

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

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March 14, 2012
Start: 9:46 a.m.
Recess: 10:52 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway
Committee Room, 14th Floor

B E F O R E:
JULISSA FERRERAS
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Charles Barron
Margaret S. Chin
Annabel Palma
Ruben Wills
Daniel Dromm

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Good

morning. I'm Council Member Julissa Ferreras, Chair of the Women's Issues Committee. Before I start my statement I just want to acknowledge the- -because it's Women's History Month, the members of the Women's Caucus have all brought in a distinguished young lady from their district to be Council Member for the Day, and I want to acknowledge Sherique Roper [phonetic], from the Young Women's Leadership Academy, and she's the representative of our Council Member Annabel Palma. So, welcome.

[applause]

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: I'd like to thank my colleague, Council Member Dromm, Chair of the Committee on Immigration, for co-sponsoring Resolution 1064-A. The Violence Against Women Act is a historic and crucial piece of legislation that has had tremendous positive impact on our society. It has changed language, legislation and attitudes. It has enhanced services and educated untold numbers of people. It has saved lives. VAWA has shed light on intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and the hidden world of

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2 violence. It has enabled thousands of victims to
3 leave abusive situations, getting housing and
4 getting help along with a new beginning and a
5 fresh start. It has provided tools to law
6 enforcement to assist in combating such crimes.
7 It has aided in changing our societal notions
8 about who the victims are and how we can help them
9 heal. It has shown us that victims can be young,
10 old, or male and female. We know so much more
11 now, thanks in large part for VAWA. At our
12 February 27th hearing on Resolution 1064, we heard
13 from numerous advocates, criminal justice experts,
14 including our esteemed DA from Staten Island, Dan
15 Donovan; a representative from Brooklyn DA Hynes;
16 along with written testimony from DA Vance. All
17 agree VAWA needs to be reauthorized. Everyone who
18 showed up to testify and everyone who submitted
19 written testimony supported the resolution. We
20 took their testimony and made some amendments to
21 the original resolution, which we are voting on
22 today. VAWA is currently a victim of a logjam of
23 partisan politics in Washington, DC. Today I ask
24 you to vote yes on Resolution 1064-A, in order to
25 lend our unified voice to support the

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2 reauthorization of VAWA and the programs it helps.
3 To add to the chorus of hundreds of advocates and
4 law enforcement groups, we all say the same. Pass
5 the reauthorization. Continue the work of VAWA.
6 Thank you. And now I'd like to have some time to
7 my Council Member Co-Chair, Danny Dromm.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you
9 very much, Madam Chair. Since its initial passage
10 in 1994, the Violence Against Women Act, or VAWA,
11 has assisted innumerable survivors of gender-based
12 violence with its support for vital initiatives
13 here in New York City and throughout the country.
14 Despite the continuing need to dedicate resources
15 to this endemic problem, the reauthorization of
16 VAWA has become ensnared in election year
17 politics. Council Resolution 1064 will send a
18 loud and clear message to congress. Our sisters
19 and mothers and daughters deserve to live lives
20 free from violence. And if they ever experience
21 the terror of rape or sexual assault or intimate
22 partner violence, every effort must be made to
23 bring the perpetrators to justice and to promote
24 healing for the survivors. I want to take a
25 moment to recognize the advocates for pushing the

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2 reauthorization of VAWA. Several of these groups
3 testified before the Committee on Women's Issues
4 on two particularly vulnerable groups that will
5 benefit--lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
6 individuals, and immigrants. Finally, I want to
7 thank my colleague, Council Member Julissa
8 Ferreras, Chair of the Committee for her
9 outstanding leadership on this issue. I also
10 wanted to say thanks to Council Staff Annie
11 Meredith, Joan Povolny, Tai Meah, and my Counsel,
12 Sebastian McGuire. I am proud to stand with New
13 York City's women, and hope that you will join me
14 by voting Yes on resolution 1064. And I think
15 it's particularly important that we are passing
16 this in March, Women's History month. Thank you
17 very much, Madam Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you,
19 and if you may call the vote.

20 WILLIAM MARTIN: William Martin,
21 Committee Clerk. Roll call vote, Committee on
22 Women's Issues, Resolution 1064-A. Council Member
23 Ferreras.

24 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: I vote Aye.

25 WILLIAM MARTIN: Barron.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote Aye,
3 and I'd like to say that I'm really honored to be
4 a part of this resolution, and with this right
5 wing conservative attack on women, this couldn't
6 be more timely than in this presidential year.
7 So, I hope we all stand firm, not just for this
8 month, but forever, in support of women and
9 protection of women and the safety of women. So,
10 I congratulate you and I with honor say Aye.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN: Palma.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: I want to
13 congratulate both Council Member Ferreras and
14 Danny Dromm, Council Member Dromm, for taking the
15 leadership in making sure that we were able to
16 pass the reauthorization of VAWA. I vote Aye.

17 WILLIAM MARTIN: Chin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I also wanted
19 to thank Council Member Julissa Ferreras and
20 Council Member Dromm for sponsoring this
21 resolution. And I'm proud to vote Aye on this,
22 especially on Women's History Month. Thank you.

23 WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote of four
24 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no
25 abstentions, item is adopted. Members, please

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sign the committee report. Thank you.

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[END FILE 1]

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[START FILE 2]

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WILLIAM MARTIN: Council Member

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Wills.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: I vote Aye

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for Women's Issues. This vote is now closed.

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WILLIAM MARTIN: Final vote for the

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Committee on Women's Issues stands at five in the

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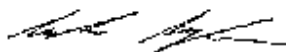
affirmative, zero in the negative, and no

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abstentions.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Erika Swyler, 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

Date 3/28/12