

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS

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December 7, 2011
Start: 1:30pm
Recess: 1:50pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
MATHIEU EUGENE
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
James Sanders, Jr.
Lewis A. Fidler
Vincent J. Gentile
Fernando Cabrera
Daniel Dromm
David G. Greenfield

A P P E A R A N C E S

CLERK:

William Martin

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Good

afternoon. Today the Committee on Veterans will be holding a vote on Resolution 958, a resolution introduced by Council Member Jessica Lappin which urges the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign H.R. 930, a bill introduced by Congresswoman Shirley - - . H.R. 930 to amend the Title 38 of the United States Code to improve the evaluation procedure for veterans applying for disability compensation with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Especially H.R. 930 would reduce the burden of proof that victims of military sexual trauma must show in order to be eligible for disability compensation. This change would reflect the law passed by the Congress in June of 2010 that reduced the burden of proof a veteran must provide the VA to show they suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD. As a result of this law, a veteran suffering from PTSD only needs to provide a medical opinion that the claim - - is consistent with the circumstances of the veteran's service, rather than the previous requirement of providing proof of time in combat and that a traumatic event occurred during this

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2 time. Resolution 958 would urge Congress to
3 establish - - burden of proof for victims of
4 military sexual trauma who currently face many
5 obstacles when applying for disability
6 compensation and adjusting to civilian life when
7 returning from the service in military. I am
8 proud to support this resolution and want to thank
9 Council Member Jessica Lappin for her work on this
10 bill as well as the Speaker Christine Quinn for
11 her support of the legislation and participation
12 in the joint hearing the Veterans and Mental
13 Health Committees held on Monday discussing this
14 bill and other mental health issues facing
15 veterans. Finally, I would to recognize the work
16 of the Committee legislative counsel, Barbara - -
17 and the policy analyst Brian Fuller [phonetic] for
18 their hard work on this bill. This moment is also
19 bittersweet because it is my understanding that
20 this is Brian Fuller's final Veteran's Committee
21 hearing. He is leaving the City Council to attend
22 graduate school full-time at New York University.
23 Brian, I just want to acknowledge on the record
24 the wonderful job that you have done as the policy
25 analyst and I wish you the best of luck in school

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2 and in your professional career. Now, let's open
3 the floor. We are going to wait for a few minutes
4 - - to come, but I want to say that this is a
5 wonderful bill and a wonderful, very important
6 legislation because our veterans, those who put
7 their lives in danger for us, they deserve all the
8 best, all the services that we can provide them.
9 I think that all of us from the City of New York,
10 from the United States, all of us as a city, as a
11 country, we owe them a good deal of gratitude. I
12 commend Council Member Jessica Lappin one more
13 time for introducing this very important bill.

14 [background conversation]

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: We're going to
16 open the floor for a vote on Resolution 958.
17 Would you please...?

18 CLERK: William Martin, Committee
19 Clerk. Roll call vote Committee on Veterans.
20 Council Member Eugene?

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Aye.

22 CLERK: Fidler?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Aye.

24 CLERK: Cabrera?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

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CLERK: Greenfield?

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Pass.

I'm kidding. Yes. Thank you.

CLERK: by vote of four in the affirmative, zero in the negative, no abstentions, item is adopted. Members, please sign the Committee Report.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

We're going to keep the vote open for another ten minutes because Council-

CLERK: Council Member Gentile?

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Yes.

CLERK: The vote now currently stands at five in the affirmative.

[pause]

CLERK: Council Member Sanders?

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: I gladly vote in the affirmative. I vote aye.

CLERK: The final vote in the Committee on Veterans is now six in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Without further ado, this hearing is now closed.

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COMMITTEE ON VETERANS

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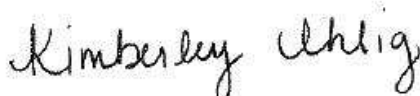
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[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig 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

Handwritten signature of Kimberley Uhlig in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.Date 1/4/12