are, this isn't our area of
9 expertise. That's not what he studied. So,
10 again, DCAS has completely taken that over. As I
11 said, our personnel functions, they've been
12 helping us with any kind of changes that we've
13 needed to do. Procurement and contracting, I
14 spoke about the RFP for digitization. Again,
15 that's, that's a major thing. That's a major
16 thing for you, for, for the community, and for the
17 archivists. These are collections that we have in
18 our possession, that we wouldn't be able to, we
19 don't have the time, we don't have the funding,
20 to, to digitize these. And, and this is something
21 that we're putting out there, to get these records
22 digitized. And then they'll be available to all
23 of the communities, and to the public. Our
24 offsite storage contract, this is a citywide
25 storage contract that's going to really, it's,

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2 it's going to incorporate 15 different classes of
3 service, something again the City has never had.
4 It's a huge thing, it's taken us well over a year
5 or so--maybe into two, right?--with, that, to get
6 this going. Why? Because we don't have the
7 expertise, we don't have, we don't--we're,
8 everything that we try to do, we're calling every
9 agency, "How do we do this? How do we do this?"
10 We're dealing with MOCS, we're saying, "How do we
11 do that?" Now that DCAS has taken this over,
12 it's, it's going to be done shortly. I mean,
13 they're at the final stages of putting it out.
14 Out technology. Our information technology, we
15 have a program that Luna, it's a photographic,
16 digital photographs. We have to-date 849,000
17 photographs that are available to the public in-
18 house. We have not been able to get them online.
19 So, why? It's too complicated, and I'm not in IT,
20 and we can go and [laughs] it's been going on for
21 a long time. But again, DCAS, one of the DCAS out
22 of the 65 IT specialists that DCAS has, one of
23 them said, "Oh, you know, you know what the
24 problem is, we got to do this program and we got
25 to--" He wrote the program, sent it to DOITT ,and

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2 these images will be available very soon on the
3 web. Everybody's in agreement, this was the
4 solution. But again, it came out of the DCAS
5 camp, and it came out of, from them, researching
6 what it was that we, we needed. We've, we've
7 upgraded all of our computers. We're not, you
8 know, using 2010. So [laughs] again, something we
9 would've had to fund out of our own accounts and
10 couldn't do it. Not only that, but even the
11 installation, all of this stuff would've taken
12 ages. DCAS, they've been working. And when I say
13 it's not, this, I find a lot of people say, "Well,
14 you know, what if it's just because they're being
15 told?" This isn't something, this is the
16 atmosphere and the community and the change and
17 the--what the Commissioner is promoting in this
18 new DCAS and everything, people are energized.
19 And everybody's working together, and the
20 mentality is drop the divisions, drop all of that,
21 and go with a, you're all working in all the
22 areas. And that's what's happening with us, we're
23 all working together constantly, and to improve--
24 we use our areas to combine thoughts and to
25 troubleshoot the problems of the City as a whole.

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2 Not of what we're responsible for. And that has
3 really been coming through not only for our
4 agency, but throughout the City. So, there's a
5 million things that, I mean, I can tell you that
6 we got cleaning in the warehouses that we never
7 had. I real--I just found out that we had staff
8 cleaning the, the warehouse bathrooms that we
9 weren't aware of. And the second that it was
10 spotted, that three of the chiefs over at DCAS
11 were like, "Oh, my god, get somebody down there,
12 get it, get it fixed. This shouldn't be
13 happening." And the concern and the care and, and
14 the team support, is something that we've never
15 had. So, I understand that there are concerns,
16 and I've talked to several people. But there are
17 so many advantages to us going forward. And to
18 this community, to both records management,
19 records management, is another thing. We're, like
20 I said, we're helping DCAS by saving a lot of
21 space, or whatever, but we're also piloting our
22 records management programs, in DCAS, so that we
23 could take it citywide. DCAS has a citywide
24 training center where they train City employees.
25 We're going to have for the first time ever, a

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2 records management training program. I mean, the
3 State offers them, all different, they're offered,
4 but we've never had one for the City. So it's
5 also going to give people more of a, and it's
6 going to mandatory training where people will have
7 a correct, they actually will have records
8 managers that are assigned, and that they will
9 have really guidelines, and, and also updates on
10 the latest technology. So, that's out there, that
11 again many of you may be aware of or be working
12 with, but the City isn't. So, that's the, okay,
13 thank you for your time.

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
15 much, and Ken Cobb, did you want to add anything,
16 or just questions? Okay. Thank you, Ken Cobb,
17 for all your service, in particular. I know some
18 of my colleagues are coming, there are a lot of
19 other meetings today, but let me just start with
20 some questions. And just so the public
21 understands, when the Mayor introduces a bill, the
22 Chair of the Committee puts his or her name
23 alongside of it. And I think the Commissioners
24 know, but that I had a lot of, I have a lot of
25 issues with the merger, and raised a red flag, if

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2 that's the correct term. And I think to the
3 credit of the City there was a hearing, when many
4 of you joined us at so-called Bank Building or
5 temporary City Hall, whatever the current name is,
6 at 49-51 Chambers, on I think it was in March.
7 And a lot of people raised issues there, and
8 together with Tim and with Seth, we've met with
9 many of the archivists and incredibly intelligent,
10 committed community, a community that feels very
11 strongly about DORIS and feels very strongly about
12 the future. So, I want to thank everybody 'cause
13 this is a collaborative effort, it's not just a,
14 you know, one dimensional. There, I really want
15 to hear from everyone who's in the room here
16 today. So, I'm here to ask some specific
17 questions. And although you've both hinted and
18 talked about this, how do you think specifically
19 the merger would allow for more effective records
20 management specifically, and archival services
21 specifically. Because I think that's really the
22 heart of the matter, even though you think that
23 the training room and the, you know, technology
24 support--To be honest with you, I've worked in
25 City agencies, myself. And if you call Corp

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2 Counsel, they're there. They're always there.
3 And if I called DOITT, maybe because I used to
4 Chair Technology, and I happen to understand quite
5 a bit about technology. They're always there. No
6 matter what agency. So I understand your
7 discussion that it's only through DCAS can we get
8 these services, because we're not big enough. I
9 guess that's not my experience, personally. So,
10 my question to you is, can you be specific? Is it
11 a, the merger allows for more effective,
12 specifically records management, and specifically
13 archival services.

14 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Okay, let me
15 just frame it a bit for you. As I said, one of
16 the, one of the purposes, I view this opportunity,
17 is so that you'll feel DCAS in this. So at the
18 conclusion of the open meeting that we had, it
19 became very clear that there was concern of not
20 just the whole of DORIS being swallowed up in
21 DCAS, but particularly with respects to archives
22 and then libraries. And so in consultation with
23 Eileen and others, we determined that, that's a
24 very valid point, that while they have, can gain
25 advantages because of the merger,

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2 administratively, their, their identities were
3 important to the City. So, when we're talking
4 about the outward facing aspects of the merger,
5 we're looking at DCAS records, but that the
6 library and the archives will have a separate
7 identity connected to the City. So, that would
8 be, it would maintain the New York City archives,
9 and/or the New York City Library, or some
10 combination thereof, with separate identities on
11 the internet, the City pages, so that that
12 maintains and that continues. We were able to
13 provide that resolution because of the
14 responsiveness that we, we have at DCAS. It is
15 one thing to call up, and you're part of a queue,
16 in DOITT. It's another thing when you're sitting
17 right next to the Commissioner, the Chief of
18 Staff, Records, Asset Management, the other lines
19 of service at DCAS, and as Eileen indicated,
20 you're saying over the cubicle, "What about this?
21 Can we do that?" So, the City agencies, the
22 oversight agencies are fabulous in their support,
23 but when you're, as, when you're part of that
24 system, you have that kind of support. Now, with
25 respect to Records, Records is a challenge for the

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2 planet. [laughs] And I think one of the reasons
3 we find this challenge is because no one wants to
4 get rid of what needs to be get rid of, be, when
5 no one what's to be gotten rid of, at the time it
6 needs to be, it needs to be gone, frankly.

7 [laughs] And we believe in what we're--

8 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: No, you're
9 going to have a lot of Council Members' junk--

10 EDNA WELLS HANDY: [laughs] Well,
11 and that's, that's the challenge, but we have the
12 opportunity now, in DCAS, looking at how we do,
13 how we deliver service, in the two-and-a-half
14 years that we believe we have to do it in, to look
15 at how can we make a difference in records? How
16 can we make a difference in space allocation, in
17 office space? How do we make a difference in how
18 we manage the fleet? How do we in DCAS make a
19 difference in all of the so-called back office
20 operations, such that it will carry us forward in
21 the new day of fiscal constraint, in the new day
22 of technology and the new day of higher
23 diversification? So, that effort is cascading, is
24 being made part of records. We have, we sit with
25 operations monthly, talking about a citywide

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2 process that we can roll out to the rest of the
3 City on how to manage first your paper records,
4 then how do we go forward on your electronic
5 records. Because DCAS, as you noted in your
6 presentation, is one of the larger agencies, with
7 not only huge day-to-day records, but archival and
8 historical documents. We're using DCAS as the
9 test. So, let's first look at each agency has a
10 records officer. Let's bring DCAS's records
11 officer. How are you disposing? How are you
12 identifying records that have to be archived? How
13 are you getting the necessary sign-offs? What is
14 your retention schedule? We know that retention
15 schedules have not been updated in years. So
16 again looking at DCAS, I think we have something
17 like 400--[background comment] I can't even fix my
18 mother to say it. We have something like 400
19 retention schedules. Well if we're representative
20 of the City, looking at DCAS's retention
21 schedules, identifying what's still valid, how we
22 can work it, such that it's manageable, we can
23 then use that process to go forward with the City.
24 We have contr--we have, not contracted, yet, but
25 we have asked for a proposal from a, a records

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2 management organization, to look at how do we come
3 up with a module, a records retention, records
4 schedule, records disposal, module that we can,
5 that has a training component, that we can then
6 move out to the City. So, in answer to your
7 specific question with records, our goal is to
8 provide a model that becomes part of the City, and
9 we're doing it day-by-day, week-by-week, in
10 committee, in conjunction with the stakeholders,
11 including operations and IT, so that we can move
12 on that area.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I appreciate
14 all the thought that's going into this. It's
15 obviously bigger than DORIS itself, and the whole-
16 -I mean, I think probably agencies around the
17 country are thinking about the same thing. So,
18 but I, you haven't convinced me yet, but you're
19 working at it. I just want to let you know, and I
20 appreciate all the thought. What about space
21 management planning? I know you talked a little
22 bit about Bush, you talked about Queens. Where
23 are all the archives now? As an example. And
24 again, the bathrooms should be cleaned anyway. I
25 appreciate that they got cleaned, but they should

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2 be cleaned anyway. So my question is, where are
3 the archives now in terms of storage? And why
4 would this merger be so helpful to them?

5 EILEEN FLANNELLY: You want me to
6 answer?

7 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Where's the
8 storage now?

9 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Okay, well,
10 right now we have space in 31 Chambers, in the
11 basement of 31 Chambers, and we also have a floor
12 out in Bush Terminal, where we have archives
13 stored. So, in regard to--

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Something
15 about Queens, something about Queens, didn't you
16 mention Queens, also?

17 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Well, well,
18 Queens, we don't have the archives out there.

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

20 EILEEN FLANNELLY: That's for our
21 records management.

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's for
23 records management.

24 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yeah.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, go

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ahead, so the archives, go ahead.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: So, yeah, so we have Bush Terminal and we have 31 Chambers Street.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Mm-hmm.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: But why would this, what's going to be the benefit? Well, first of all, this is going to, as far as Ken I meet with DCAS staff, they have project management, and this is something we've never had. And everybody, all of the lines of service were trained on project management. And our projects, things that we're proposing putting forward, are things that we work on with a team of people now. This means all of our, our disposal projects, our RFPs and digitization projects, and things we haven't been able to do before, are now nicely organized and we have timelines--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: But you're doing them now, even before a, if there is a merger, even before a merger.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes, we're working with them.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So maybe you don't need the merger, because it's going so well.

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EILEEN FLANNELLY: Well [laughs]
no, there's a--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: No, no, no,
no, no, come on, no, no, no, I'm just, I'm being a
little facetious.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: I mean--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm not trying
to--

EILEEN FLANNELLY: You know,
anybody who, who--there is a complete difference
between being on an outside and being on an inside
in a group, and being part of a discussion that
everybody decides together what's important and
what the, the lead projects are, and what, what
everybody can do to help each other. When I sit
in a room and I have all of the lines of service
in a room with me, and I'm saying, "Okay, I'm
doing this project, and it's a digitization
project, and I need A, B, C, D." We are all able
to discuss right there and then, and Sergio will
say, "Okay, well we can do the procurement end of
it and we can do the legal end." And everybody
takes part in that. Completely different. It
would take me a month at least to do the same

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2 thing by telephone, to do the same thing, calling
3 up and reaching out to the individuals. There's
4 nobody who can think that that's, that there's not
5 an advantage to that. I'm sorry, but I've been
6 actually working with DCAS, and like I said I've
7 worked with DCAS for many years now, and I've had
8 a wonderful relationship with DCAS, and I found
9 them to be a very helpful agency. Yet, it is not
10 the same thing.

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And I
12 know we've talked in the past about cost savings.
13 This is not, as you have stated, a cost saving
14 effort. I think it was the \$150,000 was the--

15 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --which is
17 what you had quoted to me.

18 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Right.

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So, what then
20 are, if there would be more staff, I understand
21 that there would be a shared staff. But you
22 obviously have huge needs, not just the clerks at
23 the Bush Terminal, but others. Would there be
24 extra staff assigned to DORIS, or would it
25 continue to be a shared? Or do you not have that

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worked out, if there is a merger. Why don't you both--

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Well--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Go ahead.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Okay, sorry, well, right now, I can tell you that, that my, what my Director of Records Management was saying, that there was certain projects that we're actually working on with the Council, and we're working with DOI on certain projects. And she was saying, "Well, you know something? We have to hold up this project because our driver, we only have one motor vehicles operator, and he's doing this project down there." And I said, "Pearl," I said, "Reach out to Sergio and the DCAS staff, and find out. They have their stock workers there, find out if we can get more motor vehicle operators." So we have men. They came back and said, "Well, you know, not only do, can we give you some of the guys to help with your projects, but we also have a, you know, a trucking contractor we could use to assist you." So, now the projects that we would've put on hold, are, we now have more assistance. And the whole idea is

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2 we're not looking at, at it, right, as being
3 separate or being--Everybody's got it in the mind
4 frame that we're working together and we're
5 working as one.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, so--

7 EILEEN FLANNELLY: And so we've
8 been, we've been sharing services.

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right, so
10 the sharing staff, but there's no new staff.
11 Would there be any new professional staff,
12 Commissioner, can you answer that? Regarding a
13 merger? Or that hasn't been determined yet.

14 EDNA WELLS HANDY: It, it has not
15 been determined yet.

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. All
17 right, so--

18 EDNA WELLS HANDY: And again, we
19 don't want to get in front of--

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: No, I
21 understand that, so--

22 EDNA WELLS HANDY: --there's a
23 merger question.

24 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --so there's
25 not, there's not much in terms of savings and

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2 there's no clear delineation that there would be
3 more staff to assist with DORIS except some of
4 these shared opportunities, which you have
5 outlined. Okay.

6 EDNA WELLS HANDY: At present, yes.
7 If I might, if I might, I'd like to just go back
8 to the point that was, was alluded to, if it's
9 going so well, then we don't need the merger.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Mm-hmm, yep,
11 shared services, yep.

12 EDNA WELLS HANDY: I think that, I
13 think that addresses the, the need to put the
14 roots down, so that it is not dependent upon the
15 goodwill of those at DCAS, that it's dependent
16 upon the strictures that are in the statute, or
17 the law that, that will come, come about, in the
18 procedures that we put in place, so that is not
19 dependent upon who's managing it. But those
20 procedures will provide the kinds of service that
21 we're indicating that we can provide now, and we
22 want to provide in the future.

23 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I mean, I
24 think one of the issues is, you know, how do you
25 ensure that DORIS's specialized knowledge, which

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2 is what it is, and expertise is retained and
3 utilized? You talked about the great things
4 happening at DCAS now. I don't know who's going
5 to be the Mayor in two-and-a-half years or in 30
6 years. And that's what we're all concerned about.
7 So, the question is, how do we know that DORIS's
8 knowledge and expertise, if we don't even know if
9 we'll have the funding for that kind of
10 professional staff, and how do we know that the
11 staff that is there will be retained and utilized?
12 How can we produ--how can we think about that?
13 And we had some wonderful meetings with some of
14 the archivists whom you know, from all the
15 different archives in the university systems, and
16 across the country, in Washington. These folks,
17 you know, it's the, that's the quality that you
18 need in order to preserve this amazing collection.
19 So how do we know that that's going to happen.
20 What kind of safeguards would you put into a
21 merger to make sure that those safeguards are
22 there? I mean, it's staff that does it. There's
23 no other magic. Staff and money.

24 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Well, at
25 present, we're maintaining the same level of

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staffing that has the professional pieces to it.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: But everybody feels that there's not enough. We heard this conversation earlier, is we're merging 'cause we don't have enough. But drivers are great, but that's not the kind of professional needed. With all due respect, this agency is probably more specialized than most agencies; perhaps, obviously, Technology more so, but this is a very unique type of person.

EDNA WELLS HANDY: No, and, and we, we do appreciate that.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So how--

EDNA WELLS HANDY: So, if I can, if I may--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Sure.

EDNA WELLS HANDY: In Eileen presentation, in her testimony, she indicated that in many instances, her, the staff of, of records, they're doing dual and triple duty. So, taking at least two of those, those responsibilities away, allows tho--will allow those who are the professionals to fully commit and fully function in their professional capacities. So, it

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2 unleashes that kind of energy so that we have
3 people who are one-third FTE devoted to archiving.
4 Now we have a full FTE devoted to archiving. So,
5 in a sense we have increased capabilities. But I
6 think the other piece to look at is, we do
7 appreciate the dual that archives and library
8 represent to the City. And so we're looking at
9 ways in which to provide enhanced training for
10 people, in records. I meet with record staff and
11 I'll embarrass Pearl to say this, but I'm pushing
12 her. Get your certification, Pearl. Others on
13 the, on that staff, get your certification, so
14 that we can have the certified skill set that we
15 need to go forward. That's a way to ensure a
16 level of service, irrespective of the management
17 that might be in place in years to come.

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I mean,
19 there also has been concern from some of the folks
20 from the community about reduced hours and access
21 to the archives, and to the library. And I just
22 wanted to know what kind of assurances could you
23 make that there will be not just no reduction, but
24 maybe more access, with any kind of a merger?

25 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Okay--

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CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And I don't know if you can say that, don't say that you can if you can't. But if you, is this something that gets discussed?

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Well, yes it is, but also if I can just go back to, about the staffing. Right now, in anticipation of the merger, we're, we--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Of the hoped for merger.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Of, right--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Hasn't happened yet.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: A--I know. So for the hoped for merger, we are ready, we'll be, we've already identified four people who will be going, three who will be going to the archives, and one who will going back to records management. So, the staff will be strengthened by four, to start with, and in addition, as I mentioned earlier, the use of the stock workers is going to strengthen our Records Management Department. And we've also taken on the Records staff as far as working with them at DCAS. And if in anticipation

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2 of in hopes of a merger, if that does happen, we
3 will also be gaining that staff in our headcount.

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. So, I
5 guess my overall question is, maybe not this time,
6 and I know you think you delineated this, but it's
7 hard to hear a very specific plan for increasing,
8 'cause any merger should increase capacity and
9 service, and not--

10 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --decrease,
12 and not just keep it linear. But should actually
13 increase.

14 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Right. And
15 we're going to be--

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Can you say
17 that in two sentences, how exactly a merger would
18 increase services? Specifically.

19 EILEEN FLANNELLY: We will, we will
20 be opening the visitor center, that will be a--

21 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, but I, I
22 know you're excited about the visitor center.

23 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Right.

24 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm must admit
25 it's not my number one concern. I'm telling you.

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2 The library, the records, and I love going to the
3 New York Historical City, the Museum of the City
4 of New York, and the Brooklyn Historical, because
5 I actually think, just to be honest with you, that
6 there are people there. In other words, you'd
7 have to get groups to come.

8 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Right.

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So, just not,
10 I'm speaking for myself, it's not my number one
11 concern. So, you're saying the visitor center,
12 I'm saying, "Okay, but think of another list."
13 Keep going.

14 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Well, I think
15 it's going to--the thing about the visitor center
16 is it highlights all the collections from the City
17 Hall Library--

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

19 EILEEN FLANNELLY: --and the
20 archives--

21 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I understand
22 that.

23 EILEEN FLANNELLY: That's the
24 purpose of it.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

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2 EILEEN FLANNELLY: And also, that's
3 going to be open, the City Hall Library is going
4 to be part of that, it's going to bring more
5 attention to that, and it's also going to be more,
6 bring more attention to the archives. I mean,
7 and--

8 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Yeah, perhaps I
9 can--

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yeah, you need
11 a better list.

12 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Just to--

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Go ahead. Go
14 ahead.

15 EDNA WELLS HANDY: And we will
16 provide that as soon as we, we come up with it,
17 and why I say it in, in that term, I've asked for
18 each chief of my respective line of service to
19 come up with a strategic plan, to identify how
20 we're going to go forward, how we're going to
21 address the culture, address the service, to
22 increase and to provide the kind of customer
23 satisfaction that the public is entitled to. So
24 that's one area. But just as a, as an example of
25 it, we had a meeting with a archivist--no, a

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2 genealogist, a genealogist. And he talked about
3 the question of why there's no internet access,
4 and we're looking at how can we provide internet,
5 internet access there. We're, we've opened up to
6 the level of the user, and so as we continue that,
7 increasing that access, we'll be able to identify
8 the ways in which services will be improved.

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I'm
10 just saying, if I were you, I would have a better
11 list, I'm just telling you, than what you've come
12 up with so far. Advisory boards, they haven't met
13 often. Why? And if some of these answers perhaps
14 could have come out of an advisory board. I'm a
15 big proponent of advisory boards. Great to have
16 the users, great to have the public. I mean, you
17 have two advisory boards. Can you just tell us
18 generally who's on them, have they met, and if not
19 why not?

20 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Okay, well our
21 first board, the Archives Oversight Board, we had
22 a meeting yesterday.

23 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Very
24 convenient. Go ahead, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

25 EILEEN FLANNELLY: As a matter, as

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a matter of fact, we've been trying to get them together--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Oh--

EILEEN FLANNELLY: --and Richard Lieberman, who is in the room--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --okay.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: --is part of our advisory board. And he--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yeah, he lives in my neighborhood, he's a wonderful man.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes. And he will tell you that we have had difficulty, so yes they--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: He's very easy to reach, I can give you his home number in my head.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: There [laughter] well, Richard is on our board, and he'll let you know, this isn't something that was for the hearing, but something we've been trying to organize for several months.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right, so one board met yesterday. And what did they say?

EILEEN FLANNELLY: There was

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excitement, and--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's the one that has five members on it, I believe.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes, yes.

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And all five of them there?

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All five of them were there.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: We, yes, they were.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Marin Casey [phonetic], Mike Best, Richard Lieberman, and Chris Moore.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And what did they come up with in terms of their summary of the meeting?

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Well, that they, I said at the end of the meeting there was a lot of excitement--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: --and they were

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in support of this.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: And felt that, that this was really going to strengthen going forward.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm sure Mr. Lieberman will articulate that.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes, he can.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: He's very good at that.

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right, and, and the other board?

EILEEN FLANNELLY: Now that board we, hasn't been, hasn't been active since I believe the late '90s.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And there's some reason? Is that a larger board?

EILEEN FLANNELLY: That was a 15 member board.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Henry's on that board?

HENRY STERN: [off mic] Yes, I was, but it hasn't met in over ten years.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's what I
3 thought. Well, you'll be, your chance is next,
4 sir. Okay.

5 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes, so I--

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right. But
7 that's something that's, you know, of concern, and
8 I assume that any new discussion of DORIS would
9 have boards that meet and would have hopefully
10 consumers as well as City agency workers.

11 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Yes, I--

12 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm always
13 concerned when boards have only people who work
14 for the Mayor on them, on it. Okay.

15 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Well, that's
16 what we're discussing as far as--

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We don't want,
18 we don't want that kind of board.

19 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Right, and as
20 far as putting this new board together, that's
21 what we've been discussing, where we would have a
22 board where we would have counsel appointees and
23 Mayoral appointees.

24 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I mean,
25 I think, we could go on and on with questions, I

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2 know there's a lot of people who want to testify,
3 and I would love to have them participate. And I
4 hope that your archival storage and records is not
5 as hot as it is in this room, 'cause I think it
6 would not be good for the records. So, I want to
7 thank you for joining us today, and I hope that
8 somebody will stay to hear some of the comments
9 coming from the community. Thank you very much.

10 EILEEN FLANNELLY: Thank you.

11 EDNA WELLS HANDY: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right,
13 Richard Lieberman, Christine Ward, Brian Anderson
14 and Henry Stern, if you want to all come up.
15 [pause, background noise] Richard, you go first,
16 'cause I know you have a time constraint.

17 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Thank you.

18 Well, I'm delighted to be here. Thank you, Gale,
19 for--

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We're glad to
21 have you.

22 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: --for inviting
23 us. And--

24 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: How's the
25 block, is the block okay? The block is okay?

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RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Yes. The potholes are fine.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: How's that, the sewer thing is okay?

RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Our sewer is fine.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Good, great.

RICHARD LIEBERMAN: My neighbors call it Richard's River, actually, when it blocks up.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I know, that's great.

RICHARD LIEBERMAN: I'm, I'm here to talk about the intro before us, 486, and a little background on myself, I'm not only a member of our advisory group, but also I've been a member of the group that didn't meet, and the group that does meet. And it's all true what has been said, that we have been trying to get together and--and by the way, two of us are appointed by the Council and two are appointed by the Mayor.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right.

RICHARD LIEBERMAN: So it isn't really just a Mayoral board and I'm--

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2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I just didn't
3 want one in the future to be just Mayor. Go
4 ahead.

5 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Oh, and I've,
6 and I am in fact appointed by the Council.

7 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yes.

8 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: And I'm the
9 Director of the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives, and
10 Professor of History at LaGuardia Community
11 College. Our archives has the public papers,
12 which are on microfilm, and many of the private
13 papers and photographs and oral history of all of
14 our mayors since Fiorello LaGuardia. And we are
15 also the archives for the City Council papers.
16 And we have worked closely with DORIS for many
17 years. In fact, I've dedicated most of my
18 professional life to the teaching and studying of
19 history of our City, with a focus on Queens. I'm
20 the author of a book on the history of the
21 Steinway Piano Company. I've worked with all the
22 commissioners and staff of DORIS since the glory
23 days Gene Bachman. I sadly have witnessed the
24 serious deterioration of DORIS over the past 30
25 years, from a staff of over 100 people to a staff

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2 of about 35. We're dealing with an agency in
3 serious, serious trouble, and it has all been
4 coming down, I would say in the last 15 years have
5 been tremendous deterioration of the staff and the
6 services and as you well know, the budget. I do
7 believe it's in the best interests of DORIS to
8 join a much more powerful agency, and I won't
9 repeat what's been said already. DORIS will
10 certainly reap the benefits of not only in the
11 battles for budget, but in the elimination of many
12 of the, of the administrative time that has been
13 mentioned already: the purchasing process, the
14 human resources issues, the IT development. I
15 know being part of CUNY that it has helped my
16 archive to have other people doing those services,
17 and one of the questions that Gale asked earlier
18 is that, "Will you increase the professional
19 staff?" And I thought the answer was perfect,
20 that if professional archivists do not have to get
21 involved in filling out forms to buy paperclips,
22 you've increased the time to do the job that we
23 were trained to do, and that's really what will
24 happen. And I applaud that. This is going to be
25 a, a merger that will enable DORIS to guard our

1 records and increase access to our City's history.
2 And that's what they're supposed to do. And
3 they're not supposed to be booking trucks and
4 filling out endlessly purchase forms and
5 negotiating, you know, contracts with the Mormons,
6 etc., that they're, they're doing now. So, I'd
7 like to make one suggestion, in terms of the
8 considerations that you're, that you, on the Intro
9 and the future law. We now have a totally digital
10 government. The typewriters are gone, everything
11 is digital, all the records are digital. At this
12 point, we must think and plan, and then put into
13 this intro, the preservation and indexing of all
14 important backup systems and hard drives
15 throughout City government. And I know, Gale,
16 you've done a lot of work in this area. We need
17 to define the relationship between DORIS and the
18 Department of Information Technology and
19 telecommunications, referred to earlier as DOITT.
20 Now, if this is done correctly, we can save money
21 now spent on labor intensive process of indexing,
22 and the enormous cost, which has already been
23 referred to, of climate controlled storage rooms.
24 So, my suggestion is let's use this moment of
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2 transition to create a seamless flow of digital
3 records, ensuring that our City's history is
4 online and available to everyone. Thank you very
5 much.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
7 much, and thank you for all of your service in
8 general. Who would like to go next? HJS?

9 HENRY STERN: This is fascinating
10 to me, and I came down here--

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Have to
12 introduce yourself.

13 HENRY STERN: Oh.

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You know, who
15 you are.

16 HENRY STERN: My name is Henry
17 Stern, I'm a former Member of the City Council,
18 from 1974 to 83. And I was with Paul - - a
19 cosponsor of the bill creating DORIS, which passed
20 in 1977. 34 years later, 34 years later, we're
21 back and unfortunately DORIS has never lived up to
22 the promise it had, has never been funded, has
23 been degraded, smashed, ignored, politicized,
24 practically every bad thing in City government has
25 happened to it, including neglect. And now it's

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2 proposed to put it out of its misery by submerging
3 it into a DGS, or whatever, DCAS or whatever it's
4 called now, a 2,000 employee agency with a billion
5 dollar budget, which cares as much about DCAS as
6 you do about a fly on the wall. Right. So, any--
7 now of course, there are all kinds of promises
8 that have been made here, and they're wonderful.
9 And I appreciate and I admire Commissioner Handy
10 for her, as far as I know her, and particularly
11 Eileen Flannelly who's been great over the years,
12 who's devoted her professional life to this. But
13 she of course is a, how shall we say it, she's in-
14 house, and certain people, you can say certain
15 things if you're in-house, and certain other
16 things when you're out of the house. And we
17 understand fully. If I were in your position,
18 that's just what I'd be saying. However, being,
19 having liberty to say what I think, it's
20 ridiculous. I mean [laughs] I can't think of
21 anything--this started as something in somebody's--
22 --"Hey, we can save, what, it'll look good to
23 eliminate a whole agency. That gives us a
24 savings, and that gives us efficiencies, and that
25 shows we're streamlining government." Well, if

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2 the agency has only 30 people and they're all
3 going to be retained, how are the efficiency, how
4 is this going to streamline government? If
5 they'll say yes, if they need a truck and now
6 they're more likely to say yes if they're the same
7 agency, you wouldn't be able to talk to them if
8 they're in the same agency, 'cause you have to
9 speak to your boss, and your boss would have to
10 speak to their boss and their boss. You do much
11 better as an independent agency, 'cause then at
12 least you have theoretical access to the
13 Commissioner, or to a Deputy Mayor, to resolve
14 problems. So this is, I mean, there's nothing
15 here about retention, there's nothing here about--
16 it's programmatic in nature. There's nothing here
17 indicating the slightest desire to increase and
18 expand. This is under the mantra of savings. And
19 what we say we'll save an, we'll save an agency,
20 we'll eliminate an agency, cheers. Well, did it
21 to DCAS, but what does DCAS do? They publish the
22 Green Book. When have you seen the last Green
23 Book? It's three years since it came out. Before
24 that it was another three years. DCAS can't even
25 do what the charter mandates it to do. Now

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2 they're going to take on the functions of an
3 additional agency? Without additional personnel?
4 I mean, it's ridiculous. This is an
5 administration which prides itself on transparency
6 and openness, and yet they haven't even published
7 a basic list of City employees. It's like a
8 telephone company stop putting out the phone book,
9 and hope that nobody would notice. So, should
10 DCAS be rewarded for its failure to perform the
11 elementary, basic informational function of
12 putting out a Green Book, by being placed in
13 charge of the Records and Information Services?
14 Not that there's much there to be put in charge
15 of. But any hope that we had under the leadership
16 of Paul O'Dwyer, who was wonderful on this. This
17 is his legislative monument. His other monument
18 was changing the date of the City seal from 1664
19 to 1625, which he did because of his Anglophobia.
20 And which is understandable, of course,
21 considering his background. And this was his
22 legislative contribution, however, and I know he's
23 from your district, and I'm sure you knew him in
24 days of yore. And because he wanted, and he
25 thought it was important. That's why they had an

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2 Archives Retention Board. The Retention Board,
3 which I was on, and which attended faithfully,
4 somehow stopped meeting and hasn't met in ten
5 years. So what's the remedy? To revive it? No,
6 to create another board, more tightly controlled
7 by City Hall. Not that it matters. And the Board
8 of fewer people, and less public responsibility.
9 It's ridiculous. The whole thing is off of
10 somebody idea of an organization chart. That if
11 we eliminate this box, we will have streamlined
12 government and therefore fulfilled our purpose and
13 mission. It has nothing to do with reality, it
14 has nothing to do with the level of service
15 provided. And indeed, it's, it has rightly
16 aroused the wrath of the archival community, the
17 records community, all those people who care about
18 City history. Because they know that the way to
19 increase attention to City history and records and
20 the past, and to make us aware of it, is not to
21 abolish the one agency that has that as its
22 mandate, and fold it up under a larger agency,
23 which has to do with rents and real properties and
24 concessions and business transactions, totally 99
25 percent of it will be totally unrelated to

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2 history. There's no rational way you can say that
3 enhances the study of history. So, I'm opposed to
4 this legislation. Not that there's not a lot to
5 be done, to improve DORIS and all the rest of it.
6 And I hope the Council takes an interest in a
7 positive way, of seeing to it that the records
8 requirements are statutory and are kept, and that
9 staffing levels are provided, and that commitments
10 are made which can be kept. But to--this is not
11 throwing the baby out with the bathwater, 'cause
12 they're not even throwing out any bathwater. It's
13 just throwing the baby out. Makes no sense.

14 [laughter]

15 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
16 much. [applause] Keep it down, keep it down.
17 Ms. Ward, or why don't you go next, and then we'll
18 do Ryan. Go ahead.

19 CHRISTINE WARD: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Introduce
21 yourself and thank you very much.

22 CHRISTINE WARD: Sure. Good
23 afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to
24 address this Committee.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Before you go

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2 on, I want to make sure that we know we've been
3 joined by Council Member Vincent Gentile, who is
4 the Chair of our Libraries Committee, and we're
5 delighted to have him here.

6 CHRISTINE WARD: Thank you. My
7 name is Christine Ward, I am the Assistant
8 Commissioner for Archives and Records in New York
9 State, and I'm also the New York State Archivist.
10 My organization, the New York State Archives,
11 manages the current and archival records of New
12 York State government, and we provide technical
13 assistance and grants to 4,400 local governments
14 and 3,000 historical records repositories around
15 the state. While the State Archives does not have
16 a direct responsibility for records and archives
17 in the City of New York, as we do for all of the
18 other local governments in New York State, we work
19 very closely with Department of Records in a
20 partnership to ensure that grant funds that flow
21 through the State Archives to the City, for
22 management of its records, are appropriately
23 distributed. And it perhaps goes without saying
24 that because of interconnected, complimentary or
25 related functions and programs, and effective

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2 management of New York City's records is of great
3 interest to State and other local governments in
4 New York. And also, because of the richness of
5 New York City's history and the records that
6 document that history, their wellbeing is of great
7 interest and concern to the citizens of the State,
8 and to all of those researchers and individuals
9 whose histories connect to this City. But my
10 purpose today is not to advise you on how to
11 organize the functions of City government, that is
12 clearly your prerogative and your responsibility.
13 Rather, my reason for accepting your invitation to
14 testify is to highlight the importance of insuring
15 that any reorganization or non-reorganization be
16 grounded in the precept that the City must have
17 strong and effective records management and
18 archival programs. And I urge you to take this
19 opportunity to ensure that the Department of
20 Records receive the regulatory, the administrative
21 and the financial authority and resources that it
22 needs, so that it can provide superior service to
23 manage, preserve and make available the
24 information created by New York City government.
25 Records management and archives are quiet,

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2 internal control functions. They go on behind the
3 scenes and they rarely result in major headlines
4 or heated debate; although, the headlines that can
5 ensue in a Freedom of Information Request is
6 lodged and you can't either find the records, or
7 worse still, they have been illegally destroyed.
8 That can be very disturbing and embarrassing. So,
9 effective management of current and archival
10 records created by City government is essential to
11 a number of things: one, to ensure government
12 transparency; to inform and support decision
13 making by City agencies and officials; to provide
14 documentation of government actions; to sustain
15 the civil and the property rights of citizens; to
16 provide cost effective control of City
17 information; and to protect the City's most
18 essential documentary resources from technological
19 obsolescence, as well as from natural and manmade
20 disasters. I respectfully ask that you consider
21 the following three challenges to local
22 government, and that you assure us, if you can,
23 that however the records function ends up being
24 organized in New York City, that the governing
25 agency will be charged with the responsibility to

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2 address all three of these. The first challenge
3 is to ensure that records management and archives
4 programs have the necessary statutory basis in law
5 and authority to carry out its functions. We know
6 that it's essential that City agencies will
7 follow, need to follow best practices and records
8 management, and that the management of City
9 records must be integrated into agency operations.
10 They cannot be exercised at the discretion of the
11 agency, which I can tell you at the Stat level
12 sometimes happens; or when the agency decides to
13 get around to it. Information is an invaluable
14 commodity and it's essential that City records be
15 complete and accurate, easily located when they're
16 needed, retained for an appropriate length of
17 time, or destroyed when they've served their
18 purpose, that whole space issue is a big one for
19 all of us. And also for those few that have long
20 term value, that they be deposited in a
21 professionally run archives for permanent
22 retention. The Department of Records can and
23 should provide agencies with guidance on this and
24 agencies should be required to follow that advice.
25 Now this all leads to the second challenge, and

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2 it's a big one, that of managing the exponentially
3 increasing volume of government information being
4 created electronically, and that's a problem that
5 faces not only New York City, but the entire
6 nation. Our collective challenge here is to
7 ensure that records are created in nonproprietary
8 or open systems, and migrated over time to new
9 software versions, formats and architectures.
10 Also, that records continue to be accessible, and
11 as needed, will be available as needed over time.
12 That electronic records information is secure and
13 protected, and that those systems that create and
14 maintain records are cost effective, non-
15 duplicative and result in usable and accessible
16 information. And if you don't make sure the
17 Department of Records has the expertise and the
18 resources to engage in dealing with this problem,
19 New York City will face the possibility of a
20 digital dark age. And I've said this to the
21 legislature of the State of New York, as well. It
22 is an incredibly important function. The third
23 challenge, I would say, and like to draw your
24 attention to, is the critical need to ensure that
25 the permanently valuable records of the City are

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2 properly preserved and made available for use by
3 City government, by the citizens of the City, and
4 by people around the country and the world. The
5 heritage and historical status of New York City is
6 unlike that of any other city in America. New
7 York was the cradle of so many historical events,
8 actions and decisions. And I I'm not going to
9 lecture you on the key role that New York City has
10 played in our history of New York State and of the
11 nation. You know that list. But the
12 documentation of many of these events and people
13 resides in the records that are created by City
14 government. And they must be preserved and
15 accessible for research. It's essential that now
16 and in the future, the Department of Records have
17 the appropriate physical facilities to protect and
18 preserve these records, by credentialed
19 professional staff, who would be there to manage
20 them. And also, that that staff have the ability
21 to certify the integrity of those records and the
22 authenticity of those records, including their
23 provenance and the whole issue of unbroken legal
24 chain of custody which is critical, and their
25 original order. Very exacting standards for

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2 environmental control and storage, as well as for
3 preparation and oversight of use are required to
4 do this correctly. So, I'm going to cut this a
5 little bit short, I've given you the document and
6 you can read that yourselves. But I would just
7 say that my purpose in testifying before you today
8 really is to underscore the significance of your
9 City's records management and archival function.
10 And the need to ensure that in whatever part of
11 City government it ends up being located, the
12 function is both valued and supported. And that
13 there is credible and authoritative voice that's
14 speaking on behalf of archives and records. The
15 Department of Records deserves and indeed must
16 have a fierce advocate for its role in City
17 government. It sounds as if this Committee is
18 taking that stand right now. It must ensure that
19 the City's records are effectively managed,
20 protected and made available for the benefit of
21 New York City and its citizens. I would say that
22 to do less would betray the faith of past
23 generations of New Yorkers and compromise the
24 future of a City whose efficient and cost
25 effective management and operation depends upon

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2 the continuing integrity, authenticity and
3 accessibility of its own information. Thank you
4 so much for giving me the opportunity to talk with
5 you today.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
7 much. I appreciate it. [applause] Next, Mr.
8 Anderson.

9 BRIAN ANDERSSON: Good afternoon
10 and thank you for your invitation to appear at
11 your hearing today.

12 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

13 BRIAN ANDERSSON: I want to thank
14 everyone in the room, this is a great turnout. I
15 wish the turnout was just as good on the Council
16 side, but we lost somebody already. I won't start
17 that. But anyway, I'm Brian Andersson. I like
18 history, I don't wish to make history, to be the
19 last Commissioner of New York City's Department of
20 Records as a standalone agency. I've served in
21 that capacity from January 2002 through August
22 2010, almost nine years, having been appointed to
23 that position by Mayor Bloomberg. I have served
24 as an Assistant Commissioner since 1999. My
25 position was eliminated in preparation for this

1 merger. I come today to express my deep dismay
2 that the agencies in the process of being merged
3 back into the much specialized mega-agency known
4 as DCAS. Astonishingly, it's the very same agency
5 from which we were born in 1977. Its birth was a
6 deliberate act by visionaries within City
7 government. It was enacted into law with a
8 specific view that the historic heritage and
9 valuable documentation of New York City could no
10 longer treated as it had been. NEGLECT is the key
11 word here. You need only search the key words:
12 municipal archives in the New York Times online
13 archives to find a few hundred articles that
14 detail the appalling state of affairs as it
15 related to how this great City's valuable records
16 were treated prior to the creation of this agency.
17 New York City was the first capital of the United
18 States. Almost half this country's population can
19 trace an ancestor that immigrated to American
20 through our City and its port. We lead the nation
21 in so many ways that we can simply not afford to
22 turn the clock back on how our archives will be
23 looked after. And be assured, this is a step
24 backwards. We were on the right path. In the
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2 last several years, with very little in the way of
3 resources or funding, and a much diminished staff,
4 we managed to significantly raise the public
5 profile of the Department. Historians, authors,
6 moviemakers, lawyers, architects, family
7 historians, have all utilized our archives and
8 library. We supplied the historic material for
9 many of NYC TV's programs. We naturally became
10 the repository for the relics of 9/11. Family
11 mementos were retrieved yearly from the attack
12 site by our dedicated staff in the late hours
13 after the public ceremony, and are now
14 safeguarded. The tattered flag that opens each
15 year's ceremony is entrusted to our care. Our tax
16 photo collection of New York City's buildings and
17 homes photographed in 1939 and again in the mid-
18 1980s is a runaway bestseller. The NBC hit, "Who
19 Do You Think You Are?" has traced several
20 celebrities' records here, and have filmed here.
21 And while we can't help the President with his
22 issue, which I heard was resolved, will most
23 likely have your grandparents' birth records if
24 they were born here, or mostly anyone before 1910.
25 Interested in really ancient history, like the

1
2 Board of Estimate hearings? We got 'em, in City
3 Hall Library which we run, for now. When the
4 Mayor solicited public proposals for the memorial
5 at the World Trade Center site, our agency
6 received them, organized them and stored them.
7 For those of who have not had a tour of our
8 facility at the beautiful Hall of Records,
9 Surrogates Court Building, I implore you to do so.
10 When Mayor Giuliani left office, and proposed to
11 privately process his administration's papers, it
12 was precisely because of the historic underfunding
13 of the agency. Promises were made, plans were
14 drawn up to build a much needed storage facility,
15 to consolidate our current deplorable storage
16 facilities, for which we currently pay rent. It
17 was never funded. Instead of partnering with an
18 online genealogical giant to digitize our
19 extremely popular vital records collections, OMB
20 promised us a million dollars in funding, so we
21 could do it ourselves; never happened. Our
22 services in the records management field have
23 helped many agencies clear out usable office
24 space, file cabinets, and helped them manage their
25 record flow and retention schedules. We provide

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2 an essential service that private companies charge
3 a fortune for. Instead of being merged away, we
4 should've been held out as the Little Engine That
5 Could, the example of doing more with less, that's
6 all we ever knew. When Cultural Affairs moved
7 into 31 Chambers a few years ago, there was some
8 talk that we could share some of our operating
9 costs and support staff functions. It never moved
10 forward. But it did show that a merger isn't
11 necessary to reduce costs. During a previous
12 attempt to merge records into DCAS, then DGS, in
13 1995, Crane's New York Business pointed out that
14 at that time, no real savings could be
15 demonstrated. In that article, one archivist
16 pointed out that records would become "the poor
17 and dowdy stepsister." The current attempt should
18 be rejected for the same reasons. I am just
19 fearful of the same agency that orders paperclips,
20 copier toner and snow tires for your City car,
21 will now oversee the City's historic legacy.
22 Sadly, the Department of Records was the low
23 hanging fruit in this well-intentioned but
24 seriously misguided attempt at cost savings.
25 Thanks for your time.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
3 much. Mr. Lieberman, can you, you do a great job
4 at the LaGuardia Wagner Archives. And can you
5 just share with us some of the ways in which you
6 have the relationship with the Municipal Archives.
7 And I know you suggested, and I take it to heart,
8 some of the digitizing technology challenges and
9 ways to address them. But are there other ways in
10 which a municipal archive, no matter where it's
11 housed, could be improved. 'Cause obviously I
12 think you've done a lot of those improvements at
13 LaGuardia. You've really set the bar very high.

14 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Thank you very
15 much. The bar is high and our accomplishments are
16 high, and because of the staff at DORIS. I mean,
17 there's no trick in this business, and there's no
18 magic. It has to do with the talent of who's
19 doing the work. And the person that has not been
20 mentioned is Leonora Gidlund who's sitting right
21 over there, who really deserves a tremendous round
22 of applause, who's really done--

23 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yes, she--
24 people love her. [applause]

25 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Well, you

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should love her. [laughs]

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Love her.

RICHARD LIEBERMAN: I mean, she has been, you know, we used to say in Brooklyn, our best reliever. She is there and she is doing all the work, and obviously Ken, you know, who's been there for a long time, and Eileen's doing a fabulous job. But the reason why we look so good is really because of the staff at DORIS. We've worked closely for 30 years, we've done it both ways, we've moved collections to our site and processed and indexed them there. We've sent staff to their site. We're currently working on a project together. Correct me when I'm wrong, I think it's 300,000 negatives that we're going through from the Koch Administration. Many of them of Henry Stern. And we've picking out [laughter]--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Make sure you do those first.

RICHARD LIEBERMAN: [laughter]
We're picking out the best of that collection.
We're, I think we're at a one percent save rate.
And they're going right onto the computer and

1
2 right up on the website. And former Mayor Koch is
3 quite delighted with this project because I bring
4 the photos to him, he, we do an oral history
5 project with the photos. And so when you click on
6 the photo, you can read snips of the oral history.
7 So, I would summarize, and - - saying that there's
8 no magic in archives, there's no magic in anything
9 we do. It's a lot of work, it's intensive work,
10 with talented staff. And I think what everybody
11 is saying here is that we have a gem of a treasure
12 trove of the City's history, and it needs the kind
13 of staff, more of the staff that it has, but what
14 I said earlier, the staff that it has now should
15 be freed up to do their work. And that's really
16 important. That's one of the reasons I look good
17 is because we have lawyers at CUNY, and we have
18 all of those people do the purchasing, and I don't
19 have to do that.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I think
21 that. Ms. Ward, how is the New York State
22 Archives, who is it structured? Obviously you're
23 doing--

24 CHRISTINE WARD: Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You're being

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very diplomatic today--

CHRISTINE WARD: [laughs]

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --because you can see there's a lot of back and forth. But how are the State Archives structured?

CHRISTINE WARD: Well, we are actually part of a larger organization, as well. We are part of the New York State Education Department. And I guess to, to provide the parallel here, we do have the benefit of counsel, of purchase, and of all of those administrative-- HR of course is a big one--activities that are done for us, and we do not have to hire people to do those things, which is good because we cannot hire anymore. So, so that is an issue, certainly, that, that I can, I can speak to. There was a possibility at one point, under the Pataki Administration, to pull us and others out and make us a gubernatorial organization, it was going to be an organization that encompassed the State Museum, the State Library and the State Archives, which is part of cultural education under the State Ed Department now. That did not happen. And I guess from a personal point of view, I'm

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2 pleased that it did not happen because I think
3 that with government reorganization, as it's
4 occurring now, we probably would no longer exist
5 as a separate organization. And I did not come to
6 speak on behalf of reorganization--

7 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: No, I
8 understand.

9 CHRISTINE WARD: --or not, but I
10 will say again from our experience, as part of the
11 State Education Department, we are buffered.

12 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And what are
13 you separate from in terms of the State Department
14 Education website? Professional space? What are
15 some of the ways in which people know? 'Cause
16 people, you--

17 CHRISTINE WARD: Yeah, we have--mm-
18 hmm--

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --people know
20 you, I'm just saying as a New York State Archive--

21 CHRISTINE WARD: Correct. We have
22 our own website.

23 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

24 CHRISTINE WARD: And if you Google
25 New York State Archives--

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CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yeah, that--

CHRISTINE WARD: --you'll get us.

I will say we had a little bit of a tussle with our IT people who are State Ed IT, because they didn't initially understand the requirements of cultural organizations, versus the requirements of a bureaucratic organization. So initially we had to explain to them why we needed to, to have access to social networking sites, which the rest of the State Education Department does not. Once we got over that barrier, however, things opened up quite a bit, and we are able to function quite well. So, you know, it's two-sided. There are issues when you're part of a big organization. And you do have to deal with those. But primarily, I guess I would say that for us, it works well.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And how does that help? I know Mr. Lieberman was talking and he's so correct in terms of some of the technology issues. How are you addressing those with agencies, because we're all facing the same dilemma.

CHRISTINE WARD: [laughs] Yes.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And so how are
3 you able to deal with those as, either as the
4 Archives or just trying to get cooperation.

5 CHRISTINE WARD: Yes. Well, again,
6 that actually is an issue that we deal with as the
7 Archives. We do not, the State Education
8 Department has no function that relates to records
9 management. So there's a difference there between
10 what's going on in New York and what we do. But
11 we, we do have responsibility for records
12 management, including electronic records in New
13 York State and, and we have authority to make sure
14 that New York State agencies follow all records
15 management precepts with regard to electronic
16 records. Frankly, we work more closely with the
17 Office for Technology and the State CIO, in a
18 partnership kind of a way, on that issue, than we
19 do with the rest of State Ed. So.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Mr.
21 Andersson, just in terms of some of the ways in
22 which you think. I know you were concerned about
23 the past and able to deal with getting more
24 funding and so on. Do you think there is a role
25 for a shared, as has sort of become the model

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2 right now, whether there's a sort of a shared
3 service model taking place between DCAS and DORIS,
4 do you think something like that could continue
5 and enable DORIS to function as an independent
6 agency at the same time? We're all trying to
7 think of how to--everybody's goal is the same, the
8 question is how do you get there?

9 BRIAN ANDERSSON: I think that the
10 shared services could work. At the same time, you
11 know, I'm confident of this team. I mean, Eileen
12 and Ken and Leonora and everybody were my staff,
13 they were fabulous. And going forward, they'll be
14 there. But again, you express the same interest
15 that in two-and-a-half years we don't know what
16 the situation will be. We don't know who's going
17 to be heading DCAS, if they're still going to call
18 it that. So as an independent agency, again, as a
19 Commissioner, I could always talk directly to
20 another Commissioner, and get something done. It
21 was increasingly difficult because we were the,
22 again the poor and dowdy stepsister. But it was
23 hard to get things done from where we were. So,
24 anything, I think, that can help the Department of
25 Records as a standalone agency, get things done,

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2 it's just a matter of will and it's a question of
3 resources. I mean, Richard you got a great
4 operation, but he's got some resources coming in,
5 too. And it was always a question of that.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Mr. Lieberman,
7 can you just comment a little bit more, and I so
8 appreciate your digitizing technology input, about
9 how you think that should work in the future. I
10 know the State's probably--we're all facing the
11 same challenges.

12 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Well, I think
13 we have to meet, we've talked about this, in fact.
14 We have to start talking to each other. We have
15 to start meeting with each other. I mean, the
16 people of DOITT and the, and the staff at DORIS.
17 And we've been, we've been talking about this
18 recently. We have to get together and start
19 figuring out what are the systems they have, what
20 are the, how are they indexed. You know, what's
21 the flow into the Archives? What's private?
22 What's public? I mean, that's the beginning
23 stages of--I mean, Eileen said it quite--I mean,
24 she was, you know, articulate about it. You know,
25 it's, it's talking to each other and figuring out

1
2 together what you have and how we're going to make
3 this work. It doesn't happen by memos or emails.
4 It really doesn't, this stuff is very--well, you
5 know, I mean you headed that area. This is very
6 complicated stuff. And in addition, you're
7 working with people who went into a field who were
8 more interested in science than English, I'll put
9 it, I'll put it that way. And so what I have
10 found with, with the IT people at CUNY is that you
11 really have to sit with them. Because when they
12 write you an email, you don't understand a word
13 they're saying. [laughter]

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Mm-hmm, thank
15 you very much. I think you probably do, but I
16 appreciate that. [laughter] Henry, do you want
17 to add anything to that, in terms of the future?

18 HENRY STERN: Yes, I was going to
19 ask how much, how many people you had,
20 Commissioner Ward, in your agency, to perform
21 these functions on a State level?

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: He thinks he's
23 a Council Member still.

24 HENRY STERN: You're right.
25 [laughter]

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CHAIRPERSON BREWER: How many people do you have in your agency?

HENRY STERN: Yes.

CHRISTINE WARD: I have, I have 70.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Can you just speak into the microphone so we know. You have 70 people.

CHRISTINE WARD: I have 70 people.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And Henry, go ahead, next question.

HENRY STERN: Yes. [laughter] I'm not going to expect--I have no, let me just respond. First, I have no problem with shared services. Whatever is efficient and whatever, and the people are great. There also seems to be no, there's no conflict here between the employees or the agencies. There's no, everyone likes everyone else, and respects the job, the heroic job, that the people have done in the face of - -

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [interposing] They are heroic at DORIS.

HENRY STERN: Yeah, there's no, there's no, when I--DCAS has a problem with the Green Book, but these guys are fine. Now, this is

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2 what I want to say. What is needed, the core
3 thing that's needed, is an indepen--is a
4 Commissioner, a Mayoral appointee, who has the
5 authority to reach other Commissioners, work with
6 the Deputy Mayor, and relay to other agencies on
7 that level, on a Commissioner level, not as a
8 Deputy somewhere down the line. And second, you
9 need an independent advisory board.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Mm-hmm.

11 HENRY STERN: The old advisory
12 board was independent. This new one appointed by
13 many people, this new one's a captive advisory
14 board, consisting of retainers and employees.

15 RICHARD LIEBERMAN: Oy, that's me!

16 [laughter]

17 HENRY STERN: Well, you've been
18 retained, and it's a wonderful thing, I agree.

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: By the
20 Council, he's pointing out. Keep going, you're
21 right, Henry, though.

22 HENRY STERN: Yeah, - - there, but-

23 -

24 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You need some
25 more consumer on it, too, yes, I agree.

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2 HENRY STERN: That's, that's right,
3 and maybe the State Archivist.

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Does the State
5 have an advisory board? And who's on that? Could
6 I ask that question, Henry?

7 HENRY STERN: Sure!

8 CHRISTINE WARD: Yes, we have three
9 advisory boards.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You have three
11 advisory boards, tell me about them.

12 CHRISTINE WARD: We, we have an
13 advisory board that is the Archival Services
14 Advisory Board, which consist of users, primarily
15 users, of the State Archives.

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And how often
17 do they, how often do they meet?

18 CHRISTINE WARD: They meet about
19 three times a year. And then we have the Local
20 Government Records Management Advisory Board.
21 Eileen sits on that, Brian used to sit on that.
22 And that advi--that Board advises us specifically
23 on our services to local governments around the
24 State.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm sure you

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talk about technology there, a lot, yes?

CHRISTINE WARD: Absolutely, all the time. And then our third advisory board is the State Historical Records Advisory Board, or SRAB, ever state has one. And they advise us on our services to historical records repositories around the State. So, it just, focusing on the different functions that we have.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And they've all been, all been meeting, whenever they're supposed to meet.

CHRISTINE WARD: Yes, yeah, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Unlike ours.

CHRISTINE WARD: LGRAB, the Local Government Board, meets four times a year, that's statutorily required. The SRAB meets I think four times a year, sometimes three. And then we do also have a less obvious one, but we meet with the records management officials in state agencies, and we meet with them probably about two times a year, bringing them together most for training and discussion of common issues. So.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. So, I want to thank the entire panel for your input and

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2 it was really, really helpful. And we're going to
3 call the next panel. But I thank you very, very
4 much. Thank you.

5 CHRISTINE WARD: Thank you for
6 having us.

7 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: The Borough
8 Historian of The Bronx, Lloyd Ultan; Rachel
9 Chatalbash, who is with the Archives Roundtable,
10 and who's been extremely helpful; Lucinda Manning;
11 Gertrude Hutchinson; and Brian Keough. And we'll
12 add some more chairs to the panelist table.

13 [pause, background noise] Can the Sergeant help
14 with more chairs, if they need them? [pause,
15 background noise] Thank you all very much. Who
16 would like to begin? How about the Borough
17 Historian from The Bronx? Thank you.

18 LLOYD ULTAN: Thank you. My name
19 is Lloyd Ultan, I am The Bronx Borough Historian.
20 Borough Historians are appointed public officials
21 empowered by New York State Law to make
22 recommendations to promote the establishment and
23 improvement of programs to manage and preserve
24 government and historical records. That is the
25 purpose of my testimony here. My first

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2 inclination is to recommend against the transfer
3 of functions of DORIS to the Department of
4 Administrative Services. The work performed by
5 DORIS and the functions of its personnel are so
6 specialized and so unique, that it appears beyond
7 the ability of the persons in charge and the usual
8 personnel of the Department of Administrative
9 Services, to adequately deal with them. The
10 temptation will always exist to financially starve
11 the functions currently performed by DORIS to pay
12 for the operations they already know how to
13 perform and with which they are more comfortable.
14 Nevertheless, we are told that the merger of these
15 two agencies will save money vitally needed in
16 these fiscally perilous times. Thus if the merger
17 is to occur, steps must be taken by including in
18 the bill affecting the merger provisions assuring
19 that the unique functions of DORIS continue at its
20 high professional level, and that they are
21 adequately funded. To make sure that this
22 happens, as Borough Historian I recommend one,
23 that the merged agency be required to hire only
24 archivists, records managers and librarians who
25 hold academic degrees and have experience in their

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2 respective fields. The same requirement should be
3 specified for all other specialized personnel,
4 such as conservators and catalogers. Two, that it
5 be required that the holdings of the Municipal
6 Archives, Records and Library be stored only in
7 facilities that are fireproof, and climate
8 controlled, and in a manner consistent with
9 professionally accepted national preservation
10 standards. Three, that the bill require that all
11 future appropriations for the merged department
12 set aside a fixed percentage of its total to be
13 used for the operations of the Municipal Archives,
14 Records and Library. This percentage figure must
15 be in the bill itself. The percentage number
16 should be established by adding the total
17 appropriations for DORIS, for all the years from
18 2006 and 2011, with a total appropriations for the
19 Department of Administrative Services for the same
20 years, and calculating what percentage of the
21 combined total went to DORIS. That is the
22 percentage number that should be specified in the
23 bill. I believe that these recommendations, if
24 followed, will preserve and enhance the operations
25 of DORIS under the merged agency. It will also

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2 ensure that any verbal promises or commitments in
3 letters, will not be forgotten over the years, as
4 new administrators who would not be aware of these
5 commitments replace those currently in charge. In
6 this way we can be assured that the heritage of
7 our past will be passed on to future generations,
8 and that the legacy that you Council Members add
9 to that heritage will continue through the
10 centuries. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
12 much. Who would like to go next?

13 RACHEL CHATALBASH: My name is
14 Rachel Chatalbash, I'm President of the Archivist
15 Roundtable of Metropolitan New York. And I would
16 like to thank City Council for the opportunity to
17 submit testimony on this subject. I'd like to
18 outline our primary concerns regarding the
19 proposed legislation at this time. First, records
20 agencies working as independent units have
21 provided better services than records agencies
22 working as part of larger, less specialized
23 departments. This has been proven through DORIS's
24 own history. For example, DORIS did not flourish
25 under the Municipal Services Administration where

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2 it was placed by Mayor Lindsay in 1969. This
3 agency had priorities other than the support and
4 care of City records, such as maintaining
5 facilities and providing offices with supplies and
6 equipment. It was not until 1977 that DORIS
7 became a standalone agency, and its archives and
8 records management divisions began to expand and
9 function more effectively. In 1995, under
10 Giuliani's Administration, a proposal was put
11 forth to merge DORIS in the Department of General
12 Services. But was rejected by City Council
13 because the City's Administration was unable to
14 identify what kind of cost savings the mergers
15 would produce. To merge DORIS into an agency
16 devoted to services, such as facilities and real
17 estate, is a mistake, and one that has been
18 recognized and rectified on DORIS's behalf before.
19 To merge DORIS into the Department of Citywide
20 Administrative Services would be to ignore the
21 lessons demonstrated by history. The question of
22 whether a records department should be a
23 standalone agency or put under a larger umbrella
24 is not unique to the current debate. The National
25 Archives and Records Administration flourished

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2 only after it was made independent from the U.S.
3 General Services Administration in 1985. Until
4 the introduction of the National Archives and
5 Records Administration Act, which secured the
6 National Archives' independence, the National
7 Archives was unable to make its case for the
8 skilled personnel and the resources it needed due
9 to lack of access to the Office of Management and
10 Budget or Congress, and was particularly
11 vulnerable to the political whims of each incoming
12 administration. Congress provided the National
13 Archives its independence to protect the agency
14 from continued neglect. The federal government's
15 support of the National Archives as an independent
16 records agency should set an example for records
17 agencies across the country. The second key issue
18 for consideration is that archivist and records
19 managers are skilled professionals with
20 specialized knowledge, education and training in
21 the evaluation of records, and the retention of
22 materials with historical importance. By merging
23 with a much larger and less specialized agency,
24 their unique skills and knowledge become devalued.
25 DORIS archivists are professionals with the

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2 knowledge to appraise, process, preserve and
3 provide access to City records. In the past,
4 DORIS has met professional standards, and if
5 allowed, will continue to do so in the future.
6 Last and perhaps most importantly, the proposed
7 legislation includes no provisions for DORIS's
8 future, and no long term protection. DORIS's
9 future as the City's archives and records
10 management agency needs to be protected in the
11 proposed legislation. If DORIS is unable to
12 remain a distinct agency, and is merged into DCAS,
13 it would need to be guaranteed autonomy within
14 DCAS. Without the guarantee of autonomy, once
15 subsumed into a larger, less specialized
16 department, the potential for DORIS to be denied
17 an active role in the management of its budget,
18 personnel and records, is too great a risk. I
19 would like to remind the Council that in February
20 of 2002, City Council heard testimony from
21 archivists, historians, legal experts and others,
22 who protested the control of former Mayor
23 Giuliani's official papers by a private archives
24 facility. At this hearing, the Archivist
25 Roundtable called for full funding of DORIS as the

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2 best solution to the questions raised by the
3 Giuliani records issue. DORIS did not in fact
4 receive increased funding, but rather its budget
5 has remained relatively flat and its staff has
6 been cut dramatically. DORIS had 55 employees in
7 2001, which represents a reduction of nearly half
8 from 1991, and has approximately 35 employees at
9 the present. As a result, the Department's
10 ability to serve the City of New York is
11 compromised. This proposed merger has been
12 presented to us as one that would provide DORIS
13 with the resources and the services it is unable
14 to access on its own. However, we must remember
15 that it has been the City and the Mayor who have
16 reduced DORIS's funding, and who now offer a
17 solution that puts our City's history and our
18 intellectual and cultural heritage at even greater
19 risk. It is an incomplete solution to a problem
20 created by this and past mayoral administrations
21 in the first place. There is no assurance that
22 DORIS as part of DCAS would have the staff,
23 funding or mandate to fulfill its vital role. The
24 Archivists Roundtable of Metropolitan New York
25 urges you to keep DORIS as an autonomous records

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2 agency. DORIS must have its interests and
3 essential functions protected so that the value
4 and accessibility of its records will be a part of
5 the future of this City. The legislation that is
6 currently under consideration is therefore far
7 reaching in its impact, as it determines how our
8 historical and cultural legacy will be documented
9 and how access to these public records will be
10 maintained. These issues are critical to
11 transparency in government and to the continued
12 function of a democratic society. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
14 much. And thank you for all your support and
15 involvement. Next.

16 LUCINDA MANNING: Yes, I'd like to
17 go next.

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Great.

19 LUCINDA MANNING: Hi, my name is
20 Lucinda Manning. And I am a professional
21 librarian, archivist and records manager, and I've
22 worked here in the City for almost 30 years. I
23 moved here in 1983. I've worked in historical
24 societies, I've worked in college and university
25 archives, and I feel that I'm really qualified to

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2 analyze what the recommendation is here. So first
3 of all, preserving public records, city records
4 belong to the people. Over recent decades, the
5 New York City Municipal Archives, DORIS, has been
6 victimized by deplorable budget cuts that have
7 crippled its legal mandate to appraise, protect
8 and provide essential access to the City's public
9 records in perpetuity. The City of New York has a
10 legal responsibility to protect its citizens'
11 rights. For example in regard to voting, property
12 ownership, original wills, birth, marriage and
13 death records, and various other kinds of
14 irreplaceable public records. This legal
15 responsibility of the City's government, to
16 preserve public records and provide access to
17 them, requires a sufficient number of trained
18 professional necessary records processing space,
19 adequate storage space to preserve records safely
20 and securely, and enough funding to carry out a
21 citywide records program. The City's lack of full
22 support for DORIS's legal mandate to preserve
23 public records represents a breach of trust as
24 well as a false economy. The City of New York is
25 not saving any money by providing such a low level

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2 of current support for DORIS, because it can't
3 accomplish it's legal mandate to appraise City
4 records; to protect all of its historical records,
5 whether paper or electronic; to discard useless
6 records; and to provide the necessary access to
7 public records. Instead, the City is spending
8 more taxpayer dollars on overwhelming DORIS staff
9 that are spending more time trying to locate
10 unorganized and inaccessible records, and it's
11 spending money to store costly records that could
12 be discarded once they have been properly
13 evaluated by staff. In view of all of this, it is
14 remarkable that the City is not proposing to
15 increase DORIS's staff and funding, to enable it
16 to actually accomplish its legal mandate regarding
17 the City's public records; but instead, it is
18 proposing that DORIS will be able to carry out its
19 responsibilities as a small cog inside of a much
20 larger agency, once again. In 1977, DORIS was
21 created by Local Law 49, as individuals have
22 mentioned earlier, which added a new Chapter 72 to
23 the Charter of the City of New York. And it
24 enabled DORIS to leave the gigantic Municipal
25 Services Administration and act as an independent

1 agency again. The change at that time
2 consolidated the New York City Municipal Archives,
3 the City Hall Library, Grant Administration Unit
4 and the Municipal Records Management Division into
5 an likeminded agency for records and information
6 services. DORIS was increasingly successful after
7 1977, as the City recovered in those years. But
8 the gains were lost in later recessions and
9 cutbacks. Over the past few decades, the City
10 government continually stripped DORIS of the staff
11 and resources it needed to keep up with a growing
12 and more complicated citywide public records
13 program. The City of New York did not step up to
14 provide its legally mandated records agency with
15 the full resources that it needed to do its job.
16 Ironically, the primary argument for creating
17 DORIS in Mayor John Lindsay's Administration
18 during the '70s fiscal crisis, was of course to
19 save money. Today, the same argument is used by
20 some in the Administration to argue for DORIS
21 losing its independence. In point of fact, there
22 were no real cost savings realized in 1977,
23 because DORIS was far too small for there to be
24 any. And there will be no real cost savings today
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1
2 if DORIS's charter is changed, because DORIS is
3 again far too small to realize any savings, and it
4 is already cut to the bone. In the comprehensive
5 annual financial report of the City Comptroller,
6 for Fiscal Year 2010, DORIS's total budget is
7 listed at \$1,236,410. So, earlier we heard that
8 it was \$5 million, but I haven't been able to find
9 that anywhere. And this is compared to DCAS, the
10 Department of Citywide Administrative Services
11 budget, which his \$349,546,721. So DORIS will be
12 completely dwarfed by DCAS, no savings will be
13 realized, and its mission critical to manage and
14 preserve the City's records will be seriously
15 compromised by lowered staff morale and further
16 unsustainable cuts.

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I just want to
18 say, if you don't mind summing up, because we have
19 the testimony, so if you don't mind summing up.

20 LUCINDA MANNING: I know, I know.
21 I think this is really important though, to read
22 into the record, and for everyone to hear, so I'll
23 speak a little bit faster.

24 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: No, but I'm
25 saying, I don't want to hear the whole history

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'cause we do have a time constraint, so--

LUCINDA MANNING: Okay, but the early history throughout the 20th Century was a triumph over the City's early neglect and ongoing neglect and it was a miracle of survival against all odds.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, we know that, though. I'm just saying, I, I appreciate what you're saying, and you could hear the concern in my voice. So--

LUCINDA MANNING: [laughs]

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --if you could just summarize, that would be great.

LUCINDA MANNING: Well, for the first hour we heard people speaking--

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: 'Cause the Administration always speaks first. So just try to summarize, if you can.

LUCINDA MANNING: I know. I know. Barry Seaver [phonetic], who worked previously for the Municipal Archives, has extensively researched the beginnings of the New York City Municipal Archives in 1914. And he outlines the growth evolution and the official designation of the New

1
2 York City Municipal Archives records on June 30,
3 1952, and this was largely due to the persistence
4 and the relentless campaign of one determined New
5 York City public official, Rebecca Rankin, for the
6 founding of professional independent archives and
7 records agency for New York City. So originally
8 established in 1914 to help educate the City's
9 electorate and improve the decision making of
10 public officials, the municipal reference library,
11 unlike others created after the progressive era,
12 expanded its mission to include recordkeeping and
13 archival responsibility.

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You really do
15 need to sum up, though, try to sum up, see if you-
16 -really, please, 'cause of the time, we have got
17 more people who want to testify. Okay? If we
18 have+--all of your material goes into the record.

19 LUCINDA MANNING: I know, but I
20 think it's important for people to hear this. And
21 I'll be very fast.

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Please
23 summarize, I'm asking you please, okay.

24 LUCINDA MANNING: I know, I will, I
25 will. Encountering indifference from City

1 officials, Rebecca Rankin used her understanding
2 of government operations, politics and public
3 relations to convince these leaders of the need
4 for municipal archives to preserve historic
5 documents and the need for a system to manage and
6 provide access to Departmental records. So in
7 doing this, Rebecca Rankin furthered the
8 development of the archival profession in the
9 first half of the 20th Century. She worked as the
10 Director of the Municipal Reference Library from
11 1920 to '52, 32 years; she worked with Mayor
12 LaGuardia throughout his three terms, and she
13 completed the transformation of the local
14 government begun during the progressive era, from
15 one based on partisan political considerations,
16 including Tammany Hall political machine, to a
17 more rational, expert oriented administration. As
18 part of this process, she convinced Mayor
19 LaGuardia and his successor, William O'Dwyer, to
20 establish and archives as a division of the
21 Municipal Reference Library. And clearly,
22 although her primary goal was the preservation of
23 historic documents, for practical and political
24 reasons she developed a records management program
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1
2 that further rationalized the administration of
3 the local government by systematizing the
4 retention and disposal of records.

5 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I'm
6 going to ask you to summarize and to finalize.

7 LUCINDA MANNING: So she was in--

8 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.

9 LUCINDA MANNING: So she developed-

10 -

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, but--

12 LUCINDA MANNING: --an independent
13 branch in 1952, and independent branch - -

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, we've,
15 we have that, can you summarize and just go to the
16 conclusion, if you like, or go to the next
17 speaker.

18 LUCINDA MANNING: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We really do
20 need to--

21 LUCINDA MANNING: I'm going down--

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --move along.

23 LUCINDA MANNING: --third paragraph
24 here. For the major part of its existence, the
25 New York City Municipal Archives and Record Center

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2 has maintained its professional autonomy as an
3 independent City agency. In Glen Cullen's
4 [phonetic] City History rewritten from municipal
5 archives, he outlines the serendipitous and
6 improbably survival of many of the City's records
7 over the decades, often despite the City's
8 inaction, lack of adequate funding and
9 carelessness with its records. Of all the
10 remarkable things about New York City Municipal
11 Archives, the most extraordinary by far is its
12 very survival.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
14 much. Okay--

15 LUCINDA MANNING: Instead, I urge
16 you today--

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Ma'am, you
18 need to stop. Ma'am, you need to stop. We are,
19 we're really over time. Please, we will have--

20 LUCINDA MANNING: Can I just
21 summarize.

22 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You--that's--

23 LUCINDA MANNING: I just want to
24 say one more sentence, that I urge--

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: One more

1 sentence, okay, one more sentence.

2
3 LUCINDA MANNING: I urge that you
4 today as City Council Members, and with the help
5 of the City's Mayor and Administration, begin to
6 take full financial responsibility for DORIS's
7 public records mandate. There are many options,
8 including increasing City revenues from agency
9 chargebacks for records management, and one of
10 your most important and fundamental obligations as
11 public officials is the sacred duty to preserve
12 and provide access to the City's public records.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

14 LUCINDA MANNING: To document New
15 York City's - -

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Ma'am, you
17 really need to stop. Thank you so much. I really
18 appreciate it. Next. Go ahead.

19 GERTRUDE HUTCHINSON: Good
20 afternoon.

21 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [off mic] Good
22 afternoon.

23 GERTRUDE HUTCHINSON: My name is
24 Gertrude Hutchinson, and I am here as the co-chair
25 of the New York Archived Conference for 2011. And

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2 as such, it is my privilege to bring testimony on
3 behalf of the NYAC membership. The preamble of
4 the Society of American Archivists Code of Ethics
5 for Archivists, states that the Code of Ethics for
6 Archivists establishes standards for the archival
7 profession, in introducing new members of the
8 profession to these standards, reminding
9 experienced archivists of their professional
10 responsibilities, and to serve as a model for
11 institutional policies. It is also intended to
12 inspire public confidence in the profession.
13 Archivists are skilled professionals, as we've
14 heard, who cooperate with and respect their
15 colleagues' institutions, donors and researchers
16 who are generally other professionals,
17 paraprofessionals, genealogists or students.
18 Archivists follow the public mandate to strive to
19 promote open and equitable access to their
20 services, and the records in their care without
21 discrimination or preferential treatment. And in
22 accordance with legal, cultural sensitivities, and
23 institutional policies. Archivists recognize the
24 responsibility to promote the use of records as a
25 fundamental purpose of the keeping of archives.

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2 And archivists may place restrictions on access
3 for the protection of privacy or confidentiality
4 of information in the records. As noted in
5 others' testimony this afternoon, archivists have
6 professional and ethical responsibilities to
7 advocate for their profession and the records for
8 which they care. Because of their advanced
9 education, archivists can assess a collection for
10 its historical value now, and for future
11 generations. Archivists have the responsibility
12 to appraise, access, process, preserve and make
13 records and collections available to the public.
14 Archivists must have, also protect the privacy of
15 their donors, whether individuals or groups, in a
16 nonpartisan, nondiscriminatory way. Archivists
17 must also be aware of the sensitive nature of some
18 collections, and treat those collections with the
19 same respect in a nonpartisan, nondiscriminatory
20 way. When Mayor Bloomberg announced his
21 recommendation that DORIS be absorbed into DCAS,
22 and his appointment of Commissioner Edna Wells
23 Handy, he gave the Commission--excuse me, he gave
24 Commissioner Handy this charge: find new ways to
25 do more with less, don't be afraid to take risks

1 and seize opportunities to take initiatives.
2
3 Given the current and projected economic
4 conditions, Mayor Bloomberg's rationale for this
5 legislative proposal is understandable. Given the
6 significance of the records involved in this
7 matter, NYAC strongly urges, irrespective of the
8 disposition of the legislative proposals on this
9 matter, that the essential components imperative
10 to protect the integrity of the intended and
11 necessary records management service be
12 maintained. And these components include, and I
13 will paraphrase for time: qualified staff, as has
14 been previously noted, with the appropriate
15 education; necessary resources for storage and
16 maintenance to keep further damage or
17 deterioration; fiduciary responsibility to make
18 archival documents and records available to the
19 public equitably, without bias; security and
20 protection provisions; and developing strong
21 collaborative relationships between the archival
22 repositories and the public it serves. In
23 closing, NYAC advocates for the retention or
24 preservation of historic and cultural records in
25 whatever format they may be found. The staffing

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2 of the agencies that carry this out, excuse me,
3 carry out these tasks by individuals with the
4 appropriate professional training, the provision
5 of adequate resources to the agencies to allow
6 them to carry out their function, and equitable
7 access to records or cultural heritage documents.
8 Thank you again for this opportunity to share
9 NYAC's views.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
11 much. Mr. Keough?

12 BRIAN KEOUGH: Thank you for
13 inviting me to testify today. My name is Brian
14 Keough, I represent the Mid-Atlantic Regional
15 Archives Conference. I'm the New York Caucus
16 Cahir for that organization, also known as MARAC.
17 MARAC was founded in 1972, and is a regional
18 volunteer consortium of over a thousand
19 archivists, records managers, historians and
20 librarians who live in the mid-Atlantic states.
21 It includes close to 100 members from the City of
22 New York who are MARAC members. Our mission at
23 MARAC is to sustain and promote the archival
24 community in the mid-Atlantic region, providing
25 affordable conferences, education opportunities

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2 and by fostering collegiality, collaboration and
3 professionalism in multiple venues. As has been
4 noted, archivists and records managers possess
5 specialized training and expertise, they work in
6 local, state and federal governments, they work in
7 colleges and universities, and multinational
8 corporations, law firms, and many other
9 organizations concerned with the accessibility
10 authenticity and preservation of information. I'm
11 here today to oppose the law as it's currently
12 written on behalf of my MARAC members. We oppose
13 the legislation because we believe that it, it's
14 not in the public's best interest. We oppose the
15 legislation also for the reasons that has been
16 outlined by the Archivists Roundtable, and two key
17 issues that I want to mention. One of the issues
18 is the continued support and legislation for the
19 preservation of government information and
20 records. The New York State Archives which
21 manages State government records and the national
22 archives, which manages federal government
23 records, have demonstrated quite clearly and
24 convincingly, that records management agencies
25 working as independent units provide better and

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2 more efficient services than record agencies
3 working as part of a larger, less specialized
4 agency. This has clearly been defined actually in
5 about a 15 year period in the early '70s, mid-
6 '70s, through about the '80s, when there was
7 concern over transparency, accountability, and
8 providing public access to records. This was
9 spurred on by Watergate, by the, by what Richard
10 Nixon did, it led to the Presidential Records Act,
11 it led to the autonomous nature of DORIS, it led
12 to the State Archives, in 1987 being given a
13 larger role in managing government records in
14 agencies. This has clearly been proven in the
15 scholarly literature. Again Rachel mentioned the
16 National Archives being freed in 1985 from the
17 General Services information, that this is a
18 failed strategy for strengthening access to
19 government records. And this is primarily why,
20 why MARAC opposes this. WE also are very
21 concerned with providing legislation to ensure
22 DORIS's long term sustainability and growth. We
23 support legislation that would do that and we look
24 to the City of New York and its residents for
25 providing legislation that would actually

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2 strengthen DORIS. So as I said, MARAC does not
3 support this legislation as its currently written,
4 and we ask that you pass legislation that
5 considers the preservation and access to New York
6 City's records as an autonomous record agency.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
9 much. We've been joined by the very great Domenic
10 Recchia, who's a colleague, Brooklyn, and head of
11 the Finance Committee. So he's going to provide
12 all the funding that will make DORIS and go from
13 35 to 55 members, like it was a few years ago.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Sounds
15 good. I'm sorry I am late, I was busy working on
16 the budget. So. [laughter]

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We're just
18 teasing, but he's a very fabulous Finance Chair.
19 Rachel, I have a question. I know you've been
20 meeting with different members of your community
21 and I really appreciate the work that you put into
22 this thought process. We heard from the State,
23 and you've obviously, you and Brian in particular,
24 I think have met with others around the country.
25 We had one model with the State as part of State

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2 Ed but very much autonomous. And I guess my
3 question to both of you is, do you see, and you
4 know, I have a lot of concerns about this merger,
5 I've made it incredibly clear to everybody I can
6 think of. But maybe even DCAS is the wrong
7 merger; State Ed is really different than DCAS, as
8 an example. So, my question is, can you list, as
9 you, I think you have, some of the absolute
10 necessities that would have to be for, either as
11 an autonomous DORIS or a semi-autonomous DORIS, if
12 there was some merger, some really bottom line
13 issues. We heard qualified, we heard budget, but
14 you know, there's a lot more I think than--and you
15 could be perhaps more specific, because of your
16 experience around the country. And anybody else,
17 go ahead, Rachel, if you want to--

18 RACHEL CHATALBASH: Well, I think
19 the issue that we've come up against as a
20 community is that we're not sure that there is a
21 way that DORIS's autonomy can be secured within
22 DCAS. And if there were a way, I think that as a
23 community we would be happy to support it. But it
24 would have to be guaranteed. And we've been
25 searching, we've been looking at, you know,

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2 various advisory boards, oversight committees.
3 You know, is there a way that we could protect
4 DORIS in the future, and we haven't come up with
5 a, a good solution.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Brian, what
7 goes on around the country? Mid-Atlantic wise or,
8 I mean, I'm obviously in agreement with what
9 you're stating, but I'm just, I'm just trying to
10 get more facts. In some of the other states, are
11 some of the other representatives who contribute,
12 are there other models that work, or are there
13 some models that don't work?

14 BRIAN KEOUGH: Well, I think New
15 York State is a good model. I mean, it's not that
16 New York State Archives and Libraries is without
17 its economic and budget challenges, but I think
18 being in a agency like the State Education
19 Department, where they're with likeminded partners
20 like the New York State Library and the New York
21 State Museum, and other agencies that are focused
22 on education, I think there's less of a, you know,
23 this is why we need to buy acid free boxes, this
24 is why we need to do this. There's less of that
25 advocating when there's a trust that, "Okay, the

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2 State Archives, we can give you the autonomy to
3 work with agencies with their records, the set
4 scheduling." The New York State, the National
5 Archives was in a very similar situation, they
6 were given added layers of bureaucracy when they
7 were put under the General Services
8 Administration, there were decades spent by
9 historians and archivists that would try to get
10 them out and ironically it was Richard Nixon and
11 some of the things that he tried to do with his
12 papers and records, that spurred a great public
13 interest and outcry in, again, transparency
14 through public information, accountability through
15 public information, and in that period of the '70s
16 and '80s, you see a whole transformation of state
17 and the national government creating archives and
18 libraries as autonomous or semi-autonomous
19 agencies. You know, there's much in the
20 literature about the national archives and what
21 they went through post-World War II, up and
22 through, till 1985, when they were given
23 autonomous status.

24 LUCINDA MANNING: I'd just, I'd
25 just like to respond really quickly. I appreciate

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2 the questioning that you have undertaken here in
3 this hearing, I think it's been excellent. And I
4 think you've raised a lot of good points about
5 your concern for this merger. I would go back to
6 what, you know, Rachel said about the absolutely
7 essentials in terms of having a well-functioning,
8 well run DORIS, is that you need sufficient staff,
9 you need all of the resources that can be passed
10 along by mayoral administrations and by city
11 government, and just clearly DORIS has been
12 starved over the decades. And so, we don't even
13 have to look at other cities' history or MARAC
14 institutions, we can look at our own history and
15 we can see that it took 32 years for Jeanette, for
16 Rebecca Rankin to actually have a unified records,
17 archives and library, and then to have it changed
18 in '69 by Mayor Lindsay, and after eight years
19 reinstated an independent agency, and then slowly
20 through budget cuts and recessionary measures--

21 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: No, I got--
22 many of my colleagues weren't born then, just so
23 you know.

24 LUCINDA MANNING: Yeah, okay.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Council Member

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Domenic Recchia was. Council Member Recchia.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: I was just going to start asking some questions about the money part of it. Well, so, it's very interesting, my question. So, when you say DORIS was starved, it was, how much was it underfunded and how, like, it got, how much bad was it cut--

LUCINDA MANNING: I don't have, I don't have those figures, but I do know that from what is said here today and what I know from having been an Archivists Roundtable member since 1983, that the staffing in the last ten-twelve years has gone from 55 to 35 and before that we had a 100. I've had many, many friends work in DORIS, and I consider myself friends of the people who work there now, professional colleagues.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Rachel, you may know, do you have any, or Borough Historian from The Bronx, Lloyd, do you know? Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: So, if this merger goes through, how do we know that it won't get hurt even more, 'cause people think that it can be picked up at the other end. We don't know that.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yeah. Lloyd,
3 do you have any sense of how the Borough
4 President's historians, how you use it, and how--
5 you answered some of the questions earlier, maybe
6 you could help--

7 LLOYD ULTAN: Yeah--

8 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --there's a
9 great historian from Brooklyn, as we know, who's
10 the Borough Historian, so go ahead.

11 LLOYD ULTAN: Yeah. Well, I've,
12 I've used the archives for various bits of
13 information, trying to find out from various
14 collections over there, certain things that have
15 happened in the City relating to The Bronx. A
16 number of people have asked me for photographs,
17 and I said the, you know, the Municipal Archives
18 has a tremendous photographic collection,
19 especially if they want to see a particular
20 building that they happen to know that comes from
21 about 1940 or so. Well, there is a photograph
22 that was taken of it, every single building in the
23 City of New York was photographed at that time.
24 People who are looking for genealogical research,
25 I would refer them to the Municipal Archives.

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2 Because it is such a great repository of material.
3 And to me it is, for its purpose, unsurpassed.
4 But it has to be taken care of. The material has
5 to be preserved, it has to be made available to
6 the public, and if the money is taken away from
7 it, considering, you know, almost mindlessly or
8 unknowingly that, "Well, gee, you know, just like
9 anything else, you can get rid of another
10 janitor," it's not quite the same, because you
11 have people there who have specific talents and
12 specific education and specific needs that you
13 don't find in other agencies. And it's these
14 people that have got to be kept, and new ones
15 coming through the pipeline to replace them as
16 they, as they grow elderly. Because without that,
17 you don't have the services and you don't have the
18 stuff preserved that the services are there to
19 provide.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
21 much. Do you want to ask something else, or--?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Yeah, no,
23 I was, I just wanted to tell Chairman Gale Brewer,
24 who's doing a great job with this Committee, I
25 think we really have to look at the numbers and

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2 the funding, because I'm a little bit
3 uncomfortable with what I'm hearing and I'm not
4 really sure--I wasn't here for the whole hearing,
5 so I'll have to talk to you more in depth about
6 it, but it sounds to me this is one place where if
7 you really don't fund it properly, you're not
8 going to be able to keep up with the records, no
9 matter who you merger it with, that there has to
10 be a certain funding level that it cannot go
11 beneath that funding level. And I just don't
12 know, I'm going to ask my Finance staff who's here
13 today, to--we got to figure out, what is that
14 funding level? Because it sounds to me that,
15 she's shaking her head, that that's a big problem.
16 That you can merge all you want and put it
17 together, but if, if you don't have a level, then
18 the whole program can't be supportive and work as
19 it should be. 'Cause one of the areas, what I
20 don't want to see happen is that the records are
21 only open to the public one day a week, for three
22 hours. Okay? That's not what we want to see
23 happen. I have a big issue.

24 BRIAN KEOUGH: In a sense, that's
25 what happened at the National Archives. National

1
2 Archives were created in the 1930s, and it was
3 moved over--

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Brian, pull it
5 towards you, the mic.

6 BRIAN KEOUGH: Sorry. And it was
7 moved over in 1949 to the Municipal Services
8 Administration, where it floundered. When it
9 eventually was given autonomous nature, and the
10 Archivist of the United States reports directly to
11 the United States President, he has the
12 President's ear, you see the building of Archives
13 II, you see the growth and success of the
14 Presidential Library System, which didn't exist as
15 it does today, when you go to the LBJ Library, the
16 JFK Library, this didn't exist until the National
17 Archives was autonomous. You see the National
18 Archives, the exhibits in their building, millions
19 of people go to see these exhibits. This did not
20 happen in the '50s, '60s and '70s, because it was
21 not an autonomous agency, it did not have the
22 authority and it did not have the two ears of the
23 President to go right directly to the person with
24 the purse strings.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: So, and

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millions of people don't come to see our archives.

BRIAN KEOUGH: And they should.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: They should, no, I--

BRIAN KEOUGH: Absolutely. I mean, this is--

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: That's what I'm, you know, you just brought--

BRIAN KEOUGH: This is in the history of Clifford Heights, Pennsylvania, where I grew up, but you know, outside of Philly. This is New York City.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: I'm glad you woke up, you came to a big City. [laughter] But--

BRIAN KEOUGH: I mean, this is, that's why I compare it to the experience of the National Archives. It's not like comparing Freehold, New Jersey, you know, to the National Archives. This is one of the greatest cities in the universe.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: But you brought up a very good point. We should really sit down--

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2 BRIAN KEOUGH: It's not just the
3 funding, it's the authority to be able to discuss
4 with the people who control the purse strings.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And maybe
6 we should bring some of those records out to the
7 public and have them on display, and more people
8 would come in and pay a little fee to get to see
9 them. And then we could help get us some money so
10 we could do more. All right, I--

11 LUCINDA MANNING: Could I ask a
12 quick question? What is the current budget of
13 DORIS? Do you know that figure?

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: It's in, we
15 have it here.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: We have
17 it.

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We have it
19 here. We have it, yeah.

20 LUCINDA MANNING: What is it?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: About \$4.9
22 million.

23 LUCINDA MANNING: Okay, but--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Lionel's
25 right here, my Finance person on the, you know,

1
2 assigned to this Committee. But we're going to be
3 looking at this and I'll be speaking, of course,
4 with Gale Brewer. Thank you, Chair, I'm sorry I
5 was late.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
7 much.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: But I'd
9 like to follow up with you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: We will
11 definitely follow up with you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA:
13 Definitely.

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Lots of issues
15 to be--it's not a slam dunk, as they say.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: It's
17 definitely not.

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Not a slam
19 dunk. All right, thank you, panel, very much.
20 We're going to call one more panel. It's Lauren
21 McKellan, McKelden Smith, Cynthia Doty, and Teri
22 Koch-Bostic. And that's our last panel. If
23 anybody else needs to sign up, please do so.
24 [pause, background noise] Whomever would like to
25 go, go ahead, who would ever like the start.

2 MCKELDEN SMITH: I'd like to start
3 because I have another appointment that I--

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Go right
5 ahead.

6 MCKELDEN SMITH: --I need to get
7 to. My name is McElgin Smith and I'm the
8 President of the New York Genealogical and
9 Biographical Society. Thank you for inviting me.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

11 MCKELDEN SMITH: The comments I had
12 planned to make are, I'd say, 60 percent
13 redundant, so I'm going to skip them.

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

15 MCKELDEN SMITH: But I do want to
16 summarize the four main points I wanted to make
17 and then focus on a point that I don't think has
18 been made yet. The four main points I wanted to
19 make are as follows. First, family history has
20 very broad appeal and is not just for scholars and
21 people descending from leading families of New
22 York. Many thousands of New Yorkers from all
23 walks of life are working on their family
24 histories. The second point I was going to make,
25 and won't pursue in detail is this: this very

1 large constituency regards the Municipal Archives
2 as essential to their success and for very good
3 reason. The information that the Municipal
4 Archives contains is fundamental to genealogical
5 work. The third point is that there is a short
6 list of critical factors that will determine
7 whether the Municipal Archives of New York City
8 will be able to meet the needs of this
9 genealogical constituency. These factors have to
10 do with accessibility, professional management and
11 the planned growth of the resource. And the
12 fourth point I wanted to make is that professional
13 public records management is a hallmark of a great
14 City. So I'm going to now just cover the first
15 point, and leave the other three as they've been
16 very eloquently described by others. Let me
17 address the broad appeal of genealogy and the size
18 of the genealogical constituency in New York City.
19 The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society
20 was founded in 1869 and is New York's largest
21 genealogical society. We have 10,000 members and
22 subscribers. We publish two quarterly journals
23 including The Record, which has been in continuous
24 publication since 1870. We maintain a growing
25

1
2 eLibrary online, and we offer wide ranging
3 educational programs as part of the New York
4 Family History School. The mission of the G&B, as
5 we call it, is to help people of all backgrounds
6 discover their family histories and find meaning
7 by placing their own family's experiences in the
8 broader context of American history. The mission
9 statement underscores the fact that people working
10 on their family histories come from all walks of
11 life, all ethnic backgrounds, all socioeconomic
12 categories. They are of all ages. People working
13 on their family histories find the process
14 intensely meaningful, because their primary
15 purpose is to find out the truth about where they
16 came from and relate that the bigger historical
17 context. We work in close partnership with the
18 New York Public Library to produce free family
19 history programs. And also we work with the
20 Library to train teachers to use family history in
21 the classrooms. Family history brings local
22 history to life and teaches research and writing
23 skills at the same time. This fall, with the New
24 York Public Library, we will launch a series of
25 free public programs to help adults in the branch

1
2 libraries build their research skills. I don't
3 mention these things just to brag about the G&B or
4 the New York Public Library. It's very important
5 for you to know that genealogy is not an esoteric
6 field pursued by a limited number of specialists.
7 Genealogy is among the most popular and widely
8 pursued hobbies and special interests in America.
9 A very large subset of people who express interest
10 actually do pursue it with a very real sense of
11 purpose. Here are three data points which bring
12 it to life. You've all heard of ancestry.com,
13 which is a family history website. It has 1.4
14 million paid subscribers. Subscribers grew 31
15 percent in 2010 versus 2009. This statistic
16 attests to the size and growth rate of this
17 category. Second, at the Research Library of the
18 New York Public Library on 42nd Street, 25 percent
19 of the people doing research in that building are
20 working on family histories. That's one in four
21 patrons. There is no other category of scholarly
22 pursuit at the New York Public Library more
23 significant in terms of the number of people doing
24 it, than genealogy. And third, as has already
25 been mentioned, NBC is currently running a series

1
2 of genealogical programs on Friday nights called
3 "Who Do You Think You Are?" The national audience
4 for this highly rated program is about six million
5 viewers per episode. [laughs] Eventually, all of
6 the people who are exposed to these programs and
7 decide afterwards to pursue their family history
8 will end up at the Municipal Archives. That's
9 because this resource is not only useful, it is
10 essential. Births, deaths, marriages, divorces,
11 probate records, land records, other City based
12 records, including photographs, are foundations of
13 good family history research. This has been true
14 in the past, and regardless of the evolution of
15 genealogy as a discipline in the internet age, it
16 will always be true. And I'm going to end there,
17 because you have heard already what else I was
18 going to say. Thank you very much.

19 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You're
20 wonderful, thank you. Who wants to go next?

21 TERI KOCH-BOSTIC: Good afternoon.
22 My name is Teri Koch-Bostic, I'm here today
23 representing the Association of Professional
24 Genealogists. I'm the Chapter Representative for
25 the New York Metro Chapter. We have over 200

1
2 members, most of whom are specialists in records
3 pertaining to New York City and various
4 ethnicities of New York City. We have over 2,500
5 members nationally, and most of them are also
6 actively involved in using New York records.
7 Because of the nature of our work, there may be no
8 other single group outside of the New York City
9 government, who every day utilize various records
10 and holdings of DORIS than the members of the
11 Association of Professional Genealogists. For
12 this reason, we want to go on record and urge that
13 DORIS not be merged with DCAS. We support the
14 entire list of concerns and recommendations
15 already provided with the April 13th document
16 submitted by the Archivists Roundtable. Rather
17 than take away autonomy from DORIS, we feel this
18 Committee should recommend that a strategic plan
19 be developed with members of DORIS, not DCAS,
20 DORIS, plus representatives of the Archivists
21 Roundtable and other key members of the local
22 genealogical, historical and university
23 communities, plus New York City and company. And
24 I'll get to that in a minute. A new strategic
25 plan for DORIS would put into action, the

1
2 recommendations from the Archivists Roundtable
3 document, and it would be a call to action for a
4 practical plan to finally modernize this archival
5 resource with DORIS's assets and to improve public
6 access and preserve and safeguard its holdings.
7 Notice I used the word "assets" when I described
8 DORIS's holdings. Because these holdings are not
9 to be thought of as a bunch of dusty boxes and
10 files to be managed in a housekeeping fashion by
11 DCAS; but rather, assets that can inform us for
12 generations to come that need to be more easily
13 accessed so they can enrich the story and the
14 history of one of the greatest cities ever
15 created. If these assets are properly utilized
16 and marketed, we can have a lot of returns. Both
17 the type that come from scholarship and from
18 finance. These assets are so important and
19 irreplaceable to the people and history of this
20 City, this merger would not be unlike asking DCAS
21 to run the Metropolitan Museum of Art. That is
22 the level of riches that DORIS's holdings have,
23 not only for the people of this great City, but
24 everywhere. While New York City has not yet
25 suffered a devastating fire, like the one at the

1
2 New York State Archives 100 years ago, there have
3 been floods and leaks and vermin that have
4 destroyed records. An untold wealth of New York's
5 history has already been destroyed in the capital
6 fire. We can't let this happen to New York City.
7 These records serve not only to tell the stories
8 of Mayors and governments, but of corporations
9 built here, charities, almshouses, foundling
10 hospitals, stories of buildings, street names,
11 grand architecture, saloons and pubs and glorious
12 restaurants where both our working classes and our
13 upper crust gathered for respite for centuries.
14 These records hold the interests of people well
15 beyond our City limits, people come from all over
16 the world to do work here. Leonora Gidlund,
17 Director of the Archive, and her staff, have
18 hosted Professor Steven Robertson and Shane White,
19 of the University of Sydney Australia for nearly
20 every summer for years, in the basement of the
21 Archive. There, Professors Robertson and White
22 have poured over thousands of New York City
23 original records and manuscripts. Robertson used
24 district attorney records to create "Crimes
25 Against Children," a study of the prosecution of

1
2 sexual violence in New York City from 1880 to
3 1960. This work has been heavily published in
4 journals all over the world, including the Journal
5 of Social History, the Journal of the History of
6 Medicine in Allied Sciences, and the Loran History
7 Review. He's won numerous awards. His partner,
8 Shane White, has published a number of prize
9 winning books on blacks in the 18th and 19th
10 Century in New York City. These are gentlemen
11 coming from Australia to write our history. He
12 has, he is currently working on "The Making of
13 Black Manhattan," and ethnographic study of black
14 culture from 1810 to 1860. Together with other
15 colleagues from the University of Sydney, they
16 have now won the 2011 ABC Clio Online History
17 Award for "Digital Harlem."

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [off mic] Let
19 me just - - [on mic] I want to thank Council
20 Member Erik Dilan for being here. I'm sorry, keep
21 going, I apologize.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: [off mic]
23 Well, since you did that, I feel inclined to state
24 my position on the bill.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Sure, go

1 ahead, you have to do it into the microphone, sir.
2 I'm sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt you, but
3 [laughter]
4

5 TERI KOCH-BOSTIC: That's okay.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: There are a
7 lot of other hearings going on.

8 TERI KOCH-BOSTIC: All right.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: For your
10 benefit, Madam Chair, I think I'm inclined with
11 the advocates on this one, just my, my brief
12 conversations with the Finance staff, this reveals
13 that the City saves absolutely no money by
14 conducting this transfer. So, I'm inclined to
15 leave things the way they are, and that's for your
16 benefit should this - -

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm certainly-

18 -

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: --
20 disposition.

21 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: --I've made
22 that, I'm trying to be impartial, but I think the
23 people know that [laughter] Thank you, thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: So I think
25 since that's already my position, I don't--

2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I appreciate
3 it.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: --need to be
5 here anymore. [laughs]

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: But thank you
7 for coming, thank you for coming.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: You got it.

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I'm sorry, go
10 ahead.

11 TERI KOCH-BOSTIC: That's okay. As
12 I said, these professors have won the 2011, this
13 is a very prestigious award, the ABC Clio Online
14 History Award for "Digital Harlem: Everyday Life,
15 1915 to 1930." And I urge everyone to take a look
16 at this website. They also won the 2010 American
17 Historical Association's Innovation in Digital
18 History with "Black Metropolitans, Harlem 1915 to
19 1930." It's been called, and I quote, "A new
20 approach to sharing historical materials that will
21 contribute to the new historical interpretations
22 and ways of understanding the Harlem Renaissance."
23 These are the kinds of things we should be helping
24 to drive, partnering and making happen here, with
25 our own materials. Another interesting project

1
2 that Leonora helped with, is "The Soundscapes of
3 Modernity," by Emily Thompson, a professor of
4 history at Princeton. This book tracks early 20th
5 Century sound, what people heard and how they
6 listened. From the archive basements again, came
7 recordings of barkers on Coney Island, church
8 bells, early radio collections, Department of
9 Health records and photos on hearing and testing,
10 symphony hall architecture and the beginning of
11 acoustic tile. Professor Thompson wove all of
12 these beautiful pieces of information together, to
13 explain how and why technology has modified our
14 taste in how we hear. And a quick aside on the
15 light side, Lionel Train Historian, Robert
16 Osterhoff of Wildwood, Missouri, conducted
17 research on Lionel Trains, designed and produced
18 here for years in New York City, and wrote a book
19 called "Inside the Lionel Trains Fun Factory."
20 And this is not just about producing trains, but
21 it's the story of one of the earliest American
22 manufacturing conglomerates in the United States.
23 My personal favorite, born from the assets of
24 DORIS, is a beautiful coffee book called the "New
25 York City Museum of Complaint," edited by Matthew

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2 Bakkom. Bakkom, also a willing treasure hunter in
3 the basement, went down to the dark depths of
4 archives, and he reviewed thousands and thousands
5 of complaint letters written to the New York City
6 Mayor's offices going back to the 1700s. In the
7 thousands of boxes, one thing rings true in just
8 reading a few of the letters in the coffee book:
9 personal expression flourishes here, whether it be
10 a letter in defense of street musicians, battles
11 with police, smells, dead animals, pushcart
12 peddlers blocking the streets, or anger at public
13 servants, it is hard to tell if the letter was
14 written in 1797 or 2011. These are the kind of
15 projects we need to continue to encourage the
16 utilization of DORIS's assets for research,
17 scholarship, and we need to find private donors to
18 partner with so we can have grant money, and we
19 can continue to write the history of this City.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Can you start
21 to sum up, maybe talk about your wonderful ideas
22 with NYC & Company.

23 TERI KOCH-BOSTIC: Yes, okay.
24 Okay. One, one more thing is that, well we, we
25 talk a lot about the importance of the mayoral

1 collection, the government collection. As
2 McKelden alluded to, it's really the stories of
3 the millions of individuals who came here, some
4 escaping many difficult hardships, and settled
5 here with hardly anything but the clothes on their
6 back. It is for them and their strength and
7 optimism that we need to respect every little
8 record of their existence. And that little record
9 may be a City directory, a tax list, a probate
10 file, or a death record. But those things are as
11 important or more, than the mayoral records,
12 because they are the story of the people who built
13 this City. As McKelden said, access to family
14 records is becoming more and more important, and
15 it's important for you to know that the
16 Association of Professional Genealogists, we track
17 access across the United States. It is not
18 becoming less open, it's becoming more open. You
19 have California and Texas, who are heavily
20 digitizing records and actually you can even buy
21 them online, you don't even have to mail away for
22 it. I think it's very obvious we have a, an
23 educated, upwardly mobile, and a population with
24 disposable income who are heavily interested in
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1
2 this. There, a lot of them are retired and they
3 have the time and the income to travel. We know
4 that New York City has more records of people who
5 have roots in the United States than anywhere
6 else. 83 percent of Americans came through the
7 Port of New York. 40 percent living today came
8 and have a relative that went through Ellis
9 Island. And we have those records. So the idea
10 is, is that DORIS needs to have a marketing plan,
11 not DCAS, but DORIS, that should be developed with
12 the, with the help of George Fertitta and his
13 staff at NYC & Company, to attract genealogy
14 related tourism. This is, hasn't even been
15 discussed, it is a huge opportunity to use New
16 York City as a genealogy destination. We could be
17 much better than the Family History Library in
18 Salt Lake City, which is totally built around
19 genealogy as a destination. We need to partner
20 with the National Archives, the New York Public
21 Library, the New York Genealogical Society, the
22 Brooklyn Historical Society, and we can really
23 make a go of this. Then we need to actively
24 solicit genealogy and historical societies all
25 over the U.S. and encourage their members to plan

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2 an individual or a group trip, and use the City's
3 resources. And while they're here researching,
4 they might as well catch dinner and a show. It
5 really works terrific for us in every way. If we
6 recognize the treasures that are hidden away in
7 DORIS, we can really bolster New York City's
8 tourism in a new strategic way. This is the kind
9 of investment that we need, to bring DORIS up to
10 snuff. Mayor Bloomberg is a financial man, he
11 needs to understand we need investment, and then
12 we'll give him return on investment. If we get to
13 a place where we can really get the visitor center
14 and more access to records because right now we
15 can bring people to the visitor center, but we
16 can't easily access the records. So, we can't
17 move too fast in one direction, without thinking
18 through the implications of people being
19 frustrated of coming here. So it's really a very
20 practical, pragmatic plan that we need, that goes
21 step-by-step, and you need to mine the community
22 of genealogists, archivists and even
23 businesspeople.

24 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
25 much. That was really comprehensive, and I

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appreciate it.

TERI KOCH-BOSTIC: You're welcome.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Who would like to go next?

CYNTHIA DOTY: I will. Hi, my name is Cynthia Doty, and I'm here as a member of the Park West Neighborhood History Group. And I'd like to read a statement that was written by one of our creators, our founder, Winifred Armstrong, from the Park West Neighborhood History Group. "We are an enthusiastic part of the constituency for the work of the Municipal Archives, and they have served us well. Whether they remain at DORIS or become part of DCAS, please keep them open, accessible, professional and funded. We are a neighborhood history organization on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and here are a few of the ways that we have used and related to the Municipal Archives over our ten years of work. We've used their information in scores of presentations that we have organized on and in our neighborhood, and about the City's history of services and government, for hundreds of aficionados. We've drawn on their history of

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2 buildings and neighborhoods for the dozens of
3 walks that we have organized with the Columbus
4 Amsterdam BID, for hundreds if not thousands of
5 people from all over the City, and tourists from
6 overseas. We've referenced them in the
7 neighborhood history collection, which we have
8 established at the Bloomingdale Branch of the New
9 York Public Library on 100th Street. We've
10 searched out sources in the exhibits that they
11 have, that we have organized at the local
12 Bloomingdale Branch of the New York Public Library
13 and in other venues. We've included them as a
14 link on our website, upperwestsidehistory.--.com.
15 And sent New York History Day students and others
16 to them, all were well served. We asked them to
17 track a newspaper photo of a water tower that we
18 found from the 1920s, which they did, locating the
19 original in a glass slide recently turned up by
20 the archivists at the New York City Department of
21 Environmental Protection. And they gave us
22 permission to publish it in our history brochure
23 of Park West Village, which is enclosed and
24 credited. And this type of thing has become very
25 valuable to those of us in the neighborhood who

1
2 are interested in what our neighborhood looked
3 like 100 years ago. 1879, so I guess that's a
4 little more than that. And we've also had the
5 privilege of touring the archives and received an
6 illuminating and instructive briefing on how they
7 work and how we, as a neighborhood history
8 organization, can work better. We've received
9 awards for our work from Community Board Seven,
10 from Goddard Riverside Community Center, from the
11 Manhattan Borough President, and from our Assembly
12 Member Daniel O'Donnell. Our work has been both
13 grounded and enhanced by the Municipal Archives and
14 its staff. We urge you to please keep them
15 strong.

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
17 much, Cindy. Would anybody else like to speak?
18 Has anybody else going to, do you want to--

19 FEMALE VOICE: [off mic] Actually,
20 I'm a pinch hitter.

21 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay.
22 [laughter] You want to be pinch hitting or you
23 just want to answer questions.

24 MCKELDEN SMITH: She's a colleague
25 of mine, we - -

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2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Oh, great,
3 okay. Thank you all very much. First of all,
4 those are extraordinarily good suggestions. And I
5 think you heard, unbeknownst to me, my colleague
6 with his concerns, and the fact that he wasn't
7 here long doesn't indicate that there's not a lot
8 of interest. And I think what we'll do as time
9 goes on is sit down with staff. And this is a
10 topic that I think is dear to everyone's heart,
11 and in this room and beyond, and we're going to
12 think very clearly and long term about how to
13 address it. So, I thank all of you very much.
14 Okay?

15 PANEL: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Oh, with that,
17 this hearing is adjourned. The topic does not go
18 away, so the topic is not adjourned, but this
19 hearing has ended. And I, again, I thank everyone
20 from the Administration to all of those who are
21 part of the Roundtable and other groups for their
22 participation. Thank you.

23 [gavel]

24 [background noise]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the printed word "Signature".

Date May 13, 2011