

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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September 22, 2014
Start: 10:21 a.m.
Recess: 10:30 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway-Committee Rm, 14th Fl.

B E F O R E:
YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Daniel R. Garodnick
Margaret S. Chin
James G. Van Bramer
Mark S. Weprin
Costa G. Constantinides
Stephen T. Levin
I. Daneek Miller
David G. Greenfield
Carlos Menchaca
Antonio Reynoso

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Good morning and welcome to today's hearing of the City Council Transportation Committee. My name is Ydanis Rodriguez and I am the chair of this committee. First, let me recognize my colleagues who are here today: Council Member Garodnick, Chin, Van Bramer, Weprin and Constantinides.

Today we will vote on a very important piece of legislation: Proposed Intro 371, a intro by majority leader Van Bramer and I, which will impose civil penalty on hit-and-run drivers on top of any other penalties imposed by state law. It is very obvious that not only the law, but basically human decency requires all of us to stop and remain at the scene of any incident on the road; most importantly, to ensure that proper medical care reach anyone who needs it as quickly as possible and yet, it still happens all the time. Cowardly drivers flee the scene with no regard to human life or the basic responsibilities that come with the privilege of driving on our streets. The laws on the book don't seem to be enough and that's why we are acting today. Our hearing on these bills we heard, that we have heard all too often before, drivers who hit and run

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2 add so much to the anguish of victims and their loved
3 ones. In order to make this law as strong a
4 deterrent as possible, since that hearing we have
5 doubled the fines prescribed in the bill, which now
6 go up to \$10,000 for the incidents that result in
7 critical injury and/or death. Although we know that
8 no amount of money will ever compensate the victim's
9 family, we hope that this legislation will bring some
10 comfort to the families. It is also important to
11 point out that because this law would impose civil
12 penalties, it should make it easier for the city to
13 pursue these cases that inherently is to meet the
14 highest standards of proof needed to put state's
15 criminal charges.

16 As I mentioned at the first hearing on
17 this bill, Intro 371 is also an example of the
18 Council doing what it can to legislate on our own to
19 advance street safety without relying on the action
20 in Albany. At the same time, we need our colleagues
21 at the state level to act on many important proposals
22 to make all of us safer including and in the perverse
23 incentive that currently extends to drunk drivers to
24 hit-and-run in order to avoid the penalty for DUI,
25 which can be higher than leaving the scene.

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2 I am very proud to have co-lead [sic]
3 Intro 371 with our majority leader, Jimmy Van Bramer.
4 We are committed to issues of street safety, which is
5 why this piece of legislation is so important to us.
6 We hope this legislation will really make drivers
7 think twice about their basic responsibility on the
8 road.

9 I now invite our majority leader, Jimmy
10 Van Bramer, to deliver an opening statement.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
12 very much, Mr. Chair, for your co-sponsorship of this
13 bill for the strengthening of this very important law
14 and for your indefatigable leadership with respect to
15 achieving Vision Zero, so I want to thank you for
16 everything you've done, and like for yourself and for
17 so many members, this is personal. Almost a year
18 ago, Luis Bravo, a 19-year old, was struck in
19 Woodside Queens and instead of stopping to help him
20 and to see if maybe there was something that could be
21 done for him, the driver fled the scene, leaving Luis
22 Bravo to literally die in the street. His mother,
23 Martha, is following this very important piece of
24 legislation and I know, because we have heard from
25 her, that our actions today and tomorrow are bringing

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2 her some comfort and it is so, so important that we
3 do all that we can to make sure that those who flee
4 the scene of a collision and leave people to die
5 would be punished as much as they possibly could, and
6 this very important bill, Intro 371, is filling a gap
7 that currently exists that most people don't know
8 exists and while it cannot bring Luis Bravo or Kuma
9 Ragunath or Karen Feras (phonetic] back, three
10 individuals who were killed in my district in the
11 last 18 months alone, by hit-and-run drivers. It can
12 and I believe will serve as a deterrent to those who
13 would do the same thing to others. We know this
14 happens all the time, far too often and I believe
15 this bill will save lives.

16 So I want to thank again, our chair for
17 co-sponsoring this legislation with me. I'm proud to
18 have introduced this. I want to thank all of our
19 colleagues, the 20 colleagues who have signed onto
20 this legislation and all of the staff who were
21 involved in making this possible and I'm proud of
22 this and tomorrow will be an even more proud day when
23 Luis's mother will join us at the City Council for
24 this very important bill. Thank you so much.

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2 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
3 majority leader. I would like to recognize also my
4 colleague, Council Member Levine [sic], Miller and
5 Greenfield and if any of my colleague has anything to
6 say before we take a vote. No?

7 Before we do the roll call, I would like
8 to dedicate this vote to the victims of hit-and-run
9 and to the courage of their family members. Your
10 death has not been in vain and we will work until
11 these laws are performed and justice is served. As
12 my colleague also has had so many cases in his
13 district, I also would like to recognize one other
14 victim that was personally connected with me, Josbel
15 Rivera, who I knew his family before he was born and
16 Josbel Rivera was a recent college graduate student,
17 who crossing Mosholu Parkway, he was hit, the driver
18 left the scene and a few hour after he left the scene
19 you can see in a video in the Facts Finder that a few
20 hours after he put his car on fire to get rid of the
21 evidence and still, it took two years for his mother
22 to be able to see justice and at this moment the
23 driver is only doing like two years in jail, so as we
24 have reason Josbel, we have so many other big thing
25 and those families they are suffering every day.

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2 I now call for a vote on Proposed Intro
3 Number 371-A and now the clerk will please call the
4 roll.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
6 Committee Clerk, roll call vote, Committee on
7 Transportation. Chair Rodriguez.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Garodnick.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Chin.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK: Levin.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Weprin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Greenfield.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I vote aye
21 and I ask that my name be added as a co-sponsor on
22 the bill. Thank you.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Constantinides.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye and
3 I, too, would to be added as a co-sponsor to the
4 bill. Thank you.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: Miller.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I proudly vote
7 aye and also would to be added on the bill.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 9 in the
9 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
10 item has been adopted and members, please sign the
11 Committee Report. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you and I
13 would like to ask the clerk to leave the vote open so
14 my other colleague will be able to vote.

15 [background voices]

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Continuation roll call
17 Committee on Transportation. Council Member
18 Menchaca.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you and
20 uh... is this working? Thank you so much and I vote
21 yea on this piece of legislation. I'm a co-sponsor,
22 proud and we kind of move forward to describe the
23 interactions between our community, either
24 pedestrians or bike and with cars that we not only
25 label them as what they are, which are collisions;

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2 these are not accidents, that we have the appropriate
3 measure and response. This bill does that and so I'm
4 very proud to be voting in support of this piece of
5 legislation. Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK: The current vote on
7 Committee on Transportation is now 10 in the
8 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

9 [background voices]

10 COMMITTEE CLERK: 'Kay, continuation roll
11 call Committee on Transportation. Council Member
12 Reynoso.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I vote aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote on the
15 Committee on Transportation is now 11 in the
16 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.
17 The hearing is adjourned.

18 [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 9/24/2014