

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR

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May 6, 2013
Start: 1:31 p.m.
Recess: 1:42 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: MICHAEL C. NELSON
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
James F. Gennaro
Melissa Mark-Viverito
Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.
Eric A. Ulrich

CHAIRPERSON NELSON: --member Mike Nelson, and I am the chair of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor. I apologize for the late start for those of you who have something to do today. Today has been a long time coming. I was interim chair in November 2009 when the precursor to the bill we are voting on today former Intro number 1059-2009 was first heard by this committee. I was a regular member of the committee when we heard the earlier version of the bill, Intro number 97 in May of 2010. Today I will vote for this legislation as chair of this committee this new version of proposed Intro number 97-A will be a local law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York in relation to the provision of paid sick time earned by employees. It has been commonly referred to as the paid sick time bill, although it's actual title is the earned sick time act. At Wednesday's stated meeting, the City Council will likely vote to join San Francisco, Washington D.C., Seattle, Portland, Oregon and the state of Connecticut in requiring many employees to provide sick time to their employees. Proposed Intro number 97-A will

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2 allow employees of companies of over 15 employees
3 - - up to five paid sick days per year to take
4 care of their health needs as well as those of
5 their family members. As sponsor of this
6 legislation, I believe that paid sick time will
7 improve the overall health of the population of
8 the city because sick people will be able to stay
9 home from work or school preventing the spread of
10 illness to coworkers, customers, classmates,
11 teachers or even strangers on the subway. In
12 addition, I believe the amendments made to this
13 bill as a result of all three hearings have made
14 this very good bill that is much friendlier to
15 small businesses than earlier versions. We have
16 been joined by members of the Committee, so far
17 Council Member Domenic Recchia to my right,
18 Council Member Eric Ulrich to my immediate right.
19 We have also been joined by Council Member Brewer,
20 the sponsor of the legislation. I would like to
21 thank the Committee staff, Matt Carlin to my
22 right, our counsel, who has worked very, very hard
23 on this, Faith Corbett, also our policy analyst,
24 John Lisansky [phonetic], our financial analyst,
25 Justin Goodman, our press officer. I would also

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2 like to acknowledge the work done in this bill by
3 assistant director - - Laura Poppa and deputy
4 director Tyrza Nasser [phonetic] as well as - - ,
5 Council Member Brewer's chief of staff, the
6 legislative division. Gale and her staff put in a
7 tremendous amount of work into this legislation,
8 which should be recognized. Before I proceed to a
9 vote, I am sure Gale would like to say a few
10 words. Congratulations, Council Member on a
11 difficult and certainly a long job well done.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you
13 very much Mr. Chair, for your support in the past
14 and eloquent speech now, and I do want to thank
15 some folks. This has been like three and a half
16 years of many hearings, many conference calls,
17 many press conferences, many, many discussions,
18 and for those who support it and for those who did
19 not, I thank everybody for their input. I think
20 we did try to listen, and we tried to come to
21 terms with a bill that is appropriately supportive
22 of those who don't have paid sick time as well as
23 understanding the needs of those businesses where
24 they may or may not have paid sick time, and they
25 have their own concerns, so I certainly want to

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2 thank Shula Warren [phonetic], as the chair did.
3 I want to thank Speaker Quinn and in her office,
4 Margaret Nelson, Laura Poppa, Tyrza Nasser, Matt
5 Carlin, Jim Caris [phonetic], Lauren Axelrod,
6 Molly Murphy, Preston Niblack, Ray Majeski, Paul
7 Strum, Faith Corbett, Michael - - and Ramon
8 Martinez, and within the group that was on the
9 steps of city hall, 500 times, I just want you to
10 know. That is how many press conferences in the
11 rain and in the snow and in the heat, and it's
12 certainly the New York Paid Leave Coalition with
13 Donna Dolan and Martha Baker, A Better Balance
14 Attorney Sherry Lewin [phonetic] and Jared Make
15 [phonetic], Center for Popular Democracy, which is
16 also part of Make the Road, and it includes Amy
17 Carol, Addy Varkin [phonetic], and Andrew Friedman
18 and - - , everybody who is part and those amazing
19 workers who I think they moved into the steps, and
20 they were there every single time, 32 BJ Allison
21 Hirsch [phonetic], 1199 Lily Carino and Kevin
22 Finnegan [phonetic], the retail workers I
23 mentioned Mark the Road, New York Communities for
24 Change, Working Families Party and all the
25 businesses, all the nurses, all the doctors,

1 health professionals, teachers, parents, I think
2 on Wednesday we will mention even more, but I am
3 just here to say thank you to the 37 sponsors.
4 From the very beginning many of my colleagues
5 wrote editorials as Council Member Domenic Recchia
6 did and people were credibly supportive. I know
7 that Council Member Eric Ulrich, even though he
8 had lots of challenge in his district, he was a
9 very early sponsor. I think it is a better bill
10 'cause we had a lot of sunshine, a lot of input,
11 and I want to thank the Speaker for coming to the
12 table to make this discussion, and when I say in
13 the last two weeks even though we have three and a
14 half years of press conferences in the last two
15 weeks, we have 500 conference calls to be sure
16 that this bill addresses the concerns of working
17 New Yorkers who don't have paid sick time. So I
18 think it will be a healthier city. This is
19 perhaps the most progressive legislation ever
20 passed by the City Council because one million
21 people either will have paid sick days who do not
22 already or they won't be fired if they take off
23 five unpaid sick days, and they won't be fired. I
24 think the businesses will find that it is
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2 reasonable. It is not extra burden. It will have
3 more loyal employees, and our restaurants and our
4 retail and people who are working low wage jobs
5 and more importantly parents will be able to pick
6 up kids. they won't have to drop off kids that
7 are sick, and then be able to go to a follow up
8 doctor's appointment, which is so important for a
9 child or for a parent or just for all families, so
10 from the bottom of my heart, thank you everybody
11 who had input into this legislation, and thank you
12 everybody particularly who were early supporters
13 and who stuck with us rain, sleet and heat. Thank
14 you very much, Mr. Chair.

15 CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Very welcome,
16 Council Member. Very tenacious, and three and a
17 half years. I though it began when I first got on
18 this Council about 12 years ago it seemed so long.
19 I'd like to mention that also Council Member
20 Gennaro is here as well. Any of my other members
21 have anything they would like to say? So we can I
22 guess call the roll now, right? Okay.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
24 Committee Clerk. Roll call vote Committee on
25 Civil Service and Labor Introduction 97-A.

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Council Member Nelson?

CHAIRPERSON NELSON: I vote aye and I recommend that my Committee members do so too.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Gennaro?

COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Mr. Chairman, I would like to speak on my vote if I may? Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wish to thank Gale Brewer in a very, very special way. We wouldn't be here today certainly without her great advocacy. I was not an early supporter of the bill. There were things in there that I thought were problematic, but Gale stuck with it, and just made it happen with the Speaker. I want to thank the Speaker also in a very, very special way for sort of getting behind the whole concept of this and bringing folks together like she did and I have gone from someone who was not a supporter of this bill at all to someone who is a very, very proud sponsor of this good bill, and so this is what happens when Gale Brewer gets an issue, she gets the consensus, she finds out what is possible, she stays with it, she is relentless. She has my utmost respect, and I thank her for her good service to the city by staying with us and

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2 getting us a good day today. I thank the Speaker,
3 I thank you Mr. Chair, members of the Committee.
4 I urge everyone to vote yes on this very good
5 bill, and I will vote yes as a proud supporter of
6 this bill. Mr. Chairman, I vote yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Thank you,
8 Council Member.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Recchia?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Mr.
11 Chairman, may I be excused to explain my vote?
12 First of all I want to start off by joining in
13 with Gale Brewer and all those people she
14 mentioned thanking them for their hard work. In
15 addition I want to especially thank my finance
16 staff who worked diligently over the years and
17 they did a great job. I want to thank Ray and
18 Preston and everyone else in finance for doing
19 such a really, really good job, but last but not
20 least I really have to thank and recognize the
21 leadership of Gale Brewer. Just a spectacular
22 council member, she works day and night. She
23 never gave up on this. She always told me we are
24 going to get it done. We are going to get it
25 done. She was right. I wrote an editorial about

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2 this, and you know, to all of those critics that
3 say it is going to hurt businesses, I disagree
4 with that. As a matter of fact, I think it is
5 going to help businesses. It is going to keep
6 your offices or your stores or whatever healthier.
7 Less people are going to get sick. The last thing
8 you want is people who are ill to come to work,
9 and spread the disease or germs all over the
10 office. I believe this is a bill that really
11 addresses many issues, and it is something that we
12 as New Yorkers would be proud of. I know some
13 people disagree. Some people called me up and
14 made issues, but I said in the long run I am going
15 to be proud of being a sponsor for this, but most
16 importantly I am being proud that I stood up
17 alongside Gale Brewer who really I have to say,
18 Gale, you were spectacular. I think all of us in
19 the City Council are very lucky to have served
20 with you. Thank you, Gale. I vote aye.

21 CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Thank you,
22 Council Member. I agree with your remarks as
23 well.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: Ulrich?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Yes.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of four
3 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no
4 abstentions, item is adopted. Members, please
5 sign the committee report.

6 CHAIRPERSON NELSON: I am going to
7 leave the vote open for--how long can I?

8 MALE VOICE: Half an hour.

9 CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Half an hour
10 for hopefully one of the members who could not
11 make it on time to sign on. So having said that--
12 any other statements by any of my colleagues?
13 This meeting Committee on Civil Service and Labor
14 is adjourned. Thank you all for being so patient.

15 [gavel]

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote in the
17 Committee Service and Labor is now four in the
18 affirmative, zero in the negative and no
19 abstentions.

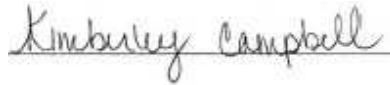
20 CHAIRPERSON NELSON: We are
21 adjourned.

22 [gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Campbell certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

Handwritten signature of Kimberley Campbell in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.Date _____ 6/4/13