

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY

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December 16, 2014
Start: 10:13 a.m.
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Room
16th Floor

B E F O R E: MARK TREYGER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Rosie Mendez
Margaret S. Chin
Donovan J. Richards
Carlos Menchaca
Eric A. Ulrich
Steven Matteo

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

Daniel Zarrilli, Director
Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency

Henry Jackson
Deputy Commissioner for Technology
NYC Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

Christina Farrell, Deputy Commissioner
External Affairs
NYC Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

John Grathwol, Deputy Director
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Rabbi Brickman
Sea Gate, NYC

Joseph Rosenberg, Executive Director
Catholic Community Relations Council (CCRC)

Laurie Schoeman
Sandy Recovery and Rebuilding Efforts
New York Office of Enterprise Community Partners

Alana Tornello
Staten Island Interfaith
Committee of Long-Term Recovery Organization

Rod Hulla
Board of Trustees
Coney Island Gospel Assembly

Margaret Becker, Director of Disaster Recovery
Legal Services NYC
Board of Directors, Staten Island Long-Term
Recovery Organization

Helene Caloir, Policy Director
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC New
York City)

Christine Happa, Staff Attorney
Legal Aid Society of New York

2 [sound check]

3 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: [gavel] Good

4 morning. I am Mark Treyger, Chair of the Committee

5 on Recovery and Resiliency. On behalf of this

6 committee, I want to welcome you all for joining us

7 today. This will be the first hearing of Intro 562,

8 a Local Law in relation to the creation of a

9 Hurricane Sandy community groups and houses of

10 worship recovery task force. This bill will

11 establish a task force, which would include members

12 of clergy, individuals experienced with Sandy relief

13 work, community based organizations, and the Director

14 of the Office of Recovery and Resiliency. The task

15 force would study the damage that houses of worship

16 and charitable organizations suffered during the

17 storm as well as the expenses they incurred in

18 helping others after the storm. It would also study

19 the sources of aid that have been available to them,

20 and if that aid has been sufficient to meet their

21 recovery needs. Finally, the task force would issue

22 a report to both the Mayor and the City Council

23 containing recommendations on how best to meet any

24 existing recovery needs including what role the City

25 could play in doing so. And recommendations on how

2 best to utilize charitable organizations and houses
3 of worship in future storms. Just to give you an
4 example, Saint Gertrude's Church in Far Rockaway,
5 Queens, which is in my colleague Donovan Richard's
6 district, was one of many houses of worship that
7 dedicated its facilities and resources to provide
8 needed aid to storm victims after Hurricane Sandy
9 passed. Volunteers used the gymnasium at Saint
10 Gertrude's church to organize local aid efforts
11 collecting and distributing emergency supplies in one
12 of the hardest hit areas of the city. And in my
13 district I know for example Coney Island Gospel
14 Assembly was-- did the same thing. In some cases,
15 community groups and houses of worship were in the
16 best position to provide immediate local aid to
17 victims of Hurricane Sandy. These types of
18 organizations implicitly understood the needs of the
19 communities they serve. They had long-lasting
20 relationships with residents prior to the storm, and
21 were able to establish a presence as centers of aid
22 before federal and city workers could.

23 The Special Initiative for Rebuilding and
24 Resiliency Final Report notes that the immediate, and
25 this is a quote, "The immediate aftermath of Sandy

2 reinforced the importance of having community
3 services, and facilities in times of crisis." And
4 there are many more stories about local charities and
5 houses of worship that open their doors and poured
6 out their resources to help neighbors in need after
7 Hurricane Sandy. It is so much in the nature of
8 these institutions to help others that we almost come
9 to expect it. But who was there to help them when
10 they are in need? This is the question that this
11 bill and this hearing is meant to address. I
12 understand that the recovery funds we received from
13 the federal government come with restrictions that
14 often exclude houses of worship. But should our
15 response be to throw our hands up and say they can't
16 be helped? Or, should we study the problem, and look
17 for creative solutions?

18 When paperwork requirements make it
19 difficult for charitable organizations to receive
20 recovery assistance or reimbursement, can we expect
21 them to still be there when the next storm comes?
22 That is why I believe we must study and act on this
23 issue. For our communities to fully recover from
24 Hurricane Sandy, we need every corner of them to
25 recover and to prepare as well for the next storm.

2 That is not just housing, and not just businesses,
3 but also we must remember and never forget our
4 charitable and religious organizations that have
5 given us so much, but also suffered so much. Even
6 when the solutions may be difficult to find, we must
7 at minimum search, aggressively search for them.
8 That is what this bill proposed to do.

9 I want to thank the members of the
10 Administration testifying today. I hope we will have
11 a constructive discussion on this issue that will
12 advance this issue forward. Thank you. We've been
13 joined by Council Members Donovan Richards and Steve
14 Matteo, and I would like to call up-- Well, we
15 already have here from the Administration Dan
16 Zarrilli, Christina Farrell from OEM, and I believe
17 Henry. Is that Jack?

18 HENRY JACKSON: [off mic] Jackson.

19 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Jackson from
20 New York City Emergency Management. Please.

21 [background comments]

22 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Oh, and before
23 we begin, this is in our committee routine. If you
24 could please raise your right hands. Do you affirm
25 to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

2 the truth in your testimony before this committee,
3 and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

4 DANIEL ZARRILLI: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Thank you.

6 DANIEL ZARRILLI: Good morning

7 Chairperson Treyger. Thanks for having us today, and
8 members of the Committee on Recovery and Resiliency.

9 My name is Daniel Zarrilli, and I'm the Director of
10 the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency. I'm

11 joined here today by Henry Jackson, Deputy

12 Commissioner for Technology and Christina Farrell,

13 Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs from NYC

14 Emergency Management, as well as John Grathwol,

15 Deputy Director of the Office of Management and

16 Budget.

17 It's a pleasure to appear before you once
18 again. I've testified previously in front of the
19 committee on climate risks, coastal protection and
20 telecommunications resiliency among other topics.

21 Today, I'm here to discuss Intro 562, which seeks to
22 form a task force to examine recovery and rebuilding
23 of non-profit corporations, and houses of worship.

24 And the potential for collaboration in preparation
25 for future disasters. The Administration supports

2 this type of collaboration, and we look forward to
3 further discussions with the Council regarding the
4 best way to ensure an effective and efficient task
5 force.

6 To start off, I will provide the
7 committee with an overview of Sandy, and the role
8 that many local non-profits and houses of worship
9 provided to their devastated communities. Next, I'll
10 describe the city's ongoing work in a number of areas
11 including housing recovery and emergency preparation
12 to partner with local community organizations as we
13 continue to recover from Sandy. And finally, I'll
14 describe some of the actions the City intends to take
15 to collaborate with local community organizations as
16 we advance the City's resiliency program and prepare
17 for future risks.

18 So we need no reminder of the devastation
19 of Hurricane Sandy, a storm that claimed the lives of
20 44 New Yorkers, and caused \$19 billion in damages and
21 lost economic activity. In the immediate aftermath,
22 houses of worship and not-for-profit organizations
23 served a critical role in the early response and
24 recover efforts. Many residents faced with the
25 largest natural disaster to strike New York City in

1 its history, turned to their local organizations and
2 houses of worship. In some of the neighborhoods
3 hardest hit, we saw these organizations provide
4 shelter resources, distribute food, and other basic
5 supplies and provide social services. Faith based
6 and other organizations coordinated efforts to
7 distribute supplies and resources to volunteers on
8 the ground. We saw this to be true across the city.

10 In Red Hook, the Red Hook Initiative
11 provided a multitude of services that ranged from
12 providing supplies, hot meals and medical or legal
13 support. Volunteers served and delivered two meals a
14 day for up to a thousand people for three weeks. And
15 at its peak, over 1,200 people were coming to Red
16 Hook Initiative for support. In Far Rockaway, the
17 Community Church of the Nazarene served as a major
18 distribution hub for food and BIDs in Queens. And it
19 was one of the most active distribution sites after
20 the storm. In Coney Island, the gymnasium of Our
21 Lady of Solace Church was used as a major hub for
22 volunteer goods and services. On the Lower East
23 Side, CAAAV, a grassroots organization that works
24 with Asian immigrants and refugee populations

2 organized over 500 volunteers to distribute supplies
3 to the Lower East Side residents.

4 After power was restored in the
5 neighborhood, CAAAV deployed their volunteers to
6 assist recovery efforts in Coney Island, Red Hook and
7 the Rockaways. And in Staten Island, the Jewish
8 Community Center provided mental health services and
9 coordinated volunteer work across the borough. This
10 is just a sample of the types of incredible and even
11 heroic actions made by local community organizations
12 all across the impacted areas. Actions that the City
13 applauds and encourages. After all, resiliency in
14 the face of future disasters will come not just from
15 top-down actions and investments, but from the
16 grassroots collaboration as well.

17 As the recovery from Sandy continues, the
18 City of New York is working closely with several
19 organizations to help the city's residents
20 communicate about disaster risk reduction, and
21 provide other support services. The city whether
22 through the Office of Recovery and Resiliency, the
23 Office of Housing and Recovery or other city
24 agencies, will continue to rely on the local
25 knowledge and relationships of community-based

organizations to carry their recovery work forward.

In exploring these partnerships, many have asked

about federal funding opportunities for non-profit

entities and houses of worships. And while there are

federal restrictions on the provision of public funds

for religious purposes, FEMA for one has developed

guidance that specifies the conditions under which

federal funds can be directed toward an organization

that engages in both religious and non-religious

activities.

HUD has also weighed in on this topic in

its issuance of Community Development Block Grant

Disaster Recovery Funds. HUD recognizes the value of

community-based organizations of all types, and

encourages grantees, such as the City to engage in

support of such organizations to the extent permitted

by law and HUD's own regulations. The HUD

regulations require that such support in the form of

disaster recovery funds must be undertaken either by

a sub-recipient agreement or by contract. In either

case, it must have clearly defined activities, which

are eligible for the funds, and consistent with all

the cost-cutting [sic] federal regulations. Despite

any limitations, there is much that can be

2 accomplished through partnerships with local
3 community organizations. Let me describe a few
4 examples.

5 Since its inception the Housing Recovery
6 Office led by my colleague Amy Peterson has worked
7 and continues to work closely with non-profits and
8 houses of worship to meet homeowner needs not
9 otherwise addressed by public funding. Such
10 partnerships have helped meet the goals of Build it
11 Back's overhaul, which includes targeted
12 communication to homeowners and increased engagement
13 with Sandy impacted communities. They also help
14 address the needs of homeowners who may not be
15 eligible for Build it Back due to federal rules and
16 restrictions. HRO's partnerships with non-profits
17 and houses of worship can be broken into two main
18 categories: Construction and rehabilitation
19 partnerships, and counseling partnerships.

20 HRO partners with non-profits to meet
21 construction needs not addressed by public funds.
22 For those applicants that are ineligible for Build it
23 Back, and those who need work that will not be
24 covered by public dollars, there are several partners
25 who have stepped in. The Local Initiatives Support

2 Corporation, or LISC, under its subsidiary,
3 Neighborhood Revitalization New York City is one such
4 example. Their Mold Treatment Program developed
5 jointly by HRO and supported by the Mayor's Fund
6 provided mold treatment assistance to homeowners. By
7 September of this year the program reached its mold
8 treatment target in 2,000 homes. Additionally, this
9 home repair program offers-- This organization's
10 home repair program offers assistance to low-income
11 homeowners who are ineligible or unregistered for
12 Build it Back using a combination of general
13 contractors and voluntary organizations. That
14 includes Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding Together,
15 Friends of Rockaway, Saint Bernard Project. As of
16 December 1st, the program has completed repairs in
17 over 250 homes, and is on track to complete all
18 remaining work by March 2015.

19 HRO also partners with non-profits to
20 connect applicants to disaster recovery counseling
21 and services. Build it Back has partnered with the
22 Center for New York City Neighborhoods on a
23 counseling program that has served over, 2,300
24 applicants to date. This counseling is a vital
25 resource for homeowners who face financial, legal, or

2 construction design problems. Other counseling
3 partnerships include the New York Disaster Interfaith
4 Services on the Needs Roundtable that helps
5 distressed homeowners with financial aid. And
6 referrals to community-based services. And the Sandy
7 Neighborhood Design Help Desk that provides
8 applicants with architectural, insurance and mortgage
9 consultations.

10 There is also much that can be
11 accomplished through private sector funding and
12 partnerships. HRO and the Mayor's Fund have
13 successfully leveraged private and flexible dollars
14 to support recovery in the City. Since Sandy, the
15 Mayor's Fund has received over \$60 million from
16 nearly 21,000 individuals and organizations to
17 support emergency response needs and long-term
18 restoration efforts. The Mayor's Fund has worked
19 closely with city agencies, elected officials and
20 community partners to continue to identify the areas
21 where private dollars have the greatest impact.

22 The recovery initiatives also included
23 the Mayor's Funding working philanthropic partners to
24 launch a \$24 million bridge loan and grant program to
25 assist non-profits that suffered the most severe

2 losses, or operate in the most affected areas. The
3 Loan Program administered by the Fund for the City of
4 New York awarded 59 loans and 91 grants.

5 Additionally, a private- A public-private team led
6 by HPD, HDC and HRO in partnership with 16 of the
7 city's leading philanthropic organizations and the
8 Mayor's Fund raised over \$3.4 million in grants to
9 support community-based organizations across the five
10 boroughs in our efforts to reach vulnerable
11 populations under the Hurricane Sandy Housing and
12 Neighborhood Recovery Donor's Collaborative. These
13 are just a few examples of the many ways these
14 partnerships have supported organizations doing
15 effective recovery work.

16 Because non-profit organizations and
17 houses of worship serve an extremely valuable role in
18 Sandy's aftermath and ongoing recovery, the city
19 strongly desires to continue its engagement with
20 these critical groups to guide recovery and
21 resiliency planning. NYC Emergency Management has
22 several ongoing programs, which partner with local
23 organizations in preparedness initiatives. One such
24 initiative is the Community Emergency Response Team,
25 the CERT Program. that has 54 teams citywide, and

2 more than 1,800 active credentialed volunteers that
3 play an important role in preparedness training.
4 CERT supports their local communities by assisting
5 city agencies that prepare for and respond to
6 emergencies. And volunteers also work to educate
7 their communities about emergency preparedness
8 through OEM's Ready New York Program.

9 In order to capture information on local
10 spaces that could be used in emergency and non-
11 emergency times, NYC Emergency Management has
12 developed a community site survey. The survey was
13 created in response to observations that in
14 emergencies people tend to feel more comfortable
15 going to identified community spaces such American
16 Legion Halls or non-profit and faith-based facilities
17 instead of accessing government facilities. The
18 survey is meant to identify potential sites that fit
19 specific parameters, and are located in communities
20 that could support the City's Emergency Management
21 Operations, or be used for community outreach events.

22 Through the Citizen Corps Initiative, NYC
23 Emergency Management works to build the capacity of
24 community and faith-based organizations through
25 trainings and presentations at community meetings.

2 In 2014, NYC Emergency Management held a four-part
3 training series in collaboration with the Jewish
4 Community Relations Council and the Department of
5 Mental Health and Hygiene in the Bronx, Queens, and
6 Staten Island that focused on building resiliency and
7 response capacity at the local level. Citizen Corps
8 has engaged 4,000 community and faith-based groups
9 through other events such as the Special Needs
10 Symposium, which focuses on improving Emergency
11 planning for agencies that provide services for
12 special needs clients. Workshops on hurricane
13 outreach and community disaster networks, as well as
14 monthly training events that are specifically geared
15 towards non-profit and community based sectors.

16 Since Hurricane Sandy, many local
17 coalitions made up of non-profit and faith-based
18 organizations have started to develop emergency plans
19 for their communities. And through Citizen Corps NYC
20 Emergency Management offers guidance information to
21 advise their planning. And is currently developing
22 other planning tools to assist in this effort.

23 Finally, I will spend just a few minutes on long-term
24 resiliency planning. During the formulation of the
25 City's Resiliency Plan, a Stronger More Resilient New

2 York, the City Convened broad working groups composed
3 of clergy, civic leaders, elected officials and
4 residents. These working groups help to shape the
5 path, the City's path forward as we confront the
6 challenges of climate change and long-term recovery
7 from Hurricane Sandy.

8 All across the city we're advancing
9 projects as part of this resiliency program. And as
10 we do so, we remain committed to continue working
11 with these organizations and others to further
12 strengthen communities through open and frequent
13 communication. For example, the city worked closely
14 with HUD's Rebuild by Design Competition, which
15 included extensive community engaged resulting in the
16 award of three projects in the city. \$335 million on
17 the Lower East Side for innovative flood protection;
18 \$21 million in resiliency investments and planning in
19 Hunts Point; and \$60 million for a living shoreline
20 project in Staten Island being implemented by the
21 State. As these projects move forward, our office is
22 committed to, and has already begun meaningful
23 community engagement as we work closely with all
24 stakeholders, community boards, local non-profits and
25 residents to implement the projects. Other impending

2 projects such as flood protection in Red Hook, doing
3 construction in Breezy Point and the rest of the
4 resiliency program will follow a similar model.

5 To conclude, partnerships between
6 government and the non-profit sector serve a vital
7 role in emergency preparations, disaster recovery,
8 and long-term resiliency planning. The city strongly
9 encourages these existing partnerships to continue,
10 and new partnerships to be developed. We very much
11 wish to engage the Council, non-profits, and houses
12 of worship on continuing recovery efforts, and on
13 preparing our city for the risks of climate change in
14 the future. I thank the Council for its focus on
15 this important issue, and look forward to continuing
16 our collaboration with community organizations and
17 houses of worship. Thank you for your time.

18 [Pause]

19 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Thank you.
20 Are there any additional opening statements?

21 DANIEL ZARRILLI: No, we're happy to take
22 questions now.

23 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: All right. I
24 think we've also been joined by Council Member
25 Margaret Chin. So let me begin. Thank you for your

2 opening statements, Director Zarrilli. Has the City
3 conducted an assessment of the physical and economic
4 damages caused by Sandy to houses of worship and
5 community organizations?

6 DANIEL ZARRILLI: As part of our
7 resiliency planning, we looked all over the city at
8 neighborhood assets, infrastructure, and the City
9 Resiliency Plan I think does a comprehensive job of
10 looking at all the different impacts that we saw
11 during the storm. There have been, not to my
12 knowledge, any specific non-profit or houses of
13 worship report that has been issued by the city.

14 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: But you would
15 agree, as you did in your opening statement, that
16 houses of worship, and local organizations played a
17 critical role in the first response to the storm?

18 DANIEL ZARRILLI: That's correct.

19 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: And so, how
20 can we follow up on making sure that there is an
21 assessment that's done. And I think that that is
22 really the spirit and the purpose behind this intro
23 is to really get a very clear picture for us.
24 Obviously, to go over lessons learned from Sandy, but
25 to really better prepare moving forward. So and I

2 correct in saying that the Administration is open and
3 supportive of such dialogue through a task force
4 mechanism?

5 DANIEL ZARRILLI: I think the
6 Administration would certainly want to continue to
7 collaborate on this topic. And whether it's through
8 a task force, or other means. There is a lot that we
9 can continue to learn. And I think the important
10 thing is to then continue to apply that to what we're
11 doing going forward. And some of the activity that's
12 happening whether it's through our Housing Recovery
13 Office, through Emergency Management, through our own
14 Office of Recovery and Resiliency, we're going to
15 continue, and want to continue engaging with many
16 types of community organizations going forward.

17 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: See, I think
18 that the point that we have to make sure that we're
19 clear on is that if we haven't done an assessment of
20 houses of worship, and CBOs in the impacted areas,
21 and many of them I believe are still suffering. Some
22 of them are still closed down, and some houses of
23 worship I know at least in my district are opened
24 with their walls exposed. The bricks are showing.
25 We then as a city can't argue that we're fully

2 prepared when Saint-- You know, in my opinion these
3 locations are sanctuaries for families. As you
4 pointed out in your opening statement that, and the
5 sites are right, many people ran to their local
6 facilities before they ran to any of the official
7 government emergency shelters. I mean then we can't
8 argue that we're fully prepared, or that we're better
9 prepared because in reality we still have houses of
10 worship damaged. We still have organizations that--
11 And to be clear, I respect the First Amendment, but I
12 want to make clear that those houses of worship that
13 fed people, that gave them shelter, that provided
14 life-saving work after the storm, they didn't ask the
15 people what religion they were. They opened their
16 doors, and they saved lives. And at minimum, they
17 need to be reimbursed for those services, and to date
18 they have not. And that to me is really a shame, and
19 I would just, you know, like to hear your thoughts on
20 what can we do to make sure that this never happens
21 again?

22 DANIEL ZARRILLI: I think there are
23 probably a couple approaches to this. Ultimately,
24 the work that you hear that the city is conducting
25 and the potential collaboration through a task force

2 to better learn these lessons, and apply them to
3 future actions. We want to make sure that our
4 neighborhoods are best prepared for the risks of the
5 future. That doesn't mean that there is no risk, and
6 that doesn't mean that we are completely safe. We're
7 not quite sure what the next risk might look like.
8 But it's important that we're prepared for a broad
9 range of risks. And that's what, you know, our
10 Office of Emergency, or NYC Emergency Management is
11 actively pursuing. And a big part of that starts
12 with personal preparation. And so if you're the
13 Ready New York Program through the Know Your Zone
14 Campaign, all the things that we can do to continue
15 to educate the public on the types of risk that we
16 face is a piece of this. And, of course,
17 organizations play a role in that as well. And I'm
18 happy to turn this over to my colleagues. I mean
19 what I ultimately think is that it's starts with
20 personal preparation. People need to know what to do
21 in the event of emergencies. And then it's also
22 incumbent upon us to make sure that we are providing
23 the right education, and that we're providing the
24 services. The Site Survey I think will help evaluate

2 other locations that people can turn to. And we're
3 going to continue this engagement going forward.

4 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: No, exactly. So, as
5 Dan said, you know, we've been, you know, really I
6 think since 9/11, you know, OEM has expanded its role
7 working with non-profits. There are two sides, the
8 preparedness side, which is focused through the
9 parent-- through the Citizen Corps Council, and then
10 the response side, which is voluntary organizations
11 active in disaster, which is a nationwide initiative.
12 You know, one thing after the blackout of 2003, the
13 City, a large report that was done, and one thing
14 that OEM undertook with all the mayoral agencies was
15 to do continuity of operation plans for city
16 agencies. So when any type of disaster strikes, the
17 organization, the city agencies that provide services
18 can do so knowing that they've identified who their
19 critical staff are.

20 Those staff can get to work when public
21 transportation and roads are compromised. You know,
22 and they know what has to be done to keep things
23 running, and some of the other things that can be
24 delayed a little bit. As part of this and certainly
25 looking towards-- past Sandy, you know, and the

2 private sectors obviously does business continuity
3 very well. You know, we're looking to increase that,
4 and that's what Citizen Corps is doing. That's what
5 we did with JCRC and the Department of Health and the
6 other partners over the past year is to look at their
7 continuity of operation plan. Many of these are, you
8 know, the same way we look at small businesses.

9 They have to have plans how they're going
10 to communicate when communication lines are down.
11 How their staff and how their service providers will
12 get in, and all of that. So we're working with them,
13 but as you said, it's a-- You're never at 100%. We
14 don't know the next storm is not going to come up the
15 way Hurricane Sandy did. So we have to take a
16 holistic approach looking at all the hazards. As we
17 go into winter weather now, that obviously brings
18 different hazards as we faced over the summer. So
19 it's an ongoing group, an ongoing process. New
20 organizations are formed. Organizations change. So
21 we continue to work with them to take the lessons
22 that the city has learned, and that our private
23 sector partners have learned. And apply those to the
24 non-profit community.

2 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: I want to say
3 we are joined by Council Member Carlos Menchaca, who
4 has multiple hearings going on at the same time. And
5 also Council Member Rosie Mendez as well. You had
6 mentioned in your opening statement that the Mayor's
7 Fund collected over \$60 million in emergency response
8 relief efforts. Do we know what is left of that
9 fund?

10 DANIEL ZARRILLI: I'd have to follow up
11 with specifically on what is remaining, and the--

12 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: [interposing]
13 And what has been spent, and what has it been spent
14 on from that fund?

15 DANIEL ZARRILLI: We could follow up with
16 that comprehensive list of how exactly we're funding.
17 I mean, some of the work that we're doing is funding
18 the Housing Programs. So there have been a number of
19 different efforts. So we can come back with a full
20 answer.

21 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Right, because
22 I-- You know, the question is what type of aid is
23 available right now to a house of worship that is
24 either closed or barely open, Or, to a community-
25 based organization that actually did critical work,

2 is still doing critical work, but is on the verge of
3 bankruptcy or already-- You know, really just cannot
4 financially function. What type of aid is available
5 to either of these cases right now?

6 DANIEL ZARRILLI: You taking that?

7 [background comment, pause]

8 DANIEL ZARRILLI: I think there's--

9 Ultimately there is a lot of private philanthropy
10 that came to bear in helping private non-profits.
11 Some of that came through the Mayor's Fund, They
12 came through a number of other organizations, the
13 Donor's Collaborative and others. What is exactly
14 remaining now I think is something we have to get
15 back to you on. And the exact dollars that might be
16 remaining we could follow up on .

17 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: I think one of
18 the issues here--and my colleagues could feel free to
19 chime in if they wish after--is I believe that
20 there's been discussions with many organizations and
21 people. But I believe things have been happening in
22 piecemeal. So you might have a great conversation
23 with a group whether they're in Manhattan or Staten
24 Island or the Rockaways. But is that being
25 transmitted across the five boroughs? And the spirit

2 of our bill wishes to formalize this process so we
3 have a city that's sharing best practices across the
4 five boroughs. And having a more formalized plan,
5 and agreements with organizations and houses or
6 worship about what the expectations are. And did we
7 get the desired outcomes.

8 Because I could tell you that for all the
9 planning we put into, you know, prior to Sandy, we
10 saw very different outcomes. And I think that we
11 need to be realistic about those outcomes, and
12 realize that there are people who are still-- Who
13 did life saving work, and are either shut down, or
14 are barely open. So I think that when you mentioned
15 that you have been working with so many groups and
16 organizations, I'm not questioning their integrity,
17 but how do we share best practices right now across
18 the five boroughs? I mean if you have a great talk
19 in one borough, how does the rest of the city
20 benefit? I mean that's the purpose of this thing. I
21 don't know if you want to comment on that.

22 DANIEL ZARRILLI: Well, I think, you
23 know, this structure of a task force could be a
24 gateway to do this. And to continue to share those
25 best practices with all the organizations that are

2 out there. I mean there are a number of
3 organizations that are active during disaster. I
4 guess some are at-- Some are pre-planning and have a
5 better capacity during disasters than others. But we
6 want to continue to make sure that we're getting the
7 services to the people that need them. If we can use
8 this task force in a way to learn the lessons of the
9 past, and continue to refine what we do going
10 forward, then I think that's a good outcome.

11 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: Well, and on that,
12 you know, the Citizens Corps Council it's a national
13 initiative in New York City. It resides within
14 Emergency Management. You know, we invite everyone.
15 It's not-- the newsletter is not just for OEM to send
16 out information or city agencies. It's for all
17 partners. So if New York Disaster Interfaith has a
18 new initiative based on this material, from time to
19 time the Red Cross, all different organizations. We
20 send that out across. We sponsor training as Dan
21 alluded to we did a special needs symposium where we
22 had non-profit faith-based and city organizations
23 talking about the lessons learned from Sandy, and
24 what they've put in place. And we also had a

2 communications forum earlier this spring where we had
3 Red Hook Initiative, Occupy Sandy.

4 And other groups come in, groups that we
5 may not have been aware of or working with at the
6 beginning of Sandy. But seeing what we could learn
7 from them, and how we could communicate more fully.
8 So the Citizens Corps does. We're always looking,
9 you know, for more organizations, different ideas,
10 what works for one community or for one service
11 provider house of worship is not going to work for
12 all, as you said. So we look to see and we look
13 across the country. OEM participates in the big city
14 emergency managers, which are the 15 largest cities.
15 And, you know, they face different hazards. But a
16 lot of the consequences are the same. So if Houston
17 learns something from a storm that happens down
18 there, or if Seattle learns something, we take that
19 information back and see how that might apply, what
20 materials they may have. So we're always looking
21 really around the world to see what things may
22 happen, and how we can push that out. And we welcome
23 collaborating with you, and you helping us on that
24 effort to amplify.

2 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Christina, if
3 I may, do you believe that Sandy exposed capacity
4 issues at OEM?

5 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: I mean OEM is 180
6 people. You know, our mantra is how do we get big
7 enough fast enough? We brought in-- We had staff
8 come back, our Reservist Program that we now put into
9 place. But then we were making phone calls to former
10 employees who know our systems, who know to work in
11 the Emergency Operations Center. We had staff. We
12 had other emergency managers come from as far away as
13 Hawaii. We had Philadelphia. We had Maine,
14 Louisiana. I'm sure lots of other--

15 HENRY JACKSON: [interposing] Texas,
16 yeah, and that--

17 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: Without a doubt we
18 needed a lot of help.

19 HENRY JACKSON: [off mic] Yeah, and, you
20 know, the organization, the voluntary organization is
21 active in disasters. It's that group that shares
22 that--

23 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Could you
24 speak into the mic, please?

2 HENRY JACKSON: [on mic] Oh, I'm sorry.
3 That organization, the Voluntary Organization Active
4 in Disaster, it's that organization that shares best
5 practices really across that industry. And that's
6 where we encourage people to work with them. Because
7 then for us, you know, we can have the VOADs in EOC
8 [sic] and sort of play that role with where we a
9 multitude of non-profits and organizations that are
10 trying to help us. So from a central sort of
11 organizational perspective, we're trying to push
12 people towards let's do some pre-planning so we know
13 who you are before hand. And we can share those best
14 practices in addition to personal preparedness. It's
15 organizational preparedness, and we want the
16 organizations to be resilient so they can help us.
17 Because, yes, Sandy was overwhelming and we couldn't
18 get big enough fast enough? And we need everybody to
19 help us.

20 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: I mean how
21 many current employees currently work at OEM? How
22 many total?

23 HENRY JACKSON: It's under 200.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK TREYGER: I think
25 clearly there are capacity issues at OEM, and I think

2 that that is something that we must address as a
3 city. The city is growing and the Administration, of
4 course, boasts of its growth. And we welcome growth,
5 but we need to make sure that especially in the areas
6 that are very vulnerable, these are some high-density
7 areas. I know OEM is a coordinating body, which
8 partners with other first responders. But I do
9 believe that 180 is insufficient. I'd like to--

10 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: [interposing] See
11 that's one thing to remember that OEM we're not
12 providing the services. We're not even necessarily
13 providing the contracts. The value that we bring is
14 that we have 140 seats in the Emergency Operation
15 Center. The City Council is represented through the
16 Speaker's Office. We have our Human Services
17 Emergency Function, which has non-profits. We have a
18 private sector there. We have other partners. We
19 have City Hall and OMB, and the Law Department there
20 to help us expedite things. So really, you know,
21 it's the coordinating body, but the boots on the
22 ground will always be Police, and Fire and all the
23 other agencies, the volunteers that come through Red
24 Cross. The CERT teams, which allow us, you know,
25 1,800. We graduated 190 more members last night, so

2 we're closing in on 2,000. That's really even if we
3 doubled our staff, our core competency in the way
4 that we run things is always going to be on the
5 coordinating side, not on the direct service
6 provision side.

7 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: I'll just say,
8 and then I'll turn it over to my colleague, that the
9 issue that we discussed at the last hearing is that
10 many people couldn't get through to Police or Fire.
11 I mean that's something that we must still address.
12 They couldn't get through to 911, and that's why I
13 think it's just as crucial. And certainly we should
14 always encourage people to call 911. But if you
15 can't reach them, then how do we make sure that local
16 groups, local people are prepared to respond in times
17 of crisis? And I will say that these organizations
18 I'm sure they do great work, but there is in my
19 opinion a disconnect between them and the local
20 communities that we have to bridge. And that's what
21 we're trying to address, and I'm sure that there are
22 great discussions going on. But how do we make sure
23 that local communities at the grassroots level are
24 getting that information that's being discussed, you

2 know, across the city and elsewhere. I turn to
3 Council Member Carlos Menchaca.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you,
5 Chair, and thank you for your testimony. I want to
6 really start by thanking the Chair and all the
7 members of the Committee and this piece of
8 legislation. And all the members that are supporting
9 this piece of legislation. What this points to, and
10 I think this is what we've been drilling down on is
11 the requirement for a response from the City in
12 coordination with the City Council, this committee
13 and our local organizations including our houses of
14 worship for a transformational change within the
15 city. But what we do know also, and this is
16 something that we understood from the get-go, and on
17 the ground during those days after Sandy, is that the
18 federal government has so many restrictions, and
19 confines us to our ability. Now, we need to get to a
20 point where we can express that to the federal
21 government. Because what's happening in Ohio or Utah
22 or wherever else the response required in the city is
23 different, and it's going to be different. We have a
24 high population, a high-density population urban
25 waterfront. That's going to require something

1 different. And so this bill really kind of looks at
2 one piece. So, I'm glad you brought the VOADs and
3 the long-term recovery groups. All those pieces are
4 federal infrastructure, and we have been-- have been
5 doing a valiant effort. These are structures that
6 are national. We need to figure out a way to change
7 the national confined nature of both the funding and
8 the structures to fit New York City. New York City
9 is very unique on all these fronts. And so, I'm
10 hoping we can use this piece of legislation, use this
11 committee and everything we've spoken about to change
12 that federal-- those federal guidelines. And as
13 difficult as it looks right now, we need to be on
14 record with a plan. And this is happening on the
15 silos of the immigrant population that continues to
16 be separated from all this, public housing. All
17 these other kind of siloed conversations that the
18 Chair was talking about. All this needs to kind of
19 get pulled together and expressed from the Mayor's
20 Office, from OEM that used to be a leader nationally.
21 All of us need to understand how we-- At least have
22 an action plan even if Congress is going to lag. We
23 need to be able to at least express what we're
24 talking about in a big way. And so, really that's my
25

2 main comment about where we are today. And how we
3 need to change the way that the City interacts with
4 the confined nature of the federal government. And
5 so again thank you for I think your support. And the
6 last thing I want to say is that on the ground, these
7 houses of worship are sometimes the only places to go
8 to. In Red Hook, and the committee report really
9 outlines it. So I' not going to go through what we
10 experienced in Red Hook. But it was the houses of
11 worship that we were able to do our distribution, and
12 heat our food along with RHI, of course, and others.
13 But this is an incredible and important piece, one
14 piece of the puzzle. And so, I'm hoping we can get
15 there. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Thank you, and
17 I would add certainly my colleagues in this committee
18 have done a lot of great work in their communities
19 that have been-- You know, Council Member Chin,
20 Menchaca, and others who were here before have done
21 great work. And I actually met with an organization
22 in my colleague's district, Council Member Menchaca's
23 district, that are Red Hook volunteers who I was
24 speaking about earlier that actually is visiting
25 families in Red Hook removing mold from their

2 properties. And they're on the verge of bankruptcy
3 if not already. We met a few months back, and that's
4 an example of an organization that's actually doing
5 life saving work. And they're sources of funding I
6 guess have run dry. There is a disconnect between
7 what we think is happening and what is actually
8 happening. And I think that we have to be cognizant
9 of that. And I think that we have to formalize this
10 and to put this in writing to make sure that
11 obviously right the wrong. But we also need to make
12 sure this never happens again.

13 I would like to ask a question about, you
14 know, there are other cities across this country that
15 have experienced natural disasters and crisis. I
16 know the directors really did a lot of work in
17 preparing for the CERT Report. But to your knowledge
18 I mean have there been any non-profits that you're
19 aware of, or any organizations that were able to
20 establish a sizeable recovery fund like the former
21 Bush and Clinton Katrina Funds, which they did in New
22 Orleans to assist houses of worship and
23 organizations? That's what they did in New Orleans.
24 I mean former President Clinton and former President
25 Bush teamed up together to raise some funds working

2 with government, public and private partnerships, to
3 help houses of worship in New Orleans post-Katrina.
4 Has any effort that you're aware of been undertaken
5 in New York City?

6 [Pause]

7 [background comments]

8 HENRY JACKSON: Yeah, I mean that-- I
9 don't know of anything specific and I think you've
10 sort of asked that question is have we done the
11 survey. And I think that's the point of your
12 legislation is to go ahead and do that. We certainly
13 are learning from what other jurisdictions are doing.
14 And so, one of the things and listen, you know, we
15 have to comply with the federal regulations as well,
16 and that can be frustrating because there are a lot
17 of them. For example, loosening up a little bit on
18 allowing voluntary hours that are used in response to
19 a disaster to count for the local match, the FEMA
20 match. And in New Jersey they did a very good job of
21 it and tracked all those hours. And jurisdictions
22 really around the country are beginning to look at
23 that and say if we can track those hours then it
24 helps the locals meet the FEMA match. And so, that's
25 an example I think of FEMA recognizing and of us--

2 and we're starting to do that work here. I talked to
3 the VOAD and saying really document your hours so
4 that we can get credit for it, and you can get credit
5 for it. So it's a long hard process, but we're--
6 You know we're working with all those folks to try to
7 make it better.

8 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: I just want to
9 crystallize this point to say that when the Mayor
10 pledges, and I appreciate the pledge to make our
11 communities whole again, houses of worship and some
12 of these organizations, they are the centers of their
13 neighborhoods. They really are places where people
14 gather and come together. Particularly not just this
15 time of the year, but year round. And there are some
16 communities that still have their main sanctuaries
17 shattered. So they're not whole again. So
18 obviously, we have to focus on rebuilding our homes,
19 getting reimbursement checks out and helping small
20 businesses recover their infrastructure. This is no
21 question about that, and resiliency is a critical
22 component to this. But they will not be made whole
23 until their houses of worship are made whole. Until
24 organizations have capacity again to serve and help
25 people that they've been helping way before this

2 storm. And I'll also add that in many of these
3 impacted communities I hear stories where many new
4 groups came in. We welcome help, but why aren't we
5 supporting the local existing organizations that have
6 been doing this work prior to the storm. So to be
7 clear, and I think that we're hearing from all sides
8 now is that does the Administration support Intro 562
9 to get this process formalized, and to really engage
10 in ongoing discussion to get this right? If you
11 could comment on that.

12 DANIEL ZARRILLI: Sure, I mean I think
13 the lead into that, you know, there's a lot of
14 challenging issues with claiming that we're going to
15 make every single house of worship whole. There are
16 federal regulations, there are First Amendment
17 issues, and there are those things. You know,
18 putting that all aside I think the organizations that
19 serve their communities best usually come from the
20 communities. And we want to make sure that we are
21 supporting that. So in terms of engaging on this
22 task force, you know, we would absolutely-- If this
23 bill passes, we are absolutely committed to see that
24 we have an effective task force process to learn the
25 lessons of what is within the realm of possible, and

2 what-- some things we might want to do differently.
3 And suggestions we want to make going forward.

4 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: But do you
5 believe that we need such a task force?

6 DANIEL ZARRILLI: I think it can be
7 helpful. I think it could certainly be helpful to
8 continue to fill in the gaps of our knowledge and
9 learn from other jurisdictions on how to better
10 prepare for future disasters.

11 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: My colleague,
12 Council Member Margaret Chin has a question.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.
14 I wanted to go a little further to explore what
15 happened. I mean during Sandy a lot of the
16 community-based organizations, houses of worships got
17 involved. But has the city ever-- I mean this is
18 from the last hearing when we talked about the
19 emergency shelter. Like in my district there is only
20 one high school that was designated as the emergency
21 shelter. And in reality, if people did evacuate from
22 their home, there's not enough space there. And also
23 it's not that close. It's like for some people who
24 are living further down in Lower Manhattan if there
25 is no public transportation, it's a long walk to get

2 to the shelter. So has the city really thought about
3 the local community-based organizations that serve as
4 a community base, emergency shelter. Or, just a
5 place for people to go get supplies, food, and
6 information.

7 To really coordinate all that effort?

8 Because like in my district, I have a lot of
9 settlement houses. It's been around for over a
10 hundred years, and those are the organizations that
11 people in the community know they can go there and
12 get service. How do we utilize and really coordinate
13 everyone so that the organization itself can be
14 prepared to take on that role? And also, to see how
15 we can help them prepare. Because one of the
16 community centers that we had in NYCHA was run by--
17 The Hamilton Madison House. We used that space for
18 serving food because that was the only place that had
19 light and heat. But they don't have the resources
20 and the capacity to do that kind of work. But it was
21 an emergency. The staff volunteered.

22 Everybody pitched in, and I remember we
23 did try to work with OEM to see if we could keep the
24 center open overnight as an emergency shelter. And
25 we tried very hard, and at the end we couldn't do it.

2 I mean it was a place where there as heat, and people
3 didn't have heat at home. So I'm just looking ahead
4 at how we can do this legislation, the task force to
5 really organize so that every community will be
6 prepared with the organization that they have. I
7 mean we're doing a lot of individual preparedness.
8 There are a lot of workshops going on, but we have
9 these valuable community based organizations. How do
10 we get them involved? I mean what do you need to
11 help you be an emergency center? Do you need to
12 upgrade your kitchen or your bathroom facility so
13 that they can be on call, and they can be ready to
14 help with this effort.

15 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: So there are a couple
16 things. If we're talking about a coastal storm and
17 an evacuation, we have centers designated. They have
18 to be out of the coastal storm zone. The geography
19 of your district is such that a lot of it is in a
20 Coastal Storm Zone, and it has expanded. Last year
21 we went from three zones to six. We all know about
22 climate change and what is happening. So over time,
23 more of the city may be in Coastal Storm Evacuation
24 Zones, which is the reality of, you know, where we
25 are in 2014. You know, the schools, and Henry runs

2 all the logistics at OEM. Basically, our evacuation
3 centers are public schools, high schools, and CUNY
4 facilities. You know, we need large facilities.
5 They 100% have to be accessible. You know, they need
6 to have facilities for food and bathrooms. They need
7 to be able to take pallets of materials in and out.

8 So we have these 64 evacuation centers.
9 Behind that, we have up to 500 additional shelters
10 that we will open based on need. So there are
11 schools in that, but for an evacuation of a coastal
12 storm, all of the centers have to be out of the
13 evacuation zones. Which for coastal districts such
14 as Coney Island or the Rockaways or the Lower East
15 Side and parts of Staten Island, people will have to
16 travel more--further than they had to in the past.
17 Once the danger of the storm has past, which happens
18 rather quickly in the City since we're about sea
19 level, then we do look to the community spaces. We
20 had mentioned-- Dan had mentioned earlier OEM has
21 instituted our Community Space Survey. I have copies
22 here, which I can share. We've sent it around to
23 different groups. We gave so far three groups, the
24 JCC in Staten Island, and the American Legion Hall in
25 Broad Channel and the Breezy Point Community Center.

2 They filled it out and sent it back to
3 us. We did this in consort-- External Affairs did it
4 with our logistics group where this is a starting
5 point to see are places accessible? Do they have--
6 What kind of heat and air conditioning? You know,
7 their kitchen facilities. All of those things. You
8 know, if somebody says, No, we're not wired or
9 something, that, you know, that doesn't mean that
10 doesn't preclude us from using it. It just is
11 additional information for us. So that when we're
12 looking to site centers after an emergency, you know,
13 it might very well be that we could use a center, a
14 NYCHA center or other things like that. So there's a
15 little-- You know, a little separation between the
16 two of what an emergency evacuation center is, and
17 what the centers are.

18 And the other thing, which is important
19 to know, is if we're talking about a fire or a water
20 main break, or if a large building is vacated because
21 of a gas leak or any other kind of thing, we
22 obviously don't have the restrictions of having to
23 get out of the evacuation zone. So if something
24 happened in your district, a large fire or something
25 where we had to open up a shelter, we're at much

2 greater liberty to open up something closer to the
3 community. But some of the things, you know, the
4 number one thing we're under a Federal Court Mandate
5 that we have to ensure that all of our-- If we open
6 something to the public under the auspices of the
7 city, it has to be 100% accessible for people with
8 all different types of special needs. But we're
9 happy to talk more about the Community Space Survey
10 and how we can sign up the different organizations in
11 your district.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So have you
13 started. Have you started the survey?

14 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: The survey, we've
15 been sending the survey out since October.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I really encourage
17 you to work with the City Council. You know work
18 with us so that we can--

19 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: [interposing] We
20 will.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --you know give you
22 a list of places that you can do that. Because as
23 you say after the storm, you know, that's when people
24 come out, and they're looking for information and
25

2 looking for resources. And that's why, you know,
3 that's where these organizations--

4 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: [interposing] Right.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --are so important.
6 But I think we also have to have resources available
7 to help these groups. Let's say if they need to
8 upgrade a bathroom, or kitchen so that they could be
9 useful. And the reason is that, and if I'm not
10 prepared to help to do that then we're wasting-- You
11 know, we're wasting a valuable place. So I think we
12 need to look at how we can put together some
13 resources to help these areas. Where they are not
14 accessible, how do we make them accessible. Because
15 those are the facilities that people go to because
16 they know. And a lot of them are houses of worship,
17 too. So if we can really do a survey of all the
18 available space and centers in every district within
19 our city, then I think we will be on a better
20 footing. So I really encourage you to work with us
21 to get those surveys out.

22 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: [interposing] We
23 will. We've made this available to the Speaker's
24 Office, but we're happy to also give it to individual
25 Council offices.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: All right, I
4 mean particularly to this committee. I mean this is-

5 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: I have the cards
6 here. I'm going to give this to you.

7 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: And I
8 appreciate that. I mean-- and I just want to just
9 point out, you know, and it's not just in New York,
10 but my colleague makes a very good point. If you
11 look at just what history has already shown us, some
12 of the sites that we have designated as emergency
13 sites during Sandy they were not fully stocked. I
14 could tell you stories I've heard about FDR High
15 School in Southern Brooklyn. That was not at
16 capacity, but if it was they were short in supplies.
17 If you look at the documentary of what took place in
18 New Orleans post Katrina, their evacuation site was
19 the Super Dome, and we all saw what happened there.
20 So, there's a distrust of government that we should
21 not ignore, and we have to work hard to regain the
22 trust of residents. And to really build a better
23 system, and we will only do that by speaking and
24 listening to the people who are on the ground, who
25 live this everyday, who deal with-- You know,

2 everyday. You know, think about this houses of
3 worship and local organizations they deal with crisis
4 probably everyday. Not Sandy type but local
5 community groups deal with some issue everyday,
6 whether it's a death in the family, whether it's
7 someone being evicted out of their apartment.
8 Everyday there's some issue, and they have trust, and
9 they have confidence of residents. We have to tap
10 into that trust, and make sure that we're building
11 that same trust.

12 I just want to make sure that I'm-- Just
13 to get clarity, are houses of worship and local CBOs
14 eligible to receive money from the Mayor's Funds, Mr.
15 Zarrilli?

16 [Pause]

17 DANIEL ZARRILLI: [off mic] I think a
18 prime example of community--

19 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: If you could
20 speak into the mic. Okay.

21 [background comments]

22 DANIEL ZARRILLI: [on mic] Sorry about
23 that.

24 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Yeah. Go
25 ahead.

2 DANIEL ZARRILLI: So I think the answer
3 is definitely on community-based organizations.
4 There have been many community-based organizations
5 that have received funds through the Mayor's Fund. I
6 do want to check back on the houses of worship
7 particularly. I think the answer is yes, but I want
8 to confirm that for you.

9 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Right, and
10 just to be-- and you'll get us the amount that's
11 left in the Sandy money that was raised--

12 DANIEL ZARRILLI: [interposing] Yes, we
13 can follow up after-- after the hearing on that.

14 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: --and which
15 groups got it.

16 DANIEL ZARRILLI: Correct.

17 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: I'd appreciate
18 that.

19 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: I think just like--

20 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: [interposing]
21 Yeah.

22 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: --you know, for the
23 non-profits and all the different groups, they're all
24 different levels, it's the same. You know, houses of
25 worship obviously are not one size fits all. There

2 are some that have, you know, a separate fund or a
3 non-profit that might run a food pantry or soup
4 kitchen or a day care or other things. So there may
5 be some stipulations. Some may be eligible because
6 they're already-- Might even have contracts with the
7 city to run some type of program as opposed to a
8 church that may, you know, only provide-- On a daily
9 basis provide services to their congregation and then
10 were generous enough to open up their doors during
11 Sandy. So I think that every case just as is the
12 case with Build it Back and with other programs, you
13 know, is going to be different based on the reality
14 of what that organization is doing.

15 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Which brings
16 me to my next question. I mean are you familiar with
17 a bill that was-- actually passed the House of
18 Representatives introduced by Congress Members Smith,
19 Grace Meng of New York and I think King of New York
20 as well, HR 592 that would amend the Stafford Act,
21 and to allow houses of worship and basically
22 organizations to be eligible for FEMA grants. That
23 provide just what you described. If a house of
24 worship provides public educational or recreational,
25 social activities, FEMA is so strict now that they do

2 not give them anything. But this act is looking to
3 make sure that in certain cases where the house of
4 worship that sustained damage, that actually provides
5 public services, would be eligible. Are you familiar
6 with this bill.

7 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: I'm not familiar with
8 that specific bill, but I can say ever since 9/11,
9 New York City has worked with the Mayor's Office.
10 New York City OEM has worked with the Mayor's Office,
11 and our congressional counterparts to try to amend
12 the Stafford Act. As Councilman Menchaca had alluded
13 to, New York City has very specific needs. And so we
14 learned after 9/11 what some shortcomings or what
15 some things may not have worked as well in New York.
16 So we certainly have over the last 13 years, you
17 know, worked. There are changes that Emergency
18 Management and the City would like to see to the
19 Stafford Act. And we have worked with the Washington
20 office and our Congressional representatives to try
21 to bring to bear.

22 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: And this is
23 really if you could speak to whether or not the
24 Administration supports this bill to make houses of
25 worship-- I mean that sends I think a strong message

2 I think from New York that our houses of worship that
3 actually provide these types of services will be
4 eligible for FEMA grants.

5 DANIEL ZARRILLI: So I think we'd be
6 available to take a position on a specific bill, but
7 there are a lot of things that we continue to
8 advocate for changes in the Stafford and with FEMA
9 policy and operations. And so we'll have to get back
10 to you once we've had a chance to review that.

11 CHAIRPERSON MARK TREYGER: Yes, I think
12 it will send a strong message. Again, I full respect
13 the first amendment, but I don't think that there's--
14 I don't think that there really is conflict here. I
15 think the issue is that if a house of worship
16 provides life saving work and has space in the house
17 of worship that provides public benefits that's non-
18 denominational. I mean for us just to close our eyes
19 and say, we hope things will get better, I mean
20 that's just insufficient. And so, I think that's
21 what Congresswoman Grace Meng is trying to address in
22 her bill. It did pass the House. I think it stalled
23 in the Senate. But now we have a new Congress
24 shaping up next year, and we'll see the status of
25 that.

2 One of the things, and then we'll turn it
3 over to the next panel is if you look at a small
4 scale example of where I think one thing I think we
5 should be doing in New York, look at the Department
6 of Sanitation's approach to dealing with snow storms.
7 One of the things that they've done is that they've
8 actively recruited and sent out word to residents
9 that if you'd to work to help clean up the snow
10 storm, there's an agreed upon wage. There are
11 expectations, rules and regulations. That they pre--
12 in advance of the storm agree to, and there is
13 clarity on both sides about what their expectations
14 are. And when the storm hits, and you have many
15 seniors and people with disabilities and other
16 families who have difficulties cleaning up snow, they
17 can rely on that list of people who provide those
18 services, and they get reimbursed to a rate that they
19 have agreed to. That's kind of what we're trying to
20 do on a bigger level.

21 That we should have in New York City a
22 very up-to-date grassroots list of organizations
23 across the city that already do this work. That want
24 to do this work, whether they're a house of worship
25 or not or a CBO. So there are no surprises about

2 expectations, an agreed to contract. Basically, pre-
3 contractual agreements. So when it comes time to
4 basically remember the work that they've done, there
5 is no more well give me your receipts, give me this.
6 We have an agreement in place already. That's the
7 problem because if you speak to people today, they'll
8 say well I have to now search two years of records.
9 And it's very hard, and that's what Build it Back
10 goes through probably day to day as well and others,
11 and small businesses. Do you understand kind of the
12 small-scale example I gave you on how we deal with
13 snowstorms? And how I think that we can kind of use
14 that model on a bigger scale to deal with crisis? Is
15 that clear on your part? Any thoughts on that?

16 DANIEL ZARRILLI: I think the model is
17 clear. I mean I'll turn it over to my colleagues to
18 talk about some of the things that we do already in
19 that vain around Emergency Management. But the
20 concept of being prepared and having contracts in
21 place, we do it all over the city whether it's the
22 Emergency Construction Contracts or other things that
23 we're pursuing so--

24 CHRISTIAN FARRELL: [interposing] Yeah, I
25 mean I think the analogy with the snow laborers, and,

2 you know, the clearing out of areas is, you know, the
3 local version of that is really CERT. And that's,
4 you know, we had at least two-thirds of our CERT
5 members who are pre-trained to come with their teams.
6 Who know their communities, who speak the languages.
7 You know, who toil heroically for hour upon hour
8 knowing that they're never going to be paid. You
9 know, they came. They set up the shelters. They
10 take down the shelters. They help deliver food, and
11 different things. And so I think, you know, we have
12 when you're talking about individuals and coming out
13 to help, you know, that's really what CERT is around.
14 And how we manage that during emergencies. And then
15 obviously during small scale, and they also
16 coincidentally shovel out hydrants and things like
17 that to help during winter storms. You know looking
18 at the non-profits, and the larger I think, you know,
19 that's really where the local voluntary organizations
20 act in disaster. The VOAD comes into place keeping
21 those lists up to day and, you know, looking to see
22 what people's competencies are. As the City looked
23 after Sandy, there was a comprehensive after action
24 process. We came up with, you know, may play books,
25 and looking at things like donations, volunteer

2 management, things that non-profits are very skilled
3 at. And as you noted, do on a daily basis, and, you
4 know, so making sure that we could use them to the
5 fullest extent.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah, I agree.

7 CERT is wonderful. It's an excellent resources, and
8 we have CERT in my district. I think they do
9 excellent work. I do think that even with CERT there
10 is still capacity issues especially with grand
11 emergencies or a major crisis. And I think that we
12 need to expand model, and I think that there is in my
13 opinion a moral hazard when there are large
14 organizations getting funded to do work that are not
15 evident or visible in the local communities. I mean
16 I recall immediately after the storm the former
17 Borough President of Staten Island really called the
18 Red Cross, for example. When there were
19 organizations in the local communities that were
20 doing the work before many--FEMA and anyone else came
21 in.

22 So I think that we-- There's a moral
23 hazard when larger groups, and I'm not questioning
24 them. I think everyone truly cares about this
25 issues. But when there are groups on the ground that

2 do this work, and they haven't been reimbursed a
3 dime. And there are larger groups that get all sorts
4 of funding from a variety of sources, there's a
5 problem. And I think that we need to bridge that
6 problem. We need to bridge that gap, and I think
7 this is what we're trying to do now. By engaging
8 with--at the grassroots with all these impacted areas
9 to hear from them, to listen to their stories, get
10 their feedback. And to share best practices across
11 the city, and make sure that what happened after
12 Sandy really never happens again. Okay. Thank you.

13 DAN ZARRILLI: Thank you.

14 HENRY JACKSON: Thank you.

15 [Pause, background comments]

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay. We'd like to
17 call the next panel. Rabbi Brickman to come up.

18 [Pause]

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I think it's Jane.
20 I'm not sure how to pronounce the last name. It
21 starts with an S, from Enterprise Community. Peter,
22 did you fill out a card? Did you fill out a card,
23 Peter? Did you-- You know, because I-- Also,
24 Joseph--

2 JOSEPH ROSENBERG: [off mic]

3 [interposing] Rosenberg.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --Rosenberg from
5 Catholic Community Relations Council.

6 [background comments, pause]

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Peter, if you could
8 fill out the card to come up.

9 PETER: Sure.

10 [background comments, pause]

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, so just to
12 be-- We have so Joseph Rosenberg, Rabbi Brickman,
13 Jane-- Is that right?

14 LAURIE SCHOEMAN: [off mic] Schoeman.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Schoeman? My
16 goodness. [laughter]

17 LAURIE SCHOEMAN: I printed it also.

18 [sic]

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And as a former
20 teacher, I used to be pretty good at reading
21 handwriting. Forgive me. And I believe Peter
22 Bodegas [sp?] is on his way. Okay, so we may begin.
23 I guess we'll start from this way, or--

24 RABBI BRICKMAN: [off mic] It's better if
25 you go that way?

2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, Rabbi,
3 please. Rabbi Brickman from the Sea Gate Community.

4 [Pause]

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Oh, is the
6 microphone on, Rabbi? Thank you.

7 [background comment]

8 RABBI BRICKMAN: It's on?

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes.

10 RABBI BRICKMAN: Okay. Thank you very
11 much Councilman and your committee, and I noticed
12 that it says over there "Recovery and Resilience." I
13 hope that you can accomplish what you have to
14 accomplish and it will be rest and relaxation.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [laughs] Thank
16 you.

17 RABBI BRICKMAN: So I want to give you
18 the view of what's called the boots on the ground. I
19 realize that you already appreciate that the faith-
20 based organizations have been doing. Being on the
21 ground, people reach out to where they're
22 comfortable, and where they know, and where they go
23 to first. It's true and I can appreciate that we do
24 have issues of First Amendment. Nevertheless, when a
25 tragedy happens, we all become Americans. We all

2 become New York City citizens. It's irrelevant which
3 way you worship the day before the tragedy. And I'm
4 not being exclusive to Sandy, although that's the
5 most recent, which we are discussing today. It could
6 happen today or tomorrow or something. Then we're
7 not Catholics. We're not Muslims. We're not Jews.
8 We're all American citizens and we all help each
9 other. And this is from the boots on the ground.
10 This is what I witnessed first hand for weeks before
11 the major organizations could even get into the
12 shorefront community such as Coney Island, Far
13 Rockaway, Sea Gate ,and Red Hook, et cetera. The Red
14 Cross wasn't there until a week and a half, two weeks
15 later. But food distribution, clothes distribution,
16 comfort, et cetera for all faiths that happened from
17 all places or houses of worship. Many of them I
18 would include as exclusive are at the bricks today.
19 No plumbing, no toilets. Should there be an
20 emergency today, God forbid, who knows what will
21 happen? And, therefore, I would like to say that I
22 understand that we do have divisions of church and
23 state. Nevertheless, we don't divide when it comes
24 to an emergency. And just like in a case of
25 emergency such as, for example, war. All the private

2 industries such as merchant mariners become part of
3 the sailors, become part of the Navy. Likewise, when
4 it comes to an emergency, I believe all of the
5 clergy, all of the houses of worship all become part
6 of the city emergency house of management. So,
7 therefore, I appeal to the Council, and to all the
8 brilliant minds who you are work with to find some
9 way to be able to legally help us, help the
10 community. I don't want to take your time. Thank
11 you so much.

12 RABBI BRICKMAN: Thank you. Thank you,
13 Rabbi, very much. Peter, do I start with--? Either
14 way is fine. Thank you

15 JOSEPH ROSENBERG: Okay. Okay, thank
16 you. Good morning, Chairman Treyger, Council Member
17 Chin. I'm Joseph Rosenberg, Executive Director of
18 the Catholic Community Relations Council, the CCRC.
19 We were established in 2008 by the Archdiocese of New
20 York and the Archdiocese of Brooklyn to represent
21 church throughout New York City on local legislative
22 and policy matters. So I'm pleased to be here
23 testify on Intro 562. We welcome this legislation
24 creating Hurricane Sandy community groups and houses
25 of worship recovery task force. And we want to

2 ensure that certain issues are included as this task
3 force moves forward. When Sandy hit the New York
4 City area, pastors, priests, nuns, rabbis, and the
5 congregations, the longstanding sources of support
6 and comfort to communities, provided food, shelter
7 and relief to thousands of displaced and desperate
8 residents by city shorefront neighborhoods. These
9 institutions were the first responders, as the rabbi
10 indicated. In many instances provided the space and
11 facilities to allow subsequent federal, state and
12 city relief efforts. Despite the catastrophic damage
13 caused by Sandy, houses of worship although having
14 suffered tremendous damages, continued to open their
15 doors to serve as food pantries and places of shelter
16 to the people who lost everything overnight.

17 Although Sandy struck New York over two years ago,
18 the pain of loss in life, and the loss of shelter
19 lingers. Rebuilding efforts proceed, but far too
20 slowly. Not only were homes of countless numbers of
21 shorefront residents destroyed, but over 120 Catholic
22 churches throughout the five boroughs of the city
23 were damaged. But most of them determined to be
24 ineligible for receiving any FEMA public assistance
25 to help with rebuilding efforts. We are pleased that

2 three members of this eleven-member task force will
3 be clergy who specifically participated in the relief
4 work. This acknowledges the role and importance that
5 houses of worship played and continue to play during
6 this ongoing crisis. The crisis perhaps faded by
7 time in the minds of some, but an unending nightmare
8 for so many residents of our city.

9 The legislation specifies findings and
10 recommendations that the task force should focus
11 upon. It is helpful the bill requires the task force
12 to study the possible sources of recovery and
13 building made available to houses of worship. But
14 also the extent that financial aid was deprived to
15 houses of worship, which you alluded, Mr. Chairman.
16 Because they did not fit into certain narrowly
17 defined categories. One such example is FEMA's
18 insistence that houses of worship despite providing
19 an essential role, especially when government relief
20 is not immediately available, did not fit into their
21 definition of providing governmental services and
22 are, therefore, ineligible. We urge the scope of the
23 task force mission include recommendations to promote
24 the most effective means of collaboration. Not-for-
25 profits and houses of worship are often negatively

2 impacted in their ability to provide help to those
3 affected by disasters. And different departments and
4 different levels of government are inefficient in
5 coordinating the responses. We also want to make
6 sure that it's understood, though, that the Catholic
7 Church here did not respond-- Does not just respond
8 to emergencies. This is a continuing mission of
9 spiritual help, social services help [bell]. And we
10 just want to make sure that this committee
11 recognizes--

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] Yes.

13 JOSEPH ROSENBERG: --that these essential
14 services must be preserved and not impeded or
15 hindered by what the task force concludes. We
16 understand it's being operated in good faith, but we
17 just want to make sure it's understood that there is
18 a continuity in services that has always been there,
19 and continue to be there. And we just want to work
20 with you to ensure that happens. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you.

22 Good afternoon, Council Member Treyger,
23 Councilperson Chin. I want to thank you and
24 congratulate you for the vision that you're bringing
25 to this committee and moving forward. Good morning.

2 I am--I am--my name is Laurie Schoeman. I lead the
3 Sandy Recovery and Rebuilding Efforts for the New
4 York Office of Enterprise Community Partners. At
5 Enterprise we bring opportunity to low and moderate-
6 income communities nationwide through the development
7 of safe, healthy, and affordable housing. Since
8 1987, we have created or preserved almost 45,000
9 affordable housing units for 115,000 New Yorkers.
10 And have invested almost \$3 billion in equity grants
11 and loans to community development projects
12 throughout New York City.

13 Sandy was a stark reminder indeed of the
14 disproportionate impact that our changing climate
15 will have for low-income communities. And this
16 reiterated the need to target strategic investment of
17 funding and capacity support to the communities most
18 impacted, are residents. And we see that CBOs are
19 critical partners in this effort. After Sandy hit,
20 Enterprise responded by deploying emergency funding,
21 almost \$400,000 of emergency funding to help CBOs
22 recover in the short-term, and since then almost \$6
23 million of capacity support for CBOs to recover in
24 the long term.

2 With an eye toward the long-term recovery
3 needs of the city's affordable housing sock, we
4 created our Recovery and Rebuilding Program. And the
5 Recovery and Rebuilding Program is built on a simple
6 premise, which is community-based organizations are
7 often the first responders in a time of crisis, and
8 are a critical resource for meeting the immediate
9 and longer-term needs of low-income families. And
10 our program has three basic principles, which is to
11 support the physical resilience of the buildings, the
12 organizational resilience of the CBOs and the broader
13 community. As one of our partners in this effort,
14 Chris Kui from the Asian-Americans for Equality,
15 said, CBOs are truly the social firehouse for
16 recovery and rebuilding. And we must consider how do
17 we support their capacity and development moving
18 forward. We've been working with a consortium of 12
19 leading affordable housing groups throughout the city
20 that represent 15,000 affordable housing units.
21 We've got lots of lessons learned from these groups.
22 And we have developed tools from the learning of
23 these groups that we would more than be happy to
24 share with the Council Committee.

2 This includes emergency planning
3 operations guidance. It includes guidance on
4 infrastructure. It includes lessons learned about
5 capacity development and funding to maintain and
6 continue business continuity. Because both these
7 buildings-- If these organizations are not able to
8 continue their business, the lights are out and the
9 communities [bell] that they serve have nowhere to
10 go. So I just want to add to the thoughts of my
11 colleagues here and just say we are very supportive
12 of this effort. We would love to be helpful in
13 anyway, and we look forward to working with your
14 committee and moving forward. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very
16 much.

17 [Pause]

18 PETER BODEGAS: Testing. [laughs] Thank
19 you for this opportunity. I think if we look back
20 over the past 13 years as the nation's response
21 apparatus has shifted since 9/11, faith communities
22 are really the only community being left out of
23 federal funding. If we look at the federal
24 government's doctrine of Whole Community that was
25 instituted by President Obama, and look back at the

1 Stafford Act reforms dating back even to 1999, we've
2 seen a regression in what's available to community-
3 based organizations. Although we've seen an enormous
4 amount of money pumped into Boots in Suits, guns,
5 equipment, all the Homeland Security apparatus that
6 protects the community, but not what builds the
7 community's resilience. And if we take seriously the
8 diversity that exists within the United States, one
9 of the most religious countries in the world where
10 84% of the population claims a religious affiliation,
11 if we are serious about Whole Community Doctrine, we
12 must ask the federal government to reform the
13 Stafford Act. To look at opportunities for funding
14 faith-based initiatives. Not only with their post-
15 disaster damage, but how they contribute to community
16 resilience and preparedness.

17 My opportunities for working with OEM
18 over the years have certainly proven that OEM and New
19 York City is in many ways better prepared than most
20 cities in the country. And they have certainly been
21 looking for any opportunity to partner with faith
22 communities. Just recently, we helped geocode all
23 the congregations in the United-- Excuse me. In New
24 York City and identified 1,300 that are in the city's
25

2 flood zones. Thirteen hundred congregations if they
3 are even partially damaged or totally taken off line,
4 just remove an enormous human services capacity that
5 exists within the community respond. And I think the
6 problems with the Stafford Act in terms of how they
7 look at congregations belie the kind of reality of
8 how congregations work. I recognize the church and
9 state issues. I think they're wrong-headed in many
10 ways, but the fact of the matter is sanctuaries are
11 simply not worship spaces.

12 Sanctuaries are places where many things
13 take place. Some of the city's biggest soup kitchens
14 occupy Sandy's biggest warehouse, were in the
15 sanctuaries of sacred spaces. So this isn't really
16 about not helping congregations rebuild worship space
17 for religious activity. It's about the
18 infrastructure that they bring as ubiquitous
19 institutions to the human service response to
20 disasters. You know, it does make me nervous to sort
21 of think we're going to [bell] throw open the doors
22 and reimburse congregations for everything they do,
23 which is part of their core mission. But I do think
24 we have to look at this differently, and plan for how
25 the city would partner with congregations to respond

2 to future incidents. And this report is necessary to
3 that process. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I certainly thank
5 you, and I agree with your characterization as houses
6 of worship being our sanctuaries. Because that's
7 exactly what they are. I mean people ran to them
8 first, and we hear story after to story not just in
9 my district, but across the city. They run to them
10 first. And as I mentioned before, not just during
11 the time of a natural disaster, but everyday they
12 deal with big or small crisis in personal lives in
13 families and communities. So, I agree. This is the
14 best investment we can make to preserve and to
15 strengthen critical sanctuaries and human services in
16 New York City. So I thank you for all of your
17 advocacy and you work and support today. Thank you.
18 Any questions?

19 LAURIE SCHOEMAN: [off mic] Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: The next panel I'd
21 like to call up Rod Hulla from Coney Island Gospel
22 Assembly, Alana Tornello, Staten Island Long-Term
23 Recovery, Margaret Becker from Legal Services, New
24 York City, and I believe we have Helene--

2 HELEN CALOIR: [off mic]

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --Caloir, I'm
4 sorry, from Local Initiatives Support Corp.

5 [Pause, background comments]

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And we can call up
7 one more. Christian Happa from the Legal Aid
8 Society. Okay. Yes, thank you.

9 ALANA TORNELLO: My name is Alana
10 Tornello. I submit this testimony on behalf of the
11 Staten Island Interfaith and Community of Long-Term
12 Recovery Organization in support of Intro 562. Thank
13 you for the invitation today. The proposed recovery
14 task force elegantly aligns with the existing models
15 of long-term recovery groups across New York City
16 including the Staten Island HRO. We are a coalition
17 of community faith-based and national organizations
18 dedicated to effective long-term disaster recovery
19 and preparedness on Staten Island. We formed a
20 response to Super Storm Sandy to provide coordination
21 support to over 90 recovery organizations. LTRO and
22 member organizations were on the ground fast, and
23 they continue to help to provide for homeowners in
24 nearly every facet of their recovery. And in almost
25 every affected neighborhood on Staten Island.

2 Recovery coalitions known as long-term
3 recovery groups and organizations were established in
4 every borough of New York City following the advice
5 and assistance of FEMA, and the nationally
6 implemented model proposed by the national voluntary
7 organizations active in disasters. LTRO
8 organizations and groups offer the following
9 strengths to the studies and recommendations target
10 in the task force to be established by Intro 562.

11 1. Sustainable community and faith-based
12 leadership.

13 2. Knowledge of past and present unmet
14 Sandy related needs.

15 3. Mapping of and direct communication
16 with diverse recovery resources and services.

17 4. Credibility on the ground in affected
18 neighborhoods, and

19 5. Collaborative creative solutions in
20 partnerships after two years of coalition building.

21 We strongly encourage this committee to
22 review the recommendations and data offered in this
23 testimony, which address each of the five task force
24 goals, which were outlined in Section 1(e) of Intro
25 562. The testimony also provides a snapshot of the

2 LGRG [sic] Model and its application on Staten
3 Island.

4 A brief few highlights. The Staten
5 Island LTRO strongly recommends that the Mayor and
6 Speaker of the Council provide equal representation
7 to the five boroughs in the selection of the ten
8 public members referenced in Section 1(b). We also
9 recommend this serious recommend this serious
10 consideration of LTRO and VOAD leaderships as
11 candidates for election as public members and/or as
12 sources of consultation in selecting clergy and non-
13 profit leadership for public membership.

14 We offer this recommendation with urgency
15 after pouring countless hours and labor and millions
16 of dollars into the Sandy impacted homes in the
17 communities. Recovery organizations become more--
18 Are running out their resources even as needs become
19 more complicated and require additional advocacy,
20 coordination, and support. Our long-term recovery
21 groups have already come together across the city to
22 address these needs as we contract. Finally, we
23 submit this testimony urging that the most
24 sustainable step to resiliency in New York City would
25 be for a significant change in recovery policy to

2 occur now. And, which precipitates better future
3 communication and coordination between federal,
4 state, city and community recovery efforts.

5 Without sincerely committed discussion
6 around where communications and coordination broke
7 down. Without earnest open ears to those [bell] who
8 have seen the trials and successes of community
9 recovery. Without fair representation among the
10 boroughs and local levels of representation, a policy
11 of resiliency will not be possible. We offer our
12 knowledge, resources, and partnership to the
13 development of this task force because we perceive
14 that the Mayor and City Council have the opportunity
15 to lead in the policy changes that would produce more
16 resiliency models of support for protecting this city
17 and the homes and lives of its still vulnerable
18 residents who we work with everyday.

19 [Pause, background noise]

20 ROD HULLA: Council Members, my name is
21 Rod Hulla, and I'm here to represent our church,
22 Coney Island Gospel Assembly, which is located in the
23 heart of Coney Island. My wife just happens to be
24 pastor of Coney Island Gospel Assembly, and I serve
25 on the Board of Trustees. I would like to take just

2 a few moments to offer our voice of support for
3 anything that can be done to help houses of worship
4 recover from Hurricane Sandy. And many, many are
5 still in dire need of your help. Our church is
6 located in Coney Island, and I'd like to set forth
7 some of the various activities we have been engaged
8 in before, during, and after Sandy. With our hope
9 that you will come to recognize that many in the
10 community have already recognized houses of worship
11 offer much, much more than religious education and
12 spiritual direction.

13 This is especially true when they are
14 located in intercity communities such as Coney
15 Island. As in the days when the country was founded,
16 the one lone schoolhouse became a hub of all
17 community activity. Besides the education, it was a
18 place for political rallies, church services,
19 community meetings, and social events. The same is
20 very much true for houses of worship including Coney
21 Island Gospel Assembly and other churches today. As
22 Councilman Treyger said, we face crises everyday. We
23 have funerals, we have deaths, we have shootings, we
24 have things that are unknown to so many people.

2 There are three aspects of community
3 service, though, that I would like to touch upon
4 today. The first is the religious services provided
5 by the church. Second is the disaster relief and
6 recovery that we have been involved with since Sandy
7 and before Sandy that is in our seaboard communities.
8 Finally, and most importantly, I will elaborate on
9 the nature of our church outside of the religious and
10 current disaster relief efforts to hopefully
11 demonstrate without question that these houses of
12 worship are the center of community life and
13 activity. And many like it have already served
14 [bell] that purpose for so many years. Our house of
15 worship was established 55 years ago. And since the
16 early days, it has been a place of spiritual comfort,
17 religious education, et cetera.

18 Worship services, prayer meetings;
19 religious education for all ages; summer youth
20 outreaches; vacation Bible schools; pageants; social
21 functions; and evangelistic outreach have all been a
22 part of our spiritual ministry to the community. In
23 fact, to this very day, in spite of my somewhat
24 diminished resources, we serve hundreds of families,
25 members and non-members alike offering baby

2 christenings, weddings, funeral services for all
3 residents of our community without charge. Without
4 charge. This is the spiritual embassy [sic] of our
5 founder, my father-in-law Jack San Filippo. His own
6 religious conversion catapulted him into a life of
7 religious service and ministry. It has been the
8 hallmark of our presence in the community.

9 The spiritual work of this church is the
10 foundation really for everything that we do. We have
11 been invited here today because of the unique
12 position we found ourselves in since Super Sandy
13 devastated our region. Despite the fact that our
14 church suffered at a minimum \$1.5 million dollars in
15 damage, that's only half the story. To this day, we
16 continue to the steady progress of repairing and
17 restoring everything that was lost in the storm.
18 Thankfully, the church Sanctuary was built at a high
19 level. The floodwaters wiped out our lower level
20 kitchen, fellowship hall, and youth center,
21 classrooms, all of our boilers, electrical rooms.
22 Everything, but it spared the sanctuary. Our parking
23 lot was converted to a relief camp.

24 We had a group come in. They were
25 serving between three and four thousand meals a day

2 to people that had no heat, no electric, nothing.
3 Nobody else was there We did what we could to
4 relieve the suffering. We didn't ask what your
5 religion was. It was our community. I made the
6 statement-- We received some contributions. I said
7 we're going to spend this to help our people. We'll
8 worry about the building later. That was our goal,
9 to help the people. Our parking lot, as I said, was
10 converted to a relief camp, and also since the
11 beginning we began to bring tractor-trailers into
12 that parking lot, three tractor-trailers a week.

13 I personally unloaded some of it. We
14 hired forklift trucks with our limited funds. We put
15 up tents. Again, with our limited funds to try and
16 help those in such desperate need. We were very
17 lucky in being able to use our sanctuary as a
18 distribution center. We were joined by other like-
19 minded group, Occupation Science [sic] Sandy. I
20 worked with some of those people. They were great.
21 The Doe Fund. So many others. But these were all
22 private institutions, private foundations, private
23 organizations. We didn't see government helping us
24 at all through the four-- I would say four weeks, and

2 meanwhile these people they're living with nothing.
3 No heat, no light, no electric.

4 It is estimated that over \$100 million in
5 goods and services have been provided by the storm
6 victims through the efforts of this one church. All
7 privately donated. The goodwill of people from all
8 over the nation, and the non-profit community at
9 large has been an overwhelming testament to the
10 spirit of the American compassion. Our church has
11 welcomed officials, dignitaries, celebrities from
12 near and far since the crisis. We've had sports
13 figures come from the Mets, the Rangers. Teachers
14 and students from many high schools. Volunteer
15 crews from the Doe Fund, the American Red Cross,
16 AmeriCorps, City Harbor, the Brooklyn Jubilee, and
17 every possible non-government organization relief
18 agency that you can imagine came and offered their
19 assistance.

20 The church was a hub and still is a hub,
21 active since 24-- or acting 24/7 in relief and
22 recovery mode. In fact our pastor, Sister Connie, as
23 she's called, was honored on site at the Robinhoods
24 Foundation 12-12-12 Historic Concert at Madison
25 Square Garden. I had to laugh at her because I said

2 you fronted the Rolling Stones since she came on just
3 before they came on. As you can see, our religious
4 work and recent relief work has made us a place that
5 never closes our doors. Between the spiritual
6 foundation and disaster relief efforts or assembly
7 the full story of our house of worship community
8 center is told. It is this part of the story that
9 needs to be especially recognized by decision-makers
10 about support for religious and other non-profit
11 organizations.

12 As I mentioned earlier, our church is
13 more than a religious house. It's a community center
14 like that one-room schoolhouse that I mentioned.
15 With this thought in mind, I'd like to alphabetically
16 just some of the various activities, institutions,
17 and community events we have sponsored has partnered
18 with in our nearly six decades of presence in the
19 community. And this includes efforts long before
20 Sandy, long before Sandy. The list is impressive.

21 After School Center for Black and
22 Latino Young Men; AIM After School Program;
23 Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous; Alternate site
24 for public schools being repaired during Sandy and
25 after Sandy. Asbestos removal help. We helped with

2 AmeriCorps. We helped out some of our residents
3 because they couldn't work with utility payments. We
4 had the Boy Scouts. We've had Brooklyn Age Task
5 Force. The Cyclones have used our site. The
6 Brooklyn District Attorney, we had a truancy program
7 because they didn't want to have these young folks
8 that they picked up off the streets brought to the
9 police precincts. We opened our doors with no charge
10 for these folks. They brought them to our church.
11 Brooklyn Jubilee Legal Services. We've had a bus
12 training company for drivers for local and bus
13 drivers. College and career preparation, community
14 festivals, and homeowners meetings.

15 Any time that one of the groups want a
16 place to meet--we fortunately have a large building--
17 we open our doors. Community service programs for
18 parolees, offenders. Coney Island Fair [sic] 1199.
19 We had a homeless shelter for those that had no place
20 else to go. That got wiped out. My father-in-law
21 was a hospital chaplain at Coney Island Hospital.
22 We've helped the Brooklyn Sharks Football team, 100
23 boys in Coney Island. They use our facilities.
24 Cornell University had a nutrition and health cooking
25 programs. A crisis intervention center; a day care

2 center; early intervention tutoring, counseling and
3 drug prevention. Emergency overnight shelter for the
4 Mayor's Office. Food pantry serving 40 other non-
5 profits and 2,000 families. Weekly deliveries. We
6 did all that before Sandy. We can't do it now. We
7 are Friends of Kaiser Park. We helped with AIDS
8 education and prevention, Girl Scouts. The list goes
9 on. I don't want to take your time. This is
10 alphabetical, and I'm only down to eight.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Mr. Hulla, I'll say
12 and I'll add something to your list, and then we'll
13 proceed. But I just want to tell you that currently
14 when we observed the two-year anniversary of Sandy
15 where the Mayor came down, and the Speaker of the
16 City Council, which we appreciated, Coney Island
17 Gospel Assembly served as the hub for Habitat for
18 Humanity to gather and to coordinate the day's work.
19 So your church opens its doors to volunteers to help
20 rebuild homes and lives in our community to this day.

21 ROD HULLA: [interposing] That's right.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And this is what
23 we're talking about.

24 ROD HULLA: [interposing] I agree.

2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And I truly thank
3 from the bottom of my heart, and on behalf of our
4 district and our city for doing, in my opinion,
5 critical life saving work every single day. And I
6 will take your full testimony to put in the record,
7 as I know you have a very long list.

8 ROD HULLA: It was a long list.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But I thank you,
10 and please send our sincerest regards to your wife,
11 Sister Connie--

12 ROD HULLA: [interposing] I sure will.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --who is dearly
14 loved and appreciated in our community.

15 ROD HULLA: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you.

17 MARGARET BECKER: Good morning. My name
18 is Margaret Becker. I'm Director of Disaster
19 Recovery at Legal Services NYC, and also a member of
20 the Board of Directors of the Staten Island Long-Term
21 Recovery Organization. And I wanted to speak very
22 briefly about the final component of the charter of
23 the proposed task force, which is the role of non-
24 profit organizations in future disasters. You know,
25 based on our experience at Legal Services NYC in

2 providing legal services after a disaster, I think
3 there are critical issues of where, when, and how
4 legal services are provide. That is consistent I
5 think with everything that has been said so far. To
6 date, Legal Services NYC has handled 6,115 Sandy
7 recover cases with 1,123 of those remaining ongoing.
8 My written testimony talks about the type of legal
9 needs that we've addressed. But the where, when, and
10 how were critical.

11 Initially, our staff went out to the
12 various governmental centers, the evacuation centers,
13 the FEMA tents. And then through our community
14 connections, through the relationships we had with
15 not only citizens in the community but also
16 community-based organizations. We quickly learned
17 that just using Staten Island as an example that
18 Saint Margaret Mary's Church in Midland Beach was
19 developing as a hub that was known within the
20 community, trusted within the community. It opened
21 its doors to Occupy Sandy to us, to be on site in one
22 place where people could go and address the myriad
23 needs. Because nobody's legal needs are in isolation
24 of other needs. And being in this hub with all of
25 the other kinds of services available, quickly

2 deployable when a person came in need was critical.
3 The when was also critical because as people were
4 struggling to recover, we had to be there evenings.
5 We had to be there on weekends when people who were
6 trying to keep their jobs while they recovered could
7 come and get the help they needed.

8 And finally, the how. You know, we
9 became involved in all three affected boroughs
10 quickly with the long-term recovery organizations or
11 long-term recovery groups as they're called in some
12 boroughs. And this allowed us to build those kinds
13 of relationships so that all of the various non-
14 profit, community-based, faith based organizations
15 understood the nature of legal issues so that the
16 lawyers and paralegals understood the nature of the
17 other issues. And were, therefore, able to really
18 able [bell] develop effective services on all fronts.
19 And that's all I wanted to say. You know, we welcome
20 the creation of a task force. And believe that these
21 long-term recovery organizations that already exist
22 provide an effective model for integrating all of the
23 kinds of services that people need.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I agree. I said
25 before to the Administration that if there's

2 something good happening in Staten Island, how do we
3 make sure it's happening across the five boroughs.
4 And if there is a great discussion or lessons learned
5 there, how do we exchange it across the board? And
6 that's what we're trying to do. But thank you for
7 your work from the beginning. Thank you very much.

8 HELENE CALOIR: Thank you Chair Treyger
9 and Council Member Chin for considering this
10 testimony about Intro 562. My name is Helene Caloir.
11 I'm the Policy Director for Local Initiatives Support
12 Corporation better known as LISC New York City. I'm
13 submitting this testimony on behalf of LISC New York
14 City, and we enthusiastically support Intro 562. It
15 is so important to step back and assess the
16 contributions made by community-based organizations,
17 by religious institutions, by citywide non-profit
18 organizations. The whole idea of people being on the
19 ground, in the communities knowing the needs of their
20 communities, knowing their neighbors. Being able to
21 arrive quickly and be trusted. It's just so
22 fundamental to disaster recovery. But also to
23 community building more generally. It's a good
24 opportunity to identify the best practices as has
25 been discussed today. And plan for how the work of

2 these sectors can be organized better, can be funded,
3 and can be used long term to help communities bounce
4 back. And also just the opportunity to document the
5 scope of what was done here, and how it can be done
6 going forward. Very often unless you actually put it
7 on the table, put it out into the wider world, it
8 doesn't get acknowledged. It doesn't get heard. It
9 doesn't get recognized.

10 So to just very quickly tell you some of
11 the work that LISC has done, we support community-
12 based organizations. That's our mission, and so
13 immediately after Super Storm Sandy, we set up an
14 emergency relief fund to help fund community-based
15 organizations to do their work on the ground. To
16 date, we've disbursed about \$2 million to ten
17 community-based organizations, which they have used
18 to assist almost 10,000 residents to connect them to
19 resources, to find out what their needs are. Some of
20 this money has been spent for community organizers
21 and outreach workers to go door to door. Because
22 there are so many people who are not going to end up
23 even going to a local center. I mean many people
24 will but they're elderly people; frail and elderly
25 people with various disabilities and illness; and

2 people with small children who are less mobile.

3 There are so many people who aren't reached unless
4 you literally go door to door, and we have funded
5 that work.

6 We also funded a mold treatment program
7 with [bell] considerable funding from the Mayor's
8 Fund for New York City actually. So that's one of
9 the places money went to do mold treatment and muck
10 outs and removal of wet sheetrock in over 2,000 homes
11 in Staten Island, in Brooklyn and Queens. We also
12 are currently working on the Home Repair Program,
13 which is aiding people up to 90% of the area median
14 income, up to \$80,000 worth of damage to their homes.
15 And the focus of this program has really been on the
16 most vulnerable communities. We've had, for example,
17 working with Holocaust survivors who are ill, and who
18 have been living without heat and basic
19 infrastructure in their home for several years.
20 Families with very small children who are living in
21 terrible conditions, and we're still seeing these
22 terrible conditions two years after the storm. So
23 this work has been really, rally important. We've
24 also helped form a Sandy Neighborhood Design Help
25 Desk that goes from community to community to give

2 technical assistance on resilient rebuilding. It
3 provides architects and other experts, and we've
4 helped about 280 people through that.

5 So the point if it is that we-- That
6 there's a real multiplier effect. We're funding the
7 CBOs. They're doing really important work on the
8 ground. The problem is that all the funding is
9 really running out now. So a lot of this
10 infrastructure my colleagues were talking about here
11 is really disappearing now. Groups are contracting
12 and they're having to lay off these workers, and yet
13 there are so many people two years after the storm
14 who are still in dire need. So, we're here to help.
15 We're here to talk about what's worked successfully,
16 how these community groups have done their work. And
17 thank you again for the opportunity to testify here
18 today.

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I thank you, and
20 correct me if I'm wrong, isn't-- is Habitat for
21 Humanity one of the groups that LISC works with you
22 as well?

23 HELENE CALOIR: [interposing] Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I believe it is.

2 HELENE CALOIR: Yes, it is. We have
3 funded them to do some of the home repair work.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And they are in
5 Coney Island. So thank you. Thank you very much.

6 HELENE CALOIR: All right.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes.

8 Thank you. Before I speak, I wanted to
9 reposition myself so I can see the clock.

10 HELENE CALOIR: Okay, let's exchange
11 seats.

12 Thank you very much. Thank you.

13 [Pause]

14 CHRISTINE HAPPA: Good afternoon,
15 Chairman Treyger and Council Member Chin. My name is
16 Christine Happa [sp?] and I'm a staff attorney at the
17 Legal Aid society of New York. Thank you for
18 convening this hearing on this very important
19 proposal. I am here to impart the support of the
20 Legal Aid Society for the creation of a Task Force to
21 address the needs of houses of worship and community
22 groups engaged in disaster relief work. We believe
23 that the proposed task force will be beneficial for
24 these groups, and will lead to better preparation and
25 strategies and the sharing the best practices. This

2 rule offers a more efficient way to discuss the needs
3 of storm-affected communities.

4 From our unique vantage point as the
5 nation's oldest and largest legal service provider,
6 we have a long and successful history of working with
7 and advocating for the needs of our community
8 partners. As one of the earliest responders for
9 providing on-site legal disaster relief, we can
10 attest to the strong commitment of many non-profit
11 organizations and houses of worship. Particularly
12 those whose generosity and consistency continue to
13 provide guiding light long after the storm waters
14 have receded. We are grateful for the opportunity to
15 serve and understand that effective service delivery
16 requires efficient planning. I will first analyze
17 the five components of this proposal and conclude
18 with some suggestions.

19 First, Role Description. The initiative
20 would help to streamline some of the key players and
21 provide an accounting of who is involved, and what
22 types of services they are seeking to date. Damage
23 assessment would help many organizations who have not
24 been able to address the extent of their own damage,
25 be it structural or financial. And proper

2 documentation and accounting will help with the
3 rebuilding efforts and regulatory compliance.
4 Resource Allocation. The task force could help to
5 encourage race reduction, fiscal responsiveness, and
6 legal compliance with open dialogue, and help people
7 to understand what is available and what is still
8 needed. In line with that is an ongoing needs
9 assessment. An in-depth needs assessment can help to
10 better allocate resources towards sustainable
11 solutions.

12 Finally, advanced preparedness sharing
13 best practices and advanced preparedness will help to
14 foster a culture of community preparedness that would
15 be integral in mitigating damages in future
16 disasters. We hope that we are able to build
17 together a set of standards that will be able to be
18 shared amongst groups to bridge the gap between these
19 great groups that have been doing this work and the
20 elected officials that represent them. And we also
21 suggest that the task force institute a digital
22 communications form that would encourage
23 communication, and foster knowledge sharing and
24 information during critical times after a disaster.
25 In conclusion, we hope that this task force promotes

2 more open and responsive communication. We value all
3 of the contributions that have been made and we hope
4 to learn from it, and support the work of the task
5 force. Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you all.
7 This has been very helpful. And I think that the
8 goals here are number one to assess what has not
9 happened since the storm. I think to also take stock
10 of what work has been done by local CBOs and houses
11 of worship. And I think that the benefits of such a
12 task force, and such a-- I think a gathering on a
13 consistent basis could apply to a variety of issues.
14 Not just a Sandy type storm, but there are many
15 challenges that our city will face both big and
16 small. And I think that to build in a community
17 infrastructure across the city to have that on an
18 ongoing basis we only benefit from more community and
19 better coordination, helping each other. And I think
20 that there are so many pluses to having this ongoing
21 dialogue, and I think that is the purpose. And also,
22 quite frankly it's the right thing to do to care for
23 those who really have given all to help us. I mean I
24 speak for my colleagues that we know.

2 We were also people on the ground. We
3 saw the work that many local CBOs did, houses of
4 worship, individuals. Regular citizens, residents of
5 our community helped before many others came in. And
6 I think it's the right thing to do to recognize that
7 work. Not just with words, but with actions, and
8 resources to help make sure that they get back up on
9 their feet, and help us in the event of the next--
10 heaven forbid a next crisis. So I thank everyone who
11 has come to testify today, and this is the beginning
12 of something that we're going to continue to build
13 and support and to work with. We heard today from
14 the Administration that they are certainly open to
15 this, and we will certainly push this as much as we
16 can to make sure that this actually happens. I like
17 the input of making sure that all the five boroughs
18 are covered. It's very important. Making sure that
19 we call all stakeholders here very, very well. Thanks
20 for that great, great feedback and we are open to
21 more as well. I thank you all very much, and with
22 that, and no further questions this hearing is
23 adjourned. [gavel]

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1 COMMITTEE ON RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY

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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 December 18, 2014