

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON AGING

----- X

May 12, 2015
Start: 10:23 a.m.
Recess: 10:52 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Room
14th Floor

B E F O R E:
MARGARET S. CHIN
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Karen Koslowitz
Deborah L. Rose
Chaim M. Deutsch
Mark Treyger
Paul A. Vallone

2 [sound check, pause]

3 [gavel]

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Good morning.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Good morning.

6 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: I'm Council Member

7 Margaret Chin, Chair of the Council's Aging
8 Committee. I'd like to first acknowledge my
9 colleagues that are here today, Council Member Paul
10 Vallone, Chair of our Senior Center Subcommittee,
11 Council Member Koslowitz, Council Member Rose. And,
12 we have Council Member Rosenthal visiting us because
13 she is the sponsor of the resolution that we'll be
14 voting on today. Oh, and then Council Member
15 Deutsch.

16 Today, the Committee will be voting on
17 two important items. The first Proposed Introduction
18 702-A sponsored by Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and
19 myself would require the Department for the Aging to
20 create a guide for building owners to help make
21 modifications and improvements to dwelling units,
22 which would allow older New Yorkers to age at home in
23 a safe and comfortable environment. Seniors have
24 expressed an overwhelming desire to stay in their
25 home and communities. And, this guide will be an

2 important resource for landlords to assist them in
3 doing so. I thank Speaker Mark-Viverito for her
4 leadership on this issue--important issue to older
5 New Yorkers, and I'm proud to have worked with her on
6 this legislation, which I know will benefit thousands
7 of senior tenants in our city.

8 The Committee will also be voting on
9 Proposed Resolution 426-A, sponsored by Council
10 Member Andrew Cohen and Helen Rosenthal. Which calls
11 upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the
12 Governor to sign S.4748 and A.5565A. Legislation
13 eliminate the sunset provisions related to income
14 threshold increase for the senior citizens rent
15 increase exemption, and disability rent increase
16 exemption programs. The income threshold increases
17 signed into law last year have allowed approximately
18 13,000 additional households to qualify for SCRIE and
19 DRIE programs. If these increases are permitted to
20 sunset in July 2016, the ability of these households
21 to remain in their homes affordably will be
22 threatened.

23 I thank Council Member Cohen and
24 Rosenthal for their advocacy on this issue, and join
25 their call for the state to permanently extend the

2 SCRIE and DRIE increases. I would like to thank our
3 staff who worked on this bill and resolution, Eric
4 Bernstein, the Aging Committee Counsel; Kelly Taylor,
5 our former Aging Committee Counsel; James Subudhi,
6 Aging Committee Policy Analyst, and Dohini Sompura,
7 Aging Committee Finance Analyst. And I urge my
8 colleagues to vote in favor of these items, and I
9 will now ask Council Member Rosenthal to give some
10 remark about her resolution.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so
12 much, Chairperson Chin for bringing this to the Aging
13 Committee today, and giving me an opportunity to talk
14 about this resolution. I want to thank Council
15 Member Cohen for joining me in this effort to call on
16 the New York State Legislature and the Governor to
17 eliminate the sunset provision of the SCRIE and DRIE
18 programs' recent baseline increases for eligibility.
19 The New York City Rent Freeze Program, formerly known
20 as SCRIE and DRIE help eligible seniors citizens age
21 62 years and older and tenants with qualifying
22 disabilities to stay in affordable housing by
23 freezing their rent. Prior to 2014, seniors were
24 only eligible for the New York City Rent Freeze
25 Program if their annual household income was below

2 \$29,000 and tenants with disabilities were only
3 eligible if their annual household income was below
4 \$20,412 for a single or \$29,484 for two or more
5 people.

6 Last year, Council Member Chin's
7 resolution expanded the income cap for SCRIE to
8 \$50,000 and I was proud to introduce the resolution
9 to do the same for DRIE. SCRIE and DRIE area
10 lifeline for seniors and people with disabilities.
11 Since the income cap was raised to \$50,000 last year,
12 an additional 13,000 people became eligible for these
13 programs. 13,000 people who would lose that right if
14 the State does not renew funding in 2016. Let's make
15 the higher cap for SCRIE and DRIE permanent so that
16 seniors and people with disabilities on limited
17 incomes don't need to worry every year that they will
18 be forced out of their homes. Today, we need to make
19 it clear to lawmakers in Albany that raising rents on
20 these 13,000 seniors and people with disabilities
21 that qualify for this program is unacceptable. Thank
22 you very much.

23 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. Now, I
24 will have the Clerk call the roll, and I urge all my
25 colleagues to support both items.

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING

6

2 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk.

3 Roll call vote Committee on Aging. Chair Chin.

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Aye on all.

5 CLERK: Koslowitz.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I'd like to
7 add my name to Intro No. 702-A, and I vote aye on
8 both.

9 CLERK: Rose.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: It always gives me
11 great pleasure to vote for smart and really useful
12 legislation, and both of these pieces are that, and
13 will benefit our senior population. So, I gladly
14 vote aye on all.

15 CLERK: Deutsch.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye on both.

17 CLERK: Vallone.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Both of these,
19 the Resolution and the Intro are key for the aging
20 community, and I thank our Chair and Council Member
21 Rosenthal and everyone for promoting these.
22 Providing the guide as a blueprint for preserving
23 housing for our seniors and making homes and
24 apartments more livable for our seniors is critical
25 in extending the SCRIE and DRIE increases on a

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING

7

2 permanent basis are instrumental. So I vote aye
3 happily on both. Thank you.

4 CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the
5 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
6 both items have been adopted.

7 [pause]

8 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: I'd like to keep the
9 vote open for another half an hour. Thank you.

10 [pause]

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Committee vote. Okay.

12 [background comments]

13 [pause]

14 [background comments]

15 CLERK: Council Member Treyger.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: I vote aye.

17 CLERK: The vote now--the vote now
18 currently stands at 6 in the affirmative, 0 in the
19 negative and no abstentions.

20 [pause]

21 CLERK: Continuation of roll call,
22 Committee on Aging. Council Member Arroyo.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

24

25

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING

8

2 CLERK: The final vote in Committee on
3 Aging is now 7 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative
4 and no abstentions.

5 [pause]

6 [background comments]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I want it--I want
8 it to be the same team. Aging Committee, May 12th is
9 now adjourned.

10 [gavel]

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

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 May 18, 2015