CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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June 30, 2026
Start: 11:24 a.m.
Recess: 11:32 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing Room 2

B E F O R E: Pierina Ana Sanchez,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Oswald J. Feliz
Crystal Hudson
Rita C. Joseph
Virginia Maloney
Kevin C. Riley
Yusef Salaam
Nantasha M. Williams
Carl Wilson
Susan Zhuang

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Sound check for the Committee on Housing and Building. Today is June 30th, 2026, being recorded by Danny Huang in HR2. Good morning, welcome to the New York City Council rule for the Committee on Housing and Building. Please silence all cell phone electronic devices moving forward. No one is to approach the dais. Chair Sanchez, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, sergeants, and Good morning. I'm Councilmember Pierina Sanchez, very sleep deprived and with remarks that aren't totally edited, so good luck, and chair of the Committee on Housing and Buildings. I'm joined today by my colleagues, and before I begin any remarks, I want to start with gratitude to Speaker Julie Menin for really holding the line on a settlement on the FEPS legislation and negotiation, to the leadership of the City Council, to the Progressive Caucus especially. We are in a monumental moment. Today, we will vote on a preconsidered Introduction T2026-2097 sponsored by me that will establish a new rental assistance program for New Yorkers facing imminent eviction and those living in shelter who were previously excluded from the

existing city for HEPS program. This legislation is advancing a component of a settlement between the City Council, the Mamdani administration, and the Legal Aid Society, ending more than 2 years of litigation. CityFEPs was established in 2018 to secure stable housing for the most vulnerable New Yorkers. And in 2023, the council voted to expand the CityFEPs program to provide housing to hundreds of thousands of our most vulnerable New Yorkers. But the previous mayoral administration refused to implement the law, even after mayoral veto was overturned, would not implement the law. So Legal Aid Society and the council joined together to bring the act— an action to court. And after a multi-year legal battle and countless hours of negotiation beginning with the Mamdani administration, today's settlement, the FY27 budget, and this piece of legislation together represent a historic agreement that ensures New Yorkers facing homelessness will finally benefit from a significant expansion in New York City housing vouchers. The legislation brought forward today preserves the key goals of the 2023 City for HEPS reform laws to keep New Yorkers facing evictions in their homes and to remove arbitrary eligibility

barriers for New Yorkers living in shelters with a, with concrete funding commitment as well of $175 million in fiscal year '27 and $125 million baseline starting next year. This legislation will provide tens of thousands of New Yorkers, approximately 9,600 families, the stability and relief that they have been waiting on for years. There has been some misunderstandings in the press, so I want to just spell out some of what is in this legislation in terms of eligibility. Eligibility is largely kept intact. So we are expanding access to this new voucher program for families and adults in shelter who earn above 200 FPL and below 50% of AMI. So what that means is that we're keeping the increased income thresholds from the 2023 laws. We're also expanding access to runaway homeless youth, those people, folks living, our young people living in DYCD shelters, those who are living in HPSD, and those who are living in MOCJ shelters. So there has been no cutting of eligibility for folks in shelter. In community, we are similarly keeping the income threshold at 50% of AMI, which is an increase and also just a new category of eligibility altogether because folks in community were previously not eligible for these

vouchers. And so folks in community who are facing eviction actively in housing court will be, and who are living in a rent-stabilized apartment, will be eligible for the voucher. There's no work requirement across the board. And importantly, the legislation includes a provision that allows the administration and the city council to expand access as and if, who knows, life is funny, things change, there is extra money in a future time. So to ensure the fair distribution of available vouchers, funding will be evenly allocated between the in-shelter eligible population and the in-community eligible population. We are codifying that the reform laws, some of the reform laws that were passed, including the 90-day rule that was passed by then, or ending the 90-day rule rather, that was passed by then Councilmember and Deputy Speaker Diana Ayala, and reforming the utility allowance that was passed by Councilmember Tiffany Cabán. And I told you it was long, it was unedited, but I wanna make sure that the facts are right. This is the only time I won't have a time limit to talk about this, but I just cannot emphasize enough that this is a historic win for vulnerable New Yorkers. We're expanding housing vouchers

responsibly. We're controlling the cost because this is a capped appropriation. It is not an entitlement program. And we're putting, most fundamentally, most important to me personally, is that we're putting the city on a stronger pathway, pivoting us from costly shelter reliance toward permanent homes. Today, we're marking a day where we stop prioritizing paying more for worse outcomes for our families, outcomes that destabilize our communities. And with that, I have a long list of acknowledgments, but I've kept you long enough, so I just want to finally thank the, of course, the staff, the Leg. Division. I see you, Andrea Vasquez, Smita Desmukh, Jeff Baker, of course, our General Counsel, Maka Ehebe, our Finance Division, Jonathan Rosenberg, Nick Connell, Julia Haramis. I've given him— this is awkward, but I've given him a nickname that I said I wouldn't say in public, but, you know, we're there. The General Counsel at the mayor's side, Stevie Steve Banks. We, we got to the finish line here. I really, really appreciate all the work and the coalition, the Homes Can't Wait Coalition, Legal Aid Society, Vocal New York, WIN Coalition for the Homeless, VOA Safety Net Project, CSS. There are more, but I just want to

thank you all for holding the line, getting us to this finish line. And to my team, my chief of staff, Maria Villalobos, Ben Ratner, Kim Castellanos, Gerard Fernandez, Dylan Campos, Maria Jose Mares, Soraya Bonilla, Oriana Roa Acevedo, our interns, Mia Marcus and Ari. Uh, everybody worked so hard on this. Thank you for indulging me. And with that, um, unless our colleagues want to say anything, I think I ask the clerk to call the roll.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Good morning. William Martin, committee clerk. Roll call vote. Committee on Housing and Buildings. Chair, Pierina Sanchez.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Riley.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Feliz.

COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Proudly vote Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Abreu.

COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Congrats, Chair. I vote Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Hudson.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Permission to explain my vote?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Permission granted.

COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you so kindly. Um, I just wanted to, uh, take a moment to acknowledge you and your tireless efforts, uh, really those of you and your team and everybody involved in, in bringing this home. Um, it's not exactly where we wanted to be, but it's still a lot more than it would have been without your, your fight and hard work. So thank you. And with that, I vote Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Joseph.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: I vote aye. Congrats, Pi. I hope you get some sleep now.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Williams.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I vote Aye. Congrats.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Salaam.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAAM: I vote Aye, and congrats as well.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Zhuang.

COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Aye, congratulations.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Maloney.

COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: I vote aye, congratulations. Sanchez won.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Wilson.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILSON: I would like to align myself with Councilmember Hudson's comments and vote Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

COMMITTEE CLERK: With a vote of 11 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and no abstentions, item has been adopted by the committee. Madam Chair, that is a full committee.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, uh, thank you, Billy. And with that, this vote is closed.

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 September 24, 2026