

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON STATE  
AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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June 10, 2014  
Start: 1:19 p.m.  
Recess: 1:35 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
250 Broadway - Hearing Room,  
16th Fl

B E F O R E:  
KAREN KOSLOWITZ  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Inez E. Dickens  
Brad S. Lander  
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.  
Ben Kallos  
Alan N. Maisel  
Antonio Reynoso

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

Bill Lindauer  
New York Taxi Workers Alliance

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Good afternoon,  
3 and welcome. My name is Karen Koslowitz, and I am  
4 the Chairperson of the State and Federal Legislation  
5 Committee. Today, we will be considering two State  
6 Legislative Resolutions and two Mayor's Messages.  
7 First I would like to introduce the members of the  
8 Committee that are present at this time. Council  
9 Member Kallos, Council Member Maisel, Council Member  
10 Dickens, and Council Member Reynoso.

11 This afternoon, the Committee will be  
12 voting on two State Legislative Resolutions. The  
13 first being considered today would require the FDNY  
14 to provide all Fire Officers with at least 40 hours  
15 of field training and classroom instruction in the  
16 Building and Construction Codes, and local  
17 ordinances, and an additional 40 hours of field and  
18 classroom instruction in the Fire Code. Emphasis  
19 will be on the inspection duties of Fire Officers and  
20 any relevant changes to these duties as a result of  
21 the new Fire and Building Codes that took effect  
22 since July 2008.

23 The second State Legislative Resolution  
24 being heard today would support the passage of Senate  
25 Bill 6115 and Assembly Bill 8386, under current State

2 Law, which is set to sunset on December 31st, 2014.

3 New York City is authorized to install 150 red light  
4 cameras at one time. This proposed legislation would  
5 remove all conditions, and would authorize New York  
6 City to install right light cameras as it deems fit.

7 The Committee will also be considering  
8 two Mayor's Messages. The first Mayor's Message  
9 being heard today supports the passage of S.7703 and  
10 A.9834, which would extend New York City authority to  
11 install and use up to 150 red light cameras. The  
12 current authority granted by the State is set to  
13 sunset on December 31, 2014. This proposed  
14 legislation would extend the sunset date to December  
15 31, 2019.

16 Lastly, the Committee will consider a  
17 Mayor's Message, which supports the passage of  
18 A.9731, which seeks to amend the Vehicle and Traffic  
19 Law in the relation -- in the relation to speed  
20 limits. This bill would give New York City the  
21 authority to have a citywide speed limit of 20 miles  
22 per hour. Moreover, the bill would permit the City  
23 to make a written determination that traffic calming  
24 devices were not feasible at set locations. And  
25 could then have the limit at that location to be as

2 low as 20 miles per hour without traffic calming  
3 devices.

4 Finally, the bill would require the City  
5 to provide a bi-annual report to the Governor, the  
6 Temporary President of the Senate, and the Assembly  
7 Speaker. Beginning March 1, 2015, discussing the  
8 results of the locations where the speed limit has  
9 been established at less than 25 miles per hour, and  
10 where traffic calming measures have been installed.

11 Do my colleagues have any statements that  
12 they would like to make? Okay, we have --

13 [Pause]

14 [background discussion]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Yeah, Chair  
16 Koslowitz, can I ask a question?

17 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Yes, Council  
18 Member.

19 [Pause]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Speaking of --  
21 We consider that as a law S.7009 and A.9573 in the  
22 Assembly by Golden and the body regarding the -- I'm  
23 looking at the fiscal impact anticipated in 2015 of  
24 \$23 million. And just wanted to speak on what  
25 occurred recently or what happened that made us feel

2 that the Fire Department needed more training. And  
3 just I know that there's an opportunity with that  
4 answer hopefully.

5 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: That the Fire  
6 Department needs more training?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Yes, and sort of  
8 like if the purpose is to require a mandatory  
9 training for Fire Officers in all cities whose  
10 population is excess -- is in excess of one million.

11 [Pause]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I guess I'm just  
13 not clear, that's all.

14 [Pause]

15 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Right now there  
16 is no requirement.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: There are new  
18 Building Codes and they haven't been trained under  
19 those Building Codes.

20 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: And there's new  
21 Building Codes, and they haven't been trained under  
22 those Building Codes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Okay, that  
24 clears it up. Thank you. I appreciate it.

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Council Member  
3 Dickens.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [off mic]

5 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, one person  
6 that wants to testify. It's Bill Lindauer and we've  
7 been joined by Council Member Espinal.

8 [Pause]

9 BILL LINDAUER: My name is Bill Lindauer.  
10 I drove a taxi for some 30 years in New York City.  
11 I'm a proud member of the New York Taxi Workers  
12 Alliance, which represents Yellow Cab drivers in New  
13 York City, and is part of the AFL-CIO. Our Executive  
14 Director Bhairavi Desai is a member of the Executive  
15 Council of the AFL-CIO. We all are for safety.  
16 Statistics show that cab drivers are the safest  
17 drivers in New York. I know we're targeted by the  
18 cops, and by snide remarks by the media and maybe  
19 some other people, who I won't mention. But  
20 statistics don't lie in this case. We are the  
21 safest. We are New York's safest. I would love that  
22 to be the decal on every cab in New York as New  
23 York's Finest is on the police cars, and Bravest is  
24 on fire engines, et cetera. My point is...

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: [interposing]  
3 Talk about the bill, sir.

4  
5 BILL LINDAUER: Yes, I think the bill  
6 should be amended because it's discriminatory, and  
7 could subject the City to legal action against the  
8 City because you're singling out cab drivers. Under  
9 the legislation, the Taxi and Limousine Commission  
10 could give points for red light violations. Regular  
11 motorists won't get any points. So many drivers with  
12 families who have their licenses suspended for  
13 nothing. Because if the yellow lights are like this,  
14 I don't know if they barely meet the Federal  
15 Requirement Minimum of three seconds. It suddenly  
16 turns yellow, you either slam on the brakes or you go  
17 through. And when you go through, it could turn red.  
18 So you're damned if you do. Damned if you don't but  
19 to single out Yellow Cab drivers to make them  
20 scapegoats is unconscionable, and I think the bill  
21 should be amended to not permit the TLC to punish cab  
22 drivers while other motorists go free willingly.  
23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: I think that it's  
25 a surprise to all motorists, and I just want to say



2 to clarify the Mayor's message regarding speed limit  
3 would permit the city to reduce its citywide speed  
4 limits as low as 25 miles per hour.

5 BILL LINDAUER: That we could live with,  
6 yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: I don't... Well,  
8 that's what this bill is about.

9 BILL LINDAUER: It's just the camera  
10 things and the points that the TLC likes to subject  
11 cab drivers to. Other motorists pay fifty bucks and  
12 they're scott free. TLC wants to impose terrible  
13 fines; wants to levy points so drivers cannot make a  
14 living. Have their licenses suspended for nothing,  
15 and then they drive a hundred times more than any  
16 regular motorist. This is just totally unfair, and I  
17 find it's unconscionable, and this supposed to be a  
18 labor-friendly city. Not in this case.

19 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay. Council  
20 Member Maisel.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: You recognize  
22 that the only people who are allowed to drive a cab  
23 are the person who is licensed to drive that cab?

24 BILL LINDAUER: Of course.  
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Right, so with a  
3 regular motorist, anybody could drive a regular car.  
4 So the purpose of the bill is to exempt motorists  
5 from points because the cameras can't distinguish  
6 who's driving. So if the cameras can't distinguish  
7 who's driving, there's no reason to give points, or  
8 there's no ability to give points to the motorist who  
9 is violating the law. In the case of a Yellow Cab,  
10 only those people have the license to drive will be  
11 driving that Yellow Cab. Therefore, it's easy to  
12 give points to that person.

13 BILL LINDAUER: Oh, aren't we the lucky  
14 ones, huh? [laughs]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Well, but that's  
16 -- that's -- but that's the rationale -- that's the  
17 rationale since it's quite clear that if a Yellow Cab  
18 is violating the restrictions, we know that it's the  
19 Yellow Cab driver who's licensed and that's why they  
20 get the points. So I don't know if there's anything  
21 unconstitutional about that or illegal about that.

22 BILL LINDAUER: Well, we might find out  
23 in court one day. [laughs]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Okay. [bell]

25 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Thank you.

2 BILL LINDAUER: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Anybody else want  
4 to make any kind of comment. With that, do you want  
5 to call the roll.

6 CLERK: William Martin, Community Clerk.  
7 Roll call vote Committee on State and Federal  
8 Legislation. Items are coupled. Council Member  
9 Koslowitz.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I vote aye.

11 CLERK: Dickens.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye.

13 CLERK: Espinal.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Aye.

15 CLERK: Kallos.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

17 CLERK: Maisel.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: In favor.

19 CLERK: Reynoso.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Aye on all.

21 CLERK: By a vote of six in the  
22 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no  
23 abstentions, items have been adopted. Members,  
24 please sign the Committee Reports.  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, we're going  
3 to keep the Committee open for 20 minutes. People  
4 are at meetings all over. So we're going to keep it  
5 open for 20 minutes. Thank you, and maybe one day  
6 we'll have a hour's meeting.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER: We can only hope.

8 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: This meeting is  
9 adjourned. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date June 13, 2014