

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
VOTE\*

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Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Start: 10:56 a.m.

Recess: 11:03 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Hon. Lynn C. Schulman, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joann Ariola  
Carmen N. De La Rosa  
Oswald Feliz  
James F. Gennaro  
Kristy Marmorato  
Julie Menin  
Mercedes Narcisse  
Susan Zhuang

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
A P P E A R A N C E S  
**(NONE)**

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2 SERGEANT LEWIS: Mic check, mic check, this is a  
3 mic check on Health. Today's date is March 26, 2025-  
4 recorded by Walter Lewis in the Chambers.

5 (PAUSE)

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning, and welcome to  
7 today's New York City Council vote for the Committee  
8 on Health. To minimize disruptions, please place all  
9 electronic devices to vibrate or silent mode. At no  
10 time is anyone to approach the dais.

11 Chair Schulman, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: (GAVEL SOUND) (GAVELING IN)

13 Thank you. Good morning, everyone, I am Council  
14 Member Lynn Schulman, Chair of the New York City  
15 Council Committee on Health.

16 Thank you all for joining us on today's vote on  
17 Proposed Introduction Number 1047-B; Proposed  
18 Resolution Number 721-A; and Preconsidered Resolution  
19 Number 722-A.

20 Beginning with Proposed Introduction Number 1047-  
21 B, sponsored by Council Member Shaun Abreu, this  
22 legislation would require the New York City  
23 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), or  
24 another agency designated by the Mayor with the  
25 appropriate subject matter expertise, to establish a

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2 3-year pilot program that provides access to sleep  
3 apnea screenings at no cost as well as access to home  
4 sleep apnea tests, if deemed appropriate. The bill  
5 would also include requirements that DOHMH publish a  
6 report on the pilot program's effectiveness,  
7 detailing whether they believe it should be made  
8 permanent. DOHMH will also be required to conduct a  
9 public education and outreach campaign on sleep apnea  
10 and the pilot program's availability.

11       Unfortunately, the test for determining if one  
12 suffers from sleep apnea can be prohibitively  
13 expensive, and lab tests can range from \$1,000 to  
14 \$10,000.00 depending on insurance. At-Home tests are  
15 cheaper ranging from \$150 to \$1,000, but for a person  
16 struggling to make ends meet, this can still pose too  
17 much of a financial burden. While Medicare covers 80  
18 percent of the cost of sleep apnea tests, the test  
19 must be deemed medically necessary by a doctor, and  
20 the deductible must be met.

21       This bill would help to... (BACKGROUND NOISE)

22       (PAUSE)

23       CLERK: Can we have a Zoom audio check, please?

24       (PAUSE)

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2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: This bill would help  
3 eliminate the barriers New Yorkers face when trying  
4 to get a sleep apnea tests and the potential  
5 financial burdens they may face in the process. As a  
6 proud co-sponsor of this legislation, and as Chair of  
7 the Health Committee, I am committed to ensuring that  
8 every New Yorker can receive the tests and care they  
9 need to stay healthy, happy, and be a part of our  
10 vibrant community. I want to thank Council Member  
11 Abreu for sponsoring this important legislation.

12 Moving on to Preconsidered Resolution Number 721-  
13 A, sponsored by myself, this Resolution calls upon  
14 the New York State Legislature to pass, and the  
15 Governor to sign, S.1804/A.128, legislation that  
16 would eliminate deductibles, copayment, coinsurance,  
17 or any other cost-sharing requirements for asthma  
18 inhalers.

19 In New York State, 1.4 million adults and 315,000  
20 children, that is 8.9 percent of children, suffer  
21 from asthma. Nationwide, this number reaches more  
22 than 20 million adults and 4.5 million children.  
23 Meanwhile, another respiratory disease, chronic  
24 obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, is the sixth  
25 leading cause of death in the nation. Despite the

1  
2 widespread and deadly nature of this disease,  
3 lifesaving inhalers remain prohibitively expensive  
4 for too many of us. These inhalers can reach costs of  
5 up to \$640.00 and month, add to that the troubling  
6 trend of asthma being more likely to effect  
7 neighborhoods in our city that are the most  
8 disadvantaged, like Astoria in Queens, which is  
9 labeled "asthma alley", and many neighborhoods in the  
10 Bronx, where the asthma mortality rate is the highest  
11 in the city, and it is easy to see why this State  
12 legislation this resolution calls for is so  
13 important.

14 S.1804, introduced by State Senator Gustavo  
15 Rivera, and A.128, introduced by Assemblymember  
16 Jessica González-Rojas, would eliminate deductibles  
17 copayment, coinsurance, or any other cost sharing  
18 requirements. This would effectively require  
19 insurance companies to cover the cost of inhalers in  
20 full, eliminating a financial barrier to care that,  
21 as it often does, effects the most vulnerable  
22 community members.

23 Finally, we will move to Preconsidered Resolution  
24 Number 722-A, also sponsored by me, calling upon the  
25 United States Congress to reintroduce and pass, and

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2 the President to sign, H.R. 2665, the Supporting  
3 Safety Net Hospitals Act, to delay Medicaid  
4 disproportionate share hospital payment reductions  
5 until Fiscal Year 2026.

6 Continuing the theme of insuring the most  
7 vulnerable New Yorkers are able to receive the care  
8 they need. This resolution moves our focus towards  
9 the safety net hospitals that are vital in caring for  
10 our communities. DSH payments have been provided by  
11 the federal government since the early 1980s and they  
12 provide funding for hospitals whose patient  
13 population includes a large proportion of Individuals  
14 insured through Medicaid and individuals who are  
15 uninsured. Unfortunately, despite the ACA increasing  
16 the availability of health insurance, 95 percent of  
17 hospitals in New York State still rely on DHS  
18 allotments to stay in business. Through this, our  
19 state and our city will be among the highest impacted  
20 by these cuts. While these cuts have been  
21 successfully delayed for about a decade, they have  
22 finally begun to take effect starting January 1st of  
23 this year and continuing through Fiscal Year 2027. An  
24 estimated \$8 billion in DSH allotments will be cut  
25 annually, resulting in a total reduction of about 50

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2 percent. These cuts could result in city hospitals,  
3 which all already under sourced and functioning at  
4 over capacity to face the real possibility of staff  
5 layoffs, further service reductions, and longer wait  
6 times. And make no mistake, these changes will  
7 disproportionately effect the poorest and the most  
8 vulnerable New Yorkers. These payments must not be  
9 reduced.

10 As Chair of the Health Committee, I remain  
11 committed to defending New Yorkers right to  
12 healthcare, no matter their financial status. The  
13 legislation we are voting on today reaffirms this  
14 commitment. No New Yorker should be forced without  
15 the lifesaving care they need.

16 I want to conclude by thanking the Committee  
17 members for being here today. I also want to thank  
18 the committee staff for their work, Committee  
19 Counsels Christopher Pepe and Sara Sucher, Joshua  
20 Newman, Legislative Policy Analyst, and the Finance  
21 staff Danielle Heifetz and Florentine Kabore, as well  
22 as my team Jonathan Boucher, Kevin McAleer, and  
23 Avygayl Zucker.

24 I now turn it over to the Clerk to call the roll.  
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COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

COMMITTEE CLERK: Good morning, William Martin,  
Committee Clerk; roll call vote, Committee on Health,  
all items are coupled.

Chair Schulman?

CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Ariola?

COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Gennaro?

COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: (MEDICAL)

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Feliz?

COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

Council Member De La Rosa?

COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Menin?

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Narcisse?

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Zhuang?

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Marmorato.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: I vote aye on all,  
congrats.

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COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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COMMITTEE CLERK: With a vote of 8 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and no abstentions, all items have been adopted by the Committee.

(PAUSE)

CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: The hearing is now adjourned.

(GAVEL SOUND) (GAVELING OUT)

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date April 1, 2025