

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES JOINTLY WITH
COMMITTEE ON GENERAL WELFARE AND COMMITTEE ON
COURTS AND LEGAL SERVICES

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October 20, 2014
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway- Committee Rm, 16th Fl.

B E F O R E:

Laurie A. Cumbo
Chairperson

Stephen T. Levin
Co-Chairperson

Rory I. Lancman
Co-Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

BEN KALLOS
DARLENE MEALY
ELIZABETH S. CROWLEY
KAREN KOSLOWITZ
ANNABEL PALMA
CARLOS MENCHACA
COREY D. JOHNSON
DONOVAN RICHARDS
FERNANDO CABRERA

RITCHIE J. TORRES
RUBEN WILLS
COUNCIL MEMBERS (CONTINUED):
VANESSA L. GIBSON
VINCENT IGNIZIO

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

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Good morning. My name is Council Member Laurie Cumbo and I thank you all for coming here today. We are having our joint council hearing. It's an oversight hearing on the coordination of services for victims of domestic violence. I am very pleased that we have a quorum so quickly. And at this time I want to recognize my colleagues who are also with me here today. We have Councilman Lancman who is Chair of the courts and legal services and we also have on the Committee on General Welfare Council Member Stephen Levin. And at this time we are going to have an opening statement. I'm so very pleased that our speaker is here and it indicates a, a strong sense of importance on this particular committee. So without further ado I introduce our Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you so much Chair Cumbo and not only for this hearing but your strong advocacy and leadership on issues impacting women. And I know that you've taken strong position on the issue of domestic violence so thank you for that. And all my colleagues that

1 are here good morning I'm Council Member Melissa
2 Mark-Viverito, Speaker of the New York City
3 Council. So I want to thank again all the chairs of
4 the committees that are here with us today Council
5 Members Lancman, Levin, and Cumbo along with the
6 members of the respective committees as well as the
7 staff to those committees. Thank you so much for
8 your efforts, for their coordination and work on
9 this important hearing today. Additionally I want
10 to thank the sponsors of the resolutions being
11 heard today; Council Members Espinal, Gibson, and
12 Cumbo and also Council Member Cabrera for the
13 introduction that we'll be hearing today. Thank you
14 to Commissioner Pierre-Louis and Commissioner Banks
15 for joining us. And last and not least I'd like to
16 thank the Victim's Service Provider organizations.
17 I know many are in this room. And in particular the
18 survivors who have come today to share their
19 experiences. I know we also had a prior hearing and
20 I know that the voice of the survivors is very very
21 impactful as it always is in these situations and
22 it takes a lot of courage so thank you for that.
23 October marks Domestic Violence Awareness Month in
24 the United States. Today we're going to hear Reso
25

1 429 which recognizes October as Domestic Violence
2 Awareness Month in the city of New York. We will
3 also hear two other resolutions and a bill.
4 Resolution number 104 calls upon the New York State
5 Unified Court System to require the integrated
6 domestic violence courts in New York City to issue
7 regular reports on batterer intervention programs.
8 Proposed resolution number 161-A calls upon the New
9 York state legislature to pass and the governor to
10 sign Assembly Bill 7964 and Senate Bill 5032 which
11 would require wireless telephone companies that
12 offer shared or family plans to allow victims of
13 domestic violence to be released from the account
14 without penalty in instances of domestic violence
15 cases. Lastly we will hear Intro 361 of this year,
16 a local law to amend the administrative code to the
17 city of New York in relation to requiring the
18 Department of Homeless Services to grant a
19 presumption of eligibility for applicants to the
20 shelter system who are exiting Human Resource
21 Administration at domestic violence shelters or
22 Department of Youth and Community Development
23 runaway homeless youth shelters. Domestic violence
24 comes in many forms and is known in all communities
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2 regardless of age, race, ethnicity, education,
3 marital status, or sexual orientation. It is a
4 pattern of abusive behavior that is used by one
5 intimate power to gain or maintain power and
6 control over another intimate partner. The abuse
7 can be physical, emotional, financial, or sexual.
8 This includes any behaviors that intimidate,
9 manipulate, humiliate, terrorize, isolate, frighten
10 coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound
11 someone. The abuse can be obvious but often times
12 it is hidden and victims suffer in silence.
13 Domestic violence often goes unreported and the
14 figures are startling. The U.S. Center for Disease
15 Control and Prevention indicates that on average 20
16 people per minute are victims of physical violence
17 by an intimate partner in the United States. Every
18 year more than three million children witness
19 domestic violence in their homes. In New York City
20 police responded to 280,531 domestic violence
21 incidents in 2013 which is an average of over 765
22 per day. According to the mayor's office to combat
23 domestic violence between 2001 and 2012 there were
24 six, 864 domestic violence homicides in New York
25 City. And those are only a handful of the very

1
2 disturbing statistics. Domestic violence is also a
3 leading cause of homelessness amongst women and
4 families. At any given time the Human
5 Administrations System of Emergency Domestic
6 Violence Shelters houses over 1,000 families. Due
7 to the state imposed time limits on the domestic
8 violence shelters many women and families end up
9 timing out of this system to then enter the
10 Department of Homeless Services shelter system.
11 According to DHS domestic violence is one of the
12 top three reasons people apply for shelter.
13 Increased access to permanent housing is one of the
14 key ways we can ensure that victims and their
15 families can live safely and independently. Sadly
16 silence is often a key enabling force in the
17 perpetuation of this abuse. Children who go up in,
18 who grow up in abusive homes often become victims
19 or perpetrators later in life. As a society we need
20 to commit to breaking the silence, offering
21 assistance, and changing attitudes that allow these
22 cycles of violence to endure through generations.
23 We need to implement policies that not only assist
24 victims but reduce incidents by educating citizens,
25 particularly our youth as to how to break cycles of

1 behaviors and what healthy relationships look like.

2 So I want to look, I look forward to hearing more
3 today, that's one of the reasons that this council,
4 not only through these hearings but we've also
5 allocated many millions of your taxpayer dollars to
6 services to help survivors of domestic violence so
7 that we can break. And I know many of the providers
8 are here, we can break those cycles and make sure
9 that families are receiving the proper support. So
10 I want to, I look forward to hearing more today
11 about how various city agencies and organizations
12 work together to serve domestic violence victims
13 and their families and learn more about how we can
14 collectively ensure that this cycle of violence is
15 broken. So again I want to thank all the chairs and
16 everyone that is here today for this important
17 hearing.
18

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you Madam
20 Speaker. The way we are going to move forward I'm
21 going to read my opening statement and we'll be
22 followed by the Committee on General Welfare
23 chaired by Council Member Steve Levin and then we
24 will follow with Committee on Courts and Legal
25 Services that is chaired by Rory Lancman which is a

1 new committee that has been created specifically by
2 the speaker in order to make sure that we have an
3 additional arm in the areas of combating domestic
4 violence. Good afternoon everyone my name is Laurie
5 Cumbo and I am the proud chair of the Committee on
6 Women's Issues. This committee is very important to
7 me and to the city of New York because it presents
8 an opportunity to address issues that impact
9 vulnerable members of our population, namely
10 members that are victims of domestic violence.
11 Today we will hear resolution number 429 which
12 recognizes October as Domestic Violence Awareness
13 Month in the city of New York. We will also hear
14 two other resolutions and a bill. Resolution number
15 104 calls upon the New York State Unified Court
16 System to require the integrated domestic violence
17 courts in New York City to issue regular reports on
18 batterer intervention programs. Proposed resolution
19 number 161-A calls upon the New York State
20 Legislature to pass and the governor to sign A7964B
21 and S5032B which would require wireless telephone
22 companies that offer shared or family plans to
23 allow victims of domestic violence to be released
24 from the account without penalty in instances of
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1 domestic violence. Lastly we will hear Intro
2 03612014, a local law to amend the administrative
3 code of the city of New York in relation to
4 requiring the Department of Home, Homeless Services
5 to grant a presumption of eligibility for
6 applicants to the shelter system who are exiting
7 human resources administration, domestic violence
8 shelters, or Department of Youth and Community
9 Development Runaway Homeless Youth Shelters. We all
10 know that domestic violence is a challenge and a
11 problem that has very long reaching effects.
12 Domestic violence has no face. It affects people of
13 all walks of life. Domestic violence does not
14 discriminate by age, by race, by ethnicity, by
15 education, employment status, physical fitness, or
16 marital status. It is all pervasive as so many of
17 you here know. Victims of domestic violence often
18 feel trapped with no way out. This is particularly
19 true for women with limited financial resources.
20 Victims who are able to safely leave often face a
21 different set of difficulties. Violence is not
22 necessarily ceased once a victim has left. In fact
23 the victim may be at greater risk after separation.
24 In addition the victim may encounter shame from
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1 loved ones, employment and financial struggles, and
2 the lack of alternative housing. The situation is
3 also particularly challenging for the children of
4 victims of domestic violence. Over the course of
5 the last few weeks I am proud to note that this
6 council has made it a point to raise awareness
7 about domestic violence. We have increased funding
8 uh though our DOVE initiative by over 40 percent.
9 And we have also created a, a major campaign with
10 our go purple day where council members throughout
11 the city of New York and all five boroughs in high
12 district areas we were out on the streets making
13 sure that people had all of the access and
14 information they needed for use in terms of
15 domestic violence issues. And we are going to
16 continue to work diligently towards combatting
17 domestic violence. Victims are not alone in this
18 struggle and we want to make that loud and clear to
19 the residents and the citizens of New York City.
20 Today we'll be examining and receiving an update on
21 service for victims of domestic violence from the
22 Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, New
23 York City Department of Homeless Services, and the
24 New York City Human Resources Administration
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1 Department of Social Services. We will also be
2 hearing one bill and three resolutions. Intro 0361
3 is a local law to amend the administrative code of
4 the city of New York in relation to requiring the
5 Department of Homeless Services to re-grant a
6 presumption of eligibility for applicants to the
7 shelter system who are exiting Human Resources
8 Administration, domestic violence shelters, or
9 Department of Youth and Community Development
10 Runaway Homeless Youth Shelters. Resolution 0104
11 calls upon the New York State Unified Court System
12 to require the Integrated Domestic Violence Courts
13 in New York City to issue regular reports on
14 batterer intervention programs. Proposed Resolution
15 0161A calls upon the New York State Legislature to
16 pass and the governor to sign A7964B and S5032B
17 which would require wireless telephone companies
18 that offered shared or family plans to allow
19 victims of domestic violence to be released from
20 the account without penalty in instance of domestic
21 violence. Last but certainly not least
22 Resolution0429 recognizes October as Domestic
23 Violence Awareness Month in the city of New York in
24 order to gain greater visibility not only here in
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1 New York City but throughout the nation. I want to
2 thank my co-chair Stephen Levin and Rory Lancman
3 for working with me and my committee on the issues
4 we will be addressing today. I'd also like to thank
5 the staff of the Committee on Women's Issues
6 Amanita Kelowna [sp?] Council to the Women's
7 Committee and Joan Povolni [sp?] our Policy
8 Analyst, the staff of the Committee on General
9 Welfare, and the staff of the Committee on Courts
10 and Legal Services. We thank all of the witnesses
11 that will testify today and we look forward to
12 hearing from each and every one of you. And I just
13 want to add that this has been a remarkable month
14 by all of the members of the city council to raise
15 awareness, visibility, and support around issues
16 pertaining to domestic violence. At this time I'd
17 like to recognize my colleagues that are here with
18 us; Council Members Crowley, Johnson, Cabrera,
19 Gibson, and Kallos. And at this time we will now
20 hear from our chair of General Welfare the
21 honorable Steve Levin.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much
24 Chair Laurie Cumbo. Good morning everybody. I am
25 Council Member Stephen Levin, Chair of the

1 Council's Committee on General Welfare. I want to
2 thank Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito for joining us
3 today to discuss this important topic as well as my
4 co-chairs Council Member Laurie Cumbo. And I want
5 to thank her for all of her work throughout this
6 month on raising awareness for victims of domestic
7 violence and Council Member Rory Lancman. As, as
8 Council Member Cumbo and the speaker have already
9 mentioned we are here today to discuss the
10 coordination of services the city provides for the
11 victims of domestic violence. As you are all ware
12 domestic violence not only affects victims
13 physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing but can
14 cause devastating effects to a family's stability.
15 National studies have shown that over 60 percent of
16 homeless women who have been victims of intimate,
17 intimate partner abuse during their adult lives,
18 and according to Department of Homeless Services
19 domestic violence is one of the top three reasons
20 for shelter entry in New York City. Although HRA
21 oversees a system of emergency domestic violence
22 shelters there are state mandated time limits on
23 these shelters and victims are required to leave
24 after only 180 days. Many victims time out of DV
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1 shelters before locating permanent housing and then
2 must begin the application process at the PATH
3 center to enter the DHS system. The new rental
4 subsidies launch by DHS and HRA Living in
5 Communities or LINC will begin to address this
6 critical need for permanent housing for victims of
7 domestic violence. We look forward to hearing more
8 about this program today and monitoring the results
9 of the program moving forward. In addition to our
10 general oversight discussion today as the speaker
11 and Council Member Cumbo mentioned we are also
12 going to be hearing Intro 361 sponsored by Council
13 Member Corey Johnson. This bill would require DHS
14 to grant a presumption of eligibility to shelter
15 applicants who have timed out of DV shelter or a
16 DYCD youth shelter. This bill would ease the
17 burdensome requirements for these populations and
18 allow them to bypass having to undergo a second
19 eligibility determination which is an arduous
20 process as those that have gone through it can
21 attest to. We look forward to working with the
22 administration on this piece of legislation. I want
23 to thank you all for being here today to testify
24 and to my colleagues Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito,
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1 Chair Lorie Cumbo, and Chair Rory Lancman, as well
2 as my other colleagues who are here today for being
3 here to address this very important and time
4 sensitive topic. With that I will turn it over to
5 Chair Rory Lancman for opening statements.
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7 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Good morning. I
8 want to thank my Co-Chairs Council Member Steve
9 Levin and Laurie Cumbo for organizing and
10 conducting this important hearing and of course
11 Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito both for creating the
12 Committee on Courts and, and Legal Services and for
13 being with us in, in her dedication to this issue.
14 Before we proceed let me also recognize the council
15 members from the Committee on Courts and Legal
16 Services who are present today. Council Member
17 Vanessa Gibson who in her own right is Chair of the
18 Public Safety Committee and Council Member Ben
19 Kallos who also happens to be Chair of the
20 Committee on Government Operations. Today we have
21 the opportunity to exam how the courts and legal
22 services are working together to address the
23 escalating issue of domestic violence. It is deeply
24 troubling to hear that according to the NYPD and
25 Safe Horizon police responded to more than 280

1 thousand domestic violence incidents in 2013. And
2 according to the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic
3 Violence between 2001 and 2012 there were 864
4 domestic violence homicides in New York City. This
5 is an issue of great importance to the council, to
6 my colleagues to myself and to the courts and legal
7 services committee. I'm particularly interested in
8 discussing the resolution calling upon the New York
9 State Unified Court System to require the
10 Integrated Domestic Violence Courts in New York
11 City to issue regular reports on batterer
12 intervention programs. The Integrated Domestic
13 Violent, Violence Courts in New York are designed
14 to have a family's multiple cases come before a
15 single judge and provide judicial monitoring,
16 access to advocacy and services, and close
17 communication with outside agencies and programs.
18 As pointed in the resolution these courts help to
19 ensure consistency in judicial orders which allows
20 the court to respond on a particularized basis to
21 each family's situation. Batterers intervention
22 programs are educational programs for domestic
23 violence offenders focusing on encouraging
24 participants to take responsibility for abusive
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1 acts and explore the effects and impact of
2 violence. Although there are several possible ways
3 to enter a batterer program one of the more common
4 is upon order from a court. However when batterers
5 go through court ordered programs there is
6 currently no readily accessible public record of
7 outcomes to determine if there are identifiable
8 changers in the behavior patterns of batterers and
9 whether the programs are successful at all.
10 Reporting on the placement in and outcomes of
11 batterer intervention programs would help
12 researchers and advocates to measure the success of
13 the programs and trends in changing the behavior of
14 the batterers. And I'm looking forward to hearing
15 testimony on this oversight topic and the related
16 resolutions before the committees today including
17 the availability of legal services to domestic
18 violence victims in our Family Justice Centers and
19 as they navigate the city's shelter and benefits
20 system. So I look forward to this morning's
21 testimony and thank you Chair Cumbo and, and Levin.

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much.
23 Thank you to all of my Co-Chairs for your
24 testimonies. Everyone we will now take a break from
25

1 the proceedings as we have a time sensitive matter
2 to deal with. The Women's Issues Committee must
3 vote on Resolution number 429 which recognizes
4 October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the
5 city of New York. This morning as the, at the
6 entire council needs to vote on this at our next
7 stated meeting or else the issue will be moot. This
8 was introduced by Council Member Vanessa Gibson and
9 myself who has signed onto it. It's also Council
10 Members Cohen, Arroyo, Chin, Constantinides,
11 Eugene, Gentile, Johnson, King, Koo, Lander, Palma,
12 Richards, Rose, Rodriguez, and Ulrich. Right now
13 the Women's Issues Committee has a quorum so it is
14 the time to take the vote. Do any members wish to
15 be heard on this resolution? Council Member Gibson.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you very
18 much Chair Cumbo and good morning to all of my
19 colleagues and to our speaker, Chairs Lancman and
20 Levin. Thank you so much for the opportunity. It is
21 a pleasure and an honor to be with all of you today
22 at this very important hearing and it is also a
23 pleasure to be the introducer along with Council
24 Member Laurie Cumbo of Resolution 429 recognizing
25 October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the

1 great city of New York. A lot has been said around
2 domestic violence and certainly I do not want to
3 repeat everything that has been said but
4 recognizing that domestic violence effects each and
5 every one of us, it affects the heart and soul of
6 our communities, children, families that are
7 impacted by domestic violence each and every day.
8 In addition to October every day we have an
9 opportunity we must continue to remain committed to
10 breaking this endless cycle of domestic violence.
11 It has been a journey the past several weeks
12 working with all of my colleagues and all of our
13 tremendous partners and stakeholders as we have
14 traveled around the city in our collective efforts
15 to raise the awareness of domestic violence. The
16 NYC 'Go Purple' day and all of the other
17 initiatives that we have put forth has been a
18 testament to our commitment, the fact that in this
19 budget we have allocated almost six million dollars
20 of domestic violence empowerment DOVE funding is
21 certainly something that is going to make a
22 significant difference. And I want to recognize
23 Council Member Laurie Cumbo who has really taken on
24 this leadership and making sure that we not only
25

1 join together in wearing purple but we also make
2 sure that we are committed to ending this cycle.
3 Commissioner Rose Pierre-Louis and the Mayor's
4 Office to Combat Domestic Violence have been true
5 soldiers in this process. We just held a incredible
6 conference at Hostos Community College in the
7 Bronx. We had hundreds of people from all across
8 the city that came together and I want to thank the
9 New York City Housing Authority as well for their
10 efforts and the mayor and all that have really come
11 together. I do want to thank our advocacy groups
12 because they are the ones that do this work every
13 day as well as our survivors. We must recognize
14 that this is an issue that has been in the dark for
15 too long and this is our effort to bring light and
16 shed light on this issue to offer the opportunities
17 of hope, of renewal, of strength, of courage, and
18 survival for so many women and children. And it's
19 something that I hear from my constituents each and
20 every day and it's certainly something that I know
21 that we are all committed to. So I want to thank
22 all of my colleagues, our speaker, Council Member
23 Cumbo for their leadership, all of the sponsors
24 that have signed on in recognizing October as
25

1 Domestic Violence Awareness month in this great
2 city. And I thank you so much Council Member, thank
3 you Chair for the opportunity to speak on this very
4 important resolution.
5

6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Thank
7 you. Aare there any other colleagues that wish to
8 speak on this resolution before we take a vote?
9 Council Member Crowley.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I want to thank
11 Chair Laurie Cumbo and Council Member Vanessa
12 Gibson for introducing this important resolution.
13 Domestic violence is the number one crime in the
14 district that I represent and that's the reported
15 amounts of domestic violence and is also believed
16 by the National Agency of Domestic Violence that it
17 is a crime that so often goes unreported. And what
18 we're doing here today with the leadership of our
19 speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito is breaking that
20 silence. We're telling women that they are not
21 alone and that there are services that our city has
22 to provide for them. So I want to thank the speaker
23 and the council because you know I've been in the
24 council for nearly six years now and, and no year
25 have we focused so much on the issue of domestic

1 violence. And I know that we're making a difference
2 here today and certainly in this council and we'll
3 be ultimately saving lives from the work that we're
4 doing, thank you.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. I just
7 want to mention also the, the statistic that is the
8 most troubling to me which is why I'm so pleased
9 that we're able to bring this fourth on a citywide
10 level is when we talk about the reports that in
11 2013 there were 62 family related homicides in
12 2013. Of these 16 victims were killed in the Bronx,
13 26 victims killed in Brooklyn, five victims were
14 killed in Manhattan, 13 victims were killed in
15 Queens, and two victims were killed in Staten
16 Island. And what's most challenging about that is
17 that 70, 74 percent of these cases had no prior
18 police contact and 86 percent of these cases had no
19 current order of protection. And so it certainly
20 shows that while the, the numbers are increasing in
21 terms of people coming for services it also shows
22 that a great many are living in very challenging,
23 horrific, and violent, and dangerous situations
24 that bring in greater awareness to this particular
25 month and all throughout the year we'll hopefully

1 have a, a better impact for so many families as
2 well as children that are coming up so that we can
3 break those cycles moving forward. So at this time
4 we are going to go ahead and take the vote. The
5 vote of Resolution 429 will now be called.

6
7 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: William Martin
8 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on
9 Women's Issues Resolution 429. Chair Cumbo.

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Crowley.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I vote aye and
13 please add my name as a co-sponsor, or a sponsor,
14 thank you.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Kallos.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I vote aye and
17 would also like to be added as a co-sponsor and I
18 just apologize that I will need to leave in order
19 to be in two places at one time at another hearing.
20 But I will make sure to review the transcript and
21 watch this online later.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: By a vote of
23 three in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and
24 no abstentions, item has been adopted. Members
25 please sign the committee report. Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. And now
4 we are going to call our panels forward. I would
5 ask in the, in the interest of time because there
6 are so many incredible testimonies that will be
7 heard today if the administration could stay as
8 long as possible it would be so appreciated. I'm
9 going to call Commissioner Rose Pierre-Louis. I'm
10 going to call Daniel Tietz from HRA. And I'm going
11 to call Stephen Banks from HRA as well. Is someone
12 missing?

13 STEPHEN BANKS: Dan is right here if we
14 need him. He's, he's... [cross-talk]

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Oh okay I got it.
16 [cross-talk]

17 STEPHEN BANKS: ...ready. [cross-talk]

18 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: There we go. [cross-
19 talk]

20 STEPHEN BANKS: He's at the ready.

21 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Give me one moment.

22 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sure.

23 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: We're going to just
24 take one brief moment. We're going to have an
25 opening statement from Council Member Corey Johnson
who is also the chair of the Health Committee. And

1 we wanted to do that prior to the testimonies from
2 the administration. I apologize for the delay of
3 your testimony. Thank you.

4
5 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you Chair
6 Cumbo. I also want to thank Chairs Lancman and
7 Levin for holding today's hearing. I wanted to give
8 an opening statement on Introduction 361 which we
9 are hearing today. And I want to thank the General
10 Welfare Committee Council Andrea Vasquez for her
11 work on this introduction as well as my legislative
12 director Louis Cholden-Brown. Introduction 361
13 would streamline access to the Department of
14 Homeless Service shelters for those timing out of
15 Human Resources Administration, domestic violence,
16 or Department of Youth and Community Development
17 Runaway Homeless Youth Shelters. People who are in
18 RHY or domestic violence shelters can age out or
19 exhaust the maximum length of stay and are required
20 to leave whether or not they have a place, a place
21 to call home. Under Introduction 361 applicants who
22 come from these facilities would no longer be
23 required to undergo a Department of Homeless
24 Services eligibility determination process prior to
25 being administer to the shelter system. Stays in

1 domestic violence shelters are time limited
2 pursuant to New York state regulation. At the end
3 of their maximum 180 day stay in an emergency
4 domestic violence shelter families are required to
5 leave the shelter regardless of whether or not they
6 have a place to go. Fewer than 11 percent of
7 families leave with safe housing. And for many they
8 are forced to enter DHS shelters. To access a
9 placement families despite having already been
10 deemed eligible for DV shelter must apply at the
11 DHS prevention assistance and temporary housing
12 PATH intake center. Families are subject to length
13 interviews where they must disclose their domestic
14 violence history in front of their children to a
15 social worker in order to secure a safe DHS
16 placement. This bill would ensure that anyone who
17 gets into and stays in domestic violence shelter
18 for the a max, for the maximum allowable time be
19 automatically, be automatically deemed homeless and
20 allowed to seamlessly transition to DHS shelter
21 without having to go to PATH. In New York Runaway
22 Homeless Youth Services consist of two parts; short
23 term crisis programs and long term transitional
24 independent living support programs. The length of
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1 stay in crisis program is capped at 60 days while
2 long term transitional stays are capped at 18
3 months. A resident also must exit shelter upon,
4 upon reaching the age of 21. This bill would ensure
5 that any youth forced to exit DYCD shelter due to
6 either the expiration of the maximum length of stay
7 or aging out is able to seamlessly access DHS
8 shelter. While singles entering DHS shelters upon
9 leaving DYCD facilities do not need to undergo
10 eligibility review before accessing a bed. Young
11 mothers are similarly required to apply at a single
12 PATH facility. Families escaping domestic violence
13 and runaway homeless youth are among the most
14 vulnerable members of our city shelter population
15 yet they often face barriers accessing temporary
16 shelter after their stays in DV and RHY shelters
17 expire. Introduction 361 will ensure that they do
18 not need to jump through duplicative hoops to
19 obtain shelter. I want to thank again the chairs of
20 their respective committees; Chairs Cumbo, Levin,
21 and Lancman for hearing this bill today. I look
22 forward to working with the administration to
23 implement these fair and just policies. Thank you
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1
2 very much for allowing me the chance to make an
3 opening statement today.

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: thank you so very
5 much Council Member Johnson. I think what's so
6 amazing about today is that there, it's a very
7 robust and full committee hearing today and so we
8 are also now going to hear an opening statement
9 from Council Member Cabrera call, for, on a
10 resolution calling upon the New York State Unified
11 Court System to require the integrated domestic
12 violence courts in New York City to issue regular
13 reports on batterer intervention programs and
14 Council Member Cabrera has been a strong advocate
15 on issues related to domestic violence and we're so
16 pleased to have you here today.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Good morning.
18 Thank you so much. Good morning everyone. My name
19 is Council Member Fernando Cabrera. First of all I
20 want to thank our Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and
21 thank Chair Levin of the Committee on General
22 Welfare, Chair Cumbo of the Committee on Woman's
23 Issue and Chair Lancman of the Committee of Court,
24 on Courts and Legal Services for the opportunity to
25 hear Reso 104 and as mentioned the resolution

1 calling upon the New York State Unified Court
2 System to require the integrated Domestic Violence
3 Courts in New York City to issue regular reports
4 from batterers intervention program. As many, as
5 many of you are aware there is no mandatory law
6 requiring domestic violence courts to issue regular
7 reports from batterers intervention programs.
8 Experts have conducted a variety of study to
9 determine the effectiveness of these programs and
10 agree that these efforts have a positive effect on
11 those affected by domestic violence. Most agree
12 that this effectiveness quote unquote means the
13 cessation of abuse. However there is no record of
14 outcome to measure the success of such programs and
15 whether there's real change in the batterers
16 behavior. In fact... batterers going to the program
17 just to resolve some issues with the court and this
18 should be avoided. This law will require the
19 integrated domestic violence courts and family
20 courts in New York City to report the times someone
21 has gone through the system and has been mandated
22 to go to a batterers intervention program in a
23 consistent regular basis. And I want to please ask
24 to add me to Intro 361 and Reso 421 and as a,
25

1 encourage every one of my colleagues to join in
2 this resolution. Thank you so much.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much
5 Council Member Cabrera. We are going to now hear
6 from our commissioner.

7 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sorry.

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And perfect timing
9 actually on that.

10 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sorry.

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: We actually are
12 doing our oaths prior to each.

13 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sure.

14 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: So I will read the
15 oath and have your agreement on it. So do you
16 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
17 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
18 committee and to respond honestly to council member
19 questions.

20 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Yes I do.

21 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Okay. Good
23 morning Speaker Mark-Viverito, Chairperson Lancman,
24 Chairperson Cumbo, and Chairperson Levin, and
25 members of the New York City Council Committees on

1
2 Courts and Legal Services, Women's Issues, and
3 General Welfare. I am Rose Pierre-Louis,
4 Commissioner of the Mayor's Office to Combat
5 Domestic Violence known as OCDV. Thank you for the
6 opportunity to speak with you today about social
7 and legal services for victims of domestic
8 violence. As a former public interest attorney and
9 civil legal, civil legal services attorney I want
10 to thank the council for establishing a Committee
11 on Courts and Legal Services. The New York City
12 Family Justice Centers known as FJCs operated by my
13 office and currently located in the Bronx,
14 Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens provide
15 comprehensive multi-agency services for victims of
16 intimate partner violence, elder abuse, and sex
17 trafficking in one location. Each center is co-
18 located with the local district attorney's office
19 and has NYPD domestic violence prevention officers
20 on site in addition to staff from over 35 partners
21 who offer counselling for adults, children, civil
22 legal assistance, immigration assistance, economic
23 empowerment, and supportive services. The FJCs are
24 walk-in centers that provide free and confidential
25 services regardless of the client's language,

1 income, immigration status, gender identity, or
2 sexual orientation. A fifth Family Justice Center
3 is expected to open in Staten Island in 2015 making
4 the New York City Family Justice Centers the
5 largest network of FJCs in the country. In 2013
6 there are almost 45 thousand client visits to the
7 FJCs and in this year we have already exceeded 43
8 thousand client visits. We expect to reach at least
9 52 thousand client visits by the end of 2014.
10 Domestic violence occurs in every neighborhood and
11 community in New York City regardless of race,
12 ethnicity, or agenda, gender. The diversity, this
13 diversity is reflected in the clients seeking
14 services at the Family Justice Centers. Since
15 January 1st, 2014 89 percent of our clients are
16 women, 10 percent are men and one percent are
17 transgender. Civil Legal Assistance is the second
18 highest service need of FJC clients after seeking
19 safety planning and risk assessment services. At
20 the FJCs there are on sight civil legal services
21 attorneys and paralegals from community agencies to
22 provide information, consultation, and
23 representation for clients in matters relating to
24 family law and matrimonial law. Since January 1st,

1 2014 12 percent of clients requested civil legal
2 services. Eight percents needed family law
3 assistance and four percent required help with a
4 matrimonial or divorce action. The Family Justice
5 Centers practice client centered approaches to
6 ensure that victims are aware of all options
7 available to them. One of the legal remedies often
8 discussed with clients is obtaining an order of
9 protection in family court. Since 2013 the Family
10 Justice Centers have been participating in a
11 program through the New York State Office of Court
12 Administration known as OCA which allows case
13 managers and advocates on site at the centers to
14 electronically file family offence petitions for
15 FJC clients. This was a welcome service addition at
16 the centers and added to the already robust civil
17 legal service delivery available to clients. The
18 web based Family Offence Petition Program saved
19 clients a significant amount of wait time in the
20 family court, enhances the content and language
21 included in the petitions with the assistance of
22 on-site advocates and attorneys and allows clients
23 to complete the petition filing process in a safe
24 supportive and culturally competent environment
25

1 what, with on-site services available to children.

2 For immigrant victims of domestic violence there
3 are added layers of complexity that factor into the
4 abusive relationship which may include a fear of
5 deportation, a lack of knowledge about domestic
6 violence laws in this country and the rights of
7 victims as well as language barriers. Since July
8 2008 through the Mayor's Office and public/private
9 partnerships immigration attorneys have been funded
10 to work on-site at the Family Justice Centers. This
11 year 57 percent of FJC clients were foreign born
12 and 10 percent of overall clients requested legal
13 assistance with an immigration related, for an
14 immigration related issue. To ensure quality
15 service delivery to all FJCs on-site staff are
16 required to attend training on cultural competency.

17 In addition staff within the FJCs speak over 25
18 different languages. We have learned that one of
19 the biggest barriers to leaving an abusive
20 relationship is the inability of victims to
21 financially provide for themselves and their
22 children without economic support from their
23 abusive partner. This is a very real fear given
24 that in 2014 46 percent of our clients reported
25

1 that they were unemployed. 27 percent were
2 receiving public assistance and 30 percent reported
3 some high school as their highest level of
4 education. At the Family Justice Centers we have
5 self-sufficiency coordinators on-site programming
6 to help clients obtain economic independence
7 through ESL and GED classes, job training, computer
8 skill courses, resume writing, financial
9 counselling, budgeting assistance, and family
10 literacy programs. HRA staff are on-site at each
11 Family Justice Center to provide substantive [sic]
12 assistance in accessing public health benefits and
13 troubleshooting cases, obtaining low cost
14 childcare, and applying for emergency financial
15 assistance programs. In addition to operating
16 Family Justice Centers OCDV also manages several
17 programs and initiatives that focus on prevention,
18 early intervention, resources for victims of
19 stalking and dating violence. In 2012 OCDV launched
20 a Domestic Violence Response team known as DVRT in
21 Staten Island to provide rapid response to high
22 risk cases by facilitating interagency coordination
23 and collaboration, to carry out individualized
24 action plans to meet the service and safety needs
25

1 of clients. Staten Island Divert has partnered with
2 over 35 community based organizations and city
3 agencies including the NYPD and the Richmond County
4 District Attorney's Office. Today DVRT has assisted
5 over 100 clients who were at high risk of
6 escalating abuse, serious physical injury, or
7 death. 70 percent of divert clients indicated that
8 they had been stalked by their intimate partner
9 making stalking the number one reported abusive
10 behavior by clients. Nationally three out of four
11 women murdered by their intimate partners have been
12 stalked by an offender in the year prior to their
13 murder. And 54 percent of female homicide victims
14 reported stalking to the police before they were
15 killed by an intimate partner. To address these
16 serious issues of stalking in collaboration with
17 the Richmond County District Attorney's Office and
18 the NYPD we launched the Coordinated Approach to
19 Preventing Stalking known as the CAPS program. CAPS
20 is a homicide prevention initiative to increase the
21 identification and reporting of intimate partner
22 stalking cases, enhance stalking arrests and
23 prosecutions, and engage in appropriate risk
24 assessment and safety planning with stalking
25

1 victims. Since the program's launch in 2014, July
2 2014 there have been at least 250 percent increase
3 in stalking identified cases by the NYPD in Staten
4 Island. A critical piece of pronation is educating
5 our youth about healthy relationships. We know that
6 nationally 72 percent of 8th and 9th graders are
7 quote unquote dating. Regrettably abusive behavior
8 is often normalized for young people making it
9 difficult for them to recognize abusive behaviors
10 is problematic and unlikely for them to report
11 abusive relationships. In fact in New York City
12 over one in 10 high school students, almost three
13 students per classroom reported being physically
14 abused by their boyfriend or girlfriend. In 2005
15 OCDV launched a healthy relationship training
16 academy to provide interactive workshops on dating
17 violence and cyber, cyber abuse for adolescents,
18 young adults, parents, and service providers. The
19 workshops are led by peer educators ranging in age
20 from 17 to 25 and a senior trainer age 29 who
21 encourage discussion and critical thinking about
22 these challenging topics. To date the academy has
23 conducted over 2,000 workshops approximately 25 per
24 month and has reached over 39 thousand young
25

1 people. In order to effectively respond to the
2 incidents of domestic violence in the city OCDV
3 focuses largely on outreach to raise awareness
4 about domestic violence and connect victims with
5 services at the FJCs and with community and govern..
6 partners citywide. Since February 1st, 2014 OCDV
7 staff have participated in over 739 outreach
8 events, an increase of 400 percent over the same
9 period last year and has distributed over 195
10 thousand pieces of outreach material. Regular
11 outreach efforts have occurred at transit hubs,
12 business districts, beauty salons, and grocery
13 stores. In addition by the end of 2014 OCDV staff
14 will have presented at all 59 community boards and
15 at all 77 police precinct community council
16 meetings in New York City. Awareness is the
17 greatest tool we have to combat domestic violence.
18 It, and it is, it is OCDV's chief priority. In
19 closing we look forward to continuing to work with
20 our city and community partners and with the
21 council on our shared goals of strengthening the
22 safety net for victims of domestic violence
23 throughout New York City. Thank you for the
24 opportunity to testify and we look forward to
25

1
2 answering any questions you may have. I also just
3 want to thank the council for the incredible work
4 that they've done to raise awareness on domestic
5 violence. And I was out with Council Member Cumbo,
6 Speaker Mark-Viverito, Council Member Gibson,
7 Council Member Johnson, many of you I've done
8 outreach events and it's really tremendous to see
9 the level of attention that the council's giving to
10 this issue to shine the light on domestic violence
11 so thank you very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Thank you
13 very much. We'll now have... We're now going to have
14 Commissioner Steven Banks, head of HRA, who's going
15 to testify and then we're going to open it up for
16 questions from the council.

17 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Okay. Do you want
18 to swear me in?

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yes we do. Thank you
20 for that.

21 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Thought you did.

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I like a man who
23 wants to be sworn in. Thank you.

24 [laughter]

25

1
2 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Many years of
3 taking testimony.

4 [laughter]

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much.
6 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth,
7 and nothing but the truth in your testimony before
8 this committee and to respond honestly to council
9 member questions?

10 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I do.

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. And thank
12 you for your willingness to be sworn in today. You
13 may proceed.

14 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Thank you very
15 much. Good morning Speaker Mark-Viverito,
16 Chairpersons Cumbo, Levin, and Lancman, and Council
17 Members Johnson, Cabrera, and Gibson. I'm Steven
18 Banks, the Commissioner of the Human Resources
19 Administration and I thank you for this opportunity
20 to discuss our efforts to provide assistance and
21 support for survivors of domestic violence
22 including updating you on several of our reform
23 initiatives that will have particular bearing on
24 the topic of, of the hearing today. And Chair
25 Lancman I particularly want to welcome you to this

1 process and looking forward to working with you as
2 we move forward as, as the speaker knows as part of
3 city policy we've consolidated all civil legal
4 services programs at HRA both in the baseline, 21
5 million dollars' worth of baseline programs and
6 programs that the council's added in order to
7 better coordinate and be more effective in our
8 efforts to fight poverty and income inequity as
9 well as prevent homelessness. So we look forward to
10 working with this new committee as part of the city
11 policy of consolidating all the programs in one
12 place for, for, to enhance effectiveness. October
13 is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. It serves as
14 an opportunity to remember and acknowledge that
15 domestic violence affects every New Yorker. During
16 this month we're reminded that no one is immune to
17 the consequences of abuse regardless of
18 socioeconomic status, race, gender, or sexual
19 orientation. Domestic violence or intimate partner
20 violence is a pattern of coercive behaviors aimed
21 at controlling one's intimate partner which
22 overtime leaves a person powerless, fearful, and
23 ashamed. It is not only characterized by hitting,
24 shoving, and punching but also by psychological and
25

1 financial abuse that results in the destruction of
2 a person's sense of self-worth, security, and
3 safety. One in three women and one in 10 men
4 experience intimate partner violence in their
5 lifetime. HRA has a long history of providing
6 services to domestic violence survivors through our
7 office of domestic violence. The largest domestic
8 violence services system in the nation our Office
9 of Domestic Violence oversees an extensive network
10 of domestic violence services which include
11 shelters, community based services, and primary
12 prevention programs. Our staff is committed to
13 providing a broad array of services to survivors of
14 domestic violence. Here's a snap shot of the array
15 of services offered through our Office of Domestic
16 Violence in the past fiscal year. 44 thousand
17 families sought services related to domestic
18 violence they were experiencing. 3,877 families
19 entered a domestic violence shelter. 7,100 families
20 in the Department of Homeless Services intake
21 centers were assessed for domestic violence by
22 HRA's NoVA program. 9,600 public assistance clients
23 at HRA job centers were assessed for domestic
24 violence by domestic violence liaison. 4,000
25

1 domestic violence survivors received legal
2 services, community based advocacy, and
3 counselling. 10,700 students participate^{3d} in
4 workshops and received counselling through teen RAP
5 our HRA Relationship Violence Prevention Program.
6 And 8,500 New York City Housing Authority Residents
7 received domestic violence education, intervention,
8 and aftercare services from HRA programs. Our
9 specific services are as follows. Emergency and
10 transitional shelter services; services, shelter
11 services for survivors of domestic violence are
12 mandated under New York state social services law
13 and are provided by HRA in accordance with the
14 state Office of Family and Children Services
15 regulations regarding emergency shelter services
16 and care for survivors of domestic violence. The
17 HRA domestic violence shelter system is the largest
18 domestic violence shelter system in the country. It
19 includes 44 confidential emergency shelter
20 facilities throughout all five boroughs of New York
21 City with a total bed capacity of 2,228 beds which
22 can accommodate approximately 800 families. And
23 seven transitional housing tier two shelters which
24 have 243 units for families. In FY14 HRA domestic
25

1 violence system served 11,105 individuals which
2 included 3,877 adults and 6,784 children as well as
3 444 single adults. Emergency domestic violence
4 shelters provide temporary housing and supportive
5 services for up to 180 days in a safe environment
6 for survivors of domestic violence in their
7 families. This 180 day limits set forth in New York
8 state regulation. The HRA Office of Domestic
9 Violence is responsible for the administrative and
10 fiscal oversight of 43 private emergency
11 residential programs and the direct operation of
12 our own largest emergency domestic violence shelter
13 facility that has 176 beds. And I just note that uh
14 the partnership with those 43 private agencies
15 critical to our efforts and we applaud them for
16 their continuing support and work with us to
17 provide services to our mutual clients. Emergency
18 shelter services are designed to stabilize clients
19 in a safe environment. Programs are developed to
20 work with families to manage the crisis and the
21 trauma of domestic violence strength and coping
22 skill and enhance client self-sufficiency. Required
23 services include individual counselling, advocacy,
24 psycho-educational groups, trauma focused
25

1 interventions that address the dynamics of domestic
2 violence in particularly that impact on parenting.
3 All shelter programs are required to provide
4 childcare services and assist clients with housing,
5 benefit entitlement assistance, financial
6 development services, and workforce development,
7 and employment readiness services to maximize self-
8 sufficiency. DV shelter programs serve all members
9 of the family including male head of households and
10 LGBTQ survivors with a particular emphasis on
11 children to ensure the opportunity for healing and
12 to break the cycle of violence. Several residential
13 programs provide special services including mental
14 health, substance use treatment, expressive therapy
15 such as art therapy, play therapy for children,
16 movement and stress reduction programs. Several
17 shelter provider agencies also specialize in
18 serving the needs of particular population
19 including persons with disabilities, orthodox Jews,
20 Asians, and Latinas. HRA also has seven
21 transitional tier two shelters. These programs as I
22 said have a total of 243 units for families. DV
23 tier two shelters are transitional residential
24 domestic violence programs regulated by the state
25

1 office of temporary and disability assistance that
2 provide an extension of shelter services for
3 families who are in the emergency shelter system
4 who are in need of continued support and ongoing
5 services to obtain safe, permanent housing and
6 reintegrate into communities. Services are aimed at
7 preparing families for reintegration by
8 strengthening client support systems and life
9 skills to maximize self-sufficiency. Particular
10 emphasis is placed on training and workforce
11 preparation advocacy and referral services for
12 special needs and aftercare services. Previously
13 after 180 days in an emergency shelter families
14 were either able to leave shelter with available
15 continuing non-residential support services, move
16 to an HRA transitional tier two housing facility or
17 if they still needed to be in shelter obtain
18 shelter from the Department of Homeless Services.
19 While families leaving the HRA DV shelter are
20 eligible for placement in a DHS shelter the process
21 of moving between the two systems has not been as
22 seamless as it should be. Working together next
23 month HRA and the Department of Homeless Services
24 are implementing a system to manage the transition
25

1 of families from the HRA system to the DHS system
2 without the need for families to be evaluated for
3 shelter eligibility a second time at PATH since HRA
4 already has determined these families to be in need
5 of shelter. However using the new LINC program
6 instead of sending families to HRA shelters for DV,
7 from HRA shelters to DV shelters we're working to
8 move these families with children into a permanent
9 home. Implemented in September the LINC Rental
10 Assistance Program short for Living in Communities
11 helps families move from temporary emergency
12 shelter back to the community as quickly as
13 possible by paying a portion of their rent for up
14 to five years if they continue to qualify. The
15 program is targeted to families who have spent the
16 longest time in shelter. There are three LINC
17 programs with one, LINC three, specifically
18 designated for domestic violence survivors who have
19 been in the HRA shelters for the longest periods to
20 avoid having to transfer families from the HRA
21 system to the DHS system when the 180 day
22 regulatory time limit is reached. Almost half of
23 the total LINC Rental Assistance Program this year,
24 1,900 slots out of the almost 4,000 slots is set
25

1
2 aside for DV's families. LINC three is designated
3 for survivors on public assistance who make up
4 approximately 85 percent of domestic violence
5 survivors in our HRA shelters. Those who are
6 working can qualify for the other LINC programs as
7 we proceed with the implementation of this new
8 rental assistance initiative. So survivors
9 ultimately can end up with more than just the 1,900
10 slots in LINC three. In addition to the LINC Rental
11 Assistance Program as we have reported previously
12 to the council in testimony regarding HRA's reform
13 initiatives. HRA, DHS, and the New York City
14 Housing Authority have worked together to
15 streamline the NYCHA application process for
16 families in the HRA and DHS shelters. Who HRA's No
17 Violence Again staff, NoVA staff has certified as
18 survivors of domestic violence. Previously even
19 though HRA had determined that such families were
20 survivors they were required to obtain additional
21 documentation to obtain the N1 NYCHA Domestic
22 Violence Priority. As a result very few families in
23 the HRA and D, DHS shelters were able to receive
24 the N1 NYCHA priority. This process has now been
25 reformed so that the HRA certification is

1 sufficient. Now that the relocation of the
2 designated 750 families from DHS shelters to NYCHA
3 apartments has been achieved NYCHA will begin the
4 process of identifying families in the HRA and DHS
5 shelters who HRA has certified to be domestic
6 violence survivors under the new streamlined N1
7 process. Based on apartment availability for family
8 sizes NYCHA projects that over the next 10 weeks
9 from now through December 31st, 2014 between 50 and
10 100 domestic violence survivors in the community
11 and in the HRA and DHS shelters with the N1
12 priority will be able to move into NYCHA
13 apartments. Thereafter the new agreed to N1
14 priority process for certified survivors of
15 domestic violence and HRA and DHS shelters will
16 continue on an ongoing basis with a number of
17 families moving into NYCHA family, NYCHA apartments
18 with the N1 priority each year dependent on
19 available apartments. Let me also now highlight the
20 services provided by NoVA, the project No Violence
21 Again. Project NoVA established in 1991 addresses
22 the needs of domestic violence survivors seeking
23 emergency housing from the Department of Homeless
24 Services. NoVA is staffed by MSW social workers who
25

1 provide assessment, crisis counselling, information
2 referrals, and placement of eligible domestic
3 violence clients into emergency DV shelters. The
4 NoVA unit is located at the DHS PATH family intake
5 center and at the DHS Adult Intake Center at
6 Belleview Medical Center where clients are assessed
7 to determine DV eligibility and risk. As part of
8 our reform initiatives DHS and HRA are working
9 together to revamp the space in HRA and NoVA staff
10 interview families at PATH so that adults can be
11 interviewed without having to answer questions
12 about domestic violence in front of their children.
13 In 2014 Project NoVA assessed more than 7,100
14 families at the DHS Path Center and more than 500
15 adult couples at the DHS Adult Intake Center. HRA
16 also operates a domestic violence liaison unit. The
17 domestic violence liaison unit is a service
18 mandated by the Family Violence Option Act which is
19 intended to protect survivors of domestic violence
20 who could be further endangered through compliance
21 with public assistance requirements, particularly
22 employment and child support. Liaison, liaisons
23 serve all HRA Job Centers and determine eligibility
24 for waivers from work and other requirements when
25

1 that is necessary to protect clients. In FY2014
2 this unit assessed more than 9,600 clients for
3 safety and DV service needs and issued over 8,600
4 waivers. As we've testified previously HRA has
5 reformed the process for obtaining DV waivers by
6 modifying the former quote partial waiver unquote
7 system that puts survivors at risk while still
8 permitting families who are able to participate
9 employment programs to do so as long as their
10 safety is protected. HRA also operates an Anti-
11 Domestic Violence Eligibility Needs team called
12 ADVENT. ADVENT is a specialized case management
13 unit for clients in emergency DV shelters who are
14 on cash assistance or receiving public assistance
15 benefits. The ADVENT program was developed as an
16 extension of the Domestic Violence Liaison Unit to
17 address the specific needs of DV clients and
18 shelter. In FY2014 ADVENT provided specialized case
19 management or work engagement services to an
20 average of 11 hundred DV clients and shelter each
21 month. HRA also operates an alternative shelter
22 program. The alternative to shelter program offers
23 domestic violence services to survivors and their
24 children the option of remaining safely in their
25

1 home in the community instead of moving into a
2 domestic violence shelter. The program provides
3 clients with a personal electronic response alarm
4 system linked to local police precincts enabling
5 them to remain safely in their homes. Clients are
6 also offered to ongoing case management services
7 which include crisis counselling and safety
8 planning support, advocacy, and referral and
9 information services. The alternative to shelter
10 program has an active caseload of over 200 clients
11 per month. HRA also operates a program called the
12 domestic violence intervention education program
13 which is a contracted program that was transferred
14 from NYCHA to HRA in 2009. The program is based in
15 nine NYCHA police service areas where case managers
16 work closely with DV police officers to respond to
17 domestic violence incident reports and provide
18 crisis intervention, counselling, and advocacy for
19 DV survivors in NYCHA housing. A goal of the
20 program I to encourage clients to accept DV
21 services to reduce the level of risk to clients and
22 increase utilization of services available to
23 clients in NYCHA. In 2014 this program engaged more
24 than 7,900 clients and domestic violence services.
25

1 HRA also operates a domestic violence aftercare
2 program which provides intensive case management
3 and support services to DV survivors living in
4 NYCHA developments who are approved for an
5 emergency housing transfer to transition to a safer
6 apartment. This program's staffed with case
7 managers and MSW social workers who provide NYCHA
8 DV clients with home based assessments, case
9 management referral information, advocacy, safety
10 planning, and relocation assistance. Clients
11 referred to this program upon approval of their
12 applications for a NYCHA emergency DV transfer. In
13 2014 this program provided case management services
14 to over 600 NYCHA emergency transfer clients. NY,
15 HRA also provides a range of non-residential
16 domestic violence programs, community based non-
17 residential services for survivors have proven to
18 be an effective method of addressing the needs of
19 some survivors of domestic violence and their
20 children, particularly survivors who are seeking
21 supportive services but do not require or would not
22 consider entering an emergency shelter program. In
23 some cases such non-residential services may
24 alleviate a need for domestic violence residential
25

1 services, in other cases non-residential services
2 offer community based support for families who have
3 left domestic violence shelter. No-residential
4 domestic violence services are mandated by New York
5 state and regulated through the state office of
6 children and family services the regulations
7 require that local social services agencies, in
8 this case HRA, must provide the following core
9 services; a telephone hotline, information
10 referral, specialized, specialized counselling and
11 medical services, and whatever else a client may
12 need, advocacy such as providing liaison services
13 or intervening with community programs on behalf of
14 survivors, counselling including individual or
15 groups for children or adults, community education
16 outreach, legal services including orders of
17 protection, child custody, child support and
18 immigration issues and divorce. HRA contracts with
19 community based organizations to offer 15 programs
20 that provide these core services in all five
21 boroughs. Two providers offer services to special
22 populations, LGBTQ, and survivors of domestic
23 violence who have disabilities. Services are
24 offered in a range of languages including Spanish,
25

1 Russian, Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, Gracchi, Panjabi,
2 Cantonese, Mandarin, Fukienese, Vietnamese, Korean,
3 Japanese, Subrocreation [sic], Tamil, French,
4 Portuguese, Arabic, Creole, Italian, Romanian. In
5 FY2014 non-residential providers assisted an
6 average of 3,000 families each month and offered
7 legal services to an average of 1,000 families per
8 month. The domestic violence hotline that HRA
9 operates was created in 1994 and receives calls
10 from survivors of domestic violence seeking
11 shelter, counselling information, referrals to
12 domestic violence services. This hotline is
13 directly operated by Safe Horizon, a private not-
14 for-profit social services agency and a long time
15 DV service provider. The hotline operates 24 hours
16 a day, seven days per week. Hotline staff is able
17 to link callers to available space in the 44 HRA
18 domestic violence emergency shelters. And in 2014
19 the DV hotline received more than 8,000 calls per
20 month. This volume has been consistent over the
21 course of several years. HRA also operates teen
22 RAP, the teen Relationship Abuse Prevention
23 program. It's a school based program and it's one
24 of the most extensive programs for prevention in
25

1 New York City and it's critical to ending
2 relationship abuse among young people. Through a
3 comprehensive curriculum students learn to
4 recognize and change destructive patterns of
5 behavior before the transfer to adult
6 relationships. Since 1999 HRA's RAP program has
7 helped teens attending public high schools and
8 middle schools develop healthier relationships. RAP
9 serves 54 high schools and eight middle schools.
10 The RAP providers are the Church Avenue Merchant's
11 Block Association, the Center Against Domestic
12 Violence, and Steps to End Family Violence. In 2014
13 more than 74 hundred students received RAP
14 intervention services and counselling and more than
15 3,300 completed the three session curriculum. And
16 since 2005 the RAP programs reached more than six,
17 60 thousand students. HRA also offers financial
18 services through our partners in the Financial
19 Clinic and the Department of Consumer Affairs.
20 These services assist clients in the community,
21 improve their financial security in areas such as
22 increasing assets, improving credit, reducing debt,
23 and accessing free tax services and benefits such
24 as the earned income tax credit. In closing thank
25

1 you for the opportunity to provide a full
2 presentation of our comprehensive services. While,
3 while our efforts to address domestic violence
4 continue to be comprehensive there is much work to
5 be done to curtail the ravaging effects of domestic
6 violence in our city.
7

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much
9 for your very robust testimony. And I'm going to be
10 brief in my questions because I know that a number
11 of my colleagues have questions as well as there's
12 a, an additional hearing that's going on that many
13 of them are a part of. But really wanted to,
14 Commissioner Banks wanted to talk about and find
15 out what percentage of people max out of the 180
16 day limit. And on top of that what are the reasons
17 why you're finding that some individuals are
18 exceeding that time limit. Why are they not able
19 to, what are the, the barriers that are preventing
20 them from finding housing and moving on in that
21 way?

22 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I mean our clients
23 you know have the same challenges that any low
24 income families have in terms of finding housing in
25 the difficult housing market which is the reason

1 why we have developed this link program
2 specifically targeted to families that would be
3 timing out of the HRA system. Of the 1900 units of
4 thousand, I'm sorry 900 of these rental assistance
5 packages are targeted for families to try to
6 address the timing out problem and to the extent we
7 can stop them from timing out by providing them
8 with rental assistance to move into permanent
9 housing, that's the best solution. This year a
10 thousand of those 19 hundred units, rental packages
11 are targeted to families in the DHS system who
12 previously timed out or for one reason or other
13 couldn't get into the system. We find that the
14 number of families that are timing out in any given
15 month are approximately 43 a month and that's how
16 we came up with the number 900 to be able to
17 address...

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: 43 a month...

20 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Timing out of the
21 HRA system and moving... (cross-talk)

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Out of how many
23 again of a total?
24
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER BANKS: That's a total of
3 on any given night or sheltering 800, about 800
4 families in the emergency system. So.. (CROSS-TALK)

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: So out of the 800
6 you're having 43 that are timing out..

7 COMMISSIONER BANKS: On any given month.

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: On any given month.

9 COMMISSIONER BANKS: But I want to
10 emphasize that people leave shelter at all
11 different periods of time. And we're particularly
12 focused on stopping the movement between the two
13 systems. It's the beginning of a comprehensive
14 approach to this problem. As we all know it's been
15 a number of years since there's been any type of
16 housing at all available to our clients. And so
17 last month we took a step, a huge step forward by
18 implementing a new rental assistance program aimed
19 at trying to avoid having clients move between two
20 systems. As we go along if the numbers turn out to
21 be different we will obviously make modifications
22 and continue to, to work to, to go forward. The
23 identification as I said of the 900 rental
24 assistance units or packages slots for families in
25 the HRA system is based upon the numbers of

1 families timing out. And the goal of our approach
2 to the program is to be able to open up space in
3 the 243 tier two units that we operate and
4 prioritize moving those families out into these
5 rental assistance packages, with these rental
6 assistance packages first in order to target the
7 longest staying families in the system. And that
8 will open up space to avoid people having to move,
9 our families having to move from one system to
10 another because they have the option now of going
11 into space... previously there was a bottleneck
12 because the families in the tier two facilities
13 hadn't been moving out either.

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Let me ask you also
16 in terms of you mentioned that it wasn't a seamless
17 transition in that way, how do you evaluate the
18 services that you're providing. Are those survivors
19 of domestic violence, are they in any way, shape,
20 form, or fashion given any form of evaluation tools
21 to understand how effective the services have been
22 or if there are areas where they feel that they
23 could have further support or other wrap around
24 services that might help them get onto their feet?
25 Or for us in the city council and me also being a

1 new member I really have no understanding of and
2 need to go on my own tour of these to understand
3 what the housing conditions are that the families
4 are living in. So how do we get an understanding of
5 the safety that's happening in many of the shelters
6 in terms of understanding the dynamics of how
7 individuals are interacting with the agency? Is
8 there any kind of evaluation system that would give
9 us and the council an understanding?
10

11 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Well let me address
12 the, a couple of aspects of your question. First of
13 all we welcome an opportunity to take you to the,
14 to the facilities. 43 of the emergency facilities
15 are run by our not-for-profit partners. We run one
16 of them. The other seven are, the seven tier two
17 facilities are run by our not for profit partners.
18 And we'd be happy to show you those, the, what the
19 operations are. As we've testified at other
20 hearings we're developing a client advocacy unit
21 within HRA that will be a place in which clients
22 can certainly express their concerns about whether
23 services are being provided adequately or not to
24 them. In terms of the seamless transition the real
25 issue and.. when we looked at the, over the last six

1 months at different reforms that we needed we got
2 two city agencies. One agency HRA had determined
3 that the families in need of shelter and then
4 historically the family was being, going through a
5 second process. And so the two agencies working
6 together said this was, that we need a much more
7 seamless transition between the two and so now
8 there's a new system that's going to implemented
9 next month that will allow the families to not have
10 to go through a second evaluation process and..
11 (cross-talk) and I think that that's as a result of
12 the two agencies looking at how to better serve
13 clients as part of an overall reform process that's
14 underway.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And all initiatives,
17 programs need a certain amount of time to
18 understand or evaluate their success. But the link
19 program that you discussed in your testimony which
20 was implemented I believe in September what has
21 been, what have you seen as a result of the
22 implementation of that in a very short period of
23 time?

24 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Well I think that
25 we, we have to learn from what's happened in the

1 past when rental assistance programs were put in
2 place. And there's no, naturally a, a delay between
3 the moment they're announced and the ability to
4 move substantial numbers of people into housing. So
5 we're working with the shelter providers, we're
6 working with our own staff to identify landlords
7 who want to participate. I've been in touch myself
8 directly with the largest HRA, the largest
9 landlords housing HRA clients and I think there's a
10 lot of interest and we have to now move forward to
11 link no pun intended clients to available
12 apartments and move forward. It's a, it's a rather
13 extraordinary commitment of resources after three
14 years of literally no rental assistance being
15 provided since 2011 to clients in the HRA or DHS
16 systems. So we have, we announce the program
17 September, we publish the rules in the, in the city
18 record. We're about to move forward with comment
19 period. And we're certainly open to people
20 suggestions about improvements but I think we're
21 really too early to reach any judgments other than
22 to say we... last month and we're moving forward with
23 it because it's really needed for our clients.
24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: An additional
3 question refers to in terms of the housing stock. I
4 would be curious to know how much of opportunities
5 of survivors of domestic violence our, their
6 placement goes to NYCHA or it goes, goes to other
7 CBOs or it goes to other private sources of, of
8 housing. What is the percentage, or are we
9 primarily utilizing NYCHA as, as the, the main
10 housing source?

11 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Well the 19 hundred
12 slots for link or rental assistance for housing in
13 the private market.

14 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

15 COMMISSIONER BANKS: And so those are
16 private market apartments, the process of, of, of
17 approving apartments for use in this program,
18 requires an HPD inspection for housing quality
19 standards before our clients move in, a lease with
20 the landlord, a commitment to not charge any
21 additional monies beyond the monies that are, that
22 are provided for in the program. And the NYCHA N1
23 priority is an ongoing priority for a certain
24 number of apartments that as they, for apartments
25 as they become available was we see over the next

1 you know essentially two months NYCHA's going to be
2 moving approximately 100 families into NYCHA
3 apartments using the N1 priority and then we'll be
4 making placements on an ongoing basis. But for our
5 focus we've got these 19 hundred slots available
6 for survivors of domestic violence and we're really
7 very focused on, on helping them move out.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. And then
10 before I turn it over to my colleagues wanted to
11 ask in terms of, and both commissioners if you can
12 both speak to this as well, talks about the
13 batterer. So in terms of housing someone lives in
14 an apartment, let's say it's a NYCHA development,
15 the batterer is still living in the apartment, how
16 does that happen in terms of what happens to the
17 batterer assuming sole responsibility for the
18 apartment or the housing... or wherever it is that
19 they have decided to part from? And in some of
20 these instances when you get to the, to the weeds
21 of it with a lot of our constituents also refers to
22 when relationship ends the distribute, the
23 distribution of, of furniture, equipment, all these
24 sorts of things that happen in a household. Does
25 your agency assist in some ways with how families

1 actually divide all of these different elements
2 because I know that that also exacerbates a certain
3 level of the division of a relationship.
4

5 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I mean that's why
6 the nonresidential services that we provide are so
7 important, particularly the legal services. These
8 are complex situations and the ability to get
9 support from either a community based non-
10 residential service provider or a legal services
11 provider to help in ensuring that appropriate
12 orders are, orders are in place to protect a client
13 to ensure that the client could, has whatever
14 rights they may have to retain the housing enforced
15 and to get the type of assistance that only legal
16 services provide, that's one of the reasons why we
17 prioritize that service.

18 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Mm-hmm. And
19 I would just add on to what Commissioner Banks just
20 said is, is certainly at our Family Justice Centers
21 one of the most important resources that we, we
22 provide in addition to our legal services and
23 counselling is around safety planning to address
24 some of these needs and... [cross-talk] certainly
25 working with the NYPD. And orders of protection can

1 play a very important role in this regard in terms
2 of delineating specifically who has to leave the
3 household, when if someone needs to go into the
4 home to access their clothing, their items.
5 Certainly in, in the cases of a matrimonial action
6 this could be distribution of assets or items
7 within the household could be handled within that
8 context.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: and is that handled
11 through the family Justice Center or is that part
12 of the wrap around services that you offer or is it
13 handled primarily with the police department?

14 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: So in terms
15 of well the Civil Legal Services piece is done
16 through our on-site partners, many of whom are, are
17 sitting in the audience today to provide a variety
18 of... safety planning, counselling, and the legal
19 services... whether it's immigration, matrimonial, or
20 family law. If for example pursuant to an order of
21 protection and I see, I, I know I saw earlier
22 someone from the DA's office here as well is that
23 they can specify that the abuser has to leave the
24 household, that if for some reason the abuser wants
25 to get something from the household it has to be

1 done within a certain period of time and typically
2 that is done with the presence of the NYPD being at
3 the household as well. Or if the victim needs locks
4 changed certainly Safe Horizon has been
5 instrumental in assisting victims in this regard.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And what services
8 are currently in existence in, in evaluation
9 procedures to understand what are we doing as far
10 as an administrative role for the batterer. Because
11 as many of the testimonies and the opening
12 statements here discuss that children, boys and
13 girls, that grow up in household where they're
14 witnessing and experiencing domestic violence that
15 they then too will repeat those behaviors at a
16 later stage. So rightfully so we need to do
17 everything that we can to make sure that those that
18 are victims of domestic violence are protected and
19 moved into safety. But at the same time my concern
20 continues to be that there are men who are
21 committing the same crimes over and over again and
22 we're not providing as best as I know a level of
23 comprehensive services that would allow them, and
24 the ability to evaluate if what in fact we're doing
25 is having an impact.

1
2 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: I think
3 certainly there are a number of, of programs
4 throughout the city, I know also through the
5 Department of Probation there's been a very
6 effective program. I know I seen... Manny Yonko from
7 Children's Aid Society that they have a very unique
8 approach to providing these services. I think that
9 this is an issue that has been discussed frequently
10 in the advocacy community. I think recent attention
11 to the issue of domestic violence brings into
12 question in terms of resources that are available
13 to individuals who are abusive I know within in,
14 in, in our agency at OCDV this is something that
15 we're looking at more closely as well. So I, I, I
16 think there are some synergies in terms of what the
17 council is looking at, what the advocacy community
18 is looking at and what, as an agency what we, we'd
19 like to see. But I think there are some, some
20 programs that have been effective. And I know
21 within probation there have been some programs that
22 are effective. Here I see Quentin Walcott just
23 walked in from CONNECT They also have a number of
24 resources as well that are, that are, have been
25

1 effective for dealing with individuals who have
2 been abusive.
3

4 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Right and I just
5 add to your, your question really focused on of
6 course the, the children who are affected and, and
7 potential impact on them which is why a number of
8 the excellent partners that we have provide the
9 kinds of services to really focus on children and
10 other kinds of, and the kinds of support that's
11 helpful to, to break that cycle of violence as, as
12 you, as you indicated.

13 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: As I turn it over I
14 just want to state that as chair of this committee
15 one of the things that's going to be very important
16 to me moving forward is the ability to have a
17 greater understanding of the evaluation of the
18 services that we're providing but also, and
19 supporting but also at the same time significant
20 resources and attention and a strategy has to be
21 developed around those batterers because I feel
22 that we're going to continue the cycles if we don't
23 get at the, the heart of what's ultimately creating
24 it and making it happen. So I certainly look
25 forward to working with you all. I just want to add

1 that we've also been joined previously by Council
2 Members Ignizio, currently Council Members Menchaca
3 as well Council Member Espinal and I am now going
4 to turn it over to my co-chair Council Member Steve
5 Levin.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you Chair
8 Cumbo and thank you Commissioners. I'll, I'll keep
9 my questions limited so that my colleagues have the
10 opportunity to ask more questions. And I very much
11 appreciate both of your testimony and both your
12 hard work. Commissioner Pierre-Louis I was very in,
13 encouraged and amazed in your testimony to see a
14 400 percent increase...

15 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Mm-hmm.

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: ...in the level of
17 outreach events you know and hard data showing what
18 your office has been able to do in, in just, in
19 just nine short months. So I want to thank you very
20 much for...

21 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: ...that and, and for
23 all of your work and Commissioner Banks as well.
24 Can, can you either of you fill us in on... I'm
25 looking at the, the issue of the time limit on

1 victims of domestic violence and HRA shelters, can
2 you fill us in a little bit on the background of
3 how that came to be the, the time that the, the
4 state law settled on. And I don't, I don't know the
5 background but if you can kind of fill us in a
6 little bit on, on why that is the number.

8 COMMISSIONER BANKS: It had been a
9 shorter number previously and over a period of time
10 it, it was gradually extended to that number. It's
11 certainly a number that we want to keep looking at.
12 As indicated in, in both the testimony and the
13 questions we're very focused on the timing out
14 issue since moving families among systems is not a
15 desired result. And as I, as I said link is aimed
16 at trying to address that. And the numbers that
17 we're currently seeing timing out is, are obviously
18 on a monthly basis the numbers we're currently
19 seeing timing out could they change, could they
20 become less, could they become more. Those are
21 things we're going to have to look at very closely
22 as well. If what you're asking, and I don't want to
23 you know get ahead of what you might be asking is
24 look should there, should that time limit be
25 increased.

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CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: It, it's certainly something that we all should be looking at as we, taking a fresher look at the overall system that we operate are looking to try to manage with that time limit if it were to change we'd still have to be doing the things I think we're... doing now which is trying to make sure that people, to the extent, to the greatest extent possible don't move between two systems.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right. Do you know what, did you, do you recall what year that happened when, when that was extended to 180 days?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Two years ago.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. And before that it was...

COMMISSIONER BANKS: It had gone from 120. It was 135. There were different time periods before then.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And the reason I ask is that you know we, we were finding ourselves in a very difficult situation right now in terms of families having challenges and getting into, keeping and, and obtaining permanent housing,

1 keeping permanent housing as we're seeing with the
2 rise in homeless families in New York City
3 continuing to increase and increasing dramatically
4 since 2011 and something that is you know is a,
5 it's a, it's a much graver picture than 10 years
6 ago for example. And, and so it would, one thing
7 that would come to mind is, is in light of current
8 challenges that we're facing as a city. And I know
9 that this administration is doing a tremendous
10 amount of work to turn that picture around and,
11 and, and create meaningful change with real
12 resources but might this be one thing that we could
13 do on a state level to, to alleviate some of that
14 burden.
15

16 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Well I mean it's an
17 interesting question. Changing the time limit would
18 have potentially the impact of people would remain
19 longer but it wouldn't address what's down the line
20 driver of the problem..

21 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right.

22 COMMISSIONER BANKS: ...which is housing.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right.

24 COMMISSIONER BANKS: And so that's why
25 we focused on the link program to deal with the

1 timing out problem very directly. There have been
2 proposals from some of our terrific not-for-profit
3 partners for additional kinds of domestic violence
4 shelters to augment the kinds of services we
5 currently provide, that's something we're certainly
6 interested in in exploring with those providers. So
7 there are a number of different pieces to the
8 puzzle. But I think that we all need to focus on
9 how to, how to get people out of the domestic
10 violence shelter system and into safe permanent
11 housing as quickly as possible.
12

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right.

14 COMMISSIONER BANKS: And, and that's
15 what we are aiming at. But you know as I said in,
16 in, in our testimony we're very conscious of as we
17 implement reforms to look at them and evaluate how
18 they're working and modify them as we need to.

19 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Now in terms of the,
20 the system itself and, and the HRA system... so how
21 long is it, there's, there's you said 800 and some
22 odd units...

23 COMMISSIONER BANKS: There, it, it's a
24 total system of a thousand but it's got different,
25 two different components. One component is the

1 emergency system which is the subject to the 180
2 day time limit. And there are, that can accommodate
3 about 800 families. It's defined by beds and so you
4 have to translate a little bit but it's, it's
5 essentially 800 families on any given night. And
6 then the, the companion system is the, is the HRA
7 run DV tier two system for which is available
8 beyond the 100 day limit for families that need
9 additional, additional services.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Is there any
12 thought... or how long has, had there been 800 or so
13 beds in the emergency system. How long has that
14 been a static number.

15 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I mean there, there
16 were... It's been that way for, for a period of time.
17 But as I said as part of our effort of, of being in
18 dialogue as a new commissioner. We've been talking
19 to advocate group, advocacy groups in particularly
20 the domestic violence providers about potential
21 options for additional units.

22 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right. So there is
23 some thought given to increasing the number of
24 emergency units?
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER BANKS: We're, we're open
3 to creative proposals to provide services and we're
4 certainly considering a few that have been provided
5 to us.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: How many, how many
7 individuals are seeking, or how many individuals or
8 families are seeking shelter for domestic violence,
9 for the reason of domestic violence that can't,
10 that can't get into an HRA shelter because of
11 capacity. So that's kind of a difficult question
12 because there's a lot of you know different,
13 different entry points but how many for example are
14 seeking a PATH shelter for domestic violence that,
15 that can't get into an HRA shelter?

16 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I mean that's a,
17 that's a place where we're very focused on. So
18 there we're seeing it's about, it's a relatively
19 small percentage.

20 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Mm-hmm.

21 COMMISSIONER BANKS: But it also, I mean
22 it, it, it builds up over time and that's why in
23 the link program we got 900 targeted to families
24 that are in the HRA system to avoid the, avoid the
25 movement between the systems and a thousand

1 targeted to the DHS system to deal with the sort of
2 residual impact of, of the lack of move outs from
3 that system. As we proceed with the link program in
4 future years the hope is there'll be less of a need
5 to target those resources on the DHS side because
6 we'll be able to accommodate people who seek
7 shelter at PATH who are certified as domestic
8 violence survivors in the HRA system rather than
9 having them end up in the, in the DHS system.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: How many entry
12 points are there into the HRA system? So there's
13 PATH obviously, can, can somebody, a victim of
14 domestic violence go, obtain a, an HRA emergency
15 shelter unit placement through the FJCs or, or does
16 it... How many point, or is there, if somebody's
17 seeking it for example in order of protection
18 obtains an order of protection are, are, can they
19 obtain an HRA placement through that process?

20 COMMISSIONER BANKS: The, the process is
21 a really through for DHS intake facilities at PATH
22 and the adult intake facility at Belleview and also
23 through the hotline. And people call the hotline,
24 there's a lot of calls that come to the hotline and
25 they call for a whole range of different reasons.

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CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Mm-hmm.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: And some people who call where there's not an available, when there is an available spot get an available spot. Some people call when there's not an available spot are seeking shelter at, through DHS. And again that's why when we looked at the link program we have to allocate units to DHS itself because there's a bit of build up over the years of people that attempted to get into the HRA system and ended up at, in the DHS system.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: But, if they, even if they call the hotline they still have to go to PATH in order to.. [cross-talk]

COMMISSIONER BANKS: No.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: No?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: No. If there's not capacity available at that particular night they would end up going to the DHS system.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: But if there is, say there is capacity on that on a given night they, there isn't, somehow they lucked out and, and there is capacity within the HRA system, would they then have to go to PATH.. [cross-talk]

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COMMISSIONER BANKS: No.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: ...HRA system?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: No.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. But can they, but they can't go to the FJC, the FJC won't, won't be an entry point into the HRA system if there's capacity available.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: If, if they arrive at an FJC they'll be contacting the hotline from there.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: I see. So it, so the, basically the two entry points are through the hotline or through, through PATH.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Right but at PATH, also just not to sort of separate the... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: ...you have HRA staff on site who are working very closely with the available capacity. One of the concerns is if you had multiple different people looking for available capacity you're, you're not going to be as efficient in, in determining what's actually available and what's not available.

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CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right. Have we, do we, do we have an accurate count of how many, how many individuals or families on any given night in the DHS system have been identified as victims of domestic violence... they're invited through NoVA or, or self-identified or, or... Do we have an accurate account of, of what that number looks like?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: I mean the certified number... again we arrived at a thousand.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: A thousand on any given night?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: In the DHS system?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Yeah. Based upon what, what are the, what are the numbers of families that are certified. And that could vary it's been less, it's been, but it's approximately 1,000 is the number which reflects multiple things. It reflects people in the past who timed out. It affects people in the present who are seeking shelter and, and there's no capacity. And it reflects other reasons why people who may have been discharged for other reasons from, from HRA shelters for administrative reasons.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: I have just two more
3 quick questions about, about link three letters
4 have gone out at this point, in other words to
5 potential clients for link three?

6 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I'm going to have
7 to get back to you on all the details but we sent
8 more than 200 to HRA clients in the HRA facilities.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER BANKS: And I'd have to get
11 back to you with the full number including the DHS
12 facilities.

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: I've heard through
14 the grapevine that there's been a challenge getting
15 landlords to take link, all three links so far,
16 that there's been some reluctance because they feel
17 that they've quote unquote been burned in the past
18 by either HSP, housing stability plus, or
19 Advantage. Is that something that, that, that
20 you've encountered or that you're seeing or that
21 we've encountered? And that might be a question for
22 DHS. But is it something that we're seeing right
23 now and is there plans to address that?

24 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Well I think, I
25 think given your longstanding work in communities

1 as well as my experience of working communities
2 when you introduce a new program there are a lot of
3 market forces that are, that come to bear
4 initially.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Mm-hmm.

7 COMMISSIONER BANKS: And as the city
8 found with the Advantage program it took some time
9 before that program was an accepted program because
10 it was new. And obviously this program addresses a
11 number of the issues with, a number of the issues
12 with the advantage program and it's potentially up
13 to five years instead of two. There are extensive
14 after serve, aftercare services that are going to
15 be provided to all the families participating. So
16 it's really a, a question of communication back and
17 forth to landlords. I, I'll tell you that I've been
18 myself speaking to some of the largest landlords
19 who provide shelter to the, housing to the largest
20 numbers of HRA clients who are used to housing and
21 renting apartments to HRA clients and there's
22 interest.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay.
24
25

3 COMMISSIONER BANKS: So it take some
4 time to, to start... you know I said this earlier
5 it's been since 2011...

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER BANKS: ...since HRA and DHS
8 had a rental assistance program. So we're starting
9 from a complete stop...

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right.

11 COMMISSIONER BANKS: ...and ramping up a
12 program to run it full speed.

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right right. Now
14 if, just to be clear though clients through link,
15 that source of income would be essentially
16 protected under local law prevent, preventing sorts
17 of income discrimination. In other words this is,
18 this is income that a landlord could not turn away
19 a client based on the fact that the subsidy is
20 provided through, through link correct? [cross-
21 talk]

22 COMMISSIONER BANKS: ...the local law
23 certainly covers this program and it's something
24 we're monitoring very closely. And if there are any
25 situations that arise we'll take appropriate
action.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And that would be,
3 that's monitored through HRA but then also enforced
4 through Human Rights Commission in the city is that
5 right?

6 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Correct but let's
7 also remember there, there are clients that we have
8 a very great concern about. And so we're certainly
9 monitoring the situation very closely. There are
10 legal services groups which are you know funded by
11 HRA to provide general sublegal services. And we're
12 certainly, we're interested in working with them
13 because we want to make sure that none of our
14 clients are, are, don't, don't have the rights that
15 it could, or afforded by that law protected. I have
16 actually the numbers, say there were 207 serve,
17 link three certification letters issued to clients
18 in the HRA facilities and 275 issued to clients in
19 the DHS facilities.

20 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much
21 Commissioners. I'll turn it over to my colleague
22 Rory Lancman for questions and I may have some
23 follow-up questions as well. Thanks.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Thanks Stephen.
25 Let me just ask you some questions about batterer

1 intervention programs. I don't know if this is
2 really an area that, that you are familiar with. I,
3 I, I'm not sure that anything that goes on in the
4 Family Justice Centers relate to, to battery
5 intervention, batterer intervention programs. As I
6 understand it these are programs that are in the
7 integrated domestic violence courts as well as the,
8 the regular domestic violent parts, domestic
9 violence parts in criminal court and, and in
10 supreme court. But to the extent that you are
11 familiar with them could you give us an, an
12 overview of, of, of those programs, how many there
13 are, how batterers are assigned to them, and then
14 ultimately what we want to get to, and this is the
15 heart of Council Member Cabrera's resolution is you
16 know whether or not they're effective in any way.

18 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: So just to
19 clarify at the Family Justice Centers we are
20 focused on, on serving victims of intimate partner
21 domestic violence so we are not dealing with
22 individuals who are abusive. In terms of the
23 numbers of programs that exist throughout the city
24 I'm, I'm, I can't give you that exact number
25 because it's not an area that we particular,

1 particularly focus on I know through the criminal
2 courts and certainly through the IDVs. They are
3 batterers intervention programs are used in a
4 variety of, of instances. And often times is used
5 throughout the pendency of a case as, as part of
6 compliance. I think in, in, in hearing from the
7 advocacy community, some of the concerns around
8 this or is, is really relates through, and this is
9 just program citywide concerns around the efficacy
10 of these programs, whether or not these programs
11 are really looking at the issue of why does that
12 particular individual, why are they abusive as
13 opposed to maybe perhaps a larger group setting.
14 There's been a lot of conversation about looking at
15 this issue and, and around from the perspective of
16 trauma, have those individuals also grown up in
17 homes where, where there's been violence. So what I
18 can say to you without getting into the specifics
19 and, and, and offering an opinion about the
20 efficacy of these programs what I would say is that
21 I do think the time is, is ripe to have a dialogue
22 about this, to do some analysis about what's going
23 on in terms of batterers intervent, intervention
24 programs. And also looking at what resources are
25

1 out there for individuals, also who may, who may be
2 abusive who often times want to get help and to
3 ensure that they can get quality services.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: And we have
6 someone from TASC testifying later and they are one
7 of the providers of these...

8 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Mm-hmm.

9 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...of these
10 programs. So sure... be able to get more information
11 from them but to you knowledge is the, is the
12 mayor's office contracting with any of these
13 programs to, to provide these services when a court
14 orders them, either in criminal court or in, or in
15 supreme court?

16 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: My
17 understanding this is all done through OCA.

18 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: All done through
19 OCA... [cross-talk]

20 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Yeah.

21 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: It's not the, it's
22 not your office, it's not... [cross-talk]

23 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: No no no no.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: It's...

25 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: No no no.

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CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...it's through OCA.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: No.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Okay.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: No. At the, once again the Office to Combat Domestic Violence is squarely focused on victims and their children.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Got it. Okay. So let me ask you about a couple things that, that came up in your, in your...

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...testimony as it relates to, to legal services.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: You had itemized the just vast need for legal services and the folks who come to the Family Justice Centers, 12 percent of the clients, 21 hundred, 28 hundred people plus requested civil legal services.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Right.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: 10 percent of the clients requested immigration law related assistance and other 23 hundred... are, are these legal services being met? I mean do we have the, the resources and the, and, and the staffing and

1 the, and the, and the relationships so that no one
2 is turned away or, or is there more that we need to
3 do?
4

5 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Well I think
6 one of the things that I'm doing is part of the
7 overall assessment of FJCs being that it's now 10
8 months into my tenor as a commissioner is looking
9 at what are the areas of need. And certainly legal
10 services is an area that we, we see that there's a
11 tremendous need. And one of the things that we are
12 looking at not only through grants that we receive
13 and public/private partnerships to be able to
14 expand our capacity to be able to provide civil
15 legal services and certainly working with HRA and
16 some of our on-site and off-site, on-site and off-
17 site partners to meet those needs. What I can say
18 to you there are times where we do have a wait list
19 for civil legal services and this is something that
20 is a top priority to, to look at to figure out how
21 we can address that need whether it's through
22 expanding the number of attorneys that are on site.
23 And can we pursue some kinds of grants or through
24 the federal government or through private
25 foundations to be able to expand our capacity to

1 provide civil legal services. And it, it can depend
2 in terms of the FJC we see particularly in the
3 Bronx and in Brooklyn high volume on average we're
4 seeing 400 clients per week at the FJC. So
5 certainly one of the things that we're looking at
6 is how do we expand our capacity and to do that
7 whether it's through request for new needs whether
8 it's a request through perusing public/private
9 partnerships.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: You look like you
12 wanted to... [cross-talk]

13 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Yes... I'd add to
14 that what, I mean the immigration area in
15 particular some of the baseline funding that, that
16 was transferred to HRA and we'll be issuing an RFP
17 soon to deal with programs that are now in our
18 baseline and one of the areas clearly is domestic
19 violence relating to the immigration challenges
20 that our clients have. And as we evaluate we're
21 funding a number of programs at HRA. As we evaluate
22 what those programs are and, and what it, what else
23 is needed we're very interested in, in looking at
24 this together with, with you and your committee.
25 Part of this too is that historically HR, legal

1 services programs have been a patchwork of funding.
2
3 As you know from your prior role some of it is
4 state money, some of it city money, and so by
5 putting it all in one place in the city the aim was
6 to say okay how much is actually being spent and
7 what are the services that are critically needed
8 and where are there gaps between what the city is
9 doing and what the state's doing to try to have a
10 more comprehensive approach. And I, I think
11 certainly the partnership that my colleague
12 commissioner and I have on this is one of saying
13 okay let's take a real close look at what is
14 available for this really essential need. And then
15 does it fit within anything that's currently in the
16 baseline, does it fit with anything that's been
17 added to us on a discretionary basis or is it fit
18 with what other funding partners are doing and, and
19 we're very much prepared. And it's just that in
20 doing that analysis to make sure that we are
21 addressing this critical need.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Because one other,
23 the questions that all commissioners get asked
24 during the budget hearings is you know do you have
25 enough money to, to meet the need and if not how

1
2 much more do you need so I assume when we get to
3 that process to you at least on this issue we'll be
4 you know at least able to come to the council and
5 say this is how much more we need. Or better yet
6 this is how much we needed and the, the
7 administration is taking care of it.

8 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Well as, as we,
9 look we just more than doubled the amount of
10 funding for anti-eviction legal services and the
11 baseline went from you know just over 6 million to
12 over 13 million. So I think as we find needs that
13 are, where there are gaps we're, we're certainly
14 not, not reluctant to try to address them. As you
15 know I, from my prior life I have a lot of
16 experience with the back and forth between the
17 administration and the council on these funding
18 issues. So we'll be ready at the appropriate time
19 to, to work with you on that.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Let me just ask
21 you about the Domestic Violence Response Time in
22 Staten Island.

23 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sure.
24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Is that, is, just
3 so I understand it that's not kind of Family
4 Justice Center lite? Is, is... [cross-talk]

5 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: No it's not
6 Family Justice Center lite at all. So we are in the
7 process. Our Family Justice Center will opening
8 2015 in order to ensure that victims of domestic
9 violence in Staten Island get services in
10 particularly those that are at high risk of
11 physical violence or, or, or death. We have the
12 family... we have a domestic violence response team,
13 domestic violence response teams before we had
14 Family Justice Centers in the city were in
15 existence and have been very effective at really
16 bringing city agencies and community based
17 organizations together to do these kind of
18 individualized action plans for victims of domestic
19 violence. ...has also helped us in Staten Island to
20 identify specific needs and certain trends. That's
21 how we came up with the CAPS initiative because we
22 saw stalking was a serious problem and we've done a
23 lot of training not only with service providers but
24 also with the NYPD and with the DA's office to
25 ensure that we do in fact continue to strengthen

1 the safety net for victims but it is not by any
2 means a, a...

3
4 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: It's mostly
5 focused on...

6 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: ...DV lite.

7 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...on the services
8 and coordination to, to, to protect the victim from
9 the... [cross-talk]

10 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: It's a, it's
11 a homicide prevention model.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right.

13 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: In fact we
14 are about to, to launch something similar in NYCHA
15 to ensure that victims of domestic violence within
16 the New York City Housing Authority are able to
17 access services through a specialized team we
18 develop... [cross-talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right. So there's
20 a program. There's, there's one in, in Staten
21 Island, there's about to be one in NYCHA...

22 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Are there other
24 programs in the other boroughs or?

1
2 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Well we have
3 Family Justice Centers now and, and for... [cross-
4 talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...the Family
6 Justice Centers accomplish that...

7 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Yes we do...
8 [cross-talk]

9 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...function in the
10 other boroughs... [cross-talk]

11 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Got it.

13 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: So we do
14 lethality assessments and provide wrap around
15 comprehensive services and engaging of, of city
16 agencies because we physically are able to have
17 city agencies and our onsite partners... [cross-talk]

18 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right. Get it.

19 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: ...physically
20 located within the FJC in Staten Island because we
21 are in the process of building out the Staten
22 Island Family Justice Center... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...Staten Island
24 Domestic Violence Response Team be absorbed by the
25 Family Justice Center when... [cross-talk]

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COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...when it opens up?

[cross-talk]

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Yes our team will, will be there. They'll comprise the, the OCDV staff there.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: My last question for, for you is I know that OCA or, and if not tell me, is very cooperative with the, the Family Justice Centers on the, on the, on the criminal side of connecting the, the victim, you know and walking them over to the.. and, and the DA offices are, are very cooperative and, and supportive is OCA as supportive as it could be in the civil side of the, the, the issues that, that the Family Justice Center addresses.. anything that OCA could maybe be doing differently or, or be more helpful?

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: So one let me say that the DA's office there, they are one of our biggest institutional partners along with HRA and, and certainly with the NYPD we work very closely with OCA and, and the IDV. So for example when I came on board I thought it was very important for me to personally meet with every

1
2 presiding judge for the IDVs to ensure that they
3 were aware of the resources that we provide and to
4 ensure that there was a process in place to, to
5 ensure that referrals were being directly made.
6 This is whether it's a criminal court case, a
7 matrimonial case, a family court case. I have met
8 and presented to all of the family court judges in
9 the state of New York to talk about the resources
10 that we provide and met with also one on one with
11 the judges that preside over a family court in the
12 five boroughs to make sure that once again that
13 they are aware of what we provide to in, ensure
14 that they are, were receiving referrals. And I can
15 tell you a large number of our referrals come
16 through whether it's IDV or whether it, it comes
17 through family courts. And I think this is because
18 of the renewed outreach that OCDV has been doing
19 not only with our stakeholders in the court system
20 and certainly with service providers but also with
21 elected officials and I think this is also
22 reflected in the outreach that we're just generally
23 doing. So they refer cases to us. We are meeting
24 with them on a quarterly basis to talk about
25 whether it's new initiatives or needs. In, in fact

1 last week in Staten Island we did some training
2 with the DA's office NYPD and all of the judges out
3 in Staten Island to talk about our programs to talk
4 about the CAPS initiative. I know other community
5 based organizations presented as well. So for me
6 it's my philosophy is someone that came out of that
7 system to ensure that we continue to engage in a
8 high touch process to make our, our partners know
9 that, what resources are available. We provide them
10 with extensive information about how to reach us,
11 how to make the referrals. They can literally call
12 us and say we have someone that's coming over. And
13 the benefits of the FJCs being located with the
14 DA's office is quite often they're, they're near
15 and around family court and supreme court. So you
16 can literally walk somebody over.

18 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: We were in, we
19 were in Supreme, family court last week getting a
20 tour and a, and a briefing just meeting folks. And
21 they had nothing but positive things to say about
22 the Family Justice Center great except that the
23 price of getting their shiny new building was that
24 it was you know farther away from, from the Family
25 Justice Center than they would have liked but it is

1 what it is. And then just Commissioner Banks we'll
2 have much deeper conversations about this and I,
3 and I think actually we're setting up a, a meeting
4 so you can give us a, a, a briefing on the
5 consolidation of, of legal services. But are there
6 anything that you've done so far in terms of
7 consolidation that points to a, a, a more efficient
8 way of providing legal services for victims of, of
9 domestic violence and the economies of scale or
10 overlap or duplication or anything that you've..

12 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I think one of the,
13 you know one of the issues from both a client
14 perspective and a provider perspective is when you
15 have multiple agencies and therefore multiple
16 contracts it's a, it's a, it's a difficult system
17 to navigate if you're a client looking for services
18 and a difficult system to negotiate if you're a
19 provider looking to streamline how you provide
20 those services and so.. just really honestly in the,
21 in the current budget cycle begun the process of,
22 of putting them together. I think that the
23 providers themselves gave us terrific work plans
24 that really highlight the need for these particular
25 services for domestic violence survivors as,

1
2 against the background of all the things that they
3 do in this most recent period we've spent most of
4 our focuses on anti-eviction services and expanding
5 that fairly dramatically. And we're going to be
6 focusing on, on domestic violence and the other
7 services in, in this next iteration. In addition to
8 the immigration services that I had mentioned that
9 will be issuing an RFP for which will include an
10 element for survivors, survivors of domestic
11 violence who have a clear, you know they're current
12 legal issues involving their rights to regularize
13 their status and so forth related to domestic
14 violence.

15 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: But I, I, I
16 just want to piggyback on what Commissioner Banks
17 said. I think one of the benefits also of the
18 Family Justice Center model is if you recall what
19 it was like before for victims of domestic violence
20 that would have to navigate multiple systems in
21 order to access services the Family Justice Center
22 model really puts the burden on us as an agency to
23 be able to provide these comprehensive services so
24 a victim can walk into one place and access not
25 only services that, that are provided through

1 district attorney's office but also the
2 counselling, the civil legal, the immigration
3 services, and children services because what would
4 happen often times is that children would be
5 present as the victim is retelling their story. And
6 so we also have staff at the FJCs that provide this
7 kind of therapeutic environment for children. And I
8 also want to mention that MOCJ also works with OCDV
9 to contract services for service providers in
10 addition to, to HRA.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Thank you very
13 much. Council Member Johnson.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you Chair
15 Lancman. And thank you commissioners for your
16 testimony today. I was not in the council before.
17 It's my first term as you know but to be able to
18 work with incredibly dedicated commissioners who
19 have made I think a tremendous difference in 10
20 months is something that I'm grateful for and the
21 testimony that you have always provided in front of
22 the respective committee's you've come before has
23 been substantive and thoughtful and I appreciate
24 that. Commissioner Banks you had mentioned in your
25 testimony that... you said well families leaving an

1 HRA DV shelter are eligible for placement in a DHS
2 shelter the process moving between the two systems
3 has not been as seamless as it should be. Working
4 together next month HRA and DHS are implementing a
5 system to manage transition of families from the
6 HRA system to the DHS system without the need for
7 families to be evaluated for shelter eligibility a
8 second time at PATH since HRA has already
9 determined these families to be in need of shelter.
10 That goes to the heart of introduction 361, my bill
11 which is having presumptom, presumptive eligibility
12 if you could, it sounds like you probably support
13 the, the substance of the bill. I wanted to hear
14 your thoughts on the introduction which I know you
15 know about and also what are the things that are
16 being discussed currently between HRA and DHS and
17 for Commissioner Pierre-Louis if you have any
18 thoughts on 361 granting presumptive eligibility to
19 DV victims in getting access to DHS facilities.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Well on the
22 substantive side you know as we had testified at
23 other hearings there's a, an act of collaboration
24 between HRA and DHS to evaluate all the different
25 policies that the respective agencies have in place

1 to make sure that they operate most effectively and
2 to benefit clients. This is one issue that we began
3 to look at that one agency was determining someone
4 to be eligible or needed a shelter. And then under
5 prior procedure that we inherited a second agency
6 was going through essentially the same process. And
7 so it made a lot more sense to have, to develop a
8 new process which will be implement the next month
9 to be able to avoid the problem of HRA having
10 determine the family to still be in need of
11 shelter, it will be in need of shelter and then
12 HRA, and DHS redetermining the same thing. It's not a
13 good use, it's not, it's not a, beneficial to the
14 family to, to have that happen. It's not a good use
15 of the city resources. So the system that will be
16 put in place next, next month will avoid that, that
17 problem of basically having to reprove your
18 eligibility. In terms of the bill... I mean the, the
19 city, the administration's recently received it,
20 they're going to, everyone's going to have to
21 analyze it and see what to do about it. But this
22 particular reform was something that we have been
23 focused on for some time to come up with a solution
24 to and this seemed as propitious an occasion as any
25

1 time to, to announce the way we're going to proceed
2 on it which I think is going to be beneficial so,
3 obviously for clients and address as you said one
4 of the issues that you have been concerned about
5 which I appreciate. As you know I've had some
6 experience with this particular issue before I had
7 my current role.
8

9 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: I, I, I
10 think Steve has reflected the administration's
11 position on this. So we, we definitely want to look
12 at the bill and, and, and certainly will follow-up.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: So it sounds
14 like I mean you, you've seen the bill and you heard
15 what the bill, what the substance of the bill is.
16 It's, it sounds like what you'd described
17 Commissioner Banks though it may not be exactly in
18 line with the text of the bill they're similar in
19 some ways. Is that accurate... would, at least with
20 regard to HRA and DHS if you take DYCD out of the
21 equation.

22 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Yeah I would just
23 say that it's not a question of whether they're
24 presumptive, families are presumptively eligible,
25 they're eligible. And so moving from one system to

1 another they're not going to lose that eligibility.

2 So the real issue is should they be subjected to a
3 second eligibility determination for something that
4 they've already determined to be in need of and
5 that's a, the reform that the two agencies have
6 worked on to be able to avoid taking a family
7 that's in need of shelter, eligible for shelter and
8 redetermining their eligibility.
9

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. Well I
11 look forward to understanding what given that this
12 is an issue that of course is important to me. I've
13 spent time working on this piece of legislation. I
14 would welcome the opportunity to work with you all
15 as you proceed with DHS, potentially DYCD on how
16 this is going to work as it move forward.

17 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Absolutely. We've
18 had a number of issues that have arisen during our,
19 during our respective tenors and I think we've done
20 well by focusing on the issues together and trying
21 to move forward in appositive way. I think this is
22 going to be a positive thing and we're, and we're
23 certainly happy to, to talk it, talk it through
24 with you.
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COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: And, and it's your belief that you can do this without, without the need of legislation, at least what you guys are contemplating right now that you can do it just by some agency rules or reform?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: You know again I want to leave the, leave legislative questions to those that are knowledgeable about legislation. From where I sit we're, this is an administrative process that had been set up that the two agencies inherited and we're changing it because we think that it can work better for clients to do it in a different way.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Well I am grateful for that. I'm grateful that we have leadership in these agencies that are looking to make these smart changes. And I look forward, given that our goals align, to have the council partner with the administration to facilitate these changes regardless of which way we get it done. So I appreciate you being here today. And I, I want to particularly point out and think, I don't want it to go without another mention because I think it's well deserved that Commissioner Pierre-Louis and

1 her staff the amount of outreach that they have
2 done in 10 months has been remarkable, incredible,
3 tireless. I know the work they have done with the
4 city council. I can't begin to imagine the work
5 they have done with all the advocates that are here
6 as well as other local community partners. And just
7 a very short quick story. You know two weeks ago,
8 three weeks ago I was at the Christopher Street
9 subway stop in my district giving out information
10 for domestic violence awareness month with members
11 from your staff. And I showed up and you know
12 people don't like to be bothered when they're
13 getting on the subway, being handed things. And I
14 thought I'll do this for an hour and then I'll
15 leave and you know. My campaign ended last year so
16 I don't want to be doing this again. But I thought
17 it's a good cause and it's important to do it. And
18 so I was doing it and right towards the end of the
19 hour a member of your staff and myself handed a, a
20 leaflet to someone who stopped in her tracks and
21 said I am so scared. I am a victim of domestic
22 violence and I need help immediately. And I was
23 sort of shocked. It's not what I expected on that
24 sunny morning. And luckily the person from your
25

1 office was so well trained on how to handle it, on
2 what to do, and you know it really made me feel
3 like that morning we made a real difference in
4 someone's life. And I know that that's a type of
5 work that you all do on a daily basis and I really
6 appreciate that you work on this issue which is so
7 devastating and as Commissioner Banks said is
8 ravaging to our communities.

10 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Thank you.

11 And I just want to point out that that individual
12 did actually come in to our Manhattan Family
13 Justice Center. And I think as we talk about issues
14 of prevention because quite often when we're
15 talking about domestic violence we're talking about
16 crisis intervention that we understand the impact
17 of outreach. And, and, and one of the reasons why
18 I've focused on this issue so much is that it's
19 also beneficial to go where people are whether it's
20 a salon, a barber shop, a supermarket. And we have
21 found that as a result of doing concentrated
22 outreach and various councilmanic districts over
23 the last ten months particularly in those
24 neighborhoods where domestic violence is an issue
25 we have seen dramatic increases in the number of

1 clients that have come in for services. And that's
2 exactly what we want to do as an agency is to be
3 able to reach those who are in need to ensure that
4 they get the information in terms of how to deal
5 with the violence that's happening in their lives.
6

7 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you to
8 both of you. Thank you to Chairs Lancman, Cumbo,
9 and Levin for holding this hearing today and for
10 the opportunity to speak and discuss my bill. Thank
11 you very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Council Member Liz
13 Crowley.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you to
15 all our chairs today and to both of the
16 commissioners for the comprehensive services that
17 you provide to New Yorkers. I was listening to
18 Council Member Johnson share his story about that
19 morning when he gave out post cards about Family
20 Justice Centers throughout the city and I had a
21 similar experience myself. When someone took the
22 card they said oh, oh... you know I was looking for a
23 number. I think it might have been for a friend but
24 you know that, that was somebody who said well we
25 were looking for it. So you know somebody will be

1 helped by just that one action but probably
2 countless people because you have been helping us
3 build awareness Commissioner Rose Pierre-Louis. You
4 know you have come to the Council's Democratic
5 Conference and to the Women's Issues meetings and
6 you helped us realize how much of an issue it is in
7 our own districts. And because of your
8 encouragement I was able to put together an op-ed
9 and I you know encouraging my constituents to help
10 break the silence, to know that there are services
11 out there. And I let them know of your office.

12
13 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Thank you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: So it is good
15 that... you know your advocacy is really making a big
16 difference here. I have a question relates to
17 education on domestic violence as it relates to the
18 Department of Homeless Services. I think that there
19 is a representative here from DHS. Unfortunately
20 Sunday morning we all woke up to the devastating
21 headlines of a three year old who was killed at a
22 shelter at the hands of a step-father. And it is
23 you know my, in asking this question I would like
24 to understand... when we have an audience such as
25 somebody coming into a city agency to spend the

1 night or spend you know a few months or longer what
2 level of education do we bring to them on domestic
3 violence. And you know for an abuser to know you
4 know of statistics that are happening, that have
5 happened, how their harm could hurt... is there any
6 education that you know of? Is there somebody from
7 DHS here?
8

9 JOSLYN CARTER: [off mic] Hi I'm Joslyn
10 Carter from DHS. And I, I think one of the things
11 that Commissioner Rose... [on mic] mentioned is...

12 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: I'm sorry before,
13 before we have you testify we do have to swear you
14 in. Sorry. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
15 whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
16 testimony before this committee and respond
17 honestly to Council Member's questions?

18 JOSLYN CARTER: I do.

19 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Thank you.

20 JOSLYN CARTER: So I think one of the
21 things in, in this particular case it is an
22 investigation that is ongoing so we really can't
23 talk about that..
24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: I'm sorry and if
3 you can also identify yourself for the record,
4 thank you.

5 JOSLYN CARTER: Absolutely, my name is
6 Joslyn Carter and I'm from DHS. I'm an Associate
7 Commissioner for Family Services at DHS. We woke up
8 to a tragedy on, on yesterday and when we found it
9 on Saturday so the investigation is ongoing. And
10 this particular case I really can't speak about,
11 the specifics of this case, but in terms of, this
12 is a family violence situation that happened, but
13 families in our system that are in the shelter
14 system that already went through Path and are now
15 in shelter we do educate around domestic violence.
16 And we do work closely with the Family Justice
17 Centers making referrals to them. So we have a
18 connection already with our NoVA partners who are
19 PATH and then with the Family Justice systems.

20 [cross-talk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Do you... so when
22 somebody goes down to the PATH Center and is about
23 to enter your system is there any level of
24 education at that center or does it begin when they
25 are given a place to stay? [cross-talk] Sometimes

1 there's no supportive services at the places to
2 stay. Like if there isn't a video or some type of
3 informational educational brochure that
4 participants receive now then there should be. And
5 that's what I'm trying to get to the heart of is do
6 we provide, and at what level do we provide
7 education on domestic violence.
8

9 JOSLYN CARTER: I think one of... you know
10 hearing... I absolutely agree with you and we're
11 meeting on the same issue today right now. This
12 meeting is happening in terms of what services and
13 what educational services are provided but families
14 who do not necessarily disclose domestic violence
15 to us, once we find out that there's domestic
16 violence we do do the work, we're around making
17 referrals and doing the education around that but I
18 think in the broader context we are looking at how
19 do we educate all our families and how do we do
20 that preventive work to help them to understand
21 what is domestic violence and not necessarily that
22 it's happening in their households. So we're
23 beginning to do those discussions now, yes. At PATH
24 if a family discloses that there, that there's
25 domestic violence as they enter the system then we

1
2 do refer them to our NoVA partners who will do...
3 assessment then. And those families in shelter if
4 there's domestic violence then we do the referrals,
5 make referrals to the Family Justice Center to have
6 them get education around that issue and support,
7 supportive services around that issue yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I don't know if
9 my question was answered. Sometimes people need to
10 be shown what domestic violence is in order to
11 realize that they're a victim or they're an abuser.
12 Now is there anything that we make participants
13 that, that is mandated for them to review?

14 JOSLYN CARTER: Not at this time, no.
15 What I'm... [cross-talk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Okay.

17 JOSLYN CARTER: ...saying to you is that
18 we're making those, we're having those discussions
19 as we speak. We started to talk about that
20 yesterday on Sunday following the incident. And so
21 we're looking at what services can we provide to
22 educate families around what domestic violence is.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Okay. Well I'm
24 you know glad that you're, you're starting to put
25 together a process and... [cross-talk]

3 JOSLYN CARTER: Yes ma'am.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: ...I know that
5 both agencies can work together because we need to
6 make sure that everybody is educated on it and, and
7 shown whether it's through pictures or video
8 footage what is abuse.

9 JOSLYN CARTER: Absolutely.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Right.

11 JOSLYN CARTER: I agree.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Because you
13 know when you listen to some of the neighbors talk
14 about what had happened you know some parents think
15 it's okay to discipline their child by abusing. And
16 we should make sure that anybody who enters the DHS
17 system knows that they cannot use physical abuse to
18 discipline.

19 JOSLYN CARTER: Yeah I, I think that I
20 agree with you. I think we, we do a lot of work
21 with child welfare around parenting and abuse for,
22 towards children. We work in partnership with ACS.
23 So that work is happening so there's that piece
24 that we have been doing that we do as families come
25 into shelter, our family shelter system, education

1
2 around that, but we are now adding to domestic
3 violence piece for... [cross-talk]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But I mean
5 that's considered domestic... [cross-talk]

6 JOSLYN CARTER: Yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: ...violence as
8 well. Abusing a child is in the house it's
9 domestic... [cross-talk]

10 JOSLYN CARTER: So we do a lot of work...
11 [cross-talk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: ...it's violence.

13 JOSLYN CARTER: ...with ACS around that
14 issue now... [cross-talk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Okay.

16 JOSLYN CARTER: ...as families come in yes
17 they're educated around child abuse and neglect.
18 100 percent of our, our providers are, are educated
19 around that. And they do complete the child abuse
20 and neglect training through ACS. And so that's
21 something that we do annually... [cross-talk]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Sure.

23 JOSLYN CARTER: ...with... [cross-talk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Now, now just
25 going forward I would be able to rest assured a

1 little bit better if I know 100 percent of the
2 participants coming in to seek shelter are
3 receiving those services as a client that they
4 understand what domestic violence is and, and that
5 abuse is not acceptable.
6

7 JOSLYN CARTER: Absolutely.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. I'm back.
10 I had another hearing that I was overseeing at this
11 time as well. We would like to take a moment to
12 pause as Council Member Mealy would like to record
13 her vote on Resolution 429. At this time we will
14 call the vote.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Council Member
16 Mealy.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Current vote on
19 Resolution 429 is now four in the affirmative.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Council Member
22 Cabrera.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: thank you so
24 much to the Chairs. Commissioners welcome. I'm so,
25 so grateful to both of you for the work that you

1 have done. Also had the opportunity to go to, to
2 sit down with you Commissioner at the Family
3 Justice Center in the Bronx. I was very impressed
4 of all the services that you are providing and I'm
5 very very hopeful. Let me just share one of my, as
6 a council member one of my frustrations. You know
7 I, I, I'm the Co-Chair of the Gun Violence Task
8 Force and we sat down for a couple of years. And
9 one of the pieces of research that I came across
10 that it shocked me was that one third, one third of
11 the, all the gun violence victims are as a result
12 of gangs and then another third is related to
13 substance abuse. And then the other one third,
14 about one third maybe a little less was domestic
15 violence. And as a council member I said alright
16 you know we could, you know we, we could put
17 cameras, put tons of cameras in my district but the
18 most out of all the councilmanic district. But when
19 I think about domestic violence where it happens
20 usually you know in the confine of the privacy of
21 the home what, what can we do to, to reduce... I mean
22 on top of everything that we're doing to reduce
23 these numbers. So Council Member thank you so much
24 for, for really highlighting the impact of gun
25

1 violence on victims of domestic violence. And I
2 think what, what you have highlighted really speaks
3 to the need of what we do at the FJCs and, and the
4 need to be able to reach as many people in need as
5 possible. Because I think the number that Council
6 Member Cumbo gave about last year 62 DV homicides
7 the majority of whom had no prior contact with the
8 police and once again the police does so much in
9 responding to domestic violence.
10

11 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: One of the
12 things that we are doing through our outreach
13 efforts and that's why we are focusing in districts
14 where we know there's a high number of filings of
15 domestic incident reports is to be able to reach
16 individuals that may be at high risk, to reach
17 individuals that may be at, not only high risk of
18 physical harm but also of death. As part of our
19 lethality assessments that we do, I know HRA does
20 the same thing and our partners at the Family
21 Justice Centers is this is part of the process that
22 we do as part of any intake process for any victim
23 of domestic violence that comes in through our
24 Family Justice Centers. But that speaks to just
25 individuals who are coming in. What we want to be

1 able to do is whether you're at subway or a beauty
2 salon to be able to get people to come into the
3 Family Justice Center so that we can minimize the
4 occurrence and the impact of, of gun violence
5 particularly as it relates to victims of domestic
6 violence. And I think creating the awareness,
7 letting people know about what resources are
8 available, letting people know that they are not
9 alone. Because when you talk to victims of domestic
10 violence there is certainly concerns around feeling
11 isolated not knowing where to turn. And this kind
12 of grass roots on the ground working with elected
13 officials, working with clergy leaders also which
14 is, there's the whole not on my watch campaign
15 which is very focused on being in communities. And
16 we are in the process of training 200 clergy
17 members around domestic violence. So once again I
18 think the process is letting people know about
19 resources, creating as strong of a network as
20 possible for victims to be identified, particularly
21 those at high risk.
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23 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Well I want to
24 thank you for... I know we had a discussion back then
25 regarding the faith based community.

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COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Me being a pastor myself for 25 years I... this, this is one of those sub-groups that I think are very ingrained in the community that can make tremendous, have a tremendous impact. And I'm sure you go to bed thinking about this as well, how can we...so let me ask you this question I, because I, because I don't know the answer to this question. One socio-economically it's a, the majority of those... involve in domestic violence in one category or is spread all across? And there's a follow-up question is the reason why I'm asking that.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: So if I understand your, your question correctly is it primarily low income...

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Right.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: ...individuals that are...

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Victims.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: ...victims. So one I think we've said this... that domestic violence touches all parts of the city, every community. What we can say is that within certain communities

1 there's a disproportionate impact. And certainly
2 within communities where there's low education
3 attainment, high unemployment, high poverty we do
4 see higher numbers in terms of, of, of domestic
5 violence. But I don't want to minimize that this
6 doesn't happen in other parts... [cross-talk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Absolutely.

9 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: ...parts of
10 the city. And, and to just simply confine this as a
11 poor person's issue I'm certainly concerned about
12 that. But our approach has been as an agency to
13 focus on neighborhoods where we know there's been
14 high numbers of DIRs or homicides. But also this is
15 why we talk about this issue through intersections
16 whether it's homelessness, whether it's child
17 abuse, whether it's income, inequality and so... and
18 poverty. But we do know certainly within those
19 communities that there can be a higher occurrence
20 but that's not to say that it doesn't occur in
21 other communities. And certainly within the
22 immigrant community as New York City continues to
23 grow in its diversity we are very focused whether
24 it's HRA through providing services to, to
25 immigrants and certainly for us providing

1 immigration services and doing it in a culturally
2 competent way in understanding where you have large
3 populations of immigrants to ensure that you are
4 reaching out to them in a culturally appropriate
5 way and certainly engaging what I call validators,
6 stakeholders within those communities that are
7 indigenous to those communities to partner with you
8 as well.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: The reason I
11 ask is because obviously not to stigmatize because
12 I know how that feels living in the Bronx. But
13 because the follow-up question was when people come
14 for services, city, city services is there an
15 opportunity to ask whether do they need help from
16 your office. You know did, is that question posed
17 as part of the interview? For example if you go, if
18 you go in for an interview for food stamps or
19 welfare or whatever it is, is, is that question
20 posed, is it part of the questionnaire?

21 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Do you want
22 to answer that... I can answer.

23 COMMISSIONER BANKS: It is not currently
24 although I think some of the thoughts that Council
25 Member Crowley and now you are raising does lead

1
2 one to want to redouble some of our efforts to make
3 sure that everybody has the kind of information
4 that we want to make sure they have.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I, I think that
6 this will be a great opportunity to identify and
7 also to create a track, to create opportunity,
8 really almost like a pretext for those that might
9 be scared, for those who many not know who to go
10 to. As much as outreach and you guys, the outreach
11 this year has been amazing and fabulous to say the
12 least. But there's still a lot of people especially
13 in the immigrant community who are new here. And so
14 to, to have the opportunity... let me ask another
15 question.

16 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: You want to
17 just piggy back on what, what Commissioner Banks
18 said. What I, what I would also point out is that
19 there's a level of collaboration that's, that's
20 going on between agents, agencies throughout the
21 administration to ensure that once we understand
22 entry points how do we collaborate what are the
23 needs that we can improve to strengthen the safety
24 net. So certainly there's a lot of cross referrals
25 that, that happens and HRA is on site at our Family

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2 Justice Centers training, which is another thing
3 that we are doing across city agencies whether it's
4 DHS or even in reaching out to sanitation to work
5 with them. Because we understand that victims can
6 come to the attention of someone through a variety
7 of, of entry points. And we want to make sure that
8 individuals that are encountering victims that they
9 know at, at the very least the resources that are
10 available and where they can refer them.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you so
12 much for that answer. I was going to ask you
13 regarding the landlords to, do landlords who, who
14 are you're approaching right now regarding through
15 DHS. Do, do those who going in, into the system
16 because of DV do they get pay more, less, the same
17 as for you know through the other DHS programs that
18 you have? Just do the landlords get paid the same?

19 COMMISSIONER BANKS: I mean the Link
20 program is, is...

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Right.

22 COMMISSIONER BANKS: ...set at the same
23 rental level for all of the programs whether
24 they're HRA or DHS focused on domestic violence

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survivors or on other families. So the rental level
is set at the same.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: So it's the
same?

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay that's
good to know. And also do you find.. why is it that..
I think it's my last question. Why is it that I,
that I find that in poor communities we have many
of these supportive services and housing I mean..
And then when we go to, from middle class and
higher class we just don't see like this fair share
of just balance in terms of the housing. And
attached with that question is that the same
experience that we find in housing for those who
are victim of domestic violence.. [cross-talk]

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Well I mean our... in
terms of permanent housing we're anxious to access
any housing that our clients can rent and that
housing historically has been all around the city
based upon whatever the prevailing rents are in the
particular neighborhoods that our clients are able
to locate housing in.

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COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Yeah but I mean, I mean it's very obvious that in some neighborhoods like mine we are just overloaded. I mean our community boards right now they're just like screaming that no more, no more. You know and then we have the huge needs and then when I look at all the neighborhoods they are not too far from where I'm at. They just, I just don't it equity.. [cross-talk] and that's my last question.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: ...one of the things that's important to us for our clients that are in HRA domestic violence facilities that as we said in the early part of the testimony... existed for a number of years most of them for safety and other reasons it may make the most sense to locate permanent housing near in that same community. And that may well be the, the best and safest thing for their client and we want to, want to really focus on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Alright thank you so much for your answer and keep up the fantastic work that you're doing.

COMMISSIONER BANKS: Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you Council

Member Cabrera. At this time I would like to call on our colleague Council Member Darlene Mealy.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Just want to say hello Commissioners. I only have two questions and I'm glad you did say it's not just a poor issue because it's quiet as kept, it's, this wholes nation issue. What is your outreach to faith based domestic violence? Do you have any tracking on that at all? Because I'm in that area and a lot of people in church are domestic violence even pastors. So are you tracking anything such as that?

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: So in terms of, you're making a good suggestion, in terms of tracking those numbers we don't currently do that but certainly would love the opportunity to talk to you more about it. As I mentioned that understanding that the clergy similar to FDNY, EMS, and the NYPD they are on the front lines in responding to domestic violence. So it's been very important to us as an agency not only to be able to meet with clergy but also to present at churches. So I can give, you know some churches I'm sitting in... services so I'll be there from 7:30 a.m. and

1 get out at 12:30 but that makes the difference in
2 terms of reaching people. The Not On My Watch
3 Campaign may serve as a great example or
4 opportunity for us to start thinking about how do
5 we capture this information but we will continue to
6 do our clergy outreach. We just did training last
7 week in the five boroughs for clergy on this issue.
8 And certainly I do recognize that there are clergy
9 members that are victims as well. And we do get
10 those calls. And, and once again this goes back to
11 touching as many different stakeholders as possible
12 to ensure that the net continues to get cast out
13 further so that it's not just relying on victims to
14 either be referred or walking into the doors of the
15 FJC but also going out into community where people
16 are going to be. And that's why our domestic
17 violence and response team in NYCHA I think will
18 also be very helpful. And we've worked with the
19 Chaplins as well who have played a, an important
20 role for us in identifying victims.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That's good. My
23 last question with NH, Neighborhood, NYCHA
24 development houses how are you coordinating with
25 DHS? Not, well house and in regards to... like at one

1 point one of my house and, young ladies she got
2 shot 11 times in the elevator she survived. And we
3 had to put her back into the same development. It
4 took us a week and I had to go to the DA, the DA in
5 order to get her into a hotel to make sure that she
6 don't go right back to where the domestic violence
7 had taken place. So how often do y'all coordinate
8 together; NYCHA, DHS, domestic violence.. are y'all
9 really coordinating.. I believe that was about at
10 least a year and a half ago so I know by now we
11 should have it together. We, no one should ever
12 have to go back to the same apartment where they
13 were domestic, I mean almost killed. So have
14 anything new with y'all coordination has transpired
15 since then?

17 COMMISSIONER BANKS: Right. I mean I, I,
18 I certainly think that and my colleague
19 commissioner emphasized this that the level of
20 cooperation among agencies is at a very high level.
21 And if a similar situation arose I think the high
22 level of coordination about moving such a family
23 would be very different than what, what you
24 experienced in the past.

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COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: So... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Go ahead.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: ...I'm sorry.
Just once again adding onto what Commissioner Banks
said I think one of the things that will happen
Council Member Mealy is that we are going to be
launching a NYCHA Domestic Violence Response Team.
That team will include community liaisons, divert
specialists who are case managers, as well as a
high risk coordinator... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: In Brooklyn. I
know y'all did one in Bronx.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: No no no no
it's going to be in, it's going to be in the five...
[cross-talk] boroughs.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay.

COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: And so we
work... that will also allow us to interface more
closely with NYCHA but certainly on a daily basis
for victims that come to us through the Family
Justice Centers. We are in regular contact with DHS
and HRA. HRA is on site at our Family Justice
Centers. This is an ongoing dialogue in terms of

1 being able to identify the needs of victims that
2 come through our FJCs to coordinate services
3 through HRA whether it's DHS or NYCHA. And those
4 conversations once again through this higher level
5 conversation we will continue to identify needs and
6 opportunities to once again as I keep on saying
7 strengthening that safety net. But also one of the
8 things in meeting with Council Members is that
9 Council Members now call us directly in terms of
10 issues and certainly through advocacy resources
11 within both of our agencies we can also ensure that
12 information is being communicated in a uniform
13 fashion, in a coordinated fashion. [cross-talk]

14
15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I just want to
16 say thank you that, I looked at it online with the
17 Bronx, domestic violence with NYCHA that was
18 excellent, please, that's a excellent job right
19 there.

20 COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS: Thank you.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Kudos. Thank you.
22 Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I want to thank both
24 of you for your testimony today and the information
25 that you provided was very thorough. I also wanted

1 to add to Council Member Mealy's question as well.
2
3 The conference that was held on Saturday at Hostos
4 with your agency as well as with NYCHA was a
5 powerful combination and the individuals that
6 attended I believe came away with a great deal of
7 information. I did myself and many of the people
8 that attended particularly there was a strong
9 growing of population of men that are attending
10 these workshops. And to see that culmination at
11 that event was pretty powerful. So I thank you for
12 that. And we are now going to call up our next
13 panel. Hope you can stay for as long as you can. We
14 are going to bring Jennifer White Reed from the
15 Urban Resource Institute. We're going to bring Nat
16 Fields from the Urban Resource Institute. We're
17 going to Bring Jackie Williams. And we're going to
18 bring Judith, please correct me, Cahn? Cohen. I was
19 going to take a risk but I didn't want to get
20 fancy. We are going to start with Jennifer White
21 Reed from Urban Resource Institute. You'd rather do
22 it that way? Alright when, when dynamic women speak
23 dynamic women listen.

24 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Good afternoon.

25 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Good afternoon.

1
2 JACKIE WILLIAMS: My name is Jackie
3 Williams. I am a lobbyist in the state of New York,
4 the owner of a successful company, a veteran of the
5 United States Navy and this year I became a victim
6 of a domestic violence. Imagine being assaulted by
7 someone you love then being blindfolded, thrown in
8 a dark room, spun around in circles until you're
9 sick. This is how I would characterize my
10 experience as a victim of domestic violence put
11 through the system currently in the place in New
12 York City. I'm not here to point fingers but to
13 illustrate how the system that is intended to serve
14 victims can often perpetuate rather than alleviate
15 the suffering caused by domestic abuse. This began
16 from the moment I called the local precinct to find
17 out what my legal options were. They simply did not
18 return my phone call. All and so unable to wait any
19 longer I decided to report it in person. The first
20 thing I was asked wasn't what had happened to me or
21 the name of my abuser but whether I am as a woman
22 of color really belonged in the precinct which
23 served a largely Caucasian demographic. The answer
24 in case you're wondering is yes. When an officer
25 who specializes in violent, domestic violence

1 finally came to speak to me she began to openly
2 discuss details of my case out in the open public
3 library, out in an open public lobby. I had to
4 plead with her to speak somewhere privately. She
5 seemed surprised by my request which in turn
6 surprised me. Wouldn't an officer who specializes
7 in domestic violence understand that it might be
8 humiliating to discuss the details of my assault
9 out in a open lobby. When I was turned over to a
10 city appointed counsellor I found myself plunged
11 into an unsympathetic, outdated, and incompetent
12 bureaucracy staffed with a personnel that were
13 rude, indifferent, and withholding of necessary
14 information. The literature available in their
15 office for victims of domestic assault was not even
16 in English and it dated back to the administration
17 of Governor Pataki. Keep in mind that this
18 counsellor was provided to me with the immediate
19 legal and emotional to... keep in mind that this
20 counsel was provided to help me with the immediate
21 legal and emotional aftermath of my assault. Well
22 because of repeated delays, a total lack of
23 communication I was forced to speak, seek out a
24 counsellor on my own whom I paid for out of my
25

1 pocket. Let me make clear that the self-affirmed
2 domestic violence is not simply a physical assault.
3 It is an emotional and psychological trauma that
4 grows even after the physical. The system made this
5 worse. All in all I was embarrassed, humiliated,
6 and made to feel unworthy. The system was supposed
7 to be a tool for me but instead it opened a new
8 chapter in the nightmare of my domestic assault.
9 And when I think back about my assault the only
10 time that I begin to cry is when I think about how
11 I was made to feel by the people who were supposed
12 to help me. I am fortunate enough to be financially
13 secure with the love and support system of my
14 family and friends who rallied around me. But what
15 about other victims? What about those who don't
16 have my resources. And this is the point of my
17 testimony today. Just last week the daily news
18 published a article about the justice center noting
19 that the number of survivors of domestic violence
20 seeking assistance has increased dramatically.
21 Given my own treatment at the justice center I find
22 this terrifying. And would urge this body to
23 consider six recommendations for improving services
24 for victims of domestic violence. One, consider
25

1 bringing in a, bringing in a customer service
2 training provider to render customer service
3 training to the staff of the justice centers and
4 NYPD domestic violence officers. Two, allow the
5 service providers in the centers to use technology
6 as a tool to communicate information to the users
7 of the centers. Three, appoint an operational
8 oversight officer to coordinate the three
9 components that make up the justice center to
10 ensure that the quality of customer service
11 provided to victims is efficient, polite, and
12 humane. Four, survey the users of the center so
13 that the quality of the service can be measured and
14 if necessary improved upon, improved upon. Five,
15 allow every NYPD precinct to allow anyone to speak
16 to a NYPD domestic violence officer no matter where
17 they live in New York City. Six, allocate capital
18 funding for NYPD to create private, private meeting
19 spaces to avoid public humiliation of victims. It
20 is my contention that the answer isn't more laws
21 but a overhaul of the current system to be more
22 efficient, more humane and more respectful,
23 respectful of victims. Thank you for hearing my
24 testimony.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you for your
3 very powerful and emotional and passionate and
4 frank and courageous testimony. I think it's, it's
5 something that we all need to hear because we
6 certainly need to understand the reality behind the
7 statistics and the reality behind the numbers. We
8 need to understand what's really happening as far
9 as don't necessarily want to refer to you as a
10 victim but as somebody who has been impacted so
11 negatively by the system in that way. But you have
12 demonstrated considerable strength and I, and I
13 applaud you for bringing this to light. And I
14 understand the complexities of you bringing this to
15 this body today. Thank you. We're going to follow
16 with questions for the whole panel after our next
17 testimony. Who, who... [cross-talk]

18 JUDITH COHEN: Hi.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...is slated to speak
20 next.

21 JUDITH COHEN: We're going this way.

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Alright, there we
23 go.

24 JUDITH COHEN: Hi, good afternoon. Thank
25 you for the opportunity to testify. My name is

1 Judith Cohen and I am the CEO of the Center Against
2 Domestic Violence and Co-Chair of the New York City
3 Coalition of Domestic Violence Residential
4 Providers along with Nat Fields, President of Urban
5 Resource Institute. The coalition positions are
6 guided by one principal, safety. We advocate to the
7 women, children, and yes men who turn to us for
8 refuge from unspeakable abuse and enter our shelter
9 safely and then leave with the tools to build a
10 secure life free of intimate partner violence.
11 Since 1985 we have advocated with a unified voice
12 for continuum of care that provides quality housing
13 and services for all domestic violence survivors.
14 And I'm attaching a, an additional sheet that
15 states who we are and who we serve. A number of my
16 colleagues will be testifying about mandated
17 service, immigrants, the disabled, legal services,
18 and housing assistance. The people we shelter in
19 HR, HRA DV shelters have had their lives devastated
20 by abusive partners. They have made themselves
21 homeless because it is unsafe for them to stay in
22 their homes. They are just as homeless as those
23 residing in DHS shelters with an important
24 difference. Domestic violence survivors are not
25

1 permitted to stay in shelter beyond 180 days.
2
3 Unlike homeless shelters domestic violence shelters
4 are mandated to provide an array of rich social
5 services under parts 452 and 453 of the New York
6 State Social Service Law. Although Safe Horizon
7 operates the New York City violence hotline every
8 DV agency is required to operate its own 24 hour
9 hotline. Shelters feel calls from police, clergy,
10 family members of victims, and other social service
11 providers seeking information about domestic
12 violence and resources for victims as well as calls
13 from victims seeking shelter of other services
14 themselves. Shelter staff provide referrals for
15 such services as legal assistance, vocational,
16 educational programs, medical and mental health
17 care as well as services for a wide range of
18 specialized needs such as services for veterans,
19 children with special needs, and residents
20 requiring cosmetic or dent, cosmetic or dental
21 reconstruction. Shelter safety advocate, conduct
22 advocacy with a, sorry. Shelter staff conduct
23 advocacy with a wide array of systems. In an effort
24 to control a partner who has fled to a shelter or
25 to intimidate them into returning batterers

1 frequently file child abuse reports or child
2 custody petitions. I got a half a page to go.
3 Dealing with a legal system or child welfare system
4 could be particularly frightening for residents.
5 Shelter staff provides weekly individual
6 counselling to all residents assisting them in
7 understanding the dynamics of abuse. Shelter
8 providers ongoing domestic violence support groups
9 utilize the psycho-educational model. Many shelters
10 also provide additional groups. Domestic violence
11 shelters provide an array of services for children
12 in shelters. These include services provided
13 directly to children such as group counselling,
14 educational recreational activities as well as
15 services provided to parents. This was a very brief
16 summary of some of the mandated services provided
17 by domestic violence shelters. I skipped as much as
18 I could.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you so very
21 much for your testimony. And I apologize that we've
22 had to put the timer on. We just have the room for
23 a limited amount of time so in the interest of that
24 try and keep to the timer but I understand that we
25 have a lot of ground to cover.

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NATHANIEL FIELDS: [off mic] Good
afternoon and... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Good afternoon.

NATHANIEL FIELDS: Thank you Judy. And
in line with your request I'm going to amend my
testimony today. Good afternoon again and thank you
for... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Good afternoon.

NATHANIEL FIELDS: ...allowing me to
testify today. And I want to thank you for all the
things that you've done, was really exciting being
in the audience to hear about all the activities
that you've attended and your desire to increase
what we do around domestic violence so thank you
all for that as well as to the administration and
my colleagues in terms of providers and survivors
in working to end domestic violence. So I'm one of
the co-chairs Nathaniel Fields of the coalition,
the DV Coalition as well as the President of Urban
Resource Institute, one of the largest domestic
violence providers in New York City. We provide
services to 14 hundred to 2,000 survivors of
domestic violence every year. And we've heard from
the, quite a few of you around the statistics

1
2 around domestic violence. So in amending my
3 comments I really want to work to put a face on
4 domestic violence. And one way we want to be able
5 to do this is to really URI in doing, putting a
6 face on domestic violence in October we moved to
7 increasing awareness by a video campaign. And what
8 we want to do is share one of those videos from a
9 perspective of a survivor. So if we can just show
10 that real quick.

11 [video plays in the background]

12 NATHANIEL FIELDS: Well like Tete [sp?]
13 many more women, children, and men are coming
14 forward to tell their story, to put a face on
15 domestic violence because of statistics the data
16 doesn't always come alive. One in four women will
17 be a victim of domestic violence. Two out of every
18 three women will be murdered as a result of
19 domestic violence. The New York City hotline
20 received over 100 thousand calls to domestic
21 violence hotline. And so our goal is to put a face
22 on domestic violence so we thank Tete for sharing
23 this. You know Jennifer White Reed who's going to
24 speak quickly and I toured one of our domestic
25 violence site because of elected official in her

1 district she wanted to see the work that we do. She
2 wanted to get a better understanding of domestic
3 violence. And in that we were talking in 20 to 25
4 survivors and, and when we talk about the statistic
5 race, class, and gender from a class perspective as
6 we started talking one in four I was very surprised
7 that this elected official started to talk her own
8 domestic violence. And so we saw the reality, how
9 horrific even though she's an elected official it
10 sort of continues to look at class issues. As we
11 continue to talk about two and three women who are
12 survivors of domestic violence. A woman in the back
13 of the room raised their hand and said I, I wanted
14 to share something with you. And she said yes two
15 in three women were murdered or will be murdered in
16 New York City as a result of domestic violence.
17 And, and at that point she raised a picture of this
18 beautiful young lady who was her sister who had her
19 beautiful smile, radiant personality, loved people,
20 and people loved her. She was one of those 13 women
21 who were killed in Queens last year, a little, or
22 less than a year ago. And while this is a shocking
23 picture and I'm going to ask them not to film it
24 just to show to the council this is how they found
25

1 her. So we are doing a lot and Jennifer is going to
2 talk about URI in a response to domestic violence
3 and... recommendations. URI's been doing this work
4 for over 30 years. We have been around since the
5 HSP and Advantage and other days and looking at
6 data as well as talking to survivors about a
7 community response to domestic violence. I'll let
8 Jennifer just talk for a second about some of the
9 work we do at URI.
10

11 JENNIFER WHITE-REED: Good afternoon
12 Committee Chairs and committee members. My name is
13 Jennifer White-Reed. I'm the vice president of
14 domestic violence programs at Urban Resource
15 Institute. I want to thank you for this opportunity
16 to share about Domestic Violence Shelters and the
17 innovative responses to domestic violence that
18 saves lives. The Urban Resource Institute URI is
19 the second largest provider of domestic violence
20 shelter services in New York City with a total of
21 438 beds and four domestic violence shelter
22 programs in Brooklyn and Manhattan. Each year URI
23 provides a physical sanctuary, counselling,
24 individualized case management, housing assistance,
25 legal services, and other supportive programs to

1 approximately 14 hundred adults and children to
2 help them recover from trauma and heal. A domestic
3 violence shelter is more than just a physical
4 building. Domestic violence shelters are a
5 temporary home where survivors can connect with
6 vital lifesaving resources and develop plans that
7 they will help, that will help them and their
8 children increase safety and move forward with
9 their lives. In order to address the unique needs
10 of domestic violence victims URI developed
11 innovative programs in shelter that reduce barriers
12 to safety. We know from research that children who
13 are exposed to domestic violence face increased
14 risk and may suffer a range of severe and lasting
15 effects. Recognizing that children represent the
16 majority of the clients we serve URI provides
17 specialized onsite services to children including
18 child therapy, child care, and recreational and
19 educational programs in partnership with the
20 Department of Education. Economic abuse is very
21 much a part of the cycle of violence that domestic
22 violence victims face particularly in New York City
23 where the cost of living is extremely high.
24 Domestic violence victims often stay in an abusive
25

1 relationship because they are unable to pay their
2 rent without the income the abuser contributes.
3 Understanding that 98 percent of victims of
4 domestic violence experience economic abuse. URI
5 developed the working internship network when a
6 career readiness program that offers job training
7 and a paid internship and financial literacy
8 education to survivors to help them transition into
9 the workforce. Lastly last year we launched URI
10 PALS, URI's People and Animals Living Safely, a
11 program to address the needs of families with pets
12 impacted by domestic violence. Up to 48 percent of
13 domestic violence victims stay in abusive situation
14 because they do not want to leave their pet behind.
15 As we witnessed during hurricane Katrina and super
16 storm Sandy pets are very important members of the
17 family. And no one should have to make the
18 impossible decision to leave their pets behind
19 during times of crisis. URI PALS is the first and
20 only domestic violence shelter, I'm sorry domestic
21 violence co-sheltering program in New York City
22 that allows the entire family; adult, child, and
23 pet to be safe together. Nat Fields will continue
24 the conversation and ask for your support in order
25

1 to help URI and other advocates in the community
2 remove barriers for domestic violence victims
3 seeking safety from their abusers.

4
5 NATHANIEL FIELDS: So just real fast in
6 the sake of time my colleagues are going to talk
7 about housing. In terms of firm [sic]
8 recommendation so much has been done. This has been
9 an administration and a council who is really not
10 just talk about domestic violence but through
11 behavior as really evidence of desire to want to
12 reduce and ultimately eliminate domestic violence.
13 Some things still need to be done. When we start to
14 look at over 100 thousand calls to the domestic
15 violence hotline we realize that probably
16 approximately about a third of those individuals
17 calling are singles. And in, those singles probably
18 will not get into shelter. The New York City DV
19 shelter system was not built to really accommodate
20 singles. It's an unmet need that's been going on
21 for many many years often under the... of singles are
22 individuals from LGBTQ population as well as the
23 elderly. So one of the things we were talking to
24 the administration about is really to start to move
25 forward and create opportunities for individuals

1 who are victims of domestic violence who present as
2 single to have a place to go. And lastly we want to
3 talk a little bit about is this community response
4 to domestic violence. So much good work has taken
5 place but when you know that two out of every three
6 women will be killed this year more has to be done.
7 And we don't want to work in isolation. We need the
8 mayor's office, we need the city council, we need
9 the provider community, we need survivors, we need
10 the NFL to come under one tent and talk about all
11 the good work that has been done but also to look
12 at what still needs to be done. So one of the
13 things we're calling for is a community response to
14 domestic violence, a true summit to really build on
15 all that has been done, look at the data, and talk
16 about what needs to be done. Thank you for your
17 time and attention today.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you all for
20 your testimony. And as you stated really bringing
21 the reality behind the numbers and the statistics
22 to a clear understanding for us. Wanted to... it was
23 a question that I asked the administration. And Ms.
24 Williams I apologize for bringing this further
25 into, into the light in that way. Do you understand

1
2 what had been at this point the ramifications
3 behind your case in terms of the, the, your partner
4 that assaulted you. Do you understand where his
5 case lies in the system in terms of what form of
6 legal action, penalties, punishment, do you have an
7 understanding of that from your experiences in the
8 system?

9 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Well the reason I was
10 able to get an understanding is as I stated in my
11 testimony I am a lobbyist, I own a lobbying firm.
12 As a result of that initially when my domestic
13 violence dispute took place because of humility,
14 shame, I didn't call any of my connections. I was
15 embarrassed.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

17 JACKIE WILLIAMS: But as I continued,
18 when I went through the center I was so shocked by
19 the treatment after I continued to watch this
20 process and lack of response and follow-up and I
21 got to chase the people down and get a appointment.
22 After they called and offered me the appointment I
23 get there I have to wait a hour and a half. They
24 give me a appointment for 11:00.

25 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Where is this?

1
2 JACKIE WILLIAMS: The, the Justice
3 Center.

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

5 JACKIE WILLIAMS: They call me.

6 Apparently, I figured out that once you did the
7 arrest then it turn after the arrest takes place
8 they make you come and look through the little
9 window like law and order and make sure that the
10 person is who they say he is. You say yes. They
11 begin the process of you know arresting that
12 individual. Then in turn, after that person is
13 arrested then off, on, my incident happened on
14 January 8th. I reported it on the 9th. On, he was
15 arrested on the 11th. On the 17th I get a phone call
16 from the Justice Center. And this woman calls me up
17 hi my name is Umpty Scrunch and I'm your domestic
18 violence councilor, oh no I'm your councilor
19 calling from the justice center. I said well what
20 kind of counsellor are you? And, because I didn't
21 know if she meant council like legal or counsellor
22 like therapist. And she was like oh I'm here to
23 provide you what your options are as a result of
24 your recent experience. And I said okay. And she's
25 like well can I give you an appointment. I was like

1
2 yes, I definitely want to come hear what you have
3 to say. She gave me the appointment of the 17th of
4 January. I'm like great I'll be there, 17th at
5 11:00. You know I know our government works since I
6 do what I do for a living I know to be there half
7 an hour early. Come with your paperwork done. You
8 know get ready to have some patience. So I asked
9 her while I'm on the call. I said can I have
10 something to, since you're going to council me and
11 provide me advice in council can you email me
12 something so I can read so I can have a prepared
13 and informed discussion about the choices that I
14 choose when we sit down and talk, oh we don't do
15 that. I was like excuse me, well how am I supposed
16 to have an intelligent discussion with you about
17 the best means of helping me with my situation if I
18 don't know if I can't read with you in advance.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

20 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Instead I got to sit
21 in your desk under duress and hurry up and make a
22 decision what I want to do after I been
23 traumatized, I didn't understand that. In addition
24 to that I hadn't received my order of protection
25 which confused me. I literally lived a, you could

1
2 throw a rock from the Justice Center which is on
3 Jay Street to where I lived at that time which is
4 the old Board of Ed. Literally you can do snail
5 mail and it'd get there in half a day. I still
6 didn't understand why I had not received my order
7 of protection. And so I said to her can you get me
8 my order of protection before I come and see you?
9 Oh no we can't do that. I was like what I'm
10 confused, can you email it to me, oh we don't do
11 email, I said I'm confused wait it's 2014.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

13 JACKIE WILLIAMS: You mean we can't use
14 email communication and I'm authorizing you to send
15 it to me.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

17 JACKIE WILLIAMS: So you're not
18 violating my privacy rights because I'm asking you
19 to send it to me so what would be the reason that I
20 can't get it.

21 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: right.

22 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Well I'm going to do
23 you a favor, I'll send it to you but that's not
24 what we do. I said okay.

25 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wow.

1
2 JACKIE WILLIAMS: So you know it was, it
3 was some interesting communication, very
4 interesting communication.

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And let me ask you
6 did you, have you been alerted throughout the
7 process in terms of, because I wanted to follow-up
8 with Nat on that, were you, just like the video
9 that we saw the young woman and the experience that
10 she had where is that gentleman what has happened
11 to him and the very challenging and beyond
12 disturbing photograph what happened to the person
13 that did that to that woman? [cross-talk]

14 JACKIE WILLIAMS: For me...

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: What happened in
16 your case... [cross-talk]

17 JACKIE WILLIAMS: For me if I didn't
18 have the connections I have and I went around the
19 system and I finally decided to do it because I
20 wanted to know, even though I signed up for
21 WebCrim, Crims. I learned that's a legal system
22 that the state of New York has that tells you and
23 tracks cases and case numbers based on people who
24 are going through the court system. I learned about
25 this doing my own research. I felt like I was my

1
2 own lobbyist in this case. So WebCrim, I tracked
3 it to, through that but had I not...

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

5 JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...made a phone call to
6 a friend of a friend to call somebody that's
7 connected at a district attorney's office I
8 wouldn't know where the case was and I just found
9 out on Friday. And I think I found out because I
10 made it clear that I was coming here to testify
11 today.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Nat can
13 you, I'm sorry Mr. Fields can you talk, I feel like
14 we're old friends now... can you talk to us a bit
15 about what happens and what does your organization
16 do in terms of the backend of the batterer? Where
17 does your agency or organization rather, where does
18 it connect with the batterer.

19 NATHANIEL FIELDS: Jennifer, as attorney
20 she oversees our legal programs so maybe she can
21 talk a little bit about that. But in terms of the,
22 the first question in terms of what happened to the
23 women who was killed and the person who killed her
24 her sister who was a blogger she talks openly about
25 domestic violence. She talks about her own

1
2 experience in terms of intergenerational abuse. In
3 this case this was a case that went to the media in
4 terms of the New York Times they were identified,
5 arrested, and convicted of murder. So the, the, the
6 person is incarcerated.

7 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: You think that has a
8 lot to do with the fact that the New York Times got
9 involved and made this a highly visible case
10 because what we're seeing in these instances here
11 is unless you're highly connected, unless you have
12 the resources to gain the attention of the New York
13 Times that a lot of these cases may not make it to
14 closure and justice in the way that it should.

15 NATHANIEL FIELDS: Listen I, I think
16 more needs to be done but I must say a lot of
17 people won't go to the criminal justice system for
18 a variety of reasons, cultural reasons, a lot of
19 other factors. But the police department has been
20 doing a better job over time. We've been training
21 and working with the police department to
22 understand domestic violence a lot more. There's
23 been more accountability. We've looked at laws
24 together to implement. It's not absolute and that's
25 why you hear me calling for a summit to do even

1 more. Look at the data, look, talk to survivors and
2 talk about what needs to be done to move forward. A
3 lot has been done but when two women out of every
4 three are being, who are killed as a result of
5 domestic violence much more needs to be done. But
6 Jennifer?

8 JENNIFER WHITE-REED: I'll just add that
9 URI services are primarily services for victims of
10 domestic violence. And so we don't have services
11 for batterers. However in our legal services
12 program which offers education with respect to
13 family law issues, criminal justice issues,
14 immigration often times we have a window into
15 what's happening with the abuser. And so our
16 clients who openly share about family court
17 proceedings or visitation matters or the fact that
18 the abuser was incarcerated that is the information
19 that we get. We as an organization however have
20 decided to invest a little more time and energy
21 into a training staff around making clients feel
22 comfortable talking about abusers because the
23 reality is when you have a child with someone that
24 relationship does not end correct?

25 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Right.

1
2 JENNIFER WHITE-REED: So we want to have
3 survivors in shelter feel comfortable saying what
4 their concerns are, if they're thinking about going
5 back, to openly talk about that relationship with
6 the abuser so that down the road if there is an
7 opportunity for the organization like URI to offer
8 some type of batterers intervention services that
9 is something that we might explore in the future.

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Council
11 Member Lancman has some additional follow-up
12 questions.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Thank you. And
14 thank you very much for your, for your testimony.
15 It was very courageous of you to share that with
16 us. I just, in your testimony you had, you had used
17 the word councilor and, and then in response to a
18 question you, you clarified a little bit. So just
19 so I understand were these, were these councilors
20 lawyers who were, who were, who were helping you or
21 were these more like a social worker? [cross-talk]

22 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Well that's what,
23 that's what made me question it.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: So what, what did
25 you...

1
2 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Well when I... [cross-
3 talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...end up... [cross-
5 talk]

6 JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...show, well when I
7 showed up on the 17th for this appointment I never
8 got to see her because I sat there for a hour and a
9 half and nobody walked out and said well she's
10 backed up, she has something to do, she's stuck in
11 court, she jumped off a roof and she's not coming
12 back in 'till tomorrow, nothing. So of course
13 because I run a business and I have things to do I
14 had to leave and I left my business card. So that
15 appointment, remember this appointment is supposed
16 to be to give me counseling. Didn't get rescheduled
17 again until January 31st. So with that being said
18 when I showed up on the 31st that's when I was of,
19 able to find out that she was a, a MSW.

20 [background comments]

21 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Right. And it, it was,
22 it was, and I have to say the communication was
23 challenging because her, she had a very thick
24 accent. And I think, I want to say it was Russian
25 or some form of European accent so it was very

1 challenging for me to understand her so I had to
2 have a different level of patience so I can consume
3 and hear and process what she had to provide for
4 me.
5

6 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: While you were at
7 the Family Justice Center were you ever asked if
8 you had any, any legal services needs. And if so
9 were, were they... [cross-talk]

10 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Well... [cross-talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...attended to?

12 JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...she did ask me that
13 but I said since it had been January 31st and my
14 incident happened the first weekend January,
15 between the time I took care of those matters. And
16 I'm fortunate. I have the money to do that unlike
17 it may... that's why I'm testifying today because
18 there's a lot of women that have nowhere near the
19 resources or access or in, in education and
20 resources that I had. I was fortunate enough to be
21 able to go and get those services. So by the time
22 she asked me they were useless.

23 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: At any point did,
24 was there an opportunity for you to, to fill out
25

1
2 any kind of survey or, or evaluations to your
3 satisfaction with... [cross-talk]

4 JACKIE WILLIAMS: No and...

5 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...services?

6 JACKIE WILLIAMS: No and more
7 importantly when you go to the Justice Center it's
8 this process you go in, there is no signage to tell
9 you to stand here or sit there and you walk up and
10 you had two ladies at the front desk. And they look
11 at you and I say, you say your name... you say your
12 name and I'm like I have an appointment with Umpty
13 Scrunch and they say yes. And then the next thing
14 you know I see a clipboard that it's obvious that
15 I'm going to have to fill this paperwork out. I
16 know I'm going to have to do it because I can read.
17 And I'm like oh can I fill this out while I'm
18 waiting, no you can't do that. I'm like okay, I'ma
19 [sic] leave it there.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Well I don't know
21 if that's a good procedure or not a good procedure
22 but... [cross-talk]

23 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Right but, but...
24 [cross-talk]

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CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...were they, were they, were they rude to you... [cross-talk]

JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...nobody asked me... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...were they, they were discourteous... [cross-talk]

JACKIE WILLIAMS: No, nobody... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...dealt with you?

JACKIE WILLIAMS: Nobody asked you to fill out a survey. That's why I made one of the recommendations in my testimony where's the follow-up.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right.

JACKIE WILLIAMS: Where is the follow-up? My incident happened in January. I have yet to receive a phone call to say hey listen, how's that going for you, do you continue to need us, here's a letter or an email or a note, something.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right. And in terms of you were getting the order of protection I'm curious did anyone from the DA's office explain to you what the order of protection was, what it's

1
2 scope was, how you would get it, a physical copy or
3 were you left in the dark about that?

4 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Nobody discussed that.

5 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Did you ever get a
6 copy of your... [cross-talk]

7 JACKIE WILLIAMS: I finally did, yeah.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Did you get it in
9 the mail?

10 JACKIE WILLIAMS: No I got the one, I
11 got an email that I asked for.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Alright. [cross-
13 talk] Do you remember the day that you got it?

14 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Oh no not off the top
15 of my head but I'm sure I could pull my records...
16 the emails... [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: No that's alright.

18 JACKIE WILLIAMS: But no I wasn't, I
19 wasn't given an education on my, a full blown
20 education. And had I not been a pushy aggressive
21 assertive lobbyist to get what I already have the
22 information I have I wouldn't have received it you
23 know. And I'm pretty astute you know so I was a bit
24 shocked. I don't know anything about the criminal
25 system. I make it my business not to know. I play

1
2 good citizen. I served my country. I'm not trying
3 to be friends with them at all, that's not a good
4 thing. So with that being said you know you should
5 be educated. And I know victim, other victims or
6 people or survivors if you will that go through
7 this they have children, they have household
8 situations, they have employment situations. So it,
9 I couldn't, there's no way I can imagine what they
10 go through. I'm very very blessed.

11 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right... [cross-
12 talk]

13 JACKIE WILLIAMS: And this was
14 traumatizing for me. So god help them. So I'm
15 hoping that today sitting here and going through
16 this process and exposing myself like a big sore
17 helps and you guys take heed to some of the things
18 that I've shared with you is some of these basic
19 recommendations that could be done one two three.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: But I just want
21 you to know I find it to very helpful, I mean first
22 we're going to put in a, a bill requiring OCDV to
23 conduct surveys of the clients that are served and,
24 and report back to the council on, on the level of
25 satisfaction. And the sense that people have, the

1 service that they're getting but we're also as part
2 of my...

3
4 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Mm-hmm.

5 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...my new committee
6 going to be touring the Family Justice Centers. And
7 I was, definitely have an, an eye out for the...
8 [cross-talk]

9 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Well can't... [cross-
10 talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...kinds of things
12 you're talking about.

13 JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...you make sure they
14 don't know you're coming? So it can, and you, not
15 put on a suit and you're, and, and you, and maybe a
16 staffer go and they not know that you're showing up
17 so you can see something for real and they not do
18 dog and pony for you because you are who you are
19 and because they have to respect you at the level
20 that they have to respect you because of what, the
21 power you bring to the table? I want, you need to
22 see the, see it for what it is. And you, they can't
23 see it if you look like who you look like every
24 day.

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CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Well you don't
know how I look like... [cross-talk]

JACKIE WILLIAMS: Well I mean in, in a
suit and tie... [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: This is a good
day, you should have seen me yesterday.

JACKIE WILLIAMS: You know what I mean...

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: I do.

JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...when I say that. I
mean no disrespect when I say it.

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right.

JACKIE WILLIAMS: And can I make a,
another recommendation that I did not write down?

CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Sure.

JACKIE WILLIAMS: Another way in terms
of I think it would be creative to have a
partnership between like CUNY and the Justice
Centers and the MSW program. And maybe rotate some
of the front desk people out where maybe that's
part of their clinical work, you know part of the
CUNY system to work on the front lines of some of
these justice centers. Because I felt the behavior
of the staff was rather desensitized because
they're in there. And I commend them for wanting to

1
2 work in that industry but after a while how many
3 beatings can you hear about, how much tragedy can
4 you hear about... [cross-talk]

5 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: I, I mentioned to
6 the Commissioner earlier that I was in family court
7 this week and the judge that I was observing, she
8 had so much empathy and such a, a warm dialogue
9 with the litigants and afterwards had a change to,
10 to say to her I don't know how you do it every day.
11 So you know in order to do that job well you do
12 have to have the patience of a, of a saint and not
13 everybody does. That's not an excuse..

14 JACKIE WILLIAMS: No it's not.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...but it's
16 something that I'm going to be inquiring about.

17 JACKIE WILLIAMS: It's something to..
18 [cross-talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Inquiring about.

20 JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...take into
21 consideration... [cross-talk]

22 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Absolutely.

23 JACKIE WILLIAMS: ...and a vehicle to
24 partner with a preexisting city institution that
25 you know that we should be partnering with all day.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Right. Can I just
3 ask Ms. White-Reed a, a question. The legal
4 services that you, you provide, do you provide them
5 in the Family Justice Centers or this is separate?

6 JENNIFER WHITE-REED: We don't. We
7 don't. We have a dedicated attorney who works with
8 our clients in shelter. So we do have a partnership
9 the Family Justice Center where we have a case
10 manager who's on site at the Manhattan Family
11 Justice Center. But the legal services project is a
12 limited project for the clients within our shelters
13 because we recognize that clients who come into
14 domestic violence shelters often come with complex
15 legal needs and if they are concerned that they
16 might lose custody of their children or they're
17 undocumented and they're not aware of their legal
18 remedies within the first couple of days, within
19 the first ten days there might be a reason why
20 someone would... [cross-talk]

21 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: How many, how many
22 lawyers do you have providing them?

23 JENNIFER WHITE-REED: Just one.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Okay. Thank you
25 very much.

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JUDITH CAHEN: I think there has to be an understanding in terms of the Family Justice Center that a lot of social service providers have put a staff and they're not reimbursed by the Family Justice Center. They're under different contracts like crime victims or HRA and they serve in the various shelter, in the various centers delivering services. So, also in the Brooklyn which this young lady went through when you go through you really feel like you're going in... this isn't a criticism it's just... at the Brooklyn DA's office. I mean that's where it's housed so...

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm. Council Member Levin would like to have a follow-up question.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Just, just one quick point. And Ms. Williams thank you very much for your testimony. It's very courageous of you to be here. And thank you, thank you very much for doing this... [cross-talk] I just wanted... is there a member of the administration that's here right now to, to listen to this? Just want to for the record point out that there's no member of the administration

1
2 that was left here to listen to this testimony.
3 Thank you very much.

4 JACKIE WILLIAMS: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you all very
6 much. Thank you very much for your courageous
7 testimonies. This was very powerful and
8 collectively together as a committee and all the
9 perspective chairs your testimony will be taken
10 into consideration for a legislation and many other
11 ideas that we can put forward. We are going to call
12 forward our next panel. Maureen Curtis from Safe
13 Horizon, Paul Feuerstein, oh thank you, Crystal
14 Pedmore [sic], and Jennifer Strachnick [sic] of
15 Covenant House New York. And I apologize as a new
16 Council Member I'm still very bad at implementing
17 the time constraints. So I know they will talk
18 about me afterwards so we're going to try to adhere
19 to the time limit as best as possible and then you
20 do follow-up questions. So thank you very much and
21 you can begin. A precedent was set from left 'till
22 right. So if you would like to begin that would be
23 fantastic, thank you.

24 JENNIFER STRACHNICK: [off mic] Thank
25 you. Good afternoon. My name is... [on mic] Okay.

1 Good afternoon. My name is Jennifer Strachnick. I
2 work in the Advocacy and Legal Department at
3 Covenant House New York. I would like to thank the
4 Committees on General Welfare, Women's Issues, and
5 Courts and Legal Services for the opportunity to
6 testify today on Intro number 361 specifically that
7 which we provide a presumption of eligibility for
8 applicants exiting runaway and homeless youth DYCD
9 programs into the shelter system. I have submitted
10 written testimony but, testimony but due to the
11 time I will try to summarize. Covenant House New
12 York is the nation's largest privately funded non-
13 profit adolescent care agency serving homeless
14 runaway and at risk youth. Many of the youth we do
15 serve grew up in homes witnessing domestic violence
16 or have been victims of intimate partner violence
17 themselves which is one reason many of our young
18 people become homeless in the first place. So we
19 are in favor of Intro number 361 providing this
20 presumption of eligibility both for applicants
21 exiting HRA domestic violence shelters and DYCD
22 runaway homeless youth shelters.. [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I'm sorry to, can we
25 keep the volume noise down in the room so that I

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can hear the testimony as clearly as possible?
Thank you.

JENNIFER STRACHNICK: Thank you. Since Covenant House is a runaway homeless youth shelter I will focus my testimony on the eligibility of young mothers and their children and pregnant young women attempting to access shelter through PATH, the DHS Family Intake Center. So in order to be found eligible for shelter through PATH applicants are required to provide a two year housing history listing the address of each residence and prove that they live there, that it is up to the applicant to demonstrate the family can no longer reside at each residence providing evidence. This is unduly burdensome for the young mothers and pregnant women we serve. Many have moved from place to place, stayed with family, friends... around for brief periods of time. And the documentation they must gather is often voluminous. It's easily misplaced because they are without a, a stable place to reside. And even when young women have assistance gathering this documentation as they do at covenant house it's still difficult to obtain all of the documentation that DHS requires. It's

1 particularly difficult to obtain documentation when
2 young mothers have stayed with family or friends in
3 NYCHA apartments because NYCHA will only provide
4 documentation to the primary tenant of that
5 apartment. So if the primary tenant refuses to
6 comply as is very often the case with our young
7 people it is impossible for the applicant to obtain
8 that documentation. The second major barrier to DHS
9 eligibility for the young people we serve is just
10 an adamant refusal of some family members to allow
11 the youth to return to the residence. For example a
12 few weeks ago a young woman who I will call Maggie
13 came to my office stating she had been denied by
14 DHS because in their determination she could return
15 to live with her mother. She had not lived with,
16 seen, or spoken to her mother since she was kicked
17 out of her home along with her son in January of
18 2013. So when I called the mother to assess the
19 situation to find out what was possible the mother
20 was very aggressive to me, stated Maggie absolutely
21 could not return and refused to provide any
22 documentation explaining her reasons why. And she
23 expressed no interest in Maggie or her son. Shortly
24 after arriving at Covenant House Maggie turned 21
25

1 so she aged out of runaway and homeless youth
2 services. She returned to PATH was denied again. I
3 accompanied Maggie to the fair hearing she
4 requested and the DHS attorney indicated that
5 Maggie's mother had refused to cooperate with DHS
6 personnel or allow them to investigate. But since
7 there was no proof that Maggie could not live there
8 she was found ineligible for shelter. She's
9 currently awaiting the fair hearing decision but
10 for now Maggie and her child are sneaking into a
11 NYCHA apartment to stay with a friend therefore
12 jeopardizing this friend's housing with NYCHA. But
13 the reality is Maggie has nowhere else to go except
14 the street at this point. And RHY providers,
15 Runaway Homeless Youth providers are required by
16 New York state law to work toward reunifying youth
17 with families when appropriate. We also explore the
18 possibility of reunifying youth with other
19 appropriate supportive adults outside of their
20 families. So RHY providers are already trying to
21 find any appropriate placement for these young
22 people. When reunification is not possible we make
23 referrals to transitional living and other
24 supportive housing programs. Unfortunately there
25

1 are far fewer beds at these programs than there are
2 young women in need. Beds are even more limited for
3 young mothers who have more than one child. And
4 often there's a considerable waiting period for
5 beds to become available. It should be noted that
6 youth can only remain in runaway and homeless youth
7 programs for a maximum of 30 days with the
8 possibility of a 30 day extension for a maximum of
9 60 days under New York state law. So in conclusion
10 we urge the city council to pass Intro number 361
11 waiving this eligibility determination process for
12 youth leaving DYCD runaway homeless youth shelters.
13 And we appreciate Commissioner Banks' remarks
14 regarding the forthcoming collaboration between DHS
15 and RHA but this legislation still is necessary to
16 ensure that young people in DYCD RHY programs do
17 not need to go through a second duplicative
18 eligibility determination when seeking shelter. And
19 we would... [cross-talk]

20
21 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you.

22 JENNIFER STRACHNICK: ...be happy to work
23 with DHS to provide a referral process. Thank you
24 for the opportunity.

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much
3 for your testimony. Thank you.

4 CRYSTAL PADMORE: Good afternoon. Thank
5 you for allowing me to testify today. My name is
6 Crystal Padmore and I work for Volunteers of
7 America. We house victims of domestic violence. As
8 families enter our domestic violence shelters due
9 to fleeing from imminent danger the focus quickly
10 becomes assessing the risk and ensuring the
11 family's safety while in shelter. Efforts are
12 immediately made to develop a universal and
13 workable safety plan the family can utilize when
14 faced with adversity or trouble situation. Families
15 are briefed on the safety measures and... excuse me
16 enter into a domestic violence shelter such as
17 ensuring the physical address of the building is
18 never disclosed and only a PO box is utilized for
19 mail. Such and others purposes of concerns and
20 family may be found by the abuser. Families are
21 informed... identify safe places within the community
22 or drop off pick up and given alternatives for
23 transportation and get common means are unsafe as
24 well as encouraged to ensure that they're aware of
25 their surroundings and immediately report any

1 suspicious or being followed or tracked by, back to
2 the shelter. During the shelter stay families are
3 often and encouraged to stay in... of onsite and
4 offsite services to ease transition and allow
5 parents to focus on developing safety plans, needs
6 assessments, future planning, and share imperative
7 information with the assigned staff. Many of the
8 shelter offers onsite child care and recreation
9 services. While this services is an avenue to aid a
10 parent in their chill, with their children it also
11 provides a learning environment for the child or
12 the children. While we... for the trauma for the
13 family as a whole. Through active development or
14 needs assessment by the case manager and shelter
15 team residents are offered services such an onsite
16 parenting and domestic violence education.
17 Substance abuse support group clinical services in,
18 in, employment, and aftercare services, and
19 assistance with children's educational needs.
20 Residents are immediately supported with public
21 assistance, housing referrals, and medical needs.
22 Should any of those be outstanding upon their
23 admission. The shelter staff goes through great
24 lengths to protect resident information and
25

1 preserve safety. Some areas return to shelter with...
2
3 the importance of creating and maintaining an
4 ongoing safe environment for the families. Includes
5 the shelter's 24 hour seven day staffing,
6 surveillance cameras at each of the confidential
7 locations. Use of PO boxes for any and all
8 correspondents and transportation services upon
9 arrival. In addition to the above staff encourage
10 all residents who report any concerns related to
11 the domestic violence to change their cell phone
12 numbers, deactivate social media accounts, ensure
13 GPS services are not enabled, remain out of the
14 identified unsafe boroughs, and to remain conscious
15 of their surroundings and who to disclose your
16 personal information to. Upon admission residents
17 are asked to provide an emergency contact should
18 the staff be unable to locate or contact them in
19 order to create an immediate way to ensure their
20 safety. Residents are encouraged to actively work
21 on discharge planning with their case managers to
22 ensure safe housing can be, once their shelter stay
23 has come to an end. Thank you.

24

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you so very
3 much for your testimony. And now we will hear from
4 Paul Feuerstein.

5 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Close.

6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I did it right the
7 first time.

8 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Yeah that's right,
9 that's okay. [bell chimes] That was quick. Can't,
10 can't we reset the time to three minutes so I get
11 my three minutes of fame here?

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: There we go.

13 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Are we good? You
14 ready? Okay. I'm Paul Feuerstein. I'm the
15 President/CEO of Barrier Free Living. We operate
16 the largest domestic violence intervention program
17 for victims with disabilities in the United States.
18 We have a, a shelter that is totally accessible
19 with 44 apartments. We have served people from 40
20 states in the commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Though
21 most of the people we serve are from New York City.
22 And we have a community based domestic violence
23 program. I'm going to talk just a little bit about
24 barriers that we face. One of the major barriers
25 that comes up for women with disabilities and that

1 is the number one issue with women with
2 disabilities in national surveys from 1980s 'till
3 now that have been done, is domestic abuse is the
4 threat that they will lose their children if they
5 report abuse. And the threat is very real. National
6 Council and Disability in 2012 put out a report to
7 the president called Rocking the Cradle talking
8 about the bias against parents with disabilities in
9 the child welfare system.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Can you define and
12 talk about how you define disabilities?

13 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Disability can be
14 anything from someone who is deaf, someone who is
15 blind, someone who's mobility impaired, a
16 developmental disability, cerebral palsy, muscular
17 dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, it varies. Some
18 disabilities are the result of domestic violence,
19 of people who have become wheelchair users because
20 they've been thrown out of windows, of individuals
21 who have traumatic brain injury because intimate
22 partners tend to assault the upper part of the head
23 in a CDC study that was done of head assaults where
24 strangers hit people in the jaw and that affects
25 cognition, affects sight, affects hearing. So it,

1 there's a variety of disabilities that can be under
2 that particular piece. What has happened and still
3 happening today, I just check with the director of
4 my community based program, is that the fault
5 situation is if someone reports domestic violence
6 and reports that their children have witnessed
7 domestic violence, the default if the mother has
8 the disability is to take the children and put them
9 in foster care for failure to protect. There's an
10 assumption made that that woman doesn't have the
11 ability to take care of their kids. So that's a
12 very real threat. And there needs to be supports
13 put in place beyond shelter. There was a summit on
14 permanent housing and domestic violence a number of
15 years ago. The, the results of that summit were
16 never released by the Bloomberg Administration. But
17 one of the things that was part of that was that we
18 should have 10 projects in supportive housing
19 specifically for domestic violence survivors. It
20 wasn't identified with a disability that didn't
21 bear that stigma... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Say that again.

24 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: 10 projects...

25 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

1
2 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: ...in supportive housing
3 for domestic violence survivors is a separate
4 category. New York New York three added youth aging
5 out on foster care which is not a disability it's a
6 life circumstance. What we're advocating, not only
7 the residential coalition but the gender justice
8 task force of the city is that there be a category
9 in New York New York four for survivors of domestic
10 violence. Take away the stigma. The other piece...

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

12 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: If I may is... [cross-
13 talk] is the need for more campaigns that are
14 accessible to everyone. Most of the campaigns that
15 the council has funded have been subway campaigns.
16 Most of our people don't get into subways.

17 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm.

18 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: Having bus campaigns
19 is critical because if you've been on a city bus
20 recently you've probably seen a wheelchair user. If
21 you've been on a subway probably not. We advocated
22 that there be a campaign in Access-A-Ride busses
23 because we're part of a building bridges elder care
24 elder abuse domestic violence taskforce. And
25 Access-A-Ride is used by so many where, that need

1 access to that information. But what we got from
2 the MTA was a dogmatic refusal to have any kind of
3 notification about domestic violence services or
4 elder abuse services in Access-A-Ride where so many
5 people travel.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much.
8 Thank you. Our next testimony Mauree?

9 MAUREEN CURTIS: Maureen yes, hi.

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Maureen Curtis.

11 MAUREEN CURTIS: Maureen Curtis I...

12 [cross-talk]

13 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yes.

14 MAUREEN CURTIS: ...work for Safe Horizon.
15 I'm the Associate Vice-president of the Criminal
16 Justice Programs. Safe Horizon is the nation's
17 largest victim services agency and we work with
18 victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child
19 abuse, trafficking, and other crimes. Thank you so
20 much for inviting us here to testify. We're
21 testifying today in support of Intro 361. Safe
22 Horizon operates eight domestic violence shelters
23 throughout the five boroughs of New York City with
24 a total of 725 shelter beds. Last year we provided
25 a safe healing environment for approximately 25

1 hundred adults and children fleeing immediate
2 danger. Prior to entering an HRA domestic violence
3 shelter individuals are screened and assessed by
4 Safe Horizon's 24 hour domestic violence hotline or
5 by NoVA to determine their eligibility. Our clients
6 enter domestic violence shelters to protect
7 themselves and their families from ongoing threats
8 of abuse. For many these shelters are a place of
9 last resort. Unlike the Department of Homeless
10 Services shelter system domestic violence shelters
11 offer limited stays. For emergency shelters there's
12 a maximum of 180 days. It's 90 days with the
13 possibility of an extension of another 90 days. A
14 limited number of families have the opportunity to
15 transition to a domestic violence tier two shelter
16 where they may be able to stay another six to 12
17 months. The need for domestic violence tier two
18 shelter spaces far outweighs the available spaces.
19 For the majority of families who are unable to
20 obtain affordable housing during their relatively
21 short stay with us the next step on their journey
22 will be to enter the DHS homeless system. Currently
23 this means that families pack up all of their
24 belongings and bring them along with their children
25

1 to the PATH intake center in the Bronx. Families
2 must wait at the PATH center while the DHS system
3 considers their eligibility for shelter, a process
4 that can take several days or longer and then
5 locates a placement. School age children will
6 likely miss class as all children entering shelter
7 with their parents must accompany them to the PATH.
8 After being assessed at PATH they are eventually
9 given a new shelter placement and once again loved
10 to a new location. We believe this is
11 administratively inefficient, physically difficult
12 for families, and often destabilizing and re-
13 traumatizing as they have already been thoroughly
14 screened by the domestic violence shelters, a
15 presumption of eligibility for the homeless shelter
16 system would allow families to move fore seamlessly
17 from their DV shelter to the appropriate tier two
18 homeless shelter or an adult shelter for clients
19 without children. Safe Horizon Street Work Project
20 provides a range of services to homeless youth who
21 face violence and exploitations on the streets. We
22 operate two drop in centers for homeless youth a 24
23 bed youth shelter and conduct nighttime street
24 outreach to engage homeless youth who are on the
25

1 street. Our councilors and social workers advocate
2 daily for young people who have timed out of their
3 short stays, typically 30 days, allowed in youth
4 shelters or who at age 21 age out of these
5 facilities and find themselves applying for shelter
6 in municipal systems. Many of our clients see the
7 assessment period in the municipal shelter function
8 first and foremost as a diversionary mechanism.
9 Without another option young people find themselves
10 increasingly immersed in unsafe situations with
11 family they had previously fled or increasingly
12 engaged in the survival economy where trading sex
13 for a place to stay or small amounts of money is
14 common. With increased involvement in the survival
15 economy comes increased drug involvement, higher
16 transmission of infectious diseases like HIV and
17 hepatitis C and increased involvement in the
18 criminal justice system, all of which have lifelong
19 consequences. Belleview and Wards Islands, two of
20 the DHS assessment shelters for single men are
21 facility names that often shut down conversations
22 with the young men we work with at the difficult
23 times...
24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: This will have to be
3 your closing paragraph.

4 MAUREEN CURTIS: Sure.

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yes.

6 MAUREEN CURTIS: Okay. Some have
7 experienced assault in these large and at times
8 chaotic shelters or find their environment similar
9 to a detention facility. We believe that seamless
10 transition into adult facilities by youth already
11 known to be homeless by city funded agencies would
12 allow for consistent engagement with these young
13 people and increase their chances as achieving
14 stability and exiting homelessness entirely. Thank
15 you.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much
17 to all of my colleagues, on behalf of all of my
18 colleagues. Just wanted to ask some questions in
19 terms of there's a lot of discussion about youth
20 and wanted to know in the previous testimony from
21 the administration talking about youth programs and
22 about maybe 54 schools throughout New York City.
23 But I know in my district I have 54 schools. So I'm
24 wondering how is it that we're able to, or, or what
25 work is being done and how is it permissible for a

1 lot of this work about domestic violence, how are
2 they reaching young people in their schools about a
3 topic when particularly issues around sex education
4 and many others we're falling by the wayside at.
5 How will conversations with domestic violence
6 happening within our school system.

8 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: I think the RAP
9 program, you already had your time Judy. The RAP
10 program is a program and, and Judy is one of the
11 providers of that. It is in some wonderful things
12 with an unlimited number of schools. At one point
13 we were funded by United Way to work with District
14 75 to see if we could reach children with
15 disabilities to give them safety training about
16 issues of abuse.

17 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

18 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: The Board of Ed at
19 that point allowed us to talk to teachers and
20 allowed us to come to a PTA meeting but wouldn't
21 let us near a child. There's really a need for
22 their to be more education. There's a need for
23 further RAP programs. At one point there was going
24 to be a RAP program in a school for the deaf and we
25 were prepared and we were competing for that

1 because that's our specialty and the principal of
2 the school withdrew his school from that
3 competition. We know that the rate of sexual abuse
4 among deaf people is through the roof. And it's
5 something that needs to be addressed and often
6 times people are afraid to get into the subject.

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wow I, you know
9 it's, it's one of those things. Uh-huh. I'm going
10 to bring you right back up in one moment. Just want
11 to... I'm, I'm, didn't realize or look at it in the
12 same way in terms of individuals that are being
13 abused in terms of the already having difficulties
14 disabilities and that sort of thing. And are those
15 individuals that have disabilities are they more
16 prone to domestic violence than others? It would
17 seem that..

18 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: ...four times the rate
19 both as children and adults.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wow.

21 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: And, and that's you
22 know, and that's the issue. And, and many times
23 within the Criminal Justice System because a
24 colleague of mine named Dix Opsies [sic] who works
25 out of University of Alberta has documented that

1
2 people have gotten stiffer sentences for stealing a
3 CD player out of a car than for sexually abusing a
4 developmentally disabled woman.

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And... go ahead.

6 JUDY: I just want to add because I
7 think that that's a, that's a great question about
8 you know what's happening in the schools. And I
9 think that one of the things that would be really
10 great is if we saw a citywide strategy of working
11 with the Board of Ed in all schools starting to
12 teach at a very young age. There was a great
13 question that was asked earlier what, what programs
14 are out there for, for batterers. And, and the
15 reality is that when you look at domestic violence
16 and you look at so much of the crime in New York
17 City you know it's coming from often times there's
18 violence in the home. I mean we see it, we're in
19 the family courts and we see children that are
20 brought in, arrested for juvenile delinquency
21 crimes and often there's a history of domestic
22 violence. There's also you look at you know
23 criminals is trauma that's been experienced. So
24 reaching children at a very young age to teach them
25 that violence is not the answer about healthy

1 relationships where it's part of the curriculum can
2 really go a long way because to your point while
3 the programs that are, that are in the schools are
4 fabulous. They're not in all the schools and
5 sometimes they're reaching children when they're
6 older and, and you know we all know how quickly we
7 get sit in our ways and what we do or don't do.

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm. And just
10 wanted to... and then I'm going to bring it right to
11 you to close out before I turn it over to my
12 colleagues. What relationship do you all have with
13 the Family Justice Centers in your perspective
14 boroughs where your services are provided?

15 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: We're a citywide
16 program. There are two citywide programs, one for
17 victims with disabilities and one for the LGBT
18 community. We have some staff in every one of the,
19 of the Family Justice Centers.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: You do, okay.

21 PAUL FEUERSTEIN: And because of
22 partnerships we have a bit of funding so that we
23 can afford to have a staff member in Brooklyn one
24 day a week and a staff member now in Queens one day
25 a week. And other than that we have to juggle the

1 staff that we have from other funding sources to be
2 able to stretch them to that point. We would love
3 to be able to have a greater presence in all of the
4 Family Justice Centers because that's one of the
5 core ways in which we found many victims.

7 CRYSTAL PADMORE: We also at Volunteers
8 of America do have a relationship at Family Justice
9 Center. The case managers actually accompany our
10 clients through the center and back. We would
11 really like... actually send someone on site because
12 most of the clients when they do come onsite
13 they're still nervous. They don't want to travel.
14 They're still going through that trauma stage so
15 we're working with them to actually get someone on
16 site.

17 JENNIFER STRACHNICK: At Covenant House
18 we don't have anyone specifically at the Family
19 Justice Centers but we work with a lot of partners;
20 Sanctuary for Families, Safe Horizon, GEMS, other
21 organizations...

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

23 JENNIFER STRACHNICK: ...that are working
24 exclusively more with domestic violence victims so
25 we partner with those organizations.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay. And yes in
3 terms of the, the programs with the youth please.
4 Then I'll turn it over... [cross-talk]

5 UNKNOWN MALE: ...everybody wants to go
6 home.

7 MAUREEN CURTIS: As Commissioner Banks
8 indicated there are three agencies that provide RAP
9 services. Commissioner Door [sp?] had taken RAP out
10 of the, out of his budget and the city council was
11 fantastic in supporting the RAP program for four
12 years and separately funding us. There about 50
13 thousand young people and about I don't, 62
14 academies that used to be schools before the
15 Bloomberg Administration. But the part that's
16 exciting about that program well we're... license
17 social worker is put into an individual school
18 every person in the school must be reached, they're
19 mandated to be reached including individual
20 counselling, group counselling, meeting with
21 parents but they're treated as, they come as guests
22 into the schools. They don't compete with anybody
23 else in the school.

24 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm, mm-hmm.
25

1
2 MAUREEN CURTIS: So that's a really
3 dynamic part. But the part that's most fascinating
4 of the 50 thousand young people about three or four
5 hundred from the different programs go into a
6 summer program peer [sp?] where they're paid
7 minimum wage and their taught to be peer
8 counselors. 90 to 100 percent of those youth go
9 onto two and four year colleges.

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wow.

11 MAUREEN CURTIS: That's compared to a
12 graduation rate it keeps varying, it's in the 60
13 percent. And Betsy Gopound [sic] had advocated that
14 there be a RAP program in it. This is before 07 and
15 the crash.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

17 MAUREEN CURTIS: In every high school in
18 New York City. And we're not only in high schools
19 today. We're in intermediate schools and my agency
20 in particular is also writing a program for younger
21 children.

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you so very
23 much. I'm going to turn it over to Council Member
24 Lancman. Do you have any additional follow-up
25 questions or conclusions?

1
2 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: For Ms. Curtis,
3 Safe Horizon?

4 MAUREEN CURTIS: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Yeah, hi.

6 MAUREEN CURTIS: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: So I, you
8 mentioned the batterer intervention programs or
9 batterer batterer programs. But there's the
10 specific species of, of batterer program called the
11 batterer intervention programs that a judge might
12 send a, a domestic violence defendant to..

13 MAUREEN CURTIS: Mm-hmm.

14 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...either as part of
15 their sentence or maybe some other circumstance. Do
16 you have any experience with those and, and whether
17 or not they're, any of you have any experience with
18 those and whether or not they're effective, could
19 be made better?

20 MAUREEN CURTIS: Well we, we, Safe
21 Horizon did run the largest batterer intervention
22 program called the Domestic Violence Accountability
23 Program that actually, back in the late 1990s I was
24 a supervisor and instructor in that program. And
25 they are court mandated. So at one point it used to

1 be self-refer but they found that they got no men
2 self-referring and it's, it's just men who are
3 referred by court. As far as the success batterers
4 intervention programs basically say that they, they
5 let victims of domestic violence know that they're
6 not successful in changing the participants
7 behavior. Their goal is to hold the participants
8 accountable to the court system. So they, if they,
9 they have to show up, they have to be on time, they
10 have to act in a respectful manner, and if they
11 don't they're referred back to the court. But as
12 far as what they're learning in that class they
13 don't, the, the program says that they do not say
14 whether or not they're successful because we don't
15 know because what we do know is that a man who
16 comes into that class could be presenting as the
17 most respectful person but going home and beating
18 his partner.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: Yeah I'd love to
21 hear your thoughts on that but you have to come up
22 and sit at the table. Because I, I, before you add
23 that I'm not sure I quite understand. I mean the,
24 the programs have to have as their aim to improve
25 and, and make it less likely that that person will,

1 will commit an act of domestic violence again. Are
2 you, are you saying that there's some different aim
3 or just merely we have haven't figured out whether
4 any of those programs are successful or not?
5

6 MAUREEN CURTIS: Those who receive which
7 the domestic violence accountability program a
8 certification from the state they basically are
9 accountable to the court so they're success is
10 whether or not the participant completes the, the
11 26 week program. But they do not, they do not talk
12 about being successful. Now of course there's
13 different batterers intervention programs. This was
14 the premise of the domestic violence accountability
15 program which was the largest batterer intervention
16 program in the country.

17 UNKNOWN MALE: Which is, which is... which
18 is changing. Our field is about three to four
19 decades old and we wanted to have space for the
20 survivors of domestic violence victims and
21 accountability victims with just that... had to be
22 some level of accountability at 10, 26 weeks.

23 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Hmm.

24 UNKNOWN MALE: And that was it. Now
25 we're starting to introduce data and look at what

1 are the outcomes we're seeking. And so there
2 different types of account, different types of
3 batterer intervention programs being born
4 nationally. And what we're looking to do is to look
5 at the outcomes the data and introduce different
6 types of interventions here in New York City. But
7 most are still around using a old outdated
8 accountability measure. And many new ones are
9 starting to introduce some data to support what are
10 the appropriate outcomes and understand that we can
11 as a field start to move forward with ways of
12 working with batterers. Because not all batterers
13 are the same just like when we work with sexual
14 offenders who understand that the severe...

16 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: I, and I want to
17 get to you but...

18 UNKNOWN MALE: Yeah, okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...who's doing this
20 work? And we're going to have someone testify...

21 UNKNOWN MALE: Yeah.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANCMAN: ...I think, I think
23 next from, from TASC which provides better
24 intervention services. So, so if we want to, to get
25 to the, to the bottom of which programs work if any

1
2 and you know support the ones that do and weed out
3 the ones that don't like where's the next step for
4 my committee to, to look because we're very
5 interested in, in that court service being useful.

6 UNKNOWN MALE: Well I think it's just
7 that whole community response but children aid
8 society's been doing a lot of interesting work.
9 We're really looking at a different approach to
10 intervention. They use more, they use
11 accountability but they also use cognitive
12 behavioral approaches to really work. And that's
13 been a proven approach with a lot of folks. It's
14 not a one size fit all. For some folks it won't
15 work but they assess and they look at based on
16 their assessment what approach is more effective.

17 UNKNOWN MALE: I was invited by HRA to
18 be a... [cross-talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And this'll be our
20 final word yes.

21 UNKNOWN MALE: ...dialogue...

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

23 UNKNOWN MALE: ...on you know bringing
24 together fatherhood programs, accountability
25 programs. The folks who are working with abusive

1 partners with victim services because we're focused
2 on the victim and not on the other side. And we've
3 been having dialogues over once a month supervision
4 with people from various programs coming to bring
5 cases forward to say what can we do to begin to
6 talk about what outcome measures could look like
7 for different types of programs because different
8 programs have different foci. And I know one of the
9 things that's happening with children's aid is
10 they're bringing some people in I believe from
11 Wisconsin who've worked on a, a program that has
12 been fairly successful out there to do training in
13 New York so that we can begin to do things in a
14 different way than we have because there's a
15 recognition that the old style program where
16 success was you've attended for X number of
17 sessions and that's it really isn't successful. And
18 we're looking to see what ways we can create
19 dialogue between victim services and services for
20 perpetrators to look at how to embrace safety at
21 the same time look at creating outcomes that might
22 move the dial in terms of the behavior of an
23 abuser.
24

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I want to thank you
3 all. I, I don't want to, the information that
4 you're providing is very serious and is very robust
5 and we are taking all of this in and I apologize
6 that we have to minimize it in the interest of
7 time. It's just that my colleagues will ask me
8 tomorrow if my hearing is over.

9 [laughter]

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: So I, I just want to
11 give ample time for everyone to present. We're
12 going to have our next panel. I thank you all for
13 your testimony. We'll have Henry Algarin who will
14 go first, Cecilia Gaston, Lequisha Chandry [sic]
15 from the Food First Family Project, and
16 Erin Feely-Nahem from the Food First DV Residential
17 Coalition. Alright. Mr. Algarin.

18 HENRY ALGARIN: Good afternoon.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Good afternoon. And
20 could you just speak into the microphone? And bring
21 it up to you as close as you can so that way this
22 hearing is being televised. We want to definitely
23 make sure that they can hear you at home.

24 HENRY ALGARIN: My name is Henry
25 Algarin. I'm the Program Director of Brooklyn TASC

1 Treatment Alternative for Safer Communities. But
2 I'm here to speak specifically about our batterers
3 intervention program. Our batterers intervention
4 program is a 16 week educational program for men
5 who batter. The program is based on the empirically
6 tested intervention strategy of the Duluth model a
7 psycho-educational and skill building curriculum
8 which focuses on encouraging participants to take
9 responsibility for abusive acts and exploring the
10 effects and impact of their violence. The
11 curriculum is starting classes that emphasize the
12 development of critical thinking skills. There are
13 eight themes and each theme is divided into two
14 sessions. Each session begins with a video
15 demonstration of the specific controlling behavior
16 being highlighted for that day. Discussion centers
17 on the actions used by the batterer depicted in the
18 demonstration to control his partner. There are
19 subsequent sessions, sessions each group member
20 describes his own use of the controlling behavior
21 and the alternative behaviors are then explored. So
22 the eight themes that are, are, are utilized are
23 the non-violence non-threatening behavior, respect,
24 support and trust, accountability and honesty,
25

1 sexual respect, partnership which includes shared
2 responsibility economic partnership, and the
3 responsible parenting. And the eighth theme is
4 negotiation of fairness. All our participants are
5 mandated by the court although we do take clients
6 from ACS and the integrated domestic violence court
7 part in Supreme Court. Participants must attend
8 individual session, orientation session before
9 signing up for the classes. So all our clients come
10 from the courts, from Brooklyn Criminal Court,
11 Domestic Violence Court Part One and Two. The
12 referrals come either from the defense bar, the
13 district attorney, or the judge himself. And if
14 found appropriate for our services then we enroll
15 them in our batterers intervention program. And I
16 know most of the panels before me was speaking
17 mostly of the victims.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

20 HENRY ALGARIN: Which I absolutely agree
21 where the main focus should be but our program is
22 for the batterers because something has to be done
23 to address that behavior and hopefully has some
24 type of change that doesn't occur again. And our
25 statistics which I ran briefly this morning in 2013

1 we enrolled 290 clients of which 202 completed and
2 36 were violated. For this year we've enrolled 102
3 of which the numbers inter lap because the sessions
4 are, it's a 16 week course so it's, cycles, clients
5 are referred all the time so they might be
6 participating in one session when someone else is
7 starting today.

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Hmm.

10 HENRY ALGARIN: So it's the numbers
11 don't coincide. So this year we've completed 111
12 and 24 have been violated. And when I mean violated
13 I mean that they were referred back to the court
14 either because they got rearrested because we run
15 our rap sheets intermittedly [sic] to make sure
16 that our clients have not been rearrested and have
17 not disclosed that to us, either they violated the
18 order of protection, or they failed to comply with
19 the program's rules and regulations either
20 latenesses, they miss two days in a row they're
21 terminated, if they miss a total of three they're
22 terminated. And any noncompliance is reported
23 immediately to the court. We notify the attorney
24 that the case is being advanced. We notify the
25 district attorney's office so they could be

1 prepared with the case. And then we notify the
2 judge that they have violated the conditions of the
3 program.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I understand that
6 you have a court case. And no disrespect to the
7 other panelists I just wanted to ask you a few
8 questions before you had to depart because... [cross-
9 talk]

10 HENRY ALGARIN: Yes I have to go back to
11 court.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yes I, I understand
13 and I, and I apologize and I respect your time as
14 well... [cross-talk]

15 HENRY ALGARIN: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...because I know
17 we've been here for an easy four hours but it's
18 fine. Wanted to ask you because I find that this is
19 incredibly important to me in this process, are
20 there other programs like your program or that are
21 providing a similar service so that as you're
22 saying you're getting your, your clients from the
23 court system are they disseminating that same type
24 of referral to other organizations that do similar
25

1
2 work or are you receiving all of those referrals as
3 it pertains to the batterer?

4 HENRY ALGARIN: There's other programs,
5 yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: There are other
7 programs. Approximately how many other programs are
8 there?

9 HENRY ALGARIN: I believe in Brooklyn
10 they're utilizing us mainly and the PAC program of
11 Brooklyn as a second alternative.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: So the, in your
13 estimation there are about two programs that are
14 providing services for the batterer?

15 HENRY ALGARIN: Yes. All...

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: In Brooklyn?

17 HENRY ALGARIN: Although most out, oasis
18 license outpatient programs do have a domestic
19 violence curriculum.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

21 HENRY ALGARIN: But from the Brooklyn
22 Criminal Court the only two programs that are being
23 utilized are the PAC program of Brooklyn and TASC.

24 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: How often after
25 completion of the program do you follow the, the

1
2 experiences of the batterer in terms of you, you've
3 stated that some have violated? Does that happen,
4 are you documenting that a year after or are you
5 documenting that five years after? Or how long are
6 you following those that have gone through the
7 program?

8 HENRY ALGARIN: If they violate the
9 program the court is notified immediately so it's
10 not a year later it's, these statistics are
11 accurately documented right away. If they violate,
12 they violate it.

13 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay so you could
14 include a violation that's five years later into
15 your current statistics right now?

16 HENRY ALGARIN: No, no.

17 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: No?

18 HENRY ALGARIN: The statistics I gave
19 you were just for 2013 and the present year.

20 UNKNOWN MALE: Is it safe to say that
21 once the client leaves your program you don't keep
22 track of whether or not they reoffend.

23 HENRY ALGARIN: Well I run rap sheets
24 every three to six months utilizing the.. number

25

1
2 number to document whether or not our client was
3 rearrested for any offence.

4 UNKNOWN MALE: After... concluded the
5 program?

6 HENRY ALGARIN: Yes.

7 UNKNOWN MALE: Do you have any stats on
8 that?

9 HENRY ALGARIN: No I don't. I... [cross-
10 talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay. That would be,
12 that would be very important to understand and to
13 document in that way. I'll turn it over to my
14 colleagues if they have any additional questions.

15 UNKNOWN MALE: do you do any evaluation
16 whether it's running the rap sheets or, or anything
17 that would tell us how successful the program is in
18 keeping these individuals from not committing
19 domestic violence in the future.

20 HENRY ALGARIN: Besides being able to
21 document whether or not they were rearrested..

22 UNKNOWN MALE: During the course of the
23 program.

24 HENRY ALGARIN: During the course or a
25 year after there's no way of knowing whether or

1 that behavior is, still exist within that household
2 or any future household that that batterer might be
3 involved in.
4

5 UNKNOWN MALE: Who is your, who is your
6 contract with? Is it, is it with OCA? I mean...

7 HENRY ALGARIN: We have no contract.

8 UNKNOWNMALE: So the batterer is sent to
9 this program and then he has to pay for it himself
10 out of pocket.

11 HENRY ALGARIN: Absolutely that's the
12 feminist approach to holding the man accountable
13 for his actions.

14 UNKNOWN MALE: Okay. And do you, are
15 you, are you providing services in any other
16 borough to the best of your knowledge?

17 HENRY ALGARIN: We receive referrals
18 from Manhattan ACS Integrated Domestic Violence
19 Court part probation probation and sub paroles,
20 parolees.

21 UNKNOWN MALE: So the Brooklyn courts,
22 Manhattan ACS, some parole?

23 HENRY ALGARIN: Mm-hmm.

24 UNKNOWN MALE: But...

1
2 HENRY ALGARIN: Basically comes from
3 Brooklyn criminal court.

4 UNKNOWN MALE: Right, but TASC is not
5 providing the service in Queens or maybe TASC
6 Queens is providing it you don't... [cross-talk]

7 HENRY ALGARIN: No no, only in Brooklyn.

8 UNKNOWN MALE: Only in Brooklyn. Do you
9 know who provides the services in the other
10 boroughs?

11 HENRY ALGARIN: The PAC program.

12 UNKNOWN MALE: The PAC in the, all the
13 other boroughs?

14 HENRY ALGARIN: Yes.

15 UNKNOWN MALE: Yeah. And how did you
16 come to be designated as the, as the place that the
17 judge would send the defendants to you? Was there
18 some kind of competitive... [cross-talk]

19 HENRY ALGARIN: Well TASC has been...
20 [cross-talk]

21 UNKNOWN MALE: ...process or...

22 HENRY ALGARIN: ...around for a long time,
23 for over 30 years. And it's one of the five models
24 utilized in New York State as an ATI. So we were
25 finding that clients that were being referred to us

1 had to have a history of substance abuse or alcohol
2 or the crime was committed under the influence of
3 drugs or alcohol so...

4 UNKNOWN MALE: Sorry to interrupt. So
5 all of your clients from the domestic violence..
6 [cross-talk]

7 HENRY ALGARIN: No no. so we found that
8 clients that were not, did not have a history of
9 drugs or alcohol were not getting that opportunity
10 to plea bargain their case.

11 UNKNOWN MALE: So is it the opposite
12 that all of your clients are, are people who do not
13 have substance abuse histories, those folks are
14 sent somewhere else?

15 HENRY ALGARIN: Correct. [cross-talk]
16 Our batterers intervention program is basically to
17 address the behavior. If they have a history of
18 drugs or alcohol then they become a TASC client and
19 they referred out.

20 UNKNOWN MALE: And, and that services
21 that they provide would be a bundle of substance
22 abuse services... [cross-talk] and batterer
23 intervention.
24

1
2 HENRY ALGARIN: ...with a domestic
3 violence specific curriculum.

4 UNKNOWN MALE: Aright got it.

5 UNKNOWN PERSON: Okay thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm. I just have
7 follow-up question. Just very quickly for my own
8 education and I understand that this is a very long
9 question, well requires a long answer but if you
10 could make it as concise as possible what does your
11 program ultimately entail? Is it, is it you know as
12 quickly as it, is it 12 meetings, is it 12 meetings
13 and site visit, is it observation in the home? What
14 all does, what all entails this service?

15 HENRY ALGARIN: It's 16 weeks. Most
16 domestic violence batterers intervention programs
17 are usually 26 weeks. Ours is 16 weeks because we
18 extended whether an hour session is a two hour
19 session. So day one we talk about the particular
20 these that's the topic for the day using the
21 threatening behavior. The second session is on the
22 non-threatening behavior or the solution to the
23 problem of how, how they should have acted in that
24 situation.

25 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

3 HENRY ALGARIN: Rather than have
4 committed the, the crime that was, that led to...
5 [cross-talk]

6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Are these group
7 sessions or are they individual?

8 HENRY ALGARIN: They're group sessions.

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: They're group
10 sessions.

11 HENRY ALGARIN: So they're afforded the
12 opportunity to hear stories from other individuals
13 because that behavior is a cycle which they, it
14 takes a while, after a while they cycle gets
15 shorter and shorter where the violence escalates
16 and then there's the explosion where the police who
17 called and then there's a honeymoon period where
18 I'm sorry Honey it will never happen again, the
19 flowers, the chocolate, and then it starts all over
20 again. And that's what we try to address.

21 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And I, and I guess
22 in conclusion of that if the batterer is having
23 issues or, or flare ups or it feels like they're
24 getting to that place do you have services that are
25 available to that batterer even after the program
is over so two years later they're getting to that

1
2 stage where they see the relationship is cycling
3 into a dangerous place.

4 HENRY ALGARIN: Our doors are always
5 open and we've had clients return to speak and also
6 to participate in the classes. And there they
7 voluntarily come, they're not mandated... [cross-
8 talk]

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And you see that
10 that happens?

11 HENRY ALGARIN: Absolutely.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay. Alright thank
13 you very much.

14 HENRY ALGARIN: You're welcome.

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you.

16 HENRY ALGARIN: Thank you for having me.
17 I have to go back to court... [cross-talk]

18 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you.

19 HENRY ALGARIN: Thanks.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Yes I, I
21 have it thank you very much. Thank you.

22 CECILIA GASTON: I started my
23 presentation with a good morning now it's a good
24 afternoon. My name is Cecilia Gaston. I'm the
25 Executive Director of the Violence Intervention

1 Program a non-profit founded in 1984 for the strict
2 purpose of dealing with domestic violence in the
3 Latino community. We're very hopeful with it, an
4 unprecedented collaboration across the leadership
5 of the city that has raised the visibility of this
6 issue in a very profound way. We provide a full
7 continuum of services to survivors of domestic
8 violence through our emergency and transitional
9 housing programs as well as our non-residential
10 community based services free of charge to citizens
11 and non-citizens alike. VIP is a member of both the
12 domestic violence residential and non-residential
13 coalitions, the New York state coalition against
14 domestic violence and the National Network, the
15 National Latina Network's Policy Advisory Council
16 and I say this just to get the perspective...

18 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

19 CECILIA GASTON: ...of how we are informed
20 in our policy and our advocacy. Immigrant victims
21 are at high risk for domestic violence. But due to
22 their immigration status they may face more
23 difficult time escaping abuse. Immigrant women
24 often feel trapped in abusive relationships because
25 of immigration loss, language barriers, social

1 isolation, and lack of financial resources. Despite
2 recent failure of legislation that has opened new
3 and safe routes to immigration status for some
4 immigrant women abuse is still a significant
5 problem. A recent study in New York City found that
6 51 percent of intimate partner homicide victims are
7 foreign born while 45 percent were born in the
8 United States. 48 percent of Latinas in one study
9 reported that their partner's violence against them
10 had increased since their immigration to the united
11 states. Married women experience higher levels of
12 physical and sexual abuse than in unmarried
13 immigrant women 59.5 percent compared to 49.8
14 percent respectively. Abusers are often use their
15 partner's immigration status as a tool of control
16 in such situations it is common for the batterer to
17 exert control over his partner's immigration status
18 in order to force her to remain in the
19 relationship. Immigrant women often suffer higher
20 rates of violence than US citizens because they may
21 come from cultures that accept domestic violence or
22 because they may have less access to legal and
23 social services than US citizens. Additionally
24 immigrant batterers and victims may believe that
25

3 the penalties and protections of the US legal
4 system do not apply to them. Also a lot of the
5 remedies in the United States are geared through
6 the criminal justice system which perceives women
7 of color and minority communities in a very
8 different way than a middle class white girl... you
9 know...

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

11 CECILIA GASTON: ...eh person. In some
12 instances foreign born women who have survived
13 terrible abuse have literally no chance for... [bell
14 chimes] I'm sorry, legal relief especially if they
15 have kept abuse a secret out of shame or fear. As
16 advocates for survivors we are acutely aware of the
17 devastating impact in the city's collaboration with
18 Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE ...on a
19 immigrant survivors that we serve. This not only
20 makes our work more challenging but actually
21 further victimizes and endangers a survivor on the
22 road to safety. In New York victims of intimate
23 partner violence can risk arrest when they call the
24 police either because they have, have to defend
25 themselves from abuse or because an inability to
speak English results in an arrest. We routinely

1 hear reports of survivors who are not provided with
2 interpretation when making the difficult,
3 difficult and often dangerous decision to contact
4 law enforcement and then improperly arrest her for
5 being unable to report their victimization. Sexual
6 assault, human trafficking, family, homophobic or
7 transphobic violence are already underreported
8 crimes. Survivors are acutely aware of the risk of
9 deportation when calling the police and ICE police
10 collaboration pushes survivors deeper into the
11 shadows. We have a special intake form for
12 vulnerable survivors where we actually try to draw
13 out immigration situations that would be, affect
14 their safety planning.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much.
17 Thank you. Next.

18 LEQUISHA CHANDRY: Hi, good afternoon.
19 My name is Lequisha Chandry. I'm a Program Director
20 at Food First Family Project.

21 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

22 LEQUISHA CHANDRY: And Food First Family
23 Project is a domestic violence shelter. I'm not
24 going to go over my program service. I just want to
25 go over some issues that bother me. So as... we are

1
2 trying our best to serve them. Like as you guys
3 know like... [cross-talk]

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Can you pull your
5 microphone a little bit closer?

6 LEQUISHA CHANDRY: Uh-huh. As you guys
7 know about housing issue.

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yes.

9 LEQUISHA CHANDRY: Not giving them a
10 priority, like a first priority now NYCHA is, is
11 packed like no room over there. And as a result
12 women they got stuck in our shelters. Each area
13 they give a... they give like a extra, extra days but
14 they are like sitting on a time bomb it's like
15 that. But it's affecting on a hot line that hot
16 line is jam because there is no space in a DV
17 shelter where they going to put the new people. New
18 people are calling hotline, hotline don't, no space
19 for them and they are in a trauma suffering with
20 this... And on other hand each other, they did... they
21 give like us like a link program but think about
22 honestly if someone is a victim of domestic
23 violence suffering with all those trauma how soon
24 he, she or he can be ready for, for to have a full
25 time job. And is ready... [cross-talk]

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CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm.

LEQUISHA CHANDRY: ...competitive, they,
how soon they can get a job? They need a time to
just get settled... left everything their house,
relationship, every single thing. Now they are in a
process like a healing process. Then I'm going to
get those employment as soon as possible so they
can get that housing program. It's very difficult
for them. On a other hand like... 44 to 46 domestic
violence shelter they have very real... like a...
thing. And some domestic violence victim they, even
though they have unsafe location they... they are not
going to be fitting that criteria.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

LEQUISHA CHANDRY: So it's kind of very
jammed and packed... and not only like a family's
living in the, as not brought up like a single
woman shelter believe me is a real real trauma. If
you will check hotline how many single call every
single day for the placement. And obviously staff,
they going to tell them like a...

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Right.

LEQUISHA CHANDRY: ...space is full but
call back. We going to try again, try again, try

1 again but that try again is nothing. They know they
2 not going to get anything. And plus like it's very
3 real shelter they have single placement... living
4 with a family for the single woman is really really
5 challenge. They... they going to make noise, they
6 going to make whatever they have... they, they have
7 to adjust with them and it's very hard when they
8 are having a job or focusing on their... they should
9 have a separate single woman domestic violence
10 shelter. And on top of this very miserable
11 population that I'm thinking is men. Men who are
12 victim of domestic violence that don't have
13 anything, anything because everything, people are...
14 first of all it's a very kind, kind of like a... that
15 men cannot be a victim and if man is a victim is
16 very kind of for people to laughing on them.

18 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

19 LEQUISHA CHANDRY: They don't have those
20 type of like a services or domestic violence
21 shelter where they can come forward or where they
22 can get all those services. You guys are talking
23 batterer program. Those program are force by the
24 court. They're forced to take that. Change should
25 be, begin it from childhood to change the

1
2 community, to change the families to change the
3 world not at the last minute. What you can do, do,
4 you not going to change people personality as much
5 as you can change the community by their childhood
6 by giving them education and awareness to making
7 them understand what is a real domestic violence... I
8 am sorry my time is over but I'm really glad that
9 you guys are here. I'm feeling that you guys going
10 to make a change and I'm not alone. I'm feeling
11 supportive. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you very much
13 for your testimony. And do know that your words are
14 being heard and there will be further discussion
15 and movement and action from this hearing today.

16 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Just for the record
17 Family Project at one point before that recession
18 was trying to have a battered men shelter because
19 we take a lot of battered men with their shelter
20 and we had gotten a letter of support from HRA but
21 then in 2009 the recession hit. By the time we
22 found a building they had to take that back. We're
23 still wanting to do one specifically for battered
24 men because they do have unique needs.

25 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Hmm.

1
2 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: And there, there's
3 one. We have three or four families that are men
4 based but there along with 20 other women you know
5 they, they deserve also some specialized attention.
6 Alright. Good afternoon.

7 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Good afternoon.

8 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: City Council chairs
9 and members. My name is Erin Feely-Nahem and I am
10 the Executive Director of Food First Family
11 Project. I'm also the Co-Chair of the New York City
12 Coalition of Domestic Violence Residential
13 Providers Housing Committee. On October 14th I was
14 very encouraged by the commitment articulated by
15 City Council Member Ritchie Torres who advocated
16 for equal access to NYCHA's N-0 priority preference
17 for HRA shelter residents and easier access for all
18 domestic violence survivors. On July 24th I had
19 testified with other advocates and survivors at the
20 NYCHA town hall meeting. I expressed apprehension
21 and concern at NYCHA's decision to sponsor an
22 amendment to the agency's 2014 annual plan which
23 limited access to the N-0 homeless priority
24 preference to DHS referred clients omitting HRA
25 domestic violence shelter residents. The following

1 day in a closed unscheduled meeting with only one
2 NYCHA board member abstaining because she heard our
3 women's testimonies the amendment was passed
4 accepting into policy this inequitable practice.
5 Historically NYCHA has not discriminated against
6 HRA domestic violence shelter residents allowing
7 clients within both systems to qualify for their
8 homeless priority N-0. The amendment to NYCHA's
9 2014 annual plan as well as the agent's 2015 annual
10 plan which was scheduled for submission on October
11 18th places HRA domestic violence shelter residents
12 long term safety behind the immediate housing in
13 need of DHS shelter residents as well as behind
14 those DHS families who are on the NYCHA family
15 waitlist. Changes made to documentation
16 requirements for N-1 priority which were announced
17 July 18th which allows HRA shelter residents to
18 qualify for N-1 priority based on a risk assessment
19 tool is not enough to address this inequity. The
20 move to a domestic violence expert administered
21 risk assessment tool to award priority status is a
22 positive development but should be utilized for all
23 survivors inside and outside the shelter system.
24 Historically HRA domestic violence shelter
25

1 residents were able to qualify for both preferences
2 N-0 and N-1 placing them at the top of the list. On
3 July 31st, 2014 HRA submitted 631 applications to
4 NYCHA all qualified for N-1 priority preference. To
5 date not one of these applications has even been
6 coded much less interviewed. During the same period
7 of time starting in July DHS has referred and
8 placed their 750 homeless residents into NYCHA
9 apartments. In the past HRA shelter residents were
10 given a small number of HPD section eight vouchers.
11 That's like gold to our women. This year HPD will
12 give 500 section eight vouchers to DHS families,
13 300 to those with children, 200 to two adults, and
14 not one will be given to HRA shelter residents, not
15 one. This inequity is staggering. I witness the
16 housing options available to domestic violence
17 survivors within our shelter system shrink over the
18 years. Without access to a decent housing subsidy
19 or a viable priority like N-0 for public housing
20 our residents will be unable to find permanent
21 housing during their shelter stay employed or not
22 facing continued risk of serious abuse. In an
23 effort to reduce the escalating homeless population
24 HRA created and rolled out the link housing subsidy
25

1 which also limits access to HRA domestic violence
2 survivors to one of three programs. The best
3 program of link is link one and that's only
4 available to DHS families. This subsidy requires
5 that the head of household be employed full time
6 and that they contribute, excuse me... 30 percent of
7 their income towards their rent, the amount of the
8 subsidy is based on the tenants income and it's
9 available for five years. Although HRA shelter
10 residents are eligible... [cross-talk]

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I'm just going to
13 need you to...

14 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: I'm going... [cross-
15 talk]

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...to conclude.

17 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: ...last paragraph, yep.

18 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: You may be able to
19 strategically put it in your answer to a question
20 we might ask.

21 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Okay. Although HR,
22 shelter residents are eligible for this subsidy on
23 paper presently it is unavailable to them and there
24 is no date when that is scheduled to change.
25 Unfairly the only housing subsidy available to HRA

1 shelter residents is link three which is available
2 to 900 HRA shelter residents who have exceeded 180
3 day time limit in shelter, so not emergency as well
4 as 1,000 survivors who are presently in the DHF, S
5 system. Because the subsidy is funded by, by city
6 tax levy dollars to be eligible for the subsidy the
7 survivor must have and maintain an active public
8 assistance case. In today's real estate market
9 landlords are not interested in taking this
10 program. Since the program was rolled out over a
11 month ago only one HR shelter resident has found an
12 apartment using the subsidy.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm.

15 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Access to Link One
16 which is designed for homeless families with full
17 time employment should be available to qualified
18 homeless families within the HRA shelter system as
19 well awarding N-0 to all persons in shelter whether
20 it is within the HRA shelter system or the DHS
21 shelter system or the only fair way to implement a
22 housing priority. We call upon the city council to
23 encourage NYCHA to codify these changes in their
24 annual play, plan and to encourage the mayor to
25 make link one available to all qualified families

1 within the HRA system and to ask HPD to give HRA a
2 share of those 500 section eight vouchers for HRA
3 shelter domestic violence survivors. These steps
4 will help to ensure that all homeless persons have
5 meaningful access to housing that all survivors of
6 abuse have a reasonable chance to attain a, a
7 pathway to permanent housing and the safety it
8 provides. Thank you.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Now that was a
11 paragraph.

12 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Sorry.

13 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Right. Let me just
14 say your presentation has an incredible amount of
15 information that to be, just to be perfectly
16 transparent I would have to, because a lot of what
17 you're saying... I wouldn't necessarily would say is
18 counter to what the administration put forward.

19 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Right.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: But counter to what
21 the administration put forward in terms of
22 understanding that there are policies and
23 procedures and programs and initiatives that are
24 being rolled out but it's how realistic is it, are
25 these things actually being implemented.

3 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Exactly.

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And so I honestly
5 will have to read your testimony again in my own
6 private time to really understand thoroughly what
7 was presented by the administration and what you've
8 put forward. But it's very, very, very important
9 that we get to the, to the bottom of that and find
10 out...

11 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...exactly...

13 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...how these programs
15 are being implemented. And I wanted to ask you in
16 terms of the immigration status because I want to
17 understand as a council member but just in general
18 how real is someone's immigration status in terms
19 of them coming forth for help, for assistance. Is
20 it, are we at a time and a place today where we can
21 just say your immigration status doesn't matter at
22 all...

23 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: No we're not.

24 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...call for services.

25 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: No we're not. And as
long...

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: How will we... [cross-
3 talk] How will we differentiate in who we're saying
4 you should go, maybe you shouldn't?

5 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: It they, the... that
6 was, that was passed at the federal level are,
7 allows for 10,000 visas a year for the whole
8 country. Those 10,000 visas were exhausted within
9 31 days. And we are submitting them, we are
10 submitting the petitions but they are in a waiting
11 list. So there is a real remedy available but it is
12 very difficult to get. So the level of deportation
13 that we have in those country including New York
14 City we are not a safe haven. As long as we have
15 collaboration between the NYPD and ICE we have no
16 safety. The program secure communities requires
17 that every fingerprint taken gets shared with the
18 federal government. And anybody that has a case
19 which could be a, an outstanding warrant or
20 whatever is tracked to a deportation system. In the
21 deportation system you have none of the rights and
22 none of the, of the, the available to you that you
23 would have in a criminal case.

24 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: So if you're a
25 victim of domestic violence and you don't have the

1 proper paperwork and documentation in addition to
2 being a victim of domestic violence you could also
3 now be tracked to be deported as well?
4

5 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: That is correct. It
6 has happened to people that we actually are in
7 Ryker's and we tell them don't get out of Ryker's.
8 Because if you get out of Ryker's and you have a
9 hold on you you get picked up by ICE. Once you get
10 picked up and put into deportation I have in the
11 back of my presentation I have some information on
12 secure communities. Once you get tracked on
13 deportation you are not brought back for family
14 court, criminal court, or any of those things. So
15 you lose all your rights, your fundamental
16 constitutional rights for a fair hearing or a fair
17 trial. And that is an absolute real threat to
18 anyone calling the police. We have not recommended
19 to any of our, in our outreach that people call the
20 police at all because once you call the police you
21 lose control. So we actually try to do our outreach
22 in the, in the community by telling them come to us
23 before you get into a crisis. You have a lot of our
24 families... [cross-talk]

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...intermediary, you
3 become an intermediary... [cross-talk]

4 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: Yes, and all of our
5 families have, have multiple legal status.

6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

7 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: So we have
8 encountered case workers at ACS that believe that a
9 child is better in foster care than with those
10 undocumented poor people. And we have filed
11 complaints to the city to that effect. So we, I
12 have received threatening letters telling me that I
13 should stick to domestic violence and not deal with
14 immigration.

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wow.

16 ERIN FEELY-NAHEM: So the reality of the
17 undocumented and the foreign born is very very
18 real.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Thank you
20 very much. Council Member Lancman. Okay. Thank you
21 all very much for your very passionate and
22 comprehensive presentations. I do appreciate that.

23 [background comments]

24 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Right.

25 [background comments]

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Speaking
3 of which Patrick Markee, Ted Mc, McCortney, yes I
4 apologize, Constance Lesold, and I'm going to just
5 go for the gusto here Joshua Goldstein [sic], did I
6 get that right, Goldfein apologize. This will be
7 our final and concluding panel for the afternoon. I
8 thank you all for your patience and staying with us
9 for all the testimonies today. We started a
10 tradition at this panel. We're going to go from
11 left to right.

12 PATRICK MARKEE: She's requested to go
13 last so... [cross-talk]

14 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Alright... [cross-
15 talk]

16 PATRICK MARKEE: I think actually...

17 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: ...go from right to
18 left.

19 PATRICK MARKEE: ...Josh Goldfein...
20 [background comments]

21 PATRICK MARKEE: We'll start in the
22 middle. My name's Patrick Marquee. I'm the Deputy
23 Executive Director for Advocacy at Coalition for
24 the Homeless. We submit a joint written testimony
25 with the legal aid society and Josh Goldfein and I

1 will, will quickly summarize our, our testimony.
2
3 The two key parts being one about permeant housing,
4 resources for families in shelter including
5 domestic survivor families and the second being
6 about Introduction 361. I'll talk about permanent
7 housing resources. I want to echo and amplify a
8 little bit about what was just said a moment ago
9 about really the failures of the city to target
10 adequately existing permanent housing resources to
11 families in shelter including homeless families and
12 domestic survivor family, domestic violence
13 survivor families particularly through NYCHA. This
14 coming year the New York City housing authority is
15 going to place about 6,000 families into public
16 housing. Bizarrely the housing authority has a
17 priority process in place now which actually
18 provides the highest priority to families who do
19 not present, do not demonstrate any actual housing
20 needs. About 60 percent of placements into public
21 housing in the first six months of this year went
22 to families that didn't demonstrate any housing
23 needs under a Giuliani or a policy called working
24 families preference. This includes families earning
25 more than 60 thousand dollars a year who were

1 placed into public housing apartments without
2 demonstrating housing needs like high rent burdens,
3 overcrowding, substandard conditions who were
4 placed ahead of families in the domestic violence
5 shelter system and families in the DHS system.
6 Twice as many families in that highest income
7 category that didn't demonstrate housing needs
8 actually were placed into public housing than
9 domestic violence survivor families who were placed
10 under the N-1 priority. So one of the, the major
11 things that needs to be done here is not to sort of
12 talk about the inequities in terms of domestic
13 violence families and homeless families being
14 pitted against each other in terms of a scarce
15 number of public housing apartments we need to be
16 revamping the housing authorities and the city's
17 approach to how are we using our public housing
18 resources to meet the needs of the 13 thousand
19 homeless families that are in shelter tonight
20 including 24 thousand children and the thousand
21 domestic violence survivor families that are in the
22 HRA shelter system. As an added thing as the last
23 speaker just said NYCHA when it revised the annual
24 plan this year did in fact fail to put HRA back in
25

1
2 as an agency that can make priority referrals to
3 the N-0 category, DHS, DYCD, HASA, but not the rest
4 of HRA can make those referrals. Unfortunately HRA
5 can't and that's something else that needs to be
6 fixed. Fundamentally though what we need to see
7 happen is a better more equitable use of our public
8 housing resources to address the needs of families
9 and children in shelter including homeless families
10 but also domestic violence survivor families. Let's
11 remember that the majority of domestic violence
12 survivor families and shelter in the DHS system in
13 addition to which we have the thousand families and
14 I, in the HRA system. So we need to be using those
15 resources in the smartest way possible.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you.

17 JOSH GOLDFEIN: Josh Goldfein from the
18 Homeless Rights Project at Legal Aid and just to,
19 Patrick and I did some joint written testimony.
20 Just to follow up quickly on, on what Patrick said
21 in the Bloomberg administration and in
22 administrations prior to that, in the second term
23 of the Bloomberg Administration they managed to
24 move out 25 hundred families a year using federal
25 housing subsidies. And what is happening now, what

1 we've seen for instance the, the, the priority that
2 we were, that the previous panel was talking about
3 that is being under, underutilized they only gave
4 out 50 of those to shelter residents last year. So
5 we went from 25 hundred to 50. And what the
6 administration is talking about now again is well
7 we'll, we'll, we'll do 750 for DHS and we'll do, I
8 think we heard Commissioner Banks say this morning
9 we're going to do a hundred of the N-1 priorities
10 by the end of the year so now we're up to 850. But
11 again even in Bloomberg and Giuliani they were
12 doing thousands. So what the administration is
13 proposing to do is roughly a third of what
14 Bloomberg did and half of what Giuliani did. Half
15 of Giuliani that's where we are. And we have to do
16 better than that. The, but what we should be
17 talking about again as Patrick said is should we be
18 giving housing authority apartments to people based
19 on a demonstrated need such as they have a safety
20 need, they need to get away from their batterer, or
21 should we be giving away the majority of apartments
22 with no demonstration of need what's so ever which
23 is what the housing authority is doing now. And
24 that's what we have to stop. And we have to look at
25

1 the bigger picture. We need to get all of those
2 thousands of apartments back, not just whether it's
3 the 750 that they wanted to give to DHS versus the
4 100 they're going to give to HRA. Let's talk about
5 thousands rather than hundreds. And also briefly
6 just to say on the, on the, the bill that's pending
7 that, that the hearing is also the subject of which
8 would create the, the presumptive eligibility that
9 we discussed earlier Commissioner Banks I believed
10 proposed that in the next month or so HRA will try
11 to develop a seamless transition for people being
12 discharged from HRA DV shelter to DHS. He also
13 hopes to head off having people even come into DHS
14 shelter by moving them out. But the bill I think is
15 still needed because it would codify that. It would
16 ensure that that's the background. It would
17 motivate them to get it done. And also as has been
18 said the, the, we haven't heard a word from DYCD or
19 about DYCD and whether kids who are running out of
20 time in the RHY shelters, the runaway homeless
21 youth shelters, would also be able to have such a
22 seamless transition. Now I can tell you that the
23 legal aid society has brought a case on behalf of
24 runaway and homeless youth seeking to resolve these
25

1
2 issues. But that hasn't happened yet so as an
3 interim step you know pending the resolution of our
4 lawsuit on behalf of those kids it would certainly
5 be a benefit to them to eliminate for them and for
6 the city the burdensome bureaucratic process of
7 reassessing the eligibility of someone who has just
8 left a shelter for the sole reason that they've run
9 out of time there as I've just run out of time.
10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. But it is
12 a great suggestion because DYCD in retrospect
13 should have also been included in this discussion,
14 in this hearing. Thank you. Yes.

15 TED MCCOURTNEY: Good afternoon. And
16 thank you for the opportunity to address you today.
17 My name is Ted McCourtney. I work for Sanctuary for
18 Families as the Director of Sarah Burke House our
19 transitional domestic violence shelter in the
20 Bronx. Sanctuary for Families is a non-profit
21 agency dedicated exclusively to serving domestic
22 violence and sex trafficking victims and their
23 children. I'm also a member of the Steering
24 Committee [sp?] of the New York City Coalition of
25 Domestic Violence Residential Providers, a

1 coalition that includes all of the organizations
2 providing domestic violence shelter in New York
3 City. I'm here today because I am concerned about
4 clients in the domestic violence shelter system not
5 having access to Link One, the Link One housing
6 program. Clients in domestic violence shelters
7 currently only have access to Link Three housing
8 program. To qualify for Link Three one must have an
9 open cash public assistance case. Clients who are
10 employed do not qualify for the Link Three program
11 because their income makes them ineligible for
12 public assistance. At Sarah Burke House generally
13 35 to 45 percent of our 58 clients are employed.
14 Many of these women have completed Sanctuary for
15 Families' intensive workforce development program
16 and have successfully found and maintained jobs. We
17 have encouraged these clients to take steps toward
18 economic self-sufficiency and they have responded
19 impressively. However most of our employed clients
20 are new to the workforce and do not yet have
21 sufficient income to pay New York City market rate
22 rents. Temporary rental assistance would be
23 tremendously effective in transitioning these
24 clients out of the shelter and into safe permanent
25

1 housing. Unfortunately that assistance is only
2 available to clients in the domestic violence
3 shelter system who do not work. This is not the
4 case in the DHS homeless shelter system. Clients,
5 working clients in the DHS, DHS system do have
6 access to rental assistance through the Link One
7 housing program. Clearly the city recognizes the
8 need to support working clients and shelter
9 transitioning into housing. But what I s this
10 assistance available only to clients in DHS
11 shelters. Working clients in domestic violence
12 shelters are homeless and they are homeless because
13 it is unsafe to remain in their homes. They are
14 every bit as homeless as clients in the DHS shelter
15 system but with an added risk factor as well as
16 time limited stay in shelter. There is no
17 justifiable reason for working clients in the DV
18 shelter system to be denied access to a rental
19 assistance program simply because they entered a
20 shelter system designed to protect their safety.
21 Admirably New York City devotes considerable
22 resources to supporting a robust domestic violence
23 shelter network. We encourage women to escape
24 dangerous relationships. We offer them safe
25

1 confidential shelter where they and their children
2 have access to extensive clinical services. Our
3 shelters provide families the opportunity to begin
4 putting their lives back together again. And
5 clients that enter our shelters make significant
6 progress towards stability and self-sufficiency
7 during their time with us. However much of the
8 stability is destroyed when there are not safe
9 housing options available to them at the end of
10 their shelter stay. Without viable housing options
11 at the conclusion, at the conclusion of their
12 shelter stay our clients often face an impossible
13 decision, become homeless again or return to a
14 dangerous situation. This is no way to treat the
15 women who have made the courageous decision to
16 leave their abuser. Last paragraph. ...considered
17 housing... and it's not as long as Erin's...

19 [background comments]

20 TED MCCOURTNEY: No no no no.

21 [background comments]

22 TED MCCOURTNEY: Well considered housing
23 programs clearly benefit the families that enter
24 the domestic violence shelter system. Allowing
25 these families to have fair access to rental

3 assistance who play the key role in helping them
4 transition to stable violence free lives. Clients
5 who are homeless because of domestic violence
6 should be on equal footing with others seeking
7 permanent housing option, solutions. The Link One
8 housing program is already in place to assist
9 client, working clients in the DHS shelters. And it
10 should be made available to working clients and
11 domestic violence shelters as well. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you.

13 CONSTANCE LESOLD: My name is Constance
14 Lesold and I have a Master's Degree in Social Work
15 and both extensive professional and volunteer
16 experience in regard to homeless and domestic
17 violence issues. I did not come prepared to speak
18 today. I came prepared to listen and I have to
19 congratulate all of you on this wonderful hearing
20 that you have held. However I did feel inspired to
21 add a few comments at the end. Number one, as a
22 former board member of Disabled in Action and one
23 of the founders of the Brooklyn Mental Hygiene
24 Court Monitors Project I have to add to the
25 wonderful list that Barriers Free Living gave of
people with disabilities, mental health

1 disabilities. It's very hard to remember all the
2 disabilities when you're caught with a question
3 like that. But... but it is very important that it's
4 not forgotten by the city council. And because
5 people with mental health disabilities are probably
6 those people most likely to be victims of domestic
7 violence and any kind of violence. In the press you
8 often hear about violence that's done by people
9 with mental health disabilities but the much higher
10 rates of violence are done against them. So we have
11 to keep that out in the public all the time. Now
12 some of you are looking very confused about what in
13 the world is the destruction of the campus... academy
14 doing at this hearing. Well there's a very relevant
15 reason. The Haitian Academy is an American as well
16 as a Haitian institution with a 501C3 that started
17 in the United States and has acted at times as a
18 resource for children who would possibly become
19 victims of domestic violence. If they are
20 threatened for some reason in their communities and
21 the custodial parent or relative decides it's too
22 dangerous for them in New York or Miami or what and
23 they know about this wonderful school that child
24 may end up at the Haitian Academy. And I think we
25

1 have to keep in mind when we're doing a hear like
2 this and domestic violence the kind of destruction
3 that can occur in family and community networks for
4 children, if we don't pay attention to all, all
5 these other great speakers have said about what is
6 needed. Of course I also want publicity for the
7 Haitian Academy because it has been destroyed and
8 it is a wonderful resource. Thank you for giving me
9 the opportunity.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you so much
12 for your testimony as well and I am going to open
13 it now to a question from my colleague Council
14 Member Steve Levin.

15 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you Chair
16 Cumbo. So Mr. McCourtney I just wanted to touch on
17 your testimony. So I think that in developing Link
18 if it, if my understanding is correct the Link Two
19 and Link Three are dependent on, on TANIFF funds
20 which then are attached to a PA case so that's why
21 there might be some challenge in, if.. [cross-talk]

22 TED MCCOURTNEY: Okay understood. But
23 they're also exist Link One.

24 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right. And so that
25 would be the question. Is opening up Link One to,

1 to survivors of domestic violence that are in the
2 HRA system. And that's certainly something that we
3 can advocate for and take back to HRA.
4

5 TED MCCOURTNEY: Wonderful.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: You know right now
7 because the programs are so, are really in their
8 infancy they, there's kind of no the, the, the, the
9 subsidies themselves haven't really gone out the
10 door to start helping these families. And so I
11 think as, as it proceeds this is certainly
12 something that we should be looking at and
13 addressing. It might be, it might be more difficult
14 to, to make Link Three available to people without
15 a PA case. And one thing that I, I, I actually was
16 going to ask the administration but I, I, I didn't
17 get a chance to was the issue of making sure that
18 everybody that qualifies for public assistance has
19 a public assistance case open so... Because a family
20 that has you know there's, there's, there's income
21 guidelines obviously but you can be working and
22 have a, a PA case definitely. You know there's... I
23 figure what the exact...
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TED MCCOURTNEY: You, you can't be
earning much though. I mean our clients who are...
[cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Well one... and it's
175 percent of, of poverty which is I, two, 200
percent over the poverty line. So that's, that's...
no no no it's of the poverty line I think it's... so
there's... anyway...

TED MCCOURTNEY: You know I, I have
clients that they, they make minimum wage working
full time they don't qualify for PA so they don't
qualify for this housing assistance. It's a pretty
low threshold and I know you know it depends on how
many children you have and other income but I mean
I, I have a number of clients working at minimum
wage who don't qualify for Link Three because they
can't get public assistance.

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. And we should,
we should make sure that they're coordinating
though with, with HRA and so if the, the, if
there's any you know bureaucratic obstacles of
those people getting cases that they should be,
have the opportunity to do that.

TED MCCOURTNEY: Right. Thank you.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Ma'am we have to, we
3 can't, we can't have a conversation. Okay thank
4 you.

5 UNKNOWN MALE: I just want to... hearing
6 about, about, about this but I just want to you
7 know say something. I represent Palmanoc [sic]
8 2,000 plus apartments in Queens striving as
9 mightily to be a, a middle class community. And you
10 know I, it's somewhat of a, I don't want you to
11 think I'm, I'm being glib but we, we don't want
12 Palmanoc turned into, converted into, into a
13 housing shelter. So on the issue of providing
14 preferences to victims of domestic violence we're
15 all for that and that's something that I support
16 very much. But certain other comments that were
17 made about, there's no criteria for people getting
18 into Palmanoc, there are income limits, there are
19 income thresholds. 60,000 dollars might you know be
20 the upper end of that and that's not someone who's
21 doing well. A family of four for example in, in New
22 York City. So I just wanted to you know get that,
23 that out there. But certainly anything that we can
24 do to help domestic violence victims find permanent
25

1 housing is something that we should be, that we
2 should be supporting.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yeah. I want to
6 thank my colleagues here today. I want to thank
7 Council Member Steve Levin. I want to thank my
8 councilman and colleague Rory Lancman. And I want
9 to thank all of you. This has been a very
10 impactful, mind expanding hearing today. And there
11 is a lot to digest today. And you all have shared
12 such incredible and powerful testimony. It's very
13 diverse. It's really shown us the breath of the
14 issues that we need to address and tackle. So I
15 thank you all for this testimony. We are, as
16 colleagues are going to continue to convene. I
17 think everyone that has helped today with making
18 today possible. I thank all of our legal counsel
19 and all of those that assisted with making today's
20 hearing possible, all of our staffs. And I thank
21 everyone for being here today. So thank you very
22 much.

23 [gavel]

24

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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 _____ October 29, 2014 _____