CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

        of the

COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY

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                        April 23, 2012
                        Start: 10:11 a.m.
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HELD AT: Council Chambers
                        City Hall

B E F O R E:

                        FERNANDO CABRERA
                        Chairperson

        COUNCIL MEMBERS:
                        Council Member Gale A. Brewer
                        Council Member Letitia James
                        Council Member Mark S. Weprin

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

Nicholas Sbordone
Director of External Affairs
Department of Information Technology and
Telecommunications

Kate Hohman
Broadband Project Manager
Department of Information Technology and
Telecommunications

Stanley Shor
Assistant commissioner for Franchise Administration
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Michael Santorelli
Director, Advanced Communications Law and Policy
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Michael Capobianco
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Jane Aboyoun
Vice President, Chief Technology Officer
New York Public Library

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

Josh Nachowitz
Vice President for Government and Community Relations
Brooklyn Public Library

Tom Galante
President and CEO
Queens Library

2   [background noise]

3   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Good morning,

4   everyone, on this beautiful rainy day. We needed

5   water. So it came right on time. I'm joined here

6   with Law Clerk David Seitzler [phonetic] and

7   Public Policy Analyst Crystal Gopon [phonetic].

8   And we're going to have members of this Committee

9   coming in soon. But let me just get started here.

10   Broadband spurs economic growth, helps children

11   learn and teachers teach, save time and money and

12   helps people find employment. Broadband also

13   allows New York City residents to take advantage

14   of more governmental services and participate in

15   the democratic process much more easily.

16   Broadband adoption is key to America's

17   competitiveness, yet one-third of all Americans

18   have not adopted broadband at home. The situation

19   in New York City is a microcosm of this problem.

20   In a recent study, the New York City Metropolitan

21   area went near the top of metro regions in

22   broadband adoption, with an estimated 67 percent

23   of its households hooked into broadband; however,

24   three of the City's boroughs are among the eighth

25   least broadband connected counties in New York

2   State, the first one here, The Bronx, my Bronx,

3   Brooklyn and Queens. Roughly half of households

4   in those three boroughs lack broadband internet

5   access, most notably seniors and lower income

6   household. The City's one of the most wired

7   cities in the United States, but we are falling

8   behind our international competitors. Most

9   residents have only one or two broadband service

10 providers from which to choose and they are unable

11 to afford the service without broadband, and the

12 newest communication technologies, residents are

13 at an immediate disadvantage in this inform based

14 global economy. Thanks to federal stimulus money,

15 the City has taken steps recently to encourage

16 broadband adoption. In 2012, the City received

17 Broadband Technologies Opportunity Program, known

18 as BTOP, funding for three New York City connected

19 initiatives to increase access to affordable

20 broadband service across the cities, all these

21 service communities among low income public school

22 students. The Committee hopes to hear more about

23 these programs, their effectiveness, how the City

24 can continue these or similar programs when

25 funding is exhausted next year, and what else the

2   City can do to increase broadband adoption,

3   including opportunities for negotiation during

4   franchise renewal agreements. I'm going to turn

5   it over now to our panelists, if you can introduce

6   yourselves.

7   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: [off mic] Sure.

8   [on mic] Is that better? [background comment:

9   "Yes."] Good morning, thank you having us,

10   Chairman Cabrera and Members of the City Council

11   Committee on Technology. My name is Nicholas

12   Sbordone, Director of External Affairs, at the

13   Department of Information Technology and

14   Telecommunications, or DoITT. Thank you for the

15   opportunity to testify today about DoITT's work to

16   expand sustainable broadband adoption across the

17   five boroughs. With me today are Kate Hohman to

18   my left, DoITT's Broadband Project Manager and

19   Stanley Shor, Assistant Commissioner for

20   Franchises Administration. Each day across New

21   York City and around the world City government is

22   accessed by more than 100,000 visitors on NYC.gov.

23   Countless more contact us through 311 online and

24   by various social media channels. The underlying

25   common technical denominator in all these

2   interactions is broadband connectivity. As DoITT

3   Commissioner, New York City CIO Carole Post

4   recently noted, a digital world made smaller than

5   ever before by common technologies we can all use

6   and share still remains an awfully big place for

7   those without access to broadband. Accordingly,

8   the Bloomberg Administration has developed a

9   comprehensive strategy focused on targeted

10   initiatives to expand access to the vital

11   infrastructure of the 21st Century, broadband

12   technology. DoITT helps lead these efforts to

13   enhance broadband adoption in underserved

14   communities across the City. By tapping the

15   City's regulatory authority over cable franchise

16   providers, we help bring free and low cost wi-fi

17   and other tech improvements to public parks,

18   community centers, and commercial sectors valued

19   at more than $60 million. And by securing $42

20   million in federal stimulus moneys, we're helping

21   increase broadband access for public school

22   students and families, and to launch new, free

23   public computing centers citywide. First, federal

24   stimulus awards. As part of the American Recovery

25   and Reinvestment Act of 2009, approximately $4.7

billion was made available through the Broadband

Technologies Opportunities Program, as the

Chairman noted, or BTOP. This was in the form of

competitive grants in three main categories:

infrastructure, sustainable broadband adoption and

public computer center projects. Despite lobbying

by New York and other cities, only $700 million of

this funding was made available for programs that

target adoption related initiatives in the latter

two categories. Nonetheless, as I noted, the City

secured $42 million in funding for programs to

increase access to affordable broadband service

across underserved communities and low income

public school students. The aggressive lobbying

efforts of both the City Council and the City's

Congressional Delegation were also instrumental to

the City's success in this regard. The same

programs were also benefitting from nearly $16

million in additional matching funds from the

City, private sector and nonprofit partners in

these programs, including all three of the City's

franchised cable providers, Time Warner Cable,

Cablevision and Verizon. In March 2010, the

Department of Commerce awarded DoITT $22 million

2 in BTOP funding for what is known as the NYC

3 Connected Learning Initiative. Over two-and-a-

4 half academic years, NYC Connected Learning will

5 provide more than 18,000 low income sixth grade

6 students and 40,000 public school household

7 members with free home computers, access to

8 discounted broadband service, high quality digital

9 educational resources and digital literacy

10 training to support sustainable adoption of

11 broadband and boost educational outcomes. As of

12 March 31st of this year, the program had served 72

13 schools and 16,365 students, or 35,717 students

14 and household members combined. We also estimate

15 that to-date, nearly 7,000 families have become

16 new adopted broadband adopters through the

17 program, 1,410 of which have subscribed through

18 the attendant discount program offered. In

19 September 2010, Department of Commerce awarded

20 DoITT an additional $20 million in BTOP funding,

21 $14 million of which was awarded for the NYC

22 Connect Communities Initiative to significantly

23 expand the availability and capacity of public

24 computing centers in the City's highest poverty

25 areas. The program is anticipated to serve 40,000

2　　new users weekly across approximately 100

3　　libraries, public housing facilities, senior

4　　centers and community centers. Benefits include

5　　more than 1,000 new work stations and an array of

6　　new resources for digital literacy, employment

7　　support and other critical services. As of March

8　　31st, more than 60 centers across the City had

9　　been open or enhanced. In these centers, work has

10　　included installation of new or improved computer

11　　equipment and other technologies, upgrades to

12　　broadband service speeds, and the introduction of

13　　a wide range of new training programs and outreach

14　　efforts. Finally, $6 million of the September

15　　2010 BTOP award went to fund what is known as NYC

16　　Connected Foundations. This program targets City

17　　transfer school students, those between the ages

18　　of 16 and 21, who have disengaged from high school

19　　and are on, are not on track to graduate, rather.

20　　To help these students develop necessary skills

21　　for graduation, a successful transition to college

22　　and a career, students and their families at up to

23　　43 transfer high schools will receive computer

24　　training, free netbook computers, and access to

25　　discounted broadband service upon completing a

2   credit bearing, digital literacy training course.

3   To-date, 36 locations and more than 2,400 students

4   have a role in the program, with 714 of these

5   students having completed the course and received

6   home computers and discounted broadband offers.

7   Measurement of new broadband adoption within this

8   group is still underway. Taken together, this $42

9   million in federal BTOP funding and the additional

10 $16 million match are key components of the City's

11 strategic commitment to identify innovative means

12 in funding methods to foster greater digital

13 inclusion. The work of several City agencies,

14 including the Department of Education, Department

15 of Parks and Recreation, Department for the Aging,

16 as well as the City's Housing Authority, and all

17 three public library systems, was and remains

18 indispensable to developing these innovative

19 programs. As we enter the final year of our March

20 2010 award and the second half of our September

21 2010 awards, the City is working to assess program

22 successes and challenges and to identify both

23 program updates for the final years of

24 implementation and planning for sustaining program

25 components after grant funds have been expended.

2   As the City's telecommunications agency, DoITT

3   negotiates and administrates franchises with

4   private companies that use the City streets and

5   sidewalks to provide public services, including

6   television, cable television providers. The

7   second major component of the City's broadband

8   technology derives from this authority. - - caps

9   at five percent the maximum amount of revenue

10   municipalities across the country can receive from

11   cable companies, as part of its recent franchise

12   renewals with Time Warner Cable and Cablevision

13   Systems, DoITT negotiated approximately $60

14   million in additional commitments, or $60 million

15   in additional commitments from these companies who

16   arrange broadband specific public benefits. These

17   include adoption and expansion of affordable

18   broadband service. To provide free broadband

19   access to low income communities across the City,

20   Time Warner Cable will fund 40 public computing

21   centers located in facilities run by non--local

22   not-for-profit organizations. Earlier this month,

23   for example, Commissioner Post joined NYCHA, the

24   Department of Youth and Community Development, and

25   local elected officials to open a Time Warner

1

2 Cable Learning Lab at the James Weldon Johnson

3 Community Center in Harlem. The state-of-the-art

4 facility will serve as a vital community service

5 providing children and adults with access to

6 computers, hearing [phonetic] programs and high

7 speed internet. The James Weldon Johnson Center

8 and facilities like it, in addition to the

9 approximately 100 centers being expanded and/or

10 created under the NYC Connected Community Program

11 as described earlier. And for its part,

12 Cablevision Systems will expand access to high

13 speed broadband in its service areas by upgrading

14 the free internet service it provides to 75 public

15 library branches in The Bronx and in Brooklyn.

16 Broadband and public spaces. Together, Time

17 Warner Cable and Cablevision will spend

18 approximately $10 million by Autumn 2013 to create

19 wi-fi access points in city parks across the five

20 boroughs and to maintain systems through the life

21 of the franchise agreements, which is 2020. This

22 service will be free to all users for up to 30

23 minutes a month, with a nominal fee of .99 per day

24 thereafter, and free at all times to Time Warner

25 Cable and Cablevision subscribers. The expansion

of wi-fi in public spaces, as part of the cable

franchise renewals is in addition to AT&T's five

year commitment to the City for free wi-fi in 26

park locations in 20 parks across the five

boroughs. Currently, 20 locations in 15 parks and

at least one in each borough, are providing the

free public wi-fi today, with another half dozen

coming online by year's end. Broadband in

traditionally underserved areas. Both cable

companies will invest an additional nearly $2

million each year of their contracts to bring

fiber into commercial or industrial buildings not

currently being served by them, as directed by the

City. Time Warner Cable has also committed to

installing fiber optic cable down 20 miles of

street per year to upgrade nonresidential blocks

and will this year also be wiring the whole of the

Brooklyn Navy Yard. We expect these investments

to improve and improve in a sustainable way the

service options in a number of the City's

nonresidential areas. Moreover, the cable

franchise renewal agreements I just described help

also to foster a more vibrant marketplace by

solidifying for the first time long term direct

2   competition among the City's cable television

3   providers. This stage was set with a historic

4   citywide cable television franchise the City

5   granted Verizon in 2008, for a build out of its

6   fire system to all New York City households by

7   2014, a deployment which remains on track today.

8   In addition to the initiatives described above,

9   our supporting role continues on innovative

10   broadband accessibility programs like the virtual

11   senior center at the Ben Rosenthal Senior Center

12   in Flushing, for example. A partnership between

13   DFTA's self help and corporate sponsor Microsoft,

14   the virtual senior center enhances the lives of

15   homebound older adults by using computer, video

16   and internet technology to help them interact with

17   their peers. Since its launch in 2010, the

18   program has tripled in size with each

19   participating senior receiving a desktop computer

20   with broadband internet service, a touch screen

21   monitor, webcam and microphone, tools that allow

22   them to see, hear and interact with seniors and

23   staff. Targeted programs like these are at the

24   heart of the City's broadband strategy, a strategy

25   that employs an array of diversified measures and

1

2 resources at underserved communities citywide, to

3 ensure access to and promote continued adoption of

4 broadband technology. Building upon these

5 initiatives gives us an amazing opportunity to

6 further solidify New York City as a leader in

7 digital inclusion for communities that need it

8 most, and we look forward to further delivering on

9 that promise with public, private and nonprofit

10 sectors alike. Thank you for very much for your

11 time this morning, and we'll be happy to try and

12 address some of your questions.

13   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thank you so

14 much. Let me recognize Council Member Weprin, who

15 has joined us in today's hearing. I have a few

16 question and Council Member Weprin has questions.

17 We'd love to hear them and the other Council

18 Members, as well. My first question, you know, I

19 was reading the brief, I was surprised to, to be

20 informed that in just, and it was in my, in my

21 initial opening statement, that The Bronx,

22 Brooklyn, and Queens, have lower broadband use

23 than the national average. And I was surprised,

24 because we're in New York City. And can you

25 explain why that's the case?

 1

 2   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: I can't, can

 3   you? Just introduce yourself.

 4   KATE HOHMAN: My name's Kate

 5   Hohman, Project Manager at DoITT for a variety of

 6   broadband related programs. As you've probably

 7   seen, the City's data doesn't specifically

 8   identify those boroughs as having, as having lower

 9   broadband adoption rates for different reasons

10   than the City at large. The City--sure, sorry.

11   Our, our data primarily shows that broadband

12   adoption lags among low income residents citywide,

13   particularly as opposed to moderate and higher

14   income residents, and it shows that the barriers

15   to adoption within those populations tends to be

16   multiple, including affordability of broadband

17   service, as well as computer equipment, lack of

18   digital literacy skills, as well as a failure to,

19   or a failure to sort of appreciate the value of

20   broadband for their unique needs and lives. And

21   so, that's the kind of, that's the emphasis of the

22   City's data, and those are the obstacles that

23   we're primarily trying to address, and that's the

24   population that we're primarily trying to address,

25   with our NYC Connected--

1

2   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Let me see if

3   I understand you. You're saying that we don't

4   have data indicating by borough, the data is just

5   by socioeconomic status?

6   KATE HOHMAN: I'm sorry, what I was

7   saying was that--

8   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I don't

9   understand this.

10   KATE HOHMAN: --we do have data

11   that breaks down by borough what the adoption

12   levels are, but our study didn't conclude that the

13   reasons for low adoption differed among the

14   different boroughs.

15   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: But help me

16   understand why we're lower than the national

17   average. I mean, this is, we--we're constantly

18   getting funding, the City is, I would imagine

19   we're the most innovative City in the United

20   States, when it comes to technology. Why are we

21   lagging behind? I mean, is there something I'm

22   not getting?

23   KATE HOHMAN: I mean, our data,

24   what our data primarily shows is that the primary

25   barrier is income level, and that's common among

cities nationwide. And then specifically, within

low income communities in New York City, we found

that barriers to adoption included those factors

that I mentioned: affordability, digital literacy

skills and appreciation of the value of broadband.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So what are

the other cities that do have pop--similar

populations that we do have, and actually have

less resources; and yet, they're doing better than

we are? Why are they doing better than we are in

those cases?

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Actually, I'm

sorry, Chairman, I--So, are the cities doing

better? 'Cause I know you said you baselined it

against the national average. National average

would assumably include suburban areas, other

areas as well. So, I'd be interested to see how

New York City compared to other cities, and how

the cities overall compared to the national

average.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So let me ask

you this question--

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: I don't know--

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay, so

2   like, let me, let me bring it back to you, have

3   you done any studies, comparative studies,

4   comparative studies showing how you compare to

5   other, larger cities that have similar

6   populations?

7   KATE HOHMAN: Yeah, our 2006 to '07

8   Broadband Assessment Study did look at how our

9   levels compared to those of other cities, and

10   found that our levels were very comparable. Data

11   that's been published since then has demonstrated

12   that, you know, the same kind of barrier--other

13   cities face the same kind of barriers that our

14   residents do.

15   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And the other

16   cities, were you able to identify any other cities

17   that are, were doing better than we are?

18   KATE HOHMAN: I don't, I don't

19   recall offhand.

20   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: You don't

21   recall?

22   KATE HOHMAN: But we could follow

23   up on that.

24   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. I

25   would like to see that data, if you--if you could

2   produce that data. I have another question, I

3   have a lot of questions. But first of all, let me

4   recognize Council Member Tish James, who has

5   joined us. We were in the same meeting this

6   morning, and it's good to see you here. According

7   to a study in 2008, NYCHA residents have a lower

8   band, broadband adoption rate of 26 percent. Has

9   this number been raised through the NYC Connected

10   communities program? Have you seen it increase?

11   KATE HOHMAN: NYC Connected

12   Communities is a public computer centers program

13   an so we actually don 't measure broadband

14   adoption, because it's really focused on providing

15   a public place where those who don't have access

16   at home can go and access the internet. S owe

17   don't measure broadband adoption levels within the

18   populations that are served in that program. We

19   do measure it with our other two NYC Connected

20   Learning and Foundations programs.

21   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Would it be

22   useful to have that data?

23   KATE HOHMAN: I mean, it's possible

24   that it would be useful. The focus, as I said, in

25   that program is really on public access rather

2   than on fostering in-home adoption of broadband.

3   So, it's a, it's a sort of secondhand piece of

4   information for that, for those, for that program,

5   but--

6   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: If it's

7   helpful, we can use, we can certainly, obviously

8   liaise with - - see if they do any measuring of

9   the stuff aside and apart from the program, they

10   may well do that.

11   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I think

12   that'll be useful information.

13   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: - - and see

14   what they have.

15   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Especially in

16   trying to meet the goal.

17   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Sure.

18   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: We were

19   talking about. Council Member Tish James has some

20   questions and I have many others right after that.

21   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So, thank

22   you, Mr. Chair. I just want you to know at the

23   earlier meeting, you left and I mentioned all that

24   you have done, from yesterday, and how they really

25   need to use you in a book. [background comment]

2   And he knows--well, this has nothing to do with

3   this Committee, so I'm going to speak into the mic

4   when I talk about the Committee, but we need to

5   talk about that.

6   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay.

7   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: But I just

8   walked in and I heard a statement which--and first

9   let me apologize for being late--but I just heard

10   a statement which really offends me. And the

11   statement was something like this, and correct me

12   if I'm wrong, it said the reason why we have not

13   invested in low income communities because of the

14   inability of the community to appreciate the

15   benefits of broadband access. I think that's an

16   ignorant statement. I think that's a statement

17   based on bias. I think it's a statement which

18   unfortunately does not appreciate what is

19   happening on the ground. I represent downtown

20   Brooklyn and parts of Central Brooklyn, but I

21   happen to be someone who has been visiting the

22   last five boroughs, and I can tell you that there

23   is a great appreciation for broadband access. And

24   I think it's statements like that which have led

25   to this digital divide. The fact is that there is

2   a duopoly in the City of New York, and you know

3   that as well as I do. And the fact is, is that

4   we, we, the Mayor's Office, should use the bully

5   pulpit to challenge this duopoly, and to provide

6   more broadband access to low income communities.

7   The fat is that there is a significant number of

8   low income families and people of color who would

9   like to take advantage of the benefits of

10   broadband access, but the benefits are just not

11   there. In the district that I represent in

12   Prospect Heights, we have big holes. I will not

13   call those black holes, because I think that term

14   is offensive, as well. We have holes where

15   individuals get their phones dropped, their

16   broadband access is just not available, and

17   individuals have contacted me repeatedly regarding

18   this hold on not only Central Brooklyn but all

19   throughout the City of New York and this duopoly.

20   So, I would hope that the Mayor's Office would use

21   the bully pulpit, would perhaps come up with some

22   creative legislation, would take this national,

23   make this a national campaign, to break up this

24   duopoly, and to provide more broadband access to

25   low income communities and communities of color

2   who desperately need it. And this notion that

3   that community cannot appreciate the benefits, I

4   challenge you on. I welcome you to all of the

5   cafés in my district, or we have hotspots where

6   they are packed with people who look like me, who

7   want to take advantage of the benefits. And, let

8   me also say, that I have funded all of my schools

9   in my district, and unfortunately, and it's, it's

10   really unfortunate, that there's not

11   infrastructure in a lot of the schools in my

12   district and schools in Council Member Cabrera,

13   they do not have the infrastructure. I recently

14   went to a school in my district where we--where

15   the, there was a number of autistic children. I

16   had gone prior to me providing them handheld

17   computers, handheld devices, and the school was in

18   a disorder. When I provided these children,

19   autistic children, with handheld devices, you

20   could hear a pin drop in the classroom, because

21   all of them were engaged. All of them were

22   engaged. And this is a school where, again,

23   biases, people thought that the school, the

24   children were unteachable, that the school was

25   ungovernable. And I challenge that, too, as well.

All you have to do is be on the ground, know what

is happening on the ground, have a relationship

with the community, and have a relationship that

does not come in the door with any biases. You

hang you biases up at the door. And you come in

with an open heart and you come in with an open

mind, with a willingness to help, ad to close this

divide, because it's leaving our communities

behind. And I challenge anyone in this room and

anyone who's going to be part of the panel, that

there is no interest. All you need to do is

invest, just as you have invested in the Navy

Yard, which is part of my district. And the only

reason why people are investing in the Navy Yard

is because this Administration is making it a

priority, because of the technology triangle that

we are trying to create. And it's that same

priority, that same impetus, that same desire,

would put forth or would be a priority in this

Administration, in communities of color that have

been ignored for far too long, we would not have

this divide. No question, Mr. Chair, but a

comment that I could not allow to be ignored, and

needed to be responded to. Thank you.

1

2   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Well, I have

3   a question. How would you like to answer?

4   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Yeah, can I,

5   can I for the record?

6   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Sure.

7   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Respond. So,

8   thank you, Council Member, and good morning.

9   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: [off mic]

10   Good morning.

11   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: So, I think

12   there might've been a misunderstanding or maybe we

13   could've stated it better. But we at no point

14   said there was not a desire in any community

15   across the City, not to access broadband. What we

16   were citing was a series of findings done by

17   Diamond Consulting, which is, does these studies

18   nationally, and that cities across the country

19   have found, that barriers to broadband access can

20   be any number of factors. It can be the high cost

21   of the service or high, too high cost for certain

22   people to afford. It can be the unavailability in

23   certain areas. It could also be in some areas, a

24   lack of appreciation for the service. Not the

25   unwillingness to want to have it, or to adopt it,

2 ║ just not understanding how valuable it can be.

3 ║ COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And I, and I

4 ║ seri--and I challenge you on that statement. And

5 ║ I just--

6 ║ NICHOLAS SBORDONE: But I, I'm just

7 ║ relating to you what was found and what, again,

8 ║ irrespective of whether that may or may not be the

9 ║ case, we have pursued and received $42 million in

10 ║ federal stimulus funding, $14 million of which is

11 ║ put directly back into those communities, through

12 ║ the Connected communities program, through

13 ║ libraries, parks, senior centers, community

14 ║ centers, etc. And if you'd like, after the

15 ║ meeting we can get your office a list of all of

16 ║ the - - in your district--

17 ║ COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES:

18 ║ [interposing] Let me, let me just say, I worked

19 ║ with--

20 ║ NICHOLAS SBORDONE: --that has this

21 ║ stuff, and is being benefited by it. And then we

22 ║ also have the other balance of that total for

23 ║ public school students in communities across the

24 ║ City. So, I would just let you know that we are

25 ║ not at all saying that, we were just letting you

1

2   know the, those varied and we think effective

3   measures we're taking to combat that.

4   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Let me just

5   respond, Mr. Chair, if you will. There are so

6   many opportunities, job opportunities, economic

7   development opportunities, for communities where

8   there's high rates of unemployment. I want to

9   thank the former Chair, who just walked in the

10   room, Council Member Brewer. As you know, she's

11   been in the forefront, and she instituted

12   broadband access in public spaces, particularly in

13   our parks. And it was Council Member Brewer who

14   did a park in my--two--playgrounds in my district.

15   And I want to thank her for that. As of last

16   Saturday, when I visited the playground, I can't

17   even walk into the playground right now, because

18   so many people are taking advantage of that

19   initiative. And because so many people want to

20   talk to me about potholes, but anyway. But my

21   point is, is that thinking outside of the box and,

22   you know, trying to address these holes that

23   continue to exist in low income communities, will

24   go a long way, one, in addressing poverty; two,

25   will go a long way in connecting us as not only

global, not only nation, as a nation, but

globally; and three, will do a, will do, will

make, will increase our efforts in trying to

improve educational outcomes in this City and in

this nation. But again, I--this duopoly, I would

hope that you could focus on this duopoly and how

unfortunately there are two major, multinational

corporations which basically are the only two

players in this game, and a number of individuals

have contacted me and have said, you know, we need

more opportunities, we need more sources, we need

more diversification. And I would hope that you

can speak to that issue.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Absolutely,

happy to. Chairman. So first off, I concur,

your, we will probably seldom find a bigger

supporter of Council Member Brewer than I am.

Thank you, Council Member, she works with DoITT

for a number of years and has been a true champion

for broadband access and technology access overall

to the City. So, thanks to the Council Member for

that. The bid about the duopoly, I'm not sure--

well, let me take a step back and kind of explain

some of the background here. I would disagree

that it's a duopoly, because it isn't a duopoly.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: We have Time Warner Cable, and Cablevision; we also have Verizon FIOS, which is now in the process of being built out across the entire City. In 2008, and we thought this actually was, not to toot our own horns, but we actually thought this was a pretty fair example of thinking outside the box. The history of cable in the City, if you're not aware, I'll go through, Chairman, if it's okay with you and the Committee, there were these things originally we built out in the late '70s and early '80s was that you had Cablevision, Time Warner come in, and they wanted to build out the City for cable service. Each had regions that, of the City that they built out, and they were content to stay in those areas and regions of the City. If at any point during the course of that 30 or so years, any one of those companies wanted to start building into the other company's area, or vice versa, or if any other company wanted to come in from the outside and start building into those areas, the City has always stood ready and

2   continues to stand ready to invite any and all

3   competition in in for any company that wants to

4   make what would need to be a multibillion capital

5   investment. Now, that said, in 2008, we took a

6   big step towards that, because Verizon came in and

7   said, "We want to build out the entire City,"

8   first time ever, a citywide cable television

9   franchise. Which means, when it's completed, for

10   the first time ever, every New York City resident

11   will have true, head-to-head competition in the

12   cable market, for the first time. So, I live in

13   Spanish Harlem, Time Warner Cable is my cable

14   provider. When Verizon's complete, I have to

15   check if it's actually there now, I will have

16   direct choice between the Time Warner or Verizon.

17   Anybody living in the Time Warner service area

18   would have the same. Anybody living in the

19   Cablevision area would also have a direct choice

20   between Cablevision and FIOS. So, we think that

21   more companies are better, greater competition,

22   would hopefully lead to lower prices and more

23   competitive prices, and increased services. So--

24   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And I agree

25   with you, I believe in greater competition, and I

just want to also thank Council Member Cabrera for

focusing on, you know, communities of color and

low income communities, it's been his priority.

And I just want to thank him for this hearing.

But it just doesn't, it has always boggled my

brain that when I moved from Prospect Heights, the

only cable company that I could take advantage of

was Cablevision; and then when I moved to Clinton

Hill/Fort Green, now I'm limited to Time Warner.

Verizon/FIOS has reached out to me, as well. But

my friends in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville

don't have that option. They are limited, like I

said, to the duopoly. So, I thank you for this

exchange, I thank you for--language is a very

powerful thing, and it can be used in a lot of

different ways to hurt people, to offend people,

and to silence people. And so I'm very sensitive

to language. I thank you for this opportunity, I

thank you, Council Member Cabrera, for all that

you are doing.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thank you so

much, Council Member Tish James, it's a very

important question that needed to be addressed.

Which let me just follow up one question, then I'm

going to have Council Member Brewer, who has

joined us here, and she was mentioned five or six

times, and rightly so, because she has left a

tremendous legacy in this Committee and work. Is

the Verizon/FIOS network, is it still on track to

be completed by June of 2014?

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: It is. I--let

me give you a quick background on it, and then I

can turn it over to, to Stanley Shor. As part of

the franchise agreement, there is a schedule for

build out. And started in 2008, the balance of

what was left in 2008 when the agreement was

finalized 2009, and runs through 2014. As at the

end of 2011, Verizon needed to have, per their

franchise agreement, 66 percent of the whole City

built out, so that's approximately two-thirds of

the City. And within each borough, at least 60

percent of each borough needed to be completed.

Verizon has verified to us, or it was reported to

us, that they are on track with that build, which

is fantastic. As a, obviously, regulator, we

thanked them for the effort, and we also say,

"Great, and now we're going to verify that build,"

2   as we always do. So what we're in the process now

3   of doing is setting up some time to actually have

4   our staff, they put on a hardhat, they go down

5   into the sewer, spot checks of our choosing, to

6   make sure that the cable and the fiber's laid

7   where it needs to be laid. And that's how we go

8   about then verifying that Verizon is on track.

9   But all indications so far are that it is.

10   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: When are you

11   going to be able to get back to us with the

12   verification?

13   [background comments]

14   STANLEY SHOR: Is that on now?

15   Yes. Hi, Stanley Shor, I'm Assistant commissioner

16   for Franchise Administration at DoITT. We go

17   through a process every year with Verizon, where

18   they inform us that they've met their goal for

19   2011 and 66 percent of the City. We then ask for

20   the census tracts that they have completed. We

21   then, once we get that information, pick out

22   locations throughout the census tracts to go check

23   on. So, it's a process, they have an incentive to

24   move along with it, because they have a

25   multimillion dollar performance bond that they

2   can't reduce unless we have certified that they

3   have made that milestone. So, I can't tell you

4   today that I'll have the, be able to tell you a

5   month from now that we've done that, because we

6   have, it's a process back and forth with them.

7   But we, we can let you know as soon as we've

8   verified and allowed for the bar reduction.

9   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: What do you

10   expect, like two months, three, four? I mean,

11   what is it, I'm --we've been through this before,

12   so--

13   STANLEY SHOR: [interposing] I

14   expect another two months on this.

15   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Two months?

16   Okay. Very good. I have another question that

17   I'm going to come back with, but I'm going to turn

18   it over to Council Member Brewer.

19   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you,

20   Mr. Chair, for your interest, and Tish I want to

21   go to that park with you.

22   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: [off mic]

23   No.

24   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I love that

25   park.

2   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: [off mic]

3   They talk about potholes.

4   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, 'cause

5   they're your potholes, not my potholes.

6   [laughter]   And I want to get us, when you go down

7   in the manholes, I want to go with you, Nick, if I

8   could?

9   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: I can think of

10   nothing better that I'd like to do.

11   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I love

12   going in the manholes.

13   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: She's

14   special.

15   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: One

16   question I have, and I think it's thanks to you

17   and all the wonderful broadband hearings we had a

18   while ago, that the BTOP money came through, and I

19   want to thank DoITT and the Department of

20   Education and Dr. Kamber and everyone who worked

21   on it.   But I think you're newer to this, what

22   happens when the money ends?   Because the

23   incredible infrastructure that's been developed

24   needs to continue.   I know you talked about

25   thinking about it, but we're not in your thoughts.

1

2   'Cause there's too, obviously many aspects to this

3   BTOP money.

4   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Sure.   You want

5   to--? [background comments] Yeah, I mean, I

6   have, it's something that I know we had kind of

7   talked about earlier.   What we're doing now, with

8   the Department of Commerce, is working in

9   partnership with them with other cities across the

10   country, to kind of cost out what the long term

11   solutions to sustainable broadband adoption might

12   look like.   Over the next several months, and I

13   wish I had something that I can say right now that

14   it's rock solid and ironclad, we don't yet, we're

15   in the process of administering the program.   And

16   also kind of putting some thoughts around how a

17   year hence, how this stuff might begin to be

18   addressed in a sustainable way.   But what we'll be

19   doing over the coming months, and probably over

20   the course of the next year, with Kate and her

21   team, is working to identify specific lessons

22   learned from, from the BTOP money, what worked,

23   what could've worked better.   And then

24   implementing solutions from that data that looks

25   to align the long term needs of a broadband, a

national broadband adoption and inclusion

strategy. So--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. We

have some kind of an advisory group on that?

Maybe some of the folks who were the posse for the

broadband hearings? Or some group that could help

you think about it? Or is it all going to be

internal?

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Well, I mean,

we're, we're in contact with, with people all the

time, private partners, nonprofit partners, etc.,

but I see no reason why we wouldn't want to have,

you know - -

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: A posse.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: --at the table,

to, you know, advise us and just give us the

information and let us kind of wade through what

will be out there.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

Second issue is with the Department of Educate, I

think the in-house school, parent, home student is

working; the problem is the adoption rates. And I

didn't know if you had been tracking them.

Because as you know, at least with Time Warner, I

2   think with Cablevision, you do get a discount if

3   you are a family that has not yet had Time Warner

4   or Cablevision, and obviously you're in a Title I

5   school, as a parent, so it's likely that you are

6   not having a lot of income. My question, though,

7   my problem is that my understanding is that the

8   cable companies are concerned that if you have had

9   a turn off in the past, and I've certainly had

10   one, not paying the bill, I'm sure, in my history,

11   then you are not eligible for this discount. Have

12   you been tracking the adoption rates for families?

13   In other words, you get the computer at home,

14   thanks to the BTOP money, you have amazing

15   training by Computers for Youth, but in order to

16   continue this issue of access at home, you need a

17   low cost adoption rate. So, I'm wondering if

18   you've been tracking that issue?

19   KATE HOHMAN: Yes, we have been

20   tracking adoption carefully, in both the Connected

21   Learning and Connected Foundations programs. We

22   shared some data about where we are with the

23   Connected Learning program in our testimony.

24   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Mm-hmm, I

25   saw that.

2 KATE HOHMAN: We track actually our

3 program, one of our key program partners, CFY,

4 who's going to be testifying later, does the

5 tracking for the, for both programs. We track

6 both overall broadband adoption, whether that's

7 through our discount programs or through a broader

8 set of options available to those families. As

9 well as specifically adoption of the discount

10 program that we make available.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: But when

12 you find--I happen to know this is a problem,

13 sometimes I ask a question and I already know the

14 answer. And so the question is, there is an

15 adoption program. So, my question--problem--so

16 what are you doing about it?

17 KATE HOHMAN: Are you talking, are

18 you talking generally about the families we serve?

19 There's an adoption problem generally, or--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: The

21 families that you serve, people have histories of

22 not paying the cable bill. I understand that,

23 cable bills are high. So my question is, my

24 understanding is, that some of the cable companies

25 are stating different families had a cable problem

in the past, are not going to get the discount.

You don't get the discount, you're going to pay

$50 a month for internet. That's not going to

happen. So, my question is, have you been talking

to the companies, or do you think there's no

problem?

KATE HOHMAN: The agreements that,

that we have through the program, these discount

programs, is between CFY and the cable providers.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: All right,

so I need to ask CFY, is what you're telling me.

KATE HOHMAN: If you--Well, I can

tell you that they do impose certain eligibility

requirements.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yeah.

KATE HOHMAN: And that we in the

DOE and CFY, have worked with those companies to

try to do everything we can to make sure that the

families we're serving do subscribe to broadband,

whether through the discount program other

otherwise, to--and to mitigate any barriers that

they have in the form of those eligibility

requirements or otherwise.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, I'll

leave it at that. I won't go into it any more.

My final question is the, with the parks, I mean,

you talked about it, I know that, you know, I

understand the AT&T program and I understand the

franchise program. Can you, maybe you did this

already, in which case you can tell me you did--

Did you give dates for both of those programs as

to when they start and when they finish? In terms

of those two franchise and then the AT&T? 'Cause

maybe it's all up on the internet, but I haven't

been able to find it.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Okay. The AT&T

gift to the City, they started in June of last

year, building out the parks, they had their first

parks opened up at that point, and they should be

done by the end of this year.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: End of

calendar year, 2012?

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: And as far as

the Time Warner Cable and Cablevision program,

that agreement was signed in September of 2011,

we've been working with them, working with the

Parks Department, the borough presidents, going

over the locations, and we hope to be able to

announce some parks by the beginning of the

summer, that have been built out with them. They

have two years to spend $10 million. So, they're,

we would say two years from last September, we

expect to have a lot of parks done. I mean, I

think, it's part of, it's sort of a process in

figuring out how to best spend the money.

Initially, we estimated 32 parks, we believed that

we could do more than that. It's, certain

locations are much less expensive than other

locations. So, it's a process working with the

companies, working out designs that the Parks

Department can live with, and we're very hopeful

to have a few good locations announced within the

next couple of months, and then build outs more

over the summer and by the end of the year, get

enough experience so that we know how to spend the

rest of the money next year.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, and

you're checking with NYC Wireless? I know that

was a group that I suggested, I know you met with

them. You know, I have issues with this

2   particular program, but moving that aside, are you

3   checking with NYC Wireless along the way?

4   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: As far as the

5   recommended locations?

6   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Everything.

7   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: The--as far as

8   what? As far as--

9   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: NYC

10 Wireless has done a lot of parks, they did the

11 park that Council Member Tish James mentioned;

12 they are--people understand how to stretch a

13 dollar, in terms of making sure that the park is

14 accessible broadband wise. Wireless.

15   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Well, we have

16 not been, but we will - -

17   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

18 [interposing] I've been mentioning it, as Mr.

19 Sbordone knows, many times, to check with NYC

20 Wireless, because they really know how to do it,

21 and there was a lot of concern, we've had several

22 hearings on this topic. There was a different way

23 to spend the $10 million, your way prevailed. But

24 I do think they have an idea about how to stretch

25 that $10 million more than we could ever think to

do so. They have a lot of experience. Anybody

agree with that?

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: I mean, the--is

this still on? Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: You know, to

the extent that there's an understanding that the

City doesn't always have all the answers, I think

that's important. So, sure, we're, we're happy to

speak to - -

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[interposing] So you'll set up a meeting to go

over some of these ideas with them.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: I think it

doesn't hurt to talk to them and see what they,

they have to offer, sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And

then jus finally, there, I call it Dr. Camber's

program, but the fact--Oaks [phonetic] has done a

great job. Are you also going to be thinking

about how to work beyond that BTOP program? The

libraries are obviously a place where sustainable

ongoing technology is needed, we had a librarian

here in the other day. And the issue there is how

2   to look at libraries for the books that we care so

3   deeply about, but at the same time technology.

4   And so, I guess my question is, is DoITT in touch

5   with the libraries for ongoing either Department

6   of Commerce, sustainability, etc. How do you

7   react or integrate with the libraries and

8   technology?

9   KATE HOHMAN: So as you know,

10   they're three of our key partners in the

11   communities program. We are in conversation with

12   them, the larger sustainability efforts that Nick,

13   Nick described are, we're doing that as part of

14   the communities program, as well. I would say

15   many of the investments that, that we're making

16   through that program will have a long term impact,

17   things like new equipment, upgraded broadband

18   speeds, those tend to have a long term impact on

19   their own. But we're also having detailed

20   conversations with them, and in the process of

21   evaluating the individual program components to

22   assess what sustainability looks like across the

23   program and for each of those individual partners.

24   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And

25   then finally, NYCHA adoption, I know you talked

2   about it. Are you tracking the NYCHA adoption?

3   KATE HOHMAN: We spoke about this a

4   bit earlier. We don't actually track broadband

5   adoption, in the NYC Connected Communities

6   Program, because it's a program that's focused on

7   public access. It's, obviously broadband adoption

8   is the key focus of our other two programs, and

9   there we track it very carefully. We track--in

10   the communities program, we track things like

11   increases in users of these centers, increases in

12   training hours provided, things like that.

13   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: But NYCHA,

14   I'm talking about NYCHA developments specifically,

15   you don't track.

16   KATE HOHMAN: The NYCHA Program,

17   the NYCHA component of the communities program--

18   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Just NYCHA

19   in general. Not just the commu--not--in other

20   words in general. We've had this conversation, we

21   need to find ways that NYCHA residents, thick

22   walls being the problem, as many other issues are

23   involved. Are you doing any tracking of NYCHA

24   adoption, period. Not with--nothing to do with

25   BTOP.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Well, we had, we had mentioned is, we would check with NYCHA and see if they have anything by way of that, which would be separate and apart from BTOP, but we're happy to obviously make a call and see what they have to the extent that they do.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thank you so much, Council Member Brewer. I'm curious to know how many--can you give me a breakdown, when it comes to the wireless service is going to be provided in the parks, how many will go per park?

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Sure, I actually have something here. It's actually on the Parks Department website, which I can send the staff afterward. So, what the Parks Department does is they have a listing on their website which describes all the parks that are being built out by AT&T. This is the free wireless provision for the next, I believe it's five, five years.

STANLEY SHOR: Yeah, it's for a five year period.

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Thank you.

1

2 So, it's going to be parks across every borough, I

3 have a listing here. We'll start with The Bronx,

4 just randomly, you know, you might be interested

5 in that. In The Bronx, we have a Devoe Park, we

6 have Joyce Kilmer Park, and a future location,

7 this year, is going to be Hunts Point, Riverside.

8 In Brooklyn, we have a good number, we have a

9 couple of locations in Brooklyn: Bridge Park;

10 Pier One and Pier Six; Fort Green Park; Herbert

11 Von King; McCarran; and Prospect Park. Manhattan,

12 we have a good loca--good number as well, we have

13 a few locations in Battery Park, a few locations

14 in Central Park, we have Marcus Garvey, Thomas

15 Jefferson, which is where the program was

16 launched. Thompson Square. Coming to Holcomb

17 Rucker Park and Howline [phonetic]. In Queens, we

18 have Astoria Park and McDonald Park, coming to

19 Flushing Meadows, Flushing Meadows in Corona. And

20 then in Staten Island, we have Clove Lakes Park,

21 and it's coming to FDR Boardwalk and Beach. In

22 addition, for the cable agreements, and again, as

23 Assistant Commissioner Shor had described, that's

24 coming down the pike a little later after we kind

25 of see how these parks work, we want to make sure

2   that we're not necessarily--

3   STANLEY SHOR: I mean, I can

4   explain to you a little bit more about what

5   they're--there's a process we have. In the

6   agreement with the cable companies, we have a

7   loose structure, which we have to work out with

8   them, but it's a decision, as far as the parks is,

9   is a group decision between the cable company, the

10   Department of Parks, and the Department of

11   Information Technology and Telecommunications,

12   with consultation with the borough presidents.

13   Now, we have, Cablevision has committed $4 million

14   and Time Warner has committed $6 million. So, you

15   have, Cablevision has The Bronx and two-thirds of

16   Brooklyn, so they need to spend their $4 million

17   on their area, and Time Warner will spend its $6

18   million on the rest of the City. So, within that

19   framework, there is a lot of flexibility. We like

20   to hear from the different elected officials,

21   specific locations, specific parks that you're

22   interested in. I can say that in your district,

23   we have the St. James Park, which has been put on

24   our priority list. They have a recreation center

25   there. As part of the contract, we also had a

2   provision to bring video service into a number of

3   park locations where they have evacuation centers,

4   so that in the, you know, the, on the occasion of

5   when we have a hurricane or some other bad weather

6   situation, where people have to be brought into an

7   evacuation center, they will not be without the

8   ability to look at television and see what's going

9   on in the world, 'cause we know that that's one of

10   the big concerns, when you're in that kind of a

11   situation. So, we had, we got, as part of the

12   remote process, about 26 locations in parks that

13   had evacuation centers, we got the cable companies

14   to agree to bring video service into those

15   locations. Those locations already getting a

16   conduit coming in, were given a good look to see

17   whether they could have wi-fi, and so a number of

18   those will have wi-fi in addition. So, and,

19   inside the center and outside the center, in the

20   public park.

21   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Yeah, I, I

22   was, I was, to be honest with you, I was looking

23   for equity in terms of size of population, per

24   borough, and how many parks. Do you see--

25   STANLEY SHOR: We don't have an

2   actual formula, if that--if that's what you're

3   getting at, it's part of the--the balancing act

4   that we in government are trying to do to make

5   sure that every borough and every part of every

6   borough gets service, keeping in mind that there's

7   certain parks in every borough that have a draw

8   that bring people from other places.

9   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Right.

10   STANLEY SHOR: So, we--and that's

11   why I'm saying, recommendations are certainly

12   welcome. The process is not that clear. We can't

13   say, "Oh, we're only going to put them in the

14   places where they're going to be the most use,

15   because then you'll be ignoring certain corners o

16   the City that, where the people want to use it,

17   but they're not there right now because it's not

18   there. So, we're trying to distribute it

19   equitably, and we have this pool of money, and I

20   can't go any further as far as saying, "Okay,

21   there's going to be, The Bronx has this

22   population, so we're going to do this many access

23   points in The Bronx; Manhattan has this

24   population, we're going to have this many access

25   points in Manhattan, because it, it doesn't lend

itself to that kind of formula. So, that being

said, obviously we're going to be scrutinized by

whatever we do, so we're being very careful not to

ignore any part of the City, and make sure that

it's equitable across the, the whole City.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So at the end

of the day, how many parks are you going to end up

with, with all the service providers?

STANLEY SHOR: It's, it's not clear

what--I mean, initially, before we started doing

the process, we thought it was going to be 32

parks. We think it could be a lot more than that,

at this point. That there's way, there's certain

locations that can be done very inexpensively.

There's other locations that are desirable that

would be very expensive to bring into--the service

in, so we have to make decisions on that, whether

it's worth spending $200,000 for a location, if we

could spend $10,000 per location and spread it out

to a lot more locations. So, that's part of the

process. There's going to be some expensive

locations, just because they're where everybody

wants to be. And then there's going to be a lot

of less expensive locations.

2   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I have one

3   last question. Council Member James, go ahead,

4   before I ask the question.

5   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Can I have

6   that list in Brooklyn again?

7   STANLEY SHOR: So, the list in

8   Brooklyn is, this is the listing of AT&T parks,

9   not the listing of what will end up being the

10   parks wired as a result of the cable franchise.

11   There may be some more out there, there may not;

12   we want to try and get it as widespread as we can.

13   We have Prospect Park, McCarron Park, Herbert Von

14   King, Fort Green, and Brooklyn Bridge Park.

15   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay, so,

16   based on those five locations, you know, I

17   represent Fort Green, love Fort Green, and thank

18   you for selecting Fort Green. Prospect Park,

19   obviously grew up there, it was my backyard. Know

20   Von King well, it's part of Bed-Stuy; and Brooklyn

21   Bridge obviously is in Brooklyn Heights. But

22   there's nothing in Brownsville, East New York,

23   South Brooklyn, Sunset Park. So, this is

24   primarily downtown Brooklyn, it's proba--it's all

25   North Brooklyn. And so, we need South Brooklyn,

1

2 and we need more Central Brooklyn. This is more

3 northeast Brooklyn. One Williamsburg, one

4 Brooklyn Heights, one Fort Green, Prospect Park,

5 one Park Slope, and Von King Park is in the

6 beginning of Bedford Stuyvesant, these in, these

7 are, these in, all of these neighborhoods can be

8 best described as gentrified neighborhoods. And,

9 and this is where there is a significant number of

10 your customer base already. But if again, if

11 we're trying to focus on the digital divide, you

12 need to look yonder, to parts unknown in Brooklyn.

13 Again, Brownsville, East New York, South Brooklyn,

14 all of South Brooklyn. Nothing in South Brooklyn

15 at all. And East Brooklyn, Sunset Park, Red Hook,

16 etc. Those neighborhoods, as well. Thank you.

17 NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Absolutely,

18 thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And let me

20 just follow up with that before my last question.

21 I'm going to use a word that I don't hear anymore,

22 is the word "deplore." If, if we can make sure

23 that, but council Member Tish James, so correctly

24 point out, that we make sure that in the poor

25 neighborhoods, we have this availability, because

for many constituents in those district, it may be

the only way to gain access. Or it might be the

easiest way to gain access. And so if you could

put that as a point of consideration, I'm sure

that that's behind your mind, in your strategic

planning, but if it could be up front. Because I

remember the Mayor talking about this, I was there

in the press conference, and that that was going

to be one of the variables that were going to be

closer look at. So, appreciate moving towards

that goal. My last question is related with DoITT

and the work with the Board of Education. I

recall last year, it was the first time, and just

refresh my mind, that lap, that iPads were going

to be allowed to be purchased by public schools,

to be used, in lieu of textbooks. You know, it's

lighter, I remember the days of carrying 30 pounds

worth of textbooks, breaking [laughs] my back. I

love the idea, it's something that young people

love, too, and they're familiar with. Can you

give me an update on that? I think it's the wave

of the future. I think it's another way for young

people in household, once a young person has an

iPad, pretty much the whole household now have

access to a computer. Can you give me an update

on that.

[background comments]

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Okay. I

remember, I remember learning about it probably in

much the same way you did, through the press and

through the media and whatever else. What we can

do is certainly reach out to the DOE and Pat and

get you some more details. I--I think, too, we

thought was a great idea as well when I saw it. I

remember days of kind of backbreaking moving--I

always took every book home every night and

whenever else, and it was, it would be a lot

easier, I think to carry an iPad, especially if we

could have everything in one place. So, we can

check with them and find out what the status and

when that began, and any plans, if they exist, to

expand it.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Maybe the

overarching question is, how closely are you

working with the Board of Education regarding this

particular--?

NICHOLAS SBORDONE: So, I think the

answer, and Kate may be able to elucidate further,

2 we're working with them very closely on, on BTOP,

3 on the execution of the BTOP programs, making sure

4 the program is rolled out, the students are,

5 students are trying to get or being reached, their

6 family's being reached, they're getting the

7 materials put in their hands. In terms of its

8 overall efforts, though, DOE obviously would be

9 the lead on what it's doing with its, with its

10 student and family members, but we can, we can

11 check with them. Do you have anything to add?

12 That's about right. But we can certainly check on

13 the iPad.

14   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. Well,

15 I want to thank you all. Thank you for your

16 answers. And looking forward to getting some

17 reports back from you. Thank you so much.

18   NICHOLAS SBORDONE: Okay, thank

19 you.

20   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Just a

21 moment. We're going to be having, I'm going to

22 call the next group to come forward for the next

23 panel. Tom Kamber, from OATS, oh there you are,

24 Tom, it's been a while; Cindy Menz-Erb from CFY;

25 D.C. Vito, from The Lamp; Michael Santorelli,

2   hopefully I said that right, from ACLPC, NY Law

3   School; and Michael Cambiani [phonetic], if I say

4   your name wrong, oh, from Mel's, fantastic, it's

5   good to see you, Michael. Please identify

6   yourselves and you're ready to begin.

7   [pause, background noise]

8   MICHAEL SANTORELLI: Hi. Thank

9   you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to testify

10   today. My name is Michael Santorelli, I'm a

11   Director of the Advanced Communications Law and

12   Policy Institute at New York Law School. The ACLP

13   analyzes key regulatory and public policy issues

14   in the advanced communications arena in an effort

15   to facilitate the development of sound policies

16   that benefit all consumers. And prior to joining

17   the ACLP, I was a staffer on this Committee when

18   Council Member Brewer was Chairwoman, so it's

19   great to be back. And the Committee's to be

20   commended for continuing to focus on these

21   critical issues. So, at our program over the last

22   few years, we have focused a lot of our work on

23   broadband. We have studied the mechanics and

24   feasibility of regulating this technology, we have

25   assessed its many impacts on specific user groups,

like senior citizens in sectors like education and

healthcare. And in the substantial filing to the

FCC, we identified dozens of barriers to more

robust broadband adoption by many groups. But a

common thread throughout all of this work has been

a desire to identify best practices for enhancing

connectivity and meaningful use of broadband. And

focusing on these issues is essential, and as you

pointed out in your opening remarks, Chairman, the

sheer power of broadband can only be realized if

it is adopted and used in meaningful ways. But as

you mentioned, only about, about 30 percent of

adults remain unconnected. And among these 30

percent are majorities of key demographic groups,

like senior citizens and people with disabilities,

African-Americans and Hispanics in low income

households. These trends are evident in every

municipality in the United States, as--and in New

York City, as you had mentioned. But fortunately,

New York City offers compelling case study in how

to bolster broadband adoption and meaningful use.

Over the past decade, a group of new York City

based nonprofits, many of which are here today,

has emerged as nationally recognized innovators in

2   harnessing the power of technology to address

3   critical social priorities and problems. These

4   organizations, which form the core of the social

5   impact technology network, represent diverse

6   sectors but share a vision for applying advances

7   in information and communications technology, to

8   improve public service delivery, enhanced program

9   outcomes and support vulnerable New Yorkers. And

10   as has been discussed, many of these efforts have

11   been benefiting greatly from a short term infusion

12   of federal funding through the BTOP program.

13   Through these programs, through Connected learning

14   and Connected community, organizations like CFY,

15   MOUSE and OATS, have expanded their reach and are

16   working to connect thousands of older adults, low

17   income households and middle school students to

18   broadband for the first time. And these funds are

19   also creating the opportunities for groups like

20   The Lamp and - - their footprints and deliver key

21   social services like workforce development and

22   digital literacy training in the communities. The

23   many successes of these expanded efforts have had

24   several critical aspects of the social

25   infrastructure through which these services are

2   being deployed. And foremost among these is

3   whether and to what extent these efforts are

4   sustainable once the grant funding runs out next

5   year. Sustaining these programs and growing them

6   over time, should be a priority for the City

7   going forward. These organizations and their

8   leaders represent critical links in a network of

9   relationships that connect a wide range of

10   schools, nonprofits, foundations, corporations and

11   policy makers. And these groups have the unique

12   ability to bring together public and private

13   resources and focus them on a particular group or

14   community. And as will be discussed by others

15   here today, the, these groups share many common

16   goals and a strategic orientation for using

17   technology to achieve priority social objectives.

18   Devising and implementing a comprehensive post-

19   BTOP strategy for leveraging these many unique

20   resources would yield enormous benefits for the

21   City and its residents. And by harnessing these

22   groups, existing programmatic resources and

23   expertise and expanding them via public/private

24   partnerships, the City could create a coherent,

25   sustainable program to develop and deploy

2   technology related innovations in priority

3   sectors. Thank you and I look forward to any

4   questions that you might have.

5   THOMAS KAMBER: Got new microphones

6   here. My names Tom Kamber, I'm the Executive

7   Director of Older Adults Technology Services,

8   OATS. And I want to thank Council Member Cabrera,

9   Chairman Cabrera, for calling this hearing, and

10   Councilwoman James for her passion and support of

11   technology issues for communities that need it.

12   And I'll take a minute to just to kind of bring

13   the topic to the area of seniors. And what we're

14   going to do is basically, you know, run through

15   these kind of perspectives at each group housing,

16   allow you to delve in a little bit. I'm not going

17   to read every word from the testimony 'cause I

18   think it'd be better to have a little bit of a

19   conversation. OATS, for those of you who have not

20   heard me talk, do this before, we're, we've been

21   around since 2004, with--we run the largest

22   municipally based technology program for older

23   adults in the country. We have talk over 11,000

24   free classes at 70 different locations in New York

25   City since 2004. And we've trained almost 5,000

2   seniors to use the internet. I will say that

3   seniors, I mean, to toot the horn of my particular

4   demographic, if you read some of the studies,

5   seniors are arguably the least adopting group in

6   the country. They, just the factor of being old

7   seems to have an effect on people's adoption rates

8   and priorities in terms of the ability to sing up,

9   and obviously there are overlapping factors of

10   income and race and locality and availability in

11   various places. But seniors are still adopting at

12   home or in the vicinity about 35 percent, and

13   folks online, just in terms of ever using the

14   internet, are still around 50 percent. So, no

15   matter how you look at it, they're really

16   struggling. What we have found, we did a study

17   with the New York Academy of Medicine a few years

18   ago, and found that as seniors go online, we're

19   asking sort of what happens as a result of that.

20   Six months later, they've found about two-thirds

21   of the seniors that went on the internet had a

22   higher incidence of contact with their friends and

23   family. So social isolation and loneliness and

24   depression, which affect so many seniors, are

25   closely linked to technology adoption, and once

2   you do adopt, you have more access to your social

3   networks. Indeed, there's a study by the Phoenix

4   Institute down in Washington that found that when-

5   -this is a national study now--that after

6   adoption, people have a 20 percent lower rate of

7   clinical depression that appears to be correlated

8   with technology adoption. We find that 70 percent

9   of our seniors are researching health topics

10   online, which can save us money in terms of having

11   to get people accurate information about health;

12   and they're even finding that they're going out

13   more, 'cause they're finding out about community

14   events, that are only available, the information

15   is online for these things. So, they have this

16   enormous amount of demand. You've already heard

17   about BTOP so I will not retrace that too much,

18   except to say that from a senior point of view we

19   are building out 22 new computer labs across the

20   City. We are teaching 3,000 free classes, we are

21   launching the country's first technology themed

22   senior center on 25th Street in Chelsea, I know

23   it's in Chelsea, but it's got great transportation

24   from The Bronx and from Brooklyn and from Queens,

25   so that's why I put it over there. And we are

2   also, we have a digital site online that people

3   can access resources and information on a daily

4   basis, that's at seniorplanet.org. From our

5   perspective, we're building up all this new

6   infrastructure, the City has made, I think a very

7   important investment in matching funds and

8   collaborating with some of the private partners

9   like Verizon, to try to build these systems and

10   make them effective. We've gained support from a

11   lot of these partners, but we're all looking at

12   this cliff in 2013 when the sustainability

13   question is going to come up and what we really

14   need to do is find ways to make sure these

15   programs continue, because we're building more

16   infrastructure to reach more people, but it's not

17   just about the computers and the internet lines,

18   it's about the programs that we run through these

19   centers. The most powerful research is being done

20   right now about BTOP, is showing that if you just

21   build a lab, it's not enough to get people to

22   engage consistently. You have to provide the

23   ongoing resources to make those labs places where

24   people get training and support and engagement and

25   ongoing interaction with people who are

2   professionals and experts. And that's what we

3   provide for seniors. We really think it's

4   important to keep collaborating with DFTA and with

5   the private partnerships to make that go into the

6   future. So, thanks.

7   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Whoever's

8   next, Cindy go.

9   CINDY MENZ-ERB: Hi, I'm Cindy

10   Menz-Erb, I'm the Executive Director of CFY,

11   formerly Computers for Youth here in New York

12   City. Thank you, Chairman Cabrera, for having

13   this hearing, and Council Member Brewer and

14   Council Member James for your support, and for the

15   opportunity to speak today. CFY partners with low

16   income schools to help students, families and

17   teachers to harness the power of digital learning

18   to improve educational outcomes. CFY's a partner

19   with the New York City Connected Learning and the

20   Connected Foundation's initiatives, both of which

21   are managed by DoITT and DOE as mentioned earlier.

22   The vast majority of the students that CFY serves

23   are black and Latino; over 80 percent of our

24   families have incomes below $35,000; and more than

25   70 percent of our parents and guardians have no

2   credentials beyond a high school diploma. Through

3   the Connected Learning Partnership, we currently

4   serve over 70 public middle schools in high

5   poverty areas throughout New York City. Last

6   year, we served over 8,700 families. This year

7   we're on track to serve over 9,000 families in New

8   York City. Through the Connected Foundations

9   Program, we will serve about 5,000 families with

10   an aim to improve post-secondary readiness to

11   increase access to adoption of web-based

12   technologies, of students who attend New York City

13   transfer high schools. One of our nation's

14   biggest challenges is how to encourage more

15   learning to take place outside of the four walls

16   of the school building. Since 1999, CFY has

17   developed innovative solutions to this challenge,

18   and we, with proven impact on student academic

19   achievement and engagement. I'd like to talk a

20   little bit more about our digital learning

21   program, as it's unique research based approach

22   that drives student engagement and academic

23   achievement. Our digital learning program

24   provides support for school leaders in driving new

25   instructional approaches and developing deeper

2   school home connections; provides professional

3   development for educators to help them adopt

4   planned learning strategies within the classroom,

5   extend learning beyond the classroom, and engage

6   families in the learning process. Innovative

7   family learning workshops, which many of you have

8   had a chance to visit, and which we thank you for,

9   help families and children learn together a wide

10 range of digital learning activities that can

11 experience learning partnership model that they

12 continue in the home. And then of course home

13 technology support for families. We provide a

14 free refurbished desktop computer that has

15 educational software loaded on it; in addition, we

16 provide free online subscription to additional

17 software, 24/7 bilingual help desk support and

18 special broadband discounts. As a part of the

19 digital learning program, CFY leverages its free

20 digital learning platform called Power My

21 Learning, which has more than 1,000 high quality

22 digital learning activities, tagged by subject, by

23 grade and by common core. Power My Learning

24 enables teachers to meet the specific learning

25 needs of their students and helps families and

students discover fun and engaging activities that

they can do together, at home, and it reinforces

the learning in the classroom. Broadband adoption

obviously plays a really important role in

harnessing the power of digital learning, and as

such, as a part of the Connected Learning, and

Connected Foundations Initiatives, has provided

qualifying families with the opportunity to sign

up for discounted service through Time Warner

Cable and through Cablevision, making it easier

for them to access digital learning activities.

CFY's program has increased family broadband

adoption significantly. The percentage of

families with broadband adoption in their homes

has increased from 45 percent prior to our program

to more than 90 percent with just three months

after the family learning workshop. The impact

occurs for two reasons: first, our program

addresses the affordability challenge by providing

families with equipment, training, and discounted

broadband; but second, and just as important, is

their program motivates family to use the internet

and supportive learning. 96 percent of the

parents that attend our program report that our

2   program makes them feel more confident in helping

3   their children, and 98 percent state that our

4   program makes them more interested in how the

5   internet can help their children's education. One

6   exciting result of our program is that teachers in

7   schools we serve are much more confidently able to

8   assign engaging online homework because more than

9   90 percent of their children now have broadband in

10   their home. The remaining percent have online

11   access at their schools and libraries and in

12   public computing centers. This means that

13   broadband impact of our program is self-

14   sustaining. The schools themselves continue to

15   help families use broadband for positive

16   educational purposes. Broadband access, along

17   with training, is a critical, is critical in

18   powering CFY's work, because it enables teachers

19   to increase student engagement in integrating

20   digital learning into the curriculum, teachers to

21   extend learning by assigning student activities on

22   power my learning to complete outside of the

23   school day. Students become college ready by

24   exploring and mastering new digital learning

25   activities, and thereby becoming self-directed

2   learners. And parents engage in their children's

3   learning by seeing what their children are

4   learning both in class and at home, and by

5   learning with their children online. In closing,

6   I hope I paint a picture of what shows the

7   importance of broadband adoption and training in

8   low income communities. With federal funding set

9   to end in 2013 for the Connected Learning and

10   Foundations programs, CFY needs the City's support

11   to ensure we're able to continue making a positive

12   impact in the communities that we serve. Thank

13   you.

14   D.C. VITO: Let me know if you--can

15   you hear me? Well? Okay, thank you. I'd like to

16   thank the Chair and the Committee Members for

17   allowing us the opportunity to speak. My name is

18   D.C. Vito, I'm the Executive Director of The Lamp.

19   Giving people computers and broadband access is

20   not enough to bridge the digital divide. It's a

21   start, to be sure, but just as we wouldn't give

22   our car keys to a teenager that hadn't passed the

23   driving test, we can't throw equipment and

24   connections around and expect our problems to be

25   fixed. Young people and their parents and their

2   teachers need digital literacy skills in order to

3   think critically about the world of new media that

4   opens up with access to computers and high speed

5   internet. There are many reasons why digital

6   literacy training is so important, but one reason

7   in particular is that people need to learn how to

8   be responsible and productive citizens in the

9   digital world of social networking, social gaming,

10   blogs, new sites and more. Bullying and bias

11   discrimination have always been issues in schools,

12   workplaces and public places, but now this harmful

13   behavior is crossing from the physical into the

14   digital world. Increased broadband access allows

15   people to build more relationships online. This

16   power and freedom requires the ability to think

17   critically about media and comprehend how your

18   behavior impacts others within the digital space.

19   Called digital citizenship, this is where the lamp

20   comes in. Recently, together with the New York

21   City Commission on Human Rights, we've been

22   running a series of workshops in Queens with a

23   group of young people at a--and have been

24   exploring this very concept. They have been

25   analyzing popular media and identifying the subtle

ways in which media can reinforce stereotypes

about gender, sexuality, race, and religion, that

can impact the way we treat others. Not only can

the teens completing this workshop now recognize

harmful and misleading representations in

advertising, music, television, videogames and

more, but they are now using media to talk back to

media. Since February, they've been working on

public service announcements, or PSAs, about the

impact of bullying both online and offline. Those

PSAs are entirely written, shot and edited by

these teens. And our goal with the Commission on

Human Rights has been that they walk away

empowered, with critical thinking in digital

literacy skills to practice and advocate for

healthy digital citizenship. For many of the

young people we serve, The Lamp's workshops are

among their first explorations with media as

potentially positive and educational elements in

their lives. This is somewhat remarkable given

that our students, many of which are black and

Latino, spend an average of 13 hours a day with

media. Their white peers spend just over eight-

and-a-half hours. Nonetheless, most of our youth

have been taught that computers, mobile phones and

other technologies are mere toys. In fact, these

devices are tools, and powerful tools at that,

capable of opening doors to homework help, social

networking, health resources, breaking news, and

so much more. But when we hand them access to

technologies like broadband, we'll need to teach

them how to use these tools effectively and

positively. Otherwise, it's as if we're just

suping up their car and sending them on their way.

Meaningful use of increased broadband access

depends on digital literacy training. In order

for our work, work like ours to continue and

expand, The Lamp needs the support from leaders

like you. Equipment and high speed broadband

alone are not enough to bridge the digital divide,

much less gaps in education and job readiness.

Education about digital citizenship and digital

literacy training have to be part of the plan to

level the technology playing field; or else, the

communities we mean to connect will remain on the

sidelines. Thank you very much.

MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: Thank you to

the Committee on Technology, Chairman Cabrera,

2   Council Member Brewer, Council Member James, for

3   the opportunity to make some brief remarks today.

4   Good afternoon, my name is Mike Capobianco, I'm

5   the Director of Development at MOUSE, we're a

6   national nonprofit based in New York City. As

7   many of you probably know, MOUSE is an innovative

8   youth development organization that empowers

9   underserved students, to provide technology

10 support and leadership in their schools, empowers-

11 -sorry--in their schools, supporting their

12 academic and career success. We are the MOUSE

13 squad and we are currently in 140 schools

14 throughout the five boroughs in New York City. We

15 appreciate all the members of the City Council who

16 have supported us over the almost 15 years that

17 we've dedicated ourselves to New York, to serving

18 New York City schools, students and the

19 communities that they live in. Since moving from

20 the corporate sector to dedicate myself to the

21 nonprofit sector almost ten years ago, I have seen

22 firsthand the impact of providing access to

23 technology, including broadband connections to

24 individuals, families, and institutions,

25 especially schools. As someone who has worked for

three of the organizations mentioned here today, I

understand the critical importance that access to

technology, including reliable, fully supported

broadband connection can be in the home and in the

school environment, for youth and their families

living in underserved neighborhoods. We must do

everything to ensure every person has access.

Initiatives such as connective learning, part of

the BTOP, are an important step in this direction.

An initiative where private/public partnerships,

including joint cooperation between federal and

local government agencies, has sent a powerful

message about the need for broadband access for

all citizens in New York City, regardless of

economic status. We should continue to make

programs like this possible until every citizen

has the access to the infinite information and

economic opportunity provided by today's high

speed broadband connection. I'm going to end by

saying once again we applaud each of you for

taking the lead on such an important initiative,

and thank you again for the opportunity to speak

in front of you today.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: As a matter

2   of fact, I want to thank you all for the wonderful

3   work that you have been doing, innovative work,

4   comprehensive work, cutting edge work, and because

5   you are the expert, let me ask you this question.

6   You heard the Administration speak this morning.

7   Is there anything that you heard that you think

8   that the City should be doing to lessen this

9   digital divide? And for that matter, also the

10 Council.

11   [background comment]

12   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Who will be

13 the brave one?

14   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: I'll start,

15 'cause the microphone's right in front of my

16 mouth. The, you know, from our perspective, I

17 think there's, there's two pieces of this. One

18 is, I think the, there's a moment of opportunity

19 which is only going to last about twelve months,

20 and we're at the beginning of that right now.

21 Where groups like this represent--these are you

22 know, OATS aside, every one of these

23 organizations, if you got to Missouri or

24 California or Seattle or Texas, and you start

25 talking about digital access issues, somebody will

2 start talking about MOUSE. Or if you talk about,

3 you know, multimedia issues, somebody will start

4 talking about Lamp. You know, - - on workforce,

5 we are nationally known experts on these topics,

6 and we're flying all over the country to talk

7 about our strategies. We have strategies in place

8 to effectively address a lot of these adoption

9 issues for people, but right now, up to date,

10 because of BTOP, we're all kind of mot--with the

11 exception of Lamp and Perscolis [phonetic] that

12 are not part of BTOP, there is a certain amount of

13 support, but there needs to be a comprehensive

14 question using some of the strategic ideas that

15 we've got, about how to move forward. And the

16 City has been talking to us about that. So we

17 just want to make sure that the plan that comes

18 out represents some of the best thinking we've

19 got. And I think we're off to a pretty good

20 start. I mean, I, you know, we have been--DoITT

21 has called us and has said, "Come down and talk to

22 us about what you need." DFTA has called us and

23 said, "Come down and talk to us about what you

24 need." And I know, you know, we've been included

25 in a lot of those conversations, so it's really a

question not so much of where we're starting but

the idea that, you know, it, technology needs to

be a strategy, it can't be an afterthought. And

prior to BTOP, that happened a lot, where there

would be like a senior programmer, or you know, a

schools program, and oh yeah, let's, let's put a

MOUSE program in there. You know, tack it on.

And these are programs that are driving a lot of

our education opportunities, they're driving a lot

of the best services that seniors are accessing

now, so they should be kind of integral to the

real central strategy. And then the second big

piece is, the clock is ticking, we've got twelve

months. So, that strategy needs to be

implemented, you know, we really need to know what

it looks like in the next few months, get the

private partners in, get the public commitments

in, so that in the next budget cycle that's coming

up for 2013, we're ready. We can't start having

this conversation in December, because that cliff

is going to happen and if there's a six month gap,

all of these resources that people are putting

together are going to stop. We're going to be

laying off staff, and then you can't get that

2   back. You have to start rebuilding it from

3   scratch again. So, we can't have that gap, you

4   know, the, we have to bridge that chasm, those are

5   the two real things. It's the timing issue and

6   the overall strategy.

7   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Yes, please.

8   CINDY MENZ-ERB: And just to kind

9   of on the timing issue, 'cause the grants are all

10   slightly different, it's actually ten months for

11   the Connected Learning program. And the thing

12   that I think I would say that's been most

13   significant with, with Connected Learning and

14   Council Member Brewer talked about this before, is

15   that the impact has been really significant on

16   broadband adoption with the families that we've

17   been able to reach, which is now close to 18,000,

18   but there's a lot more families that need to be

19   reached. And the program here in New York City,

20   has been touted as one of the most successful of

21   the BTOP programs nationally. And I think that is

22   something to be really proud of as a City, and

23   something that we should be working feverishly to

24   continue.

25   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thank you so

much. Council Member Brewer has some questions?

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you. See we do want to follow up, I know how great your work is, and I certainly come on the weekends to see families take their computers home and get trained in their computers go home in the shopping carts. But my question is, is this issue of figuring out a way of having a lower cost monthly charge for the table connection an issue? I know you mentioned 90 percent. But I have a feeling that's not as good as it should be or it's not-- something's wrong there.

CINDY MENZ-ERB: The, so, we are seeing rates of 90 percent of adoption, and that's, whether it's through the discount program or not. We have about 1,500 families that have used, signed up for the discount program. So it is a lower number that have used the discount program than that have adopted--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So 1,500 out of 18,000?

CINDY MENZ-ERB: 1,500 out of-- well, 18,000 is the families that we served; 45 percent of them already have adoption in their

2   homes when they get to us.

3   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm sorry,

4   when they have adoption, then they're not eligible

5   for the discount, is that true?

6   CINDY MENZ-ERB: So, then, that's

7   right, so 45 percent already have broadband in

8   their homes, they're not eligible for the

9   discount.

10   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

11   CINDY MENZ-ERB: And then of that

12   45, of the leftover 55 percent, 90 percent of

13   those are adopting.

14   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And

15   you mentioned a three month follow up. Is that,

16   is that all you're able to do, just funding wise?

17   You said that--

18   CINDY MENZ-ERB: Actually, no,

19   we're, we're following up three months, we're

20   typically following up again at six months. And

21   then a year later, as well. And we're also seeing

22   the rates of net adoptions, so families that

23   adopted within three months after, or that already

24   had it at the workshop, is also very high, we're

25   seeing that around 95 percent of families are

2   staying connected to broadband. Which is pretty

3   significant for the, the population that we're,

4   that we're working with.

5   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Department

6   of Education has the ability, supposedly, to

7   communicate with parents and teachers, with a

8   system that has had some challenges, as you

9   probably know, their own system. Do you your

10   families take advantage of that, do you have any

11   tracking on that, or is that not something that

12   you track?

13   CINDY MENZ-ERB: That's not

14   something that we track.

15   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, have

16   you heard any anecdotal discussion of that?

17   CINDY MENZ-ERB: Of the, of the

18   communication through the Department of Ed? We

19   haven't. We, what we're, the way that we're

20   connecting with families is actually through a

21   call bank that we run out of our office. And most

22   of the data we're collecting is specific to CFI's

23   program.

24   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. The

25   question I have for Tom Kamber is the libraries,

we love the libraries you mentioned, and we talk

about them. Do you have any sense of how the

sustainability will work in the libraries, post-

BTOP? Or is that something that's not come up?

THOMAS KAMBER: I know the

libraries have been in conversation with DoITT for

sure. The, our understanding was that the

libraries are mostly focused on building,

increasing their sort of network capacity. The

libraries are in a somewhat different station from

some of the same - - because they have enormous

demand all the time for those access points. And

so I think that it, in terms of, you know, just

expanding people's utilization, the libraries

really are, you know, they're building out the

sites and then they don't, they're not going to

have it at quite as many programmatic needs, as

far as I understand. But I really can't speak for

what they're--if they were to put together the

budget for it post-BTOP, I'm sure they would have

some needs, and I know they've been talking to

DoITT.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, I

know they'll be here next, I just wanted to hear

2   your side of it.

3   THOMAS KAMBER: Yeah, we've taught

4   in the libraries, and we have a really great

5   partnership with them, we have a program where we

6   do a ten week course on how to use the internet,

7   and then we tap in--it's actually designed to help

8   people use the internet to access library

9   resources, and we've taught that at multiple

10   public, New York public sites. They got a State

11   grant for us, at two year grant, that is running

12   out like this calendar quarter, and we have this

13   curriculum and we've got a trained trainer, you

14   know, we could do a lot more with it. But there

15   isn't currently a plan as far as I know to be able

16   to ris--you know, kind of extend that program.

17   So, that would be an interesting opportunity for

18   restoration. And I know the Council's also been

19   really good about coming up with sort of, filling

20   the critical holes, and that might be one way to

21   learn.

22   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: All right,

23   an thank you for your work with NYCHA. Do you

24   have any suggestions as to how to do more work

25   with NYCHA? Or was it just funding?

2   THOMAS KAMBER: Wow.

3   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: 'Cause

4   you've done great work with NYCHA seniors who

5   actually cry with excitement after completing your

6   program. They actually cry with the notion that

7   they can actually use the computer that's been

8   sitting in their home that the granddaughter

9   purchased, and now they can use it. And they're

10   in tears with the excitement.

11   THOMAS KAMBER: The NYCHA, NYCHA to

12   me would be a really high priority, as well. It's

13   a real issue of, you know, there's scale, there's

14   capacity, concerns in terms of the different

15   sites. NYCHA itself is sometimes a little bit

16   unwieldy to work with. And--

17   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Really?

18   CINDY MENZ-ERB: Yes.

19   THOMAS KAMBER: It comes up--you

20   know, they try, they work hard, they call us,

21   they, you know--

22   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: You know--

23   THOMAS KAMBER: --it's a big, it's

24   a big challenge. I would say the things, and

25   we've had--but I will say that I agree that NYCHA,

2   when we get NYCHA people online, there's an, it's

3   unbelievably powerful. And this, the Diamond

4   study that was cited by DoITT earlier, if you dig

5   in to the PowerPoint a little bit, you'll see that

6   NYCHA, senior head of households at NYCHA are

7   adopting--this is old data, this is like 2007 now-

8   -but they were adopting at a five percent rate.

9   Whereas the rest of NYCHA was closer to 60

10 percent. So, staggeringly bad numbers on the

11 seniors at NYCHA. I don't see any reason why that

12 would've changed dramatically, it's still

13 significantly low. I would say, however, in terms

14 of NYCHA, in terms of themes, one is getting some

15 core labs in the highest capacity sites that have

16 strong tenants associations, strong workforce

17 connections, if we can build in some of those

18 workforce relationships, some of the attain labs

19 like at Farragut Houses in, in Council Member

20 James's district, would really, really benefit

21 from some program support. And what I would add

22 in there is diabetes curriculum, because there's a

23 real, a real opportunity to get people to manage

24 diabetes using technology as one of the ways to

25 sort of study and learn and work on things like

2   nutrition and wellness. There's a really cool

3   program called "The Chronic Disease Self-

4   Management Program" out of Stanford. And we'd

5   like to be piloting that in New York, it's just

6   one of the things where we could be a national

7   leader, and there's a digital version of it. And

8   we could run that at multiple NYCHA facilities

9   around the City. And I know that we talked to

10   Carl Douglas about that at NYCHA, they're really

11   interested in that. So, if somebody could connect

12   that dot, it would really, I think there's a lot

13   of opportunity there.

14   COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

15   Michael Santorelli, thank you for all of your

16   support on this issue, on many ways through the

17   broadband hearings and currently. Is speed an

18   issue in New York in terms of the digital divide?

19   Because obviously we're all trying to have more

20   access, but is speed and just the piping issue

21   something that we need to pay attention to? Or do

22   you think that's sufficient as is? Or you know,

23   is there something else that we should be looking

24   at?

25   MICHAEL SANTORELLI: Well, I think

speed right now isn't an issue, I think

connectivity is, and I think speed might

eventually become an issue, as more people go

online and as they start using their connections

for more sort of bandwidth intensive uses. Beyond

just, you know, watching videos, some of the

really interesting and innovative new services

that are coming out are, you know, video enables

telemedicine programs and video enabled education

programs, and those eat up a lot of bandwidth.

So, that is, again, as more people come online,

the capacity issue might arise, but you know, the

fiber networks, at least that Verizon are

building, are very robust, cable as a, the

technology is a little bit different. So the

speeds aren't quite as high, at least in theory,

as the, the fiber technology. But certainly the,

the availability issues, as Council Member James

pointed out, you know, New York City is lucky in

the fact that it's among, if not the most wired

city in the country, but there are still pockets

of unserved areas that, you know, it sounds,

sounded like there was progress being made, but

you know, obviously more could be done. So. But

2 our focus, at least at the program, has been on

3 connectivity and adoption and overcoming barriers

4 and really sort of focusing on efforts of the

5 groups here, and New York really is a leader in

6 all of these programs, it's amazing how many, how

7 the City has become sort of a, you know, a hotbed

8 for these sorts of programs. You know, I guess

9 it's out of necessity since New York is such a big

10 and complex and diverse city. And I just wanted

11 to sort of go back to the first question and tie

12 it all in. It's, you know, it seems that there's

13 a lot of progress being made in the City, there's

14 lots, there's lots going on, as a result of the

15 BTOP funding, and other efforts that are going on,

16 across the City, on the, in the private sector,

17 with the wi-fi networks, with the nonprofits, with

18 the City Council focusing on these issues, the

19 Mayor with his visual roadmap and using technology

20 to engage the citizens with social media. There's

21 lots going on, but there's been very little

22 effort, at least in my opinion, to sort of bring

23 it all together into some sort of comprehensive

24 strategy framework to think about these issues in

25 a more comprehensive way that can, you know, look

at cross agencies and look across communities to,

and to, as Tom said, sort of--bring the focus of

technology as a core focus rather than just an

add-on, and looking beyond, you know, having DoITT

work with, you know, other agencies to think about

how to integrate these nonprofits and other groups

to, you know, use technology to deliver social

services in different ways.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

That's why I kind of asked the follow up question

earlier. Thank you very much. I want to know as

a result of all of your efforts, and DoITT, this

hearing and all City Council hearings are now

being webcast and archived. And I want to thank

the staff for doing that. But it's really your

advocacy that helped us promote that. Thank you,

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And thank you

so much, Council Member Brewer, for all you have

done, in this Committee, throughout all the years.

And we have Council Member James.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So, I thank

all of you for all that you do. So let me ask

each of you, what is your catchman area, or what

1

2   communities do you serve? Could we go down the

3   line?

4   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: We're in all

5   five boroughs, we're in almost 90 percent of the

6   Council Member districts throughout the City. I

7   think 80, actually probably closer to 80, Staten

8   Island being a little bit of a dearth. Schools,

9   I think we have three schools in your district.

10   We have three schools in Council Member Brewer's

11   District, and we have four schools in Chairman

12   Cabrera's district. Bronx being our largest.

13   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And you, and

14   you're in these communities because you are funded

15   through each Council Member? Through the City

16   Council Initiative? Could you just clarify that a

17   little bit for me?

18   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: Schools mostly

19   self-select.

20   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: They self-

21   select.

22   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: They do.

23   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: From their

24   own budgets.

25   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: Correct.

2   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay.

3   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: Correct. They

4   have access to funding outside of their own

5   expensive budgets to help pay for the program. We

6   ask $999 from each school, $999. And it costs us

7   $5,000 per school to deliver the program, so we

8   seek funding from the Speaker's Office, and from

9   each of the Council Members' funding to help

10 bridge that gap.

11   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So, in the

12 three school, so you're in three schools in my

13 district.

14   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: Right.

15   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So for the

16 other 30 or 40 other schools that exist that do

17 not utilize your service, do they use other

18 organizations? Or they do not have, or--?

19   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: They do--well,

20 they may, at one point, have had a MOUSE squad in

21 their school--

22   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.

23   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: --and there

24 was a decision to continue MOUSE squad like

25 programming, but without the access to our

curriculum.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Got it.

MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: But for the most case, it's just they didn't select--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: They didn't select.

MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: --for an assortment of reasons, to have - -

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: [interposing] Do you know if they selected your competitor, or is there a--

MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: We have no competitor.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: You have none.

MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: [laughs]

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: They just do not have the program.

MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: There are, they just choose not to have the program.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Interesting.

MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay, thank you.

1

2   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Well, thank--

3   yeah.

4   D.C. VITO: Well, The Lamp is in 25

5   schools around the City, all, in all five

6   boroughs. And we're also in all three library

7   systems. So we're in New York Public Library,

8   Brooklyn Public Library and Queens Public Library.

9   And 85 percent of our students, all of our

10 programs are free to the participants, 85 percent

11 of our students are low income.

12   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay.

13   D.C. VITO: We get our funding

14 largely from fee-for-service revenue. We have

15 gotten funding through the BTOP program through

16 the connected communities, that's how we're in

17 Brooklyn Public Library and New York Public

18 Library. And then the Queens Public Library

19 Initiative, we are getting funding, they have a

20 grant from the 21st Century Learning Initiative.

21   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And the fees

22 are paid by, paid by the Department of Education?

23   D.C. VITO: Yes.

24   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay, thank

25 you.

2   D.C. VITO: Yes.

3   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Thank you.

4   D.C. VITO: Mm-hmm.

5   CINDY MENZ-ERB: CFY's currently in

6   72 public middle schools in all five boroughs, as

7   well as I think around 30 of the transfer high

8   schools through the Connected Foundations program.

9   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So I'm

10   particularly focused on the transfer high schools

11   and District 75 schools. Are you in those

12   schools?

13   CINDY MENZ-ERB: District 75, no.

14   The transfer high schools, yes.

15   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay.

16   CINDY MENZ-ERB: We, and the

17   schools are chosen in partnership with the

18   Department of Ed, and all of them are at least 75

19   percent free or reduced lunch. For the middle

20   schools, the digital learning program costs the

21   schools $60 per student, and it costs us over $600

22   per student to provide those services. And we

23   also receive funding from the Council, which we're

24   very grateful for. And right now the majority of

25   our funding is through the BTOP program.

2   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Thank you.

3   THOMAS KAMBER: OATS is at--we

4   serve about 35 sites a year, around the City.

5   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.

6   THOMAS KAMBER: We're in all five

7   boroughs, but pretty weak in Staten Island, we've

8   done very minimal work there so far, but we're

9   going to do more. About, and our partnerships

10   range, we have a--there are a lot of 'em, our

11   senior centers, so more than half now, but we also

12   work with nursing homes, long term care

13   facilities, 202 housing, NYCHA buildings--missing

14   a couple--multiservice agencies, some of the

15   settlement houses. And it's very much based on

16   being able, there's a capacity issue in terms of

17   the local site being able to run a program, and

18   having a lab. We do get a lot of earned income

19   from our partners who support our programs in

20   various levels. It also depends a little bit on

21   City Council, we've got 14 Council Members plus

22   the Speaker, that support our programs, without

23   which we literally would not, I wouldn't be

24   sitting here. So we're working those 14 districts

25   very aggressively. The vast, almost, virtually

all of our seniors are low income. About 75

percent are African-American, Hispanic, and Asian.

And about 50 percent we have a loan, and about 60

percent have some sort of disability, whether it's

hearing or vision or mobility issues.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So thank

you, Dr. Kamber, I know that you work with the

Attain Lab at Farragut Public Housing, which was a

creation of then Assembly Member Roger Green, a

brainchild of his, and something I put into

effect. So, I'd like to expand it, obviously, to

some other NYCHA centers throughout the district.

And I know that you work with the Fort Green

senior center network.

THOMAS KAMBER: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: That's some

of my seniors online, and you've got, and you

talked a lot about the social isolation. And

obviously some of them have connected with their

families, and, and some of them are dating again.

THOMAS KAMBER: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes, thanks

to you.

THOMAS KAMBER: Yes, they are. We

did a Valentine's Day--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes, I know,
I heard.

THOMAS KAMBER: --for - - [laughs]

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes, I do.

THOMAS KAMBER: People loved it.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: I heard
about hotmama.com, yes. [laughter] So, I just
want to thank you--

THOMAS KAMBER: You know what they
do online after we train them, is - - [laughs]

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yeah, what
they do is their business. But I obviously want
to talk to you offline at some point, so I want to
continue to support you and expand in my district.
And thank you for all that you do. You and your
sister.

THOMAS KAMBER: Oh, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And your
other brother.

THOMAS KAMBER: [laughs] Three EDs
in our family.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right. And
one more, I think.

2   MICHAEL SANTORELLI: Oh, we, I,

3   yeah, we're just mere academics who study these

4   programs.

5   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So--

6   MICHAEL SANTORELLI: So, we free

7   ride on their, on their processes.

8   MICHAEL CAPOBIANCO: They're in the

9   cloud. [laughs]

10   COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So,

11   Professor, the, for me the three issues is

12   connectivity, as you mentioned; access; and the

13   cost. The library I support, but all the kids

14   tell me the library, you're only allowed to stay

15   on the computer for an hour. And obviously, they,

16   that can't, well it says a half hour, but they

17   cheat and stay an hour. And there's a, there's a

18   limits of the, limitations presents some

19   challenges. But I, I have to underscore the fact

20   that, you know, so many children tell me, you

21   know, they have these iPads and iPhones, and when

22   they go home, there's no internet access. And in

23   order to get a hot zone or a hot, hot zone,

24   they've got to pay for it, and they are not in a

25   position to pay for it, and so therefore there's

no internet access at home. And that's a major,

major, major issue. And so, again, hopefully the

companies can focus on that, the two companies

that I have described operate a duopoly in the

City of New York. Thank you.

MICHAEL SANTORELLI: Can we also

make one more--

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Sure.

MICHAEL SANTORELLI: On that, which

is that there's a lot of movement in Washington

now around changing the, some of the federal

guidelines around things like the universal

service fund. And this project that FCC has out

called Connect to Compete, and which is using

Comcast in a pretty interesting and innovative

way. I now DoITT has been trying to work and

engage down there lobbying, we've also been down

there doing those, having those conversations.

But there are resources out there, and some models

for providing sort of subsidized access to people.

And I think we should continue to really explore

those. Because those can be targeted at the

people who need them the most.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: That's the

1

2   major issue. Thank you.

3   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Excellent,

4   thank you so much. And I'm going to ask now for

5   the public libraries to come. Now, I want to give

6   a special thanks to them for waiting for so long,

7   and I ask for Linda Johnson, from Brooklyn Public

8   Library; Jane Aboyoun, from New York Public

9   Library; and Tom Galante from Queens Library. You

10   may begin if you could identify yourself, you can

11   begin as soon as you're ready.

12   [pause, background noise]

13   JANE ABOYOUN: Hi, good morning,

14   good afternoon, I think. Almost. Jane Aboyoun,

15   here. I'm Vice President, Chief Technology

16   Officer for New York Public Library. NYPL system

17   provides library services to the boroughs of

18   Bronx, Manhattan and Staten Island, as well as the

19   research libraries for the entire City. Thanks

20   for the opportunity to testify today, it's great

21   to be here to talk about libraries and the

22   essential services they provide. Before I begin,

23   I would like to thank Speaker Christine Quinn,

24   Community Chair Fernando Cabrera, and Members of

25   the Committee, and Members of the City Council for

your great support of the libraries. Today's

hearing focuses on the digital divide,

specifically about access to technology, and the

divide that exists between those who have access

and those who don't. Libraries play a critical

role in bridging the gap by providing free access

to computers and online information, as well as

technology training. Underserved communities,

such as immigrants, non-English speakers, and

those living below the poverty line rely on

libraries for access to technology and the wide

array of online resources that they offer. A

recent study by the Pew Research Center, "Digital

Differences," highlights the disparities of

technology access which exists for some groups.

The study finds that age, being 65 or older, a

lack of high school education, and having a low

household income, less than $20,000 per year, are

the strongest negative predictors for internet

use. In New York City we know that the number of

people living below the federal poverty line

surpasses the rest of the country, according to

the American Community Survey, from 2008 to 2010.

In communities such as northern Manhattan, 21.6

2   percent of all families and 25.6 percent of all

3   people are below the poverty level. In the South

4   Bronx, these numbers are even higher, with 36.8

5   percent of all families and 38.9 percent of all

6   people living below the poverty line. On Staten

7   Island, the number is fewer, but still 9.3 percent

8   of all families and 11.3 percent of all people

9   there are living below the poverty line. At New

10   York Public Library, we continue to invest in the

11   technology, infrastructure and training to ensure

12   that we provide internet access that can meet the

13   growing needs of these communities, providing all

14   New Yorkers with access and many times guided

15   access to the information and assistance they

16   need. The New York Public Library provides free

17   public access to the internet at each of our 91

18   location and offers onsite PCs and laptops as well

19   as a robust wi-fi network. Since fiscal year

20   2007, the library has spent over $19 million on

21   building and upgrading our technology systems to

22   meet the growing demand for online information.

23   In Fiscal Year 2012 alone, the library used about

24   $2 million in City capital funds to upgrade

25   bandwidth and network equipment, in addition to

2   another $1 million in other funds to replace the

3   technology infrastructure at the Science, Industry

4   and Business Library, and to expand free wi-fi

5   service at mid-Manhattan to all five floors open

6   to the public. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2013, the

7   library will invest over $11 million in City

8   capital funds and $4 million in its own operative

9   expense, to implement what we're calling the next

10   generation desktop initiative, a large scale,

11   system wide, upgrade to hardware, software,

12   network equipment, wi-fi, and bandwidth. We plan

13   to purchase new computers and replace out-of-date

14   software to provide the latest in technology to

15   our patrons. The library is also a partner with

16   the City on the Broadband Technology's Opportunity

17   Program, BTOP, $20 million federal stimulus fund

18   focused on the expansion of broadband access in

19   underserved areas. Through NYPL's portion of this

20   grant, and with matching City capital funds, we

21   will substantially upgrade desktop and laptop

22   equipment at 32 branches, provide digital literacy

23   outreach and instruction at 24 libraries, and

24   provide technology training for all NYPL public

25   service staff. As we add capacity, we've seen

demand increase often by 100 percent because of

this added capacity. For example, our wireless

sessions by patrons grew to over 232,000 in March

of this year, compared to 109,000 in August of

last year, as more patrons bring smartphones,

iPads and other tablets into our libraries. Peak

internet usage typically occurring weekday

afternoons grew from 500 megabits to over 700

megabits over the same nine month period. There's

a graph attached which illustrates the upward

trend. We currently offer just under 4,000 public

access to computers to our patron, of which 62

percent are desktops and 38 percent are laptops,

that can be checked out for use in the library by

patrons. In Fiscal Year 2011, we provided

approximately 4.42 million user sessions: 36

percent of those sessions were in The Bronx, 54

percent in Manhattan, and nine percent in Staten

Island. New Yorkers come to our libraries to

access the internet for information on public

assistance, job search taxes, homework help, and

healthcare, just to name a few. We also know that

many teens utilize our computers for academic

purposes, as well as for social networking and

gaming. It's an ongoing goal of the library to

invest in technology and to continue to add

capacity so that all New Yorkers have access to

the information and resources available to them

through the web. In addition to providing free

public access to computers and the internet, NYPL

was one of the first public libraries to offer

computer literacy classes to patrons. We began a

coordinated effort to bridge the digital divide in

New York City through public computer training in

March 2001, with a four year grant from the

Pickour [phonetic] Foundation called "Click On at

the Library." This grant supported the

development of a curriculum for classes, creation

of computer labs in ten library locations,

targeted marketing to populations more likely to

be digitally divided about computer access and

training, and a dedicated staff of administrators

and trainers. Once grant funding concluded, we

made the program a permanent part of the service

by using operating funds. Classes are being

offered in basic areas of computer literacy, such

as internet and web searching, email, Microsoft

Office, social media and ereading. In 2011, NYPL

2   provided 4,732 computer classes to 47,676 patrons.

3   As technology continuously changes and develops,

4   staff training is critical. We have created an

5   educational program across NYPL, across the NYPL

6   system, dedicated in increasing librarian

7   competencies, with pas grant support, the library

8   provided specialized training to reference

9   librarians and information assistance that

10   increased staff competencies in using computers

11   and online information sources, and services, and

12   services, and built staff confidence in providing

13   this specialized reference assistance. From the

14   recent expansion of social media sites, to the

15   comprehensive applications found on web pages, the

16   digital age has produced a dynamic environment,

17   where the expertise of our staff is vital to the

18   information services we provide to New Yorkers.

19   Over the last year, we've offered 169 technology

20   training sessions to 373 librarians and

21   information assistants. These training sessions

22   help us guarantee that patient, patrons who come

23   to our libraries are able to access online

24   information regardless of their computer

25   competencies. With more than a quarter of New

1

2 Yorkers living below the poverty line, the City's

3 libraries play an absolutely essential role in

4 delivering library services and information to the

5 people of New York, especially to underserved

6 communities. Increasingly, in today's world, the

7 ability to access information electronically is

8 the difference between the haves and the have-

9 nots. Every day, libraries serve on the

10 frontlines and in the trenches of this important

11 battle. At the New York Public Library, we

12 continue to make substantial investments in our

13 digital infrastructure so that New Yorkers can

14 access the information they need. The technology

15 infrastructure and training that I've discussed

16 today just scratch the surface of what the New

17 York Public Library has done and continues to do

18 to make library resources available to the 17.5

19 million people who walk through NYPL's doors last

20 year, or the 31.2 million people who visited us

21 online at NYPL.org. Libraries are the only free

22 educational provider for all New Yorkers. In past

23 years, Speaker Quinn and the City Council have

24 championed funding of this City's libraries,

25 recognizing how truly essential the services are

2   ║   that libraries provide to New Yorkers. We are

3   ║   truly grateful for the support. However, if

4   ║   libraries' doors do not remain open, it won't make

5   ║   a difference if we utilize an NPLS network or if

6   ║   we share a fiber ring or if we have 3,600

7   ║   computers or 36,000 computers, because New Yorkers

8   ║   won't be able to come to the library and access

9   ║   information. We look forward to working with you

10 ║   to allow us to continue to deliver the quality

11 ║   library service that the residents of New York

12 ║   City need and deserve in these difficult times.

13 ║   Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I'm

14 ║   available to answer any questions that you might

15 ║   have. Thank you.

16 ║   JOSH NACHOWITZ: Good afternoon.

17 ║   My name is Josh Nachowitz, I am the Vice President

18 ║   for Government and Community Relations at the

19 ║   Brooklyn Public Library, and I'm here today

20 ║   representing Linda Johnson, our President and CEO.

21 ║   I want to thank the Committee Chair, Fernando

22 ║   Cabrera, and the Members of the Committee, for

23 ║   inviting BPL to testify today, about broadband

24 ║   access and closing the digital divide. Thank you

25 ║   as well to the entire City Council for repeatedly

advocating on our behalf. We hope we can count on

your support again this year so we will be able to

continue to offer the digital resources our

patrons need. The Brooklyn Public Library is a

leader is providing free access to technology in

the borough. System wide, we offer approximately

1,300 public access computers and each year, on

average, we provide 2.3 million PC sessions. The

library is also the largest provider of free wi-fi

in Brooklyn, with high speed wireless internet

access available at all 60 of our locations.

Since we last spoke about the subject of broadband

access, the library has successfully implemented a

number of initiatives. Today I am pleased to

update the City Council on our progress and inform

you about some our plans for the future. Demand

for BPL's free wireless internet continues to

grow. Since the fall of 2010, the number of

system wide monthly unique users of our wi-fi has

nearly doubled. We have also expanded our

broadband internet capacity by 77 percent, since

2010. As a result of this upgrade, patrons who

use our PCs can navigate more quickly between

websites and use their computer sessions more

2   productively. To close the digital divide, we

3   must offer technology and computer classes where

4   they are most needed. To this end, we recently

5   partnered with the City's Department of

6   Information Technology and Telecommunications, our

7   colleagues in the Queens Library, and the New York

8   Public Library, and a number of other City

9   agencies, as part of the New York City Connected

10   Communities Project. With funding provided by the

11   federal government, federal Broadband Technology

12   Opportunities Program, or BTOP, Brooklyn Public

13   Library greatly increased its technological

14   programs and resources at eight of its libraries

15   located in underserved communities. Patrons

16   visiting our libraries in Bushwick, Bed-Stuy and

17   Ocean - - Brownsville, can now enjoy 95 new

18   lending laptops for use in the library, roughly

19   three times as many computer classes and increased

20   broadband internet speed. Since July of 2011,

21   these eight libraries have provided more than

22   40,000 laptop sessions, for a total of over 60,000

23   hours of laptop usage. In the coming months, we

24   will install additional electrical outlets at the

25   BTOP libraries, to help accommodate the rising

number of patients who need to charge their

laptops.   While some patients are adept at using

computers, many others need assistance.   Our

expanded roster of classes in the BTOP branches

covers an extensive range of subject to ensure

that all patrons can take advantage of the

resources available to them.   Our classes teach

Brooklynites how to navigate the internet, gain

proficiency in Word, Excel and PowerPoint, and

sign up for and use email accounts.   Since July of

2011, the **B**TOP libraries have offered over 800

computer learning programs, that have reached more

than 5,600 people.   Technology access is also

imperative for searching for applying to jobs.

Since April 2011, the BTOP branches have authored

over 450 job awareness programs which have been

attended by a total of more 1,200 people.

Upcoming programs range from one-on-one résumé and

interviewing skill sessions, to workshops on crowd

funding with kick start on online selling with

eBay and Brooklyn based - - .   Last December, we

relocated the central library staff lounge to open

a state-of-the-art, 50 seat computer center.   The

new center is the largest technology hub in the

2   BPL system, and it features the first rollout of

3   the library's new generation of public computers.

4   Facility's new desktop computers offer Windows 7,

5   Office 2010, several new software applications

6   including Audacity and Windows Live Moviemaker,

7   and the ability to save files locally during a

8   session. The center's furniture and technology

9   are made possible by funding from the BTOP program

10   and matching funds from the City's Department of

11   Information and Telecommunication Technology. The

12   library is also making significant headway on one

13   of its biggest technology based initiatives, the

14   Leon Levy Information Commons. This facility,

15   which is scheduled to open at the Central Library

16   in 2013 will be the first of kind in New York

17   City's three public library systems. It will be a

18   flexible, technology rich center, offering a 30

19   seat - - training space, seven private meeting

20   rooms, featuring electronic whiteboards, a bar

21   style seating for laptop users, 25 PCs, featuring

22   standard software and advanced editing programs,

23   and a help desk providing reference and

24   information services and on-demand training. The

25   information commons will offer extensive

technology training for job seekers, community

college and distance learning students, and other

populations in need. It will be a groundbreaking

new space for patrons to exchange ideas, learn new

skills and access information. BPL is committed

to closing the digital divide in Brooklyn. For

initiatives like the Central Library Computer

Center, BTOP and the Leon Levy Information

Commons, we help ensure that all Brooklynites,

regardless of their educational attainment or

income, have equal access to the digital resources

needed to improve their lives. Thank you for the

opportunity to testify today, and I'll be happy to

answer questions.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay.

TOM GALANTE: Good afternoon,

right, yeah. Yeah, good afternoon. My name's Tom

Galante, I'm the President and CEO of the Queens

Library. I want to begin by thanking you all here

for the invitation here today. This is a very

important topic for libraries. Libraries are more

relevant to people's lives than ever before. And

we are constantly evolving to meet their needs.

Our mission, to provide free and fair access to

information, is a cornerstone of this City, and

indeed of our free society. It does not matter

whether that information is contained with a bound

leather tome or lives in the cloud. The library

offers a place to find knowledge, no matter who

you are or where you came from. It is the place

where experts help you use that knowledge to

inform you, enrich you and empower you. I also

don't have to tell you that technology is

reshaping the field of information services.

Access to high speed internet is no longer a

luxury for our citizenry, mobile devices,

smartphone and tablets are ubiquitous, literature

is going digital. Our challenge as public

libraries is to ensure that these technologies do

not become barriers to accessing information and

enriching lives. Just to point out, I mean,

libraries have been in the business of bridging

the information divide for hundreds of years, and

this new divide, a digital divide, is expanding,

as people use their devices, even more, people

with ereaders and e-content for books. We must

ensure that we do not let technology divide our

people into the information haves and the have-

nots. It is a real danger. Here in New York

City, an estimated 74 percent of interactions with

the government happen via NYC.gov. Yet an

unacceptable number of people can't even get to

that resource at home. The U.S. Department of

Commerce reports that nearly 38 percent of

Americans do not have access to the internet at

home, and we know the numbers are much higher in

New York City compared to the American average.

National trends also show that the two groups who

most frequently rely on their public libraries for

computer access are among the most vulnerable:

the poor, immigrants and teenagers. Access to--

free public access to computers and wi-fi is a

really important service that libraries have

provided for at least 15 years now, to bridge that

digital divide. In Queens, we currently have a

network of 1,554 public access computers that

provide free access to the internet. They're used

by patrons nearly 60,000 times every single week;

additionally, all our community libraries are

equipped with unlimited free wireless for people

who have their own computers or wi-fi enabled

mobile devices. And we also have 593 laptops that

1

2   we loan out for within our facilities and we hope

3   to continue to grow that. In the computer

4   literacy and programming area, that's an area that

5   we continue to expand out. In the last year, we

6   have successfully built out our technology and

7   associated educational components, in large part

8   through the Connected Communities initiative,

9   funded through the BTOP funding through the

10   federal government. As you are aware, this

11   initiative is aimed squarely at improving

12   broadband access for underserved and high poverty

13   communities. With the $4 million committed to

14   this program over three years in Queens, we have

15   vastly expanded computer access and literacy in

16   Long Island City, Jamaica and the Rockaway

17   Peninsula. Since it launched just seven months

18   ago, our dedicated team has helped over 7,500

19   people in a combination of one-on-one sessions and

20   group workshops. The program focuses on workforce

21   development and computer literacy skills.

22   Instruction on basic internet skills, introductory

23   computer skills and the basics of using the

24   Microsoft Office programs Word and Excel, are

25   among the most popular programs offered. Other

program topics run the gamut from résumé writing

to social media networking to civil service exam

prep. Our team has found that the demand for

those programs far exceeds the capacity and

patrons are coming in from every demographic

group. Many teenagers who are well equipped, or

well versed on using their smartphones in social

media, come in seeking instruction on basic word

processing and other software; many midcareer

professionals who find themselves looking for a

new job, turn to the library when they discover

their computer skills are outdated. Many older

adults are coming in to dust off their résumé and

reenter the workforce. We have recently had our

central library designated as a Certiport

authorized testing center, which means we will be

able to offer industry certifications in Microsoft

Office, Adobe, and other computer programs.

Students who take the course and pass the tests

will be much more qualified and attractive to

potential employers. A series of classes and test

administration in the private market for a single

certification could cost an average of $800. At

the library it'll be totally free through our

2   program. So we have a lot of good things going on

3   there, and we continue to build it out. In the

4   digital content and access area, this month we

5   began loaning ereaders to library cardholders for

6   the first time. The pilot project is putting

7   digital content, selected by librarians, directly

8   into the hands of our patrons, on an ereader

9   device they otherwise could not afford. We

10   recognize that digital content and digital readers

11   are the next method of information consumption.

12   We must be able to provide access to that

13   information for free, on demand, to our patrons.

14   If we don't, we risk leaving them behind has

15   content becomes exclusively digital. As it is

16   now, cuts to our budget have slashed our

17   purchasing of books by 60 percent, and that

18   applies to print books and also ebooks, obviously.

19   Wait times for popular ebooks are really

20   unacceptably high. Some people in Queens will

21   need to wait for more than a year to read

22   information that they seek. This just shouldn't

23   be. Expanding our services to offer a robust and

24   accessible digital collection to our nearly

25   900,000 cardholders, it won't be easy. Millions

of new dollars are needed to meet growing demand,

and as you all know, we've gone through some

relatively severe budget cuts over the last three

or four years, you know, through this downturn in

the economy. But what we really need to be doing

is expanding out our digital content which takes

more money, also buying ereaders, so that we can

loan those to the other, to people who can't

afford it, so they can access that content. This

must happen to reach our common goal to close the

digital divide which keeps too many of our

citizens from the information and education they

want and deserve to improve their lives. There is

so much libraries do to provide digital access and

literacy to the people of New York City, but

there's so much more that we could do, too. All

the staff that teachers computer classes and

provides workforce development that help those

7,500 people in the last six months is funded

through a grant that will run out in August of

2013. All the computers in all the libraries are

in use every single hour that we're open, and we

need to continue to build that out, too. Now

given all that, you know, you've seen this,

there's tremendous demand, growing demand,

tremendous needs, the current City financial plan

for fiscal 2013 proposes a funding cut to

libraries of over 30 percent. This would, if

adopted, force the outright closure of 18

libraries in Queens and drastically slash hours

everywhere else. The best way to look at it is,

you're looking at cutting service hours between 30

and 50 percent across the board. It would prevent

more than 1.3 million people from getting online

in their library each year, and shut out thousands

more from the educational programs they take

advantage of now to better their lives. So, with

so much work to do, we can't let such a scenario

come to pass. You in the City Council have been

true library champions in years past, and this

year we really need you again to restore and also

to expand out needed funding, so we can get on

with the important work of us, for the people of

this great City. So I want to thank you again for

the opportunity to testify and the tireless work

that you do every single day. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay, thank

you, thank you for the public libraries, always

1

2   stepping out, you fulfill many roles that are laid

3   upon you. Let me just follow up with just, with

4   my first question, regarding what you just

5   mentioned. What, what kind of impact we will have

6   if we were to follow the Administration proposal

7   in terms of the funding that they're proposing for

8   this year, if, if libraries were to be closed on

9   Saturdays. Let's, hypothetically speaking, what

10   would that do in terms of accessibility to, to

11   what we're talking about here today?

12   TOM GALANTE: Yeah, I mean, the

13   best way to put it is that, or one way to put it,

14   is comparatively. If you look at other cities,

15   cities that, you know, are progressive, that are

16   trying to move forward in a big way, you'll find

17   their typical library is open 60 to 70 to 80 hours

18   a week. That's the average. Here in New York,

19   we're struggling to stay at 40 right now, on

20   average, so we're almost half of what you'll find

21   in places like, say, Toronto.

22   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Right now,

23   you say.

24   TOM GALANTE: Right now.

25   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Really?

1

2 TOM GALANTE: And if these cuts

3 were to go through, you'd see us open 20 hours, 25

4 hours, on average, we'd be like a third of what

5 you'd find in say Seattle or San Francisco or

6 Toronto, Boston. So, you know, we have a

7 challenge ahead of us, you know, with this, the

8 focus of this hearing being on closing the digital

9 divide. We need additional funding to move

10 forward and support people in doing that. Not

11 less. And you know, it does, and you, we can't,

12 we still need to have those print collections of

13 books. And what we also need to bridge the

14 digital divide for those who want to receive

15 content in digital form. So, at the time, at

16 times where, I know in Queens our funding is down

17 about $16 million a year. And that means we're

18 down about 200 fulltime employees, we've cut our

19 book budget, which includes digital content, from

20 about $11 million four years ago, and this year

21 we're going to spend $4.5 million.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Wow.

23 TOM GALANTE: That's just to try

24 and keep our doors open as much as possible. But

25 you can't have people waiting over a year to get

2   to information that they seek. You know, what's

3   the point of even--

4   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: It's useless.

5   TOM GALANTE: --delivering it,

6   yeah, if it's going to come a year later. So.

7   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I don't know

8   if you want to--

9   JOSH NACHOWITZ: I think the, this

10   situation is very similar for the Brooklyn Public

11   Library, I'll just add to what Tom was saying,

12   that, you know, despite all of our figures that

13   sort of record how the public is using the library

14   being up, our attendance is at an all time high,

15   our circulation is at all time high, our computer

16   use is at all time high, our funding is

17   consistently cut and we're down about $20 million

18   every year from the Administration's failure to

19   baseline funding. We've got about 160 open

20   positions. And the bottom line is we need funding

21   to have staff in the branches, just to have the

22   doors open. And if we can't fulfill that basic

23   need, then we just can't serve our communities as

24   well as we'd like to, as well as we should be

25   doing.

2   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: What percent

3   of, percentage of your computers are outdated?

4   You mentioned earlier that you're about to go

5   through a process of getting rid of outdated--

6   JANE ABOYOUN: Right.

7   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --computers.

8   What would you say overall, in your - -

9   JANE ABOYOUN: [interposing] 78

10   percent of our desktops are coming up on the five

11   year mark, so they would need to be replaced.

12   And, I'm sorry, 98 percent of our desktops and 78

13   percent of our laptops are at their sort of end of

14   life. So, it's a significant number, which is

15   driving the sort of large scale upgrade of our, of

16   our infrastructure, so hardware/software.

17   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And what

18   percent of those will be replaced? All of them?

19   JANE ABOYOUN: The plan is replace

20   all of them, right.

21   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Oh, wow. Is

22   that--?

23   JANE ABOYOUN: Yeah. Over time,

24   obviously, it's not going to happen in a month,

25   but yes, over time we're going to, you know, we're

1

2 going to move through all of our branches and

3 replace all of our equipment, upgrade our

4 software, you know, really move, move the, move

5 the needle forward.

6   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Is that the

7 same case with the other library systems?

8   TOM GALANTE: In our case, we've

9 got the technology needs that are not so much with

10 desktops and laptops. We'd like to have more

11 laptops, so that's a funding need. The desktops

12 and laptops, we're, we've been pretty fortunate

13 over the last four or five years, with City

14 Council delegation funding, in Queens, that we've

15 used on a regular basis to replace PCs and so

16 forth. But we have an ongoing need for

17 infrastructure updates, you know, routers, hubs,

18 servers, those types of things. So, we have a,

19 some asks out there right now, to our Council

20 Members, for support in that area. And it's been

21 very, you know, we've had really good support on

22 the infrastructure and for Queens, for a number of

23 years. But what we run up against is, so you've

24 got these computers, they all work nicely, you got

25 the networks, and then you've got the lights out

2   and the doors closed. What's the point of it?

3   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Yeah, it

4   makes no sense. The Leon Levy Information

5   Commons, was that a privately funded program?

6   JOSH NACHOWITZ: It was, it was

7   funded with a grant, it was partially funded with

8   a grant from the Leon Levy Corporation. We used

9   some City Council funding, as well, for that.

10   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Are you

11   looking to make that a pilot model? - -

12   JOSH NACHOWITZ: [interposing] What

13   we're hoping is that it's going to be something

14   that can be a real draw for the entire borough.

15   It's located at our central library in Grand Army

16   Plaza, it's, it's sort of a new way for us to look

17   at how we're providing technology services to the

18   borough, which is a lot more interactive. It

19   provides a lot of space for education, for

20   classroom space; it provides separate breakout and

21   workrooms, sort of hoping that the public and

22   especially the creative community in Brooklyn can

23   actually utilize this space to have meetings, and

24   to support businesses in the borough.

25   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Where exactly

1

2   is--?

3   JOSH NACHOWITZ: It's in the

4   central, the Brooklyn Central Library--

5   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I'm not

6   familiar with it.

7   JOSH NACHOWITZ: - - Plaza. It's

8   near Prospect Park.

9   CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Oh, Prospect

10   Park. Okay. Beautiful. My last question that I

11   had, was, just give me a second here. In regards

12   to ... the NYPL, I notice in the Fiscal Year 2011

13   there were approximately 4.42 million user

14   sessions, 36 percent of those sessions were in The

15   Bronx, 54 percent in Manhattan. I'm just curious

16   as to why, if we have this digital divide, and

17   there's a greater need, I would imagine, in The

18   Bronx, that Manhattan, why is the percentage

19   lower? Though I understand there's more people

20   who live in Manhattan, is there any speculation as

21   to why--?

22   JANE ABOYOUN: Not, no, not really.

23   I mean, I--we would need to look at--we'd have to

24   sort of evaluate the number of branches, the

25   number of patrons, coming to those branches and

then looking at the hours to sort of get some more

clarity on, on those numbers. It could, there are

definitely more branches in Manhattan than there

are in The Bronx, but not, you know, not, it's not

hugely, hugely different. So--

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay.

JANE ABOYOUN: Yeah, I mean,

without really drilling into the data. It's

something we can get back to you on if that's

what- -

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [interposing]

Okay, please? Even if we have less branches,

there's a higher need.

JANE ABOYOUN: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And I would

imagine either--it's hard for me to believe

students are--at the very least students that do

know what's available, 'cause you know, they're

very much attracted to libraries. Maybe I

shouldn't even speculate. I'm asking, 'cause I

don't know, it'd be something interesting to, to

look at. Well, I want to thank you all three of

you for coming today.

TOM GALANTE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And for the great--

JANE ABOYOUN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --work, you're carrying a tremendous load, tremendous responsibility, and we're going to continue to fight to make sure that this year, as we have done in the previous year, that you get what you deserve and what you need. So you can service our constituents. Thank you so much.

JANE ABOYOUN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Well, this con--there's--we don't have anybody else? Okay, beautiful, this concludes today's Committee hearing. Thank you so much, everyone.
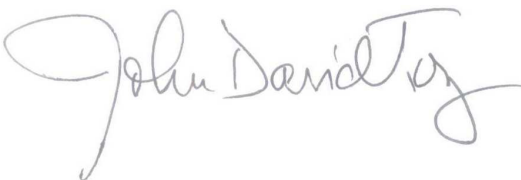
[gavel]

[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

Date   May 11, 2012