

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
TESTIMONY FOR HEARING BEFORE THE  
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
REGARDING MAKING CYCLING AND WALKING SAFER AND MORE EFFICIENT  
NOVEMBER 15, 2016**

Good morning Chair Rodriguez and members of the Committee. I am Sean Quinn, Senior Director of the Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs at the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT). I am joined by Jenna Adams, Director of Legislative Affairs. Thank you for bringing us together to discuss cycling and walking in New York City.

More people are choosing to live and work in New York than ever before. With a population of over 8.5 million and tourism booming with nearly 60 million visitors coming to the City last year, our subway system is bursting at the seams and more people are choosing to walk and bike around the city every day.

We are doing everything we can to improve the experience and safety for pedestrians and cyclists in our city. Nearly 1.6 million New Yorkers ride a bike regularly and about two and half percent of all commuting residents ride a bike to work or school. These cyclists benefit from a nearly 1,100 mile bike network.

Our growing pedestrian population can get around easier due to our 73 plazas, and other site-specific projects such as recently established pedestrian flow zones in Times Square and sidewalk widening on Flushing's Main Street.

As we close in on the three-year mark of Vision Zero, it is clear that the Mayor's leadership, along with all of our combined efforts, have begun to change the way New Yorkers think about and act on our streets. Let me outline some of the Vision Zero tools DOT is using to enhance safety for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle occupants throughout the City.

We have developed comprehensive, data-driven work plans—Borough Safety Action Plans—which focus DOT and NYPD resources at the most crash-prone locations in each borough. From this process we identified priority corridors, intersections, and areas, which became target zones for safety upgrades.

These Vision Zero priority corridors, intersections, and areas disproportionately account for pedestrian fatalities and severe injuries, so we are directing our resources to these locations to ensure the most significant safety gains. To illustrate, half of all pedestrians who were killed or seriously injured from 2009-2013 were struck on about eight percent of each borough's corridors. Further, around one percent of our intersections account for 15 percent of fatalities.

The core premise of our Borough Safety Action Plans is a strong focus on pedestrians that will enhance safety for all roadway users. These plans recommend a series of actions including safety engineering enhancements, targeted enforcement, and expanded education efforts.

Since the plans were released in early 2015, we have completed 143 Vision Zero safety engineering projects on priority geographies, and another 29 are currently underway. For example, on the Grand Concourse between 138<sup>th</sup> and 158<sup>th</sup> Street in the Bronx we recently implemented a traffic-calming project to slow down vehicular speeds on this priority corridor. We also created more space for pedestrians with the addition of safety islands that shorten crossing distances and provide pedestrian refuge. And at the Manhattan Bridge entrance in Chinatown, we installed multiple safety enhancements to benefit pedestrians including creating new crosswalks, new traffic controls and expanded pedestrian waiting areas.

More generally, we have installed nearly 1,500 Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) throughout the City. LPIs give pedestrians a head start when entering an intersection before vehicles proceed. This enhances visibility for pedestrians, thereby reducing conflicts. We are currently focused on priority corridors and intersections to receive this key safety treatment.

DOT is also retiming signals on priority corridors to reduce opportunities for excessive speeding and we have installed signs on nearly all of the priority corridors with the recently reduced speed of 25 mph.

Further, by the end of 2016, DOT expects to complete lighting upgrades at 1,000 priority intersections throughout the City, adding lamps to increase visibility over crosswalks. In addition, the agency is converting all of the City's 250,000 street lamps from high pressure sodium lamps to higher-intensity LED, which makes pedestrians and cyclists more conspicuous, and reduces the probability for nighttime crashes.

Now I would like to discuss the bills that are the subject of today's hearing.

### **Intro 1072**

Council Member Menchaca's bill requires cyclists crossing a roadway at an intersection to follow pedestrian control signals when these signals supersede the traffic control signal by law, rule or regulation.

DOT supports the intent of the bill to create a traffic regulatory framework which recognizes that cyclists proceeding through an intersection are more akin to vulnerable pedestrians than to vehicles, including during the leading pedestrian interval phase. Looking to 2006-2014 data, turning crashes represented 23 percent of bicyclist fatalities in intersections. The majority of these cases were right hooks, in which the cyclist was traveling adjacent to the vehicle prior to the turn and the vehicle turned in front of the bicycle. Using our signal system to protect these cyclists is a smart way to prevent this type of crash.

We look forward to working with Council Member Menchaca to refine the bill to acknowledge there may be select instances, such as exclusive pedestrian phases or locations with complicated geometries, where we use our engineering judgment to ensure the safety of each user. Also, we appreciate the emphasis in Intro 1072 that cyclists must yield to pedestrians before they proceed. This is currently the law and should be strongly encouraged.

### **Intro 401**

This bill requires a study to examine the installation of bike share stations in or near parks. DOT currently coordinates with the Parks Department to install Citi Bike stations near or adjacent to parks that fall within the Citi Bike service area. We now have Citi Bike stations around Central Park, Bryant Park, Washington Square Park, Tompkins Park, and City Hall Park here in Manhattan and along the west side of Prospect Park, surrounding Fort Greene Park and McCarren Park in Brooklyn as well as next to other smaller parks throughout the current service area.

Regarding stations inside parks, the Citi Bike network is intended to be used primarily for transportation, not recreation. Accordingly, it is not a priority for stations to be located within parks. Bicycles for recreation in parks are provided by bicycle rental concessionaires that serve tourists and New Yorkers who wish to bike around parks for a short period of time.

Lastly, one logistical problem must be addressed if stations were to be installed within park borders. Citi Bike is available 24 hours a day, but parks are closed for set hours each night.

### **Intro 1117**

Next up is Council Member Van Bramer's bill regarding commercial cyclists. Local law provides a number of safety and record-keeping requirements for commercial cyclists operating a bike on behalf of a business. These requirements include posting a commercial bicyclist safety poster within the business, maintaining a roster with information about each cyclist and assigning each a unique corresponding identification number and ID card. Businesses must also provide the cyclists with a helmet and reflective identification vest and also a bell, front and rear lights, reflectors, brakes and a numbered ID plate for the bike.

We support the intent of Intro 1117 to clarify that these requirements apply to independent contractor cyclists and look forward to working with him on specific language and addressing operational concerns.

Safety for all cyclists, including those making deliveries, is a priority for DOT. In the last year, we have partnered with Council Members Kallos, Rosenthal, and Mendez to host Delivery Cyclists forums where restaurant owners, community members and delivery cyclists learn about the safety requirements and receive free samples of important required safety gear.

### **Intro 1177**

Moving on to Intro 1177, which requires a feasibility study of implementing Barnes Dance pedestrian crossings at "dangerous intersections." We agree that pedestrians must be protected from turning vehicles and we are taking concrete steps to tackle this issue.

This August, DOT released our "Don't Cut Corners" report, which specifically addresses the danger of left turns for pedestrian and cyclists. We analyzed five years of crash data and found that left turns account for more than twice as many pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities as right

turns and over three times as many serious injuries and fatalities. Accordingly, we have an immediate six-point action plan that we are putting into place:

1. **Leading Pedestrian Intervals:** We are prioritizing the study and installation of LPs at priority intersections and at school intersections along priority corridors. DOT installed over 400 new LPs citywide in 2015, and plans to install at least 500 in 2016.
2. **Left Turn Traffic Calming Pilot:** DOT is undertaking a 100-intersection pilot initiative to test safer, slower left-turn designs. Treatments will include the marking of a guiding radius, permanent plastic delineators and permanent rubber curbs with delineators on the double yellow centerline. We have already seen slowed turning speeds at locations where these physical and visual cues have been installed.
3. **Split LPs:** Split LPs hold turning vehicles while allowing through vehicles to proceed. Currently there are 28 Split LPs and nine Split LPs with bicycle signals installed in the city. DOT will continue to pilot and evaluate this treatment and if proven beneficial, we will seek to accelerate the rate of installation.
4. **Left Turn Restrictions and Left Turn Signals:** DOT will take every opportunity to incorporate either left turn restrictions or dedicated left turn signals into broader improvement projects.
5. **Protected Bicycle Lanes:** We will continue to implement new protected bike lanes, enhancing bicycle mobility as well as overall street safety, with at least 18 miles planned for 2016.
6. **Press, Education and Marketing Campaign:** The third phase of the “Your Choices Matter” campaign has begun and focuses on pedestrian crashes at intersections. Our Dusk and Darkness initiative, undertaken with our Vision Zero agency partners, addresses the upturn in pedestrian crashes in the fall and winter months, and DOT has developed messaging to alert drivers that turns should be taken at under five miles per hour.

We are confident that using this updated tool kit to address the unique needs of each intersection is the best way to make our intersections safer for pedestrians crossing the street. Therefore, we need to retain the flexibility of using all of these treatments, rather than focusing on only one type of signal option for each intersection.

### **Intro 1285**

Finally, moving on to our busy sidewalks with Intro 1285.

We at DOT use different tools to analyze sidewalk congestion at specific sites or on specific corridors. These tools are not practical for estimating and ranking sidewalk congestion throughout the City. Instead, we focus on safety improvement projects, which may include widening of sidewalks, on the most dangerous corridors and intersections.

For instance, in FY 2016 we have created approximately 355,000 square feet of pedestrian space by constructing neckdowns, medians, and pedestrian islands, widening sidewalks, adding pedestrian plazas and with other targeted measures. We approach this work like the rest of our Vision Zero efforts, by following the data in order to enhance safety.

For example, in downtown Flushing, which is one of the most crash-prone areas in Queens, we are expanding on a safety project to widen the sidewalks from 38<sup>th</sup> to 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue on Main Street. In 2011, we painted sidewalk extensions and saw injuries decline by 29 percent. We are now replacing the painted sidewalk extensions with concrete.

Our Plaza Program is another premier model for creating more space for pedestrians in crowded parts of the city. Community groups apply to transform underutilized roadbed in their neighborhoods into vibrant public space. DOT prioritizes busy commercial corridors well served by public transit and areas that lack open space. Plaza de Las Americas in Washington Heights, Fordham Plaza in the Bronx, Diversity Plaza in Jackson Heights, and Willoughby Plaza in Downtown Brooklyn are just a few highlights from our program, which has dedicated over 26 acres of our right of way to pedestrians in some of the busiest parts of the city.

It is also worth noting that expanding the sidewalk is not always the solution to make a particular corridor safer for all users. Often our most crowded sidewalks run along streets that are heavily travelled by all modes, so we need to make sure we are not limiting bus use, any other public transit, or bike facilities by expanding sidewalks. Further, sidewalk widening is complex and often infeasible due to the need to regrade roadways, relocate underground utilities like catch basins and move above-ground utilities like street lights.

To close, we should continue to use our Borough Safety Action Plans as our guide to enhance safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and all roadway users.

Thank you and I look forward to answering any questions.

**Times Square Alliance  
Testimony to the New York City Council  
Committee on Transportation  
November 15, 2016  
Oversight: Making cycling and walking safer and more efficient  
Intro. 1177-2016 and Intro. 1285-2016**

On behalf of the Times Square Alliance, thank you to Chair Rodriguez and members of the Committee on Transportation for conducting today's oversight hearing on increasing pedestrian and cyclist safety. The Times Square Alliance supports Intros. 1177 and 1285, which will require the Department of Transportation to study the feasibility of implementing the "Barnes Dance" pedestrian crossing system at certain dangerous intersections and ways to reduce pedestrian congestion in high-volume locations, respectively.

Times Square is one of the most iconic, and one of the most congested, areas in New York City. It is a business and cultural hub, appealing to record numbers of tourists, local residents, and commuters. At peak times, approximately 480,000 pedestrians pass through the area daily. On Saturdays alone, over 50,000 people come to the district to attend a performance at one of Broadway's many theaters and over 24,000 visitors check in to a hotel within the district.

The Alliance is appreciative of the work that the Department of Transportation, in partnership with our local elected officials, has done to alleviate congestion in Times Square. The construction of pedestrian plazas, which we anticipate being complete later this year, were the first step towards creating new, safer public spaces. This spring, we again partnered on flow zones and designated activity zones to better manage the pedestrian traffic throughout the plazas.

The increase in pedestrian traffic in recent years is a testament to the strength of the cultural institutions, businesses, and attractions throughout the Times Square district. As the Alliance has documented in previous testimony before this committee, despite the work that has been done to manage the plaza areas, the congestion issues in Times Square have reached a tipping point. At peak hours, the confluence of pedestrians, vendors, ticket sellers, hawkers and hustlers, and vehicular traffic creates a dangerous situation on certain corridors.

42<sup>nd</sup> Street is a prime example of how a number of factors contribute to severe pedestrian congestion; food vendors and expressive matter vendors are allowed to set up at 7pm—exactly the same time as theatergoers are flooding the street to get to evening shows and hundreds of thousands of commuters are flowing into the subway stations and Port Authority Bus Terminal. On a recent Saturday evening, we counted 3,100 pedestrians walking in the street in order to get to their destination. Streets in Times Square routinely receive Level of Service grades of "E" and "F," meaning the sidewalks are "severely restricted or that forward progress is only achievable by shuffling." These dangerous conditions warrant a continued, thoughtful approach to the management of pedestrian traffic.

The Times Square Alliance supports the Council's goal to develop specific and unique strategies for the most congested corridors in New York City using objective criteria and data to improve pedestrian safety.

**Testimony of Chris Wogas, Vice President of Operations, Homer Logistics on Intro 1117-2016**

**November 15, 2016**

Good morning Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Chris Wogas and I am the Vice President of Operations at Homer Logistics. Homer is a third party logistics provider to local merchants, currently focusing on the restaurant industry. Homer's infrastructure replaces the need for business owners to manage an internal delivery team and our company hires, trains and outfits our own team of cyclists who make deliveries in New York City.

Our cyclists are W-2 employees who earn a living wage above \$15 per hour, as well as workers compensation and stock options. Additionally, we take Vision Zero extremely seriously and make safety a priority. We have GPS capability on our bikes and can evaluate if a courier has made illegal turns or did not follow proper traffic patterns. Also as part of Homer's commitment to safety, helmet use is mandatory for all employees and we encourage the Council the consider making helmets mandatory for all commercial delivery personnel in the City.

While Intro 1117 does not directly affect us as our delivery team is already following the law for commercial cyclists, we do think the bill could be stronger to reflect the industry's needs from a practical perspective.

For example, we at Homer Logistics are rapidly hiring new employees. So much so, that we have run out of 3-digit ID numbers and are now using letters in addition to 3-digit numbers to comply with the current law. The Council may want to address this issue in the bill.

Additionally, there is language in the current law that we believe should be updated. The law requires that commercial bicycle operators wear a retro-reflective garment on the upper part of their body as the outermost garment while making deliveries, the back of which shall indicate the business' name and the operator's identification number to be plainly readable at a distance of not less than ten feet. However, our delivery team, along with most other delivery personnel in the industry, wears a bag on their back, covering their jacket so you cannot read information on their garments. We respectfully request the Council amend the bill to require this information to be viewed, whether it be displayed on a garment or on a bag.

Again, we are not opposed to Intro 1117 as we are a leader in the industry who is already complying with its intent. However, we welcome further discussion on how the Council and the industry can work together to improve the law from a practical perspective.

Thank you for your consideration on these points.

## Committee on Transportation

### Oversight Hearing – Making Cycling and Walking Safer and More Efficient

Testimony by Julia Kite, Policy and Research Manager, Transportation Alternatives

Tuesday, November 15th, 2016

#### \*\*\*SUPPORT\*\*\*

Good morning, and thank you for convening this hearing. My name is Julia Kite, and I am the Policy and Research Manager for Transportation Alternatives, a 43-year-old membership-based non-profit advocating for better walking, biking, and public transportation in New York City. The topics of today's oversight hearing and the many bills up for discussion are close to our hearts.

#### Intro 1072

We strongly support Intro 1072, allowing bicyclists to proceed on the leading pedestrian interval (LPI) It is a practical safety measure for cyclists who all too frequently face aggression from drivers who do not respect their place on the road. Let us be clear: Allowing cyclists to go forward on the walk signal in a leading pedestrian interval, giving them a head start of three to seven seconds, is not about convenience or favoritism. **It is a matter of safety. No one will be harmed by this bill's passage, but people on bikes will continue to be injured or killed if it is not implemented.**

- When cyclists take a head start through red lights, it is because they know there are drivers behind them who pay no heed to a cyclist's right to occupy space on the street.
- **Letting bikes go on the LPI can prevent a common type of fatal crash, the "right hook,"** where an impatient driver turns into the path of a cyclist who is continuing straight.
- Because so many drivers fail to use their turn signal, this is a particular danger for **cyclists who can be doing everything correctly and legally, and still get hit.**
- Allowing cyclists to go on the LPI will prevent these crashes by allowing cyclists to clear the intersection first.

There is a precedent for this legislation: **Washington, DC has allowed cyclists to go on the LPI since 2013.** There is also a clear Vision Zero mandate: We know this intervention can prevent injuries and deaths, because **it has already worked keeping pedestrians safe.**

- **LPIs have been shown to reduce pedestrian-vehicle collisions as much as 60% at treated intersections,** so we have reason to believe they would reduce cyclist-vehicle collisions as well.
- **Cyclists would still have to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk when turning.** That would not change. This bill would definitely not be giving cyclists a right to blow through a group of pedestrians, nor will it allow cyclists to run red lights when there is no walk signal displayed.

- LPis for bikes can be compared to the thousands of yield signs for cars throughout the city, with an important difference being that a bicyclist's field of vision is far superior to that of car drivers - meaning less risk to pedestrians.

**Intro 1072 will keep more bicyclists from having to choose between their own safety and being ticketed for running a red light.** Cyclists face huge dangers at intersections and are far more vulnerable than drivers. Bikes are clearly not cars, and a simple measure like allowing cyclists to move during the LPI is a simple, no-cost, effective solution to a serious safety problem. We endorse it wholeheartedly.

### **Intro 1285**

We support Intro 1285, which will require the Department of Transportation to study ten locations with heavy pedestrian traffic and develop strategies for alleviating overcrowding. As the most pedestrian-heavy city in the United States, New York City should be leading on this matter.

- According to the DOT, the number of pedestrians at 100 sites it monitors has increased 18 percent on weekdays and 31 percent on the weekends since 2009.
- The City's population and tourist numbers are at all-time highs. **Many of our streets and sidewalks haven't changed in more than 50 years** even as travel habits and patterns have changed. This study is urgently needed.
- We encourage the DOT to undertake a thorough study in order to develop a methodology for creating **citywide measures of pedestrian level of service.**
- This metric should go beyond measuring volume and speed, and include elements like convenience and safety. This moves the City towards truly viewing sidewalks as multi-purpose, inclusive public spaces, not just places to walk in a rush from point A to B.

**We would also like to register our support for Intros 401, 1117, and 1177, which move the City towards a safer, fairer, and more enjoyable experience for pedestrians and cyclists. We also support proposed Intro 1124-A and recognize its role in helping the City reach its carbon emission reduction goals.**

### **Oversight: The Vision Zero Case for Making Cycling and Walking Safer**

As has been reported in recent weeks, after two years of declining fatality numbers, Vision Zero progress has, sadly, reversed: More people in total, as well as more pedestrians and cyclists, have died in crashes in New York City so far this year than in the same period of 2015. Last year's cyclist total was surpassed before Labor Day. Latest statistics indicate hit-and-run deaths have increased by over 40%. This situation is unacceptable and untenable, and we strongly encourage the City to turn its attention to the urgency of **redesigning our most dangerous arterial roads**, where the majority of fatal crashes occur.

Why the emphasis on street redesign? At present, most of our arterial roads are designed not for pedestrian and cyclist safety, but to move cars quickly at everybody else's expense. They encourage speeding and failure to yield by drivers - the most common causes of pedestrian and cyclist deaths. These are entirely preventable, and the most effective way to do this is by altering the geometry and features of the road using tools the DOT already has available in its Street Design Guide. **Street designs can change behavior and protect road users from the consequences of human error**, and critically, those changes are cast in concrete. We are encouraged by the Mayor's recent statement that he is very adamant about moving these redesigns forward as quickly as possible. The Mayor has said there is no shortage of will. What we need now, in the face of rising pedestrian and cyclist fatalities, is **urgency and expanded capacity at the DOT** to deliver the redesigns as soon as possible.

We must also emphasize that **cycling will only get safer when there is an expanded, more connected network of protected bike lanes in New York City**. We are aware of the tremendous effort on the part of the DOT to build a record number of protected bike lanes this year, and we appreciate their hard work. But this pace must be sustained, and consideration given not just to individual segments of streets, but entire routes.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on delivering safe streets for all New Yorkers.



New York City Council Committee on Transportation Hearing  
November 15, 2016  
Testimony of Eric McClure, Executive Director, StreetsPAC

On behalf of StreetsPAC, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Int. No. 1072 – Bicyclists following pedestrian signals (Support)

We offer our strong support for Intro 1072, which would allow people on bikes to adhere to pedestrian signals at intersections.

This is a common-sense bill that would greatly improve the safety at intersections of people riding bicycles, by allowing them to proceed on green leading pedestrian intervals. The measure should significantly reduce turning conflicts and “right-hook” collisions between motorists and people on bikes, while also allowing cyclists to safely establish themselves in drivers’ fields of vision when starting out from a signalized intersection.

This legislation would not require the installation of any type of special signal for cyclists, and would cost the city nothing, and it would normalize and codify a practice that is already common among people riding bikes, who frequently use LPIs as a head start for self-preservation. Furthermore, it does not require any compromise in pedestrian safety, as a person crossing an intersection on foot would retain the right of way in relation to turning cyclists.

We urge you to advance Intro 1072 out of committee without delay.

Int. No. 1285 – Study of Strategies for Reducing Pedestrian Crowding (Support)

We also offer our support for Intro 1285, which would require the Department of Transportation to study locations with significant pedestrian traffic and to develop strategies for reducing crowding.

We all know places in New York City bursting with pedestrian activity, where people walking spill into the street in search of a clear path as they merely try to go about their daily business. Whether it’s on Eighth Avenue near the Port Authority Bus Terminal, on Seventh Avenue around Penn Station, in and around Times Square or on the streets surrounding the World Trade Center, pedestrian demand is outstripping our infrastructure.

While we have made some strides in reclaiming space for people to walk, the progress hasn't kept pace with the need. This legislation will help the Department of Transportation get a handle on the issue, and will aid in developing plans to alleviate crowding. Our guess is that the answer is to take back some of the massive amount of space we have given over to private automobiles – New York City's sidewalks were much more generously proportioned a century ago – but this bill will help us figure that out with certainty.

We urge the swift passage of Intro 1285.

Res. No. 1177 – Study of feasibility of implementing Barnes dances (Support)

We also support Intro 1177, which would require the Department of Transportation to study the feasibility of implementing Barnes dances at the 25 most dangerous intersections in New York City.

Barnes dances, or pedestrian scrambles as they're sometimes known, stop all vehicular traffic at an intersection to allow people on foot to cross in all directions. While we know NYC DOT has concerns about maintaining vehicular and pedestrian flow, Vision Zero dictates that our primary emphasis must be on safety, especially at intersections that have been proven to be dangerous.

We urge the passage of this bill.

Finally, as to the larger and encompassing issue of making walking and cycling safer and easier in New York City, we applaud this committee and the City Council as a whole for prioritizing the safety of vulnerable street users.

We have made progress towards Vision Zero, to be sure, but the city will likely end this year with more traffic deaths than in 2015. We must work together to make certain that 2016 becomes a blip on a trend line moving relentlessly in the right direction, and that will take a major financial commitment to reengineering streets in lockstep with the moral commitment to end these preventable tragedies.

## PREPARED TESTIMONY

*New York City Council Committee on Transportation Hearing  
November 15, 2016  
City Hall  
Testimony of Dave 'Paco' Abraham, Street Safety advocate*

FOR THE RECORD

I am a life long New Yorker who walks, bikes, and drives and from all of those perspectives, I am proud to stand with Council Members Menchaca, Reynoso, and Lander, and passionately support Intro 1072, the LPI bill.

I consider myself lucky to be here beside these incredible safety advocates but I also consider myself lucky to be here in general, because I am a survivor of crashes - both major and minor.

March 21st, 2009 I was biking home from my mother's birthday dinner when a reckless driver hit me at the corner of Montauk and Sutter in East NY. He sped away and left me on the ground with three broken ribs and a severely lacerated spleen, from which it took months to recover.

June 6th, 2013 I was biking through Soho when the X17 express bus barreled down Broadway and moved toward the curb at Houston Street without looking to see me already there. It sent me flying and only by sheer luck did I avoid getting caught underneath its wheels.

And less serious, but still worrisome and far too common an experience, was April 29th of this year when a yellow cab sped ahead of me on Park Avenue and its exiting passenger swung the door open without looking, as the metal frame hit me squarely in the chest.

Now in the first crash, the cowardly driver left the scene so I can't know what his defense might have been but in both other cases, the driver's weak defenses match the story we too commonly hear from other crash reports in which the person at fault shrugs their shoulders and mutters "I didn't see him."

With Intro 1072 on the table, we have an easy way to eradicate the phrase "I didn't see him" because it will vastly improve visibility for all streets users. It will give people who bike a brief head start as they contend with multi-ton vehicles beside them and it will give those who drive a few extra seconds to notice those on two wheels who are more vulnerable to the dangers a vehicle crash could cause. And it does all of this while preserving a pedestrian's right of way when crossing our city streets.

While this bill offers just a few seconds of safety – frankly, less time than it takes to even read this sentence – those few seconds could be the life and death difference between a cyclist being seen versus seen as a statistic. If the hit & run criminal, the express bus driver, or the passenger exiting the cab each had a few more seconds to look at their surroundings, or I had been given a few seconds head start to cycle around them, my life would be vastly different.

I can't change the past but I can encourage the City Council to make a safer future in which a few seconds of lead-time brings about fewer crashes and eliminates the need for anyone to say, "I didn't see him". If the LPI bill passes, everyone will be seen.

FOR THE RECORD

**TESTIMONY OF DOUG GORDON IN SUPPORT OF INTRO 1072**

One of the simplest tools in the pedestrian safety toolkit can also benefit people on bikes. In a lot of cases, it already is. That tool is the Leading Pedestrian Interval, or LPI. Here's how the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) defines it in its **Urban Street Design Guide**:

*A Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) typically gives pedestrians a 3–7 second head start when entering an intersection with a corresponding green signal in the same direction of travel.*

Put another way, pedestrians get the walk signal before motorists get the green. This allows people on foot to get out ahead of car traffic, which makes them more visible to drivers, and, according to NACTO, "reinforce[s] their right-of-way over turning vehicles, especially in locations with a history of conflict." In New York, where **44 percent of pedestrians hit by drivers are in the crosswalk with the legal right of way**, even a 3-second head-start is no minor thing. "LPis have been shown to reduce pedestrian-vehicle collisions as much as 60% at treated intersections," says NACTO.

While leading bicycle intervals do exist, some cities skip bike-specific signals and simply allow cyclists to proceed on LPis. Washington, DC, for example, has allowed this behavior ever since the **Bicycle Safety Amendment Act of 2013**:

*(a) A bicyclist may cross at an intersection while following the pedestrian traffic control signal for the bicyclist's direction of travel unless otherwise directed by traffic signs or traffic control devices.  
(b) A bicyclist may cross an intersection where a leading pedestrian interval is used.*

While not legal, this practice happens all over New York, and it's making people safer. It's time for the law to catch up with what's already happening on the streets. *New York City should make it legal for cyclists to advance through intersections with leading pedestrian intervals.* Given the goals of Vision Zero, it's an idea that would yield immediate results with little in the way of effort or expense. Unlike other costly and time-consuming traffic calming measures such as protected bike lanes, all it would take to roll this out would be the installation of signs.

To consider some of the potential objections to this bill, allow me to break a few details down:

1. A 30-pound bicycle is no match for a multi-ton car or truck. People on bikes are hugely exposed at intersections, and under Vision Zero the city should be doing as much as possible to reduce the danger that comes from mixing flesh-and-bone cyclists with steel and glass vehicles.

2. The city frequently allows people on bicycles to legally do things people in automobiles cannot. Two-way bike lanes on streets that are one-way for cars and places where cyclists are legally allowed to use the sidewalk prove that it's possible to create rules that acknowledge the difference between bicycles and cars.
3. This would largely apply at large arterials, which is where most LPIs in the city can be found anyway. For quieter side streets or any place where drivers and pedestrians currently get their respective signals at the same time, existing rules would still apply.

Perhaps the biggest potential objection to allowing cyclists to legally advance on LPIs would come from **people who think that it would create chaos and uncertainty**, especially for pedestrians. Such an objection would be misplaced. In most cases, cyclists who proceed through an intersection on an LPI would be traveling in the same direction as people crossing the street on foot. Turning cyclists would still have to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk, which is no different than what's expected at an intersection without an LPI. Any confusion that might exist in the initial days or months after the passage of such a law would diminish over time. As it stands now, some cyclists start pedaling on LPIs while others do not, simply because it's illegal. Codifying this practice under the law would eliminate this uncertainty and quickly turn it into a common, accepted practice.

There's one additional benefit to legalizing this behavior: it would take away **a cudgel occasionally used by the NYPD to ticket cyclists**. While proceeding on an LPI is technically illegal for people on bikes right now, those who choose to do it are keeping themselves out of harm's way, as demonstrated in the videos above. There's simply no data-driven reason for punishing anyone who engages in this behavior.

If people who bike are meant to be equal beneficiaries of the city's Vision Zero efforts, a law allowing cyclists to proceed on leading pedestrian intervals is one of the easiest steps toward that goal.

Testimony November 15, 2016  
Mary Beth Kelly  
310 Riverside Dr. #1707  
NY, NY 10025

NY City Council, November 15, 2016

My name is Mary Beth Kelly, and I am here today to speak as a founding member of Families for Safe Streets and as a widow. My husband, Dr Carl Henry Nacht, a New York City internist who practiced on the Upper West Side of Manhattan for almost thirty years, was killed while we were riding our bicycles together. While in the cross walk on a green light, a tow truck driver turned into us, missed me, but then hit and killed my husband. If that truck had been delayed even a few seconds before being allowed his turn, my husband would not have been hit.

Bill: *INTRO 1072, allowing cyclist to move with the pedestrian or signal*  
would give legal protection to people like me, like my husband — vulnerable street users — from those drivers who will not from common decency, wait a few seconds, but instead rush the crosswalk in a hurry to make their turn before — rather than after — a cyclist. This small change can prevent the kind of suffering that my family and so many members of FSS have endured. No one should die trying to get from one side of the street to the other.

The following points speak to the strengths of this bill:

- Washington, D.C. has allowed bikes to go on the LPI since 2013. So far it has been successful.
- This bill is a safety measure. It has nothing to do with privileging any class of road user. No one is harmed by its implementation, but people are likely to be injured or killed if it is not implemented.
- Letting bikes go on the LPI can prevent a common type of fatal crash, the “right hook,” where an impatient driver turns into the path of a cyclist who is

continuing straight. Because so many drivers fail to use their turn signal, this is a particular danger for cyclists who can be doing everything right and still get hit.

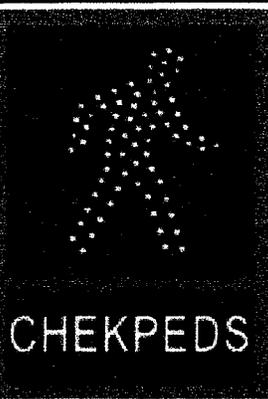
- When cyclists already go on the LPI, even though it isn't legal, they're often doing it for safety in order to not be overtaken by aggressive drivers.
- Going on an LPI means a head start of about 3-7 seconds at intersections where LPI's are in effect; this bill is definitely not allowing cyclists to ignore all red lights.
- This bill fits with Vision Zero: we know of an intervention that can save cyclist lives, so why not use it? We've implemented it to keep pedestrians safe, and it has worked. We know it can work for cyclists, too.
- LPIs have been shown to reduce pedestrian-vehicle collisions as much as 60% at treated intersections, so we have reason to believe they would reduce cyclist-vehicle collisions as well.
- Bikes are not cars. Cyclists face huge dangers at intersections and are far more vulnerable than drivers.
- LPIs for bikes is similar to the thousands of yield signs for cars throughout the city, and bicyclists' field of vision is far superior to that of car drivers. Unlike car drivers, bicyclists do not face any parts of their vehicle obstructing their view
- Under this bill, bike riders would still have to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk when turning. That would not change. This bill would definitely not be giving cyclists a right to blow through a group of pedestrians. Most cyclists will be traveling in the same direction as pedestrians, anyway.

- This bill will keep more bicyclists from having to chose between their own safety and being ticketed for running a red light.

Please, esteemed members of City Council, do the right thing!

MBK

City Council Transportation Hearings – November 15, 2016  
**IN SUPPORT**



**CHEKPEDS**

**OUR MEMBERS •**

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My name is Christine Berthet, I am the cofounder of CHEKPEDS, pedestrian safety coalition on the West Side of Manhattan.

We applaud the introduction of this batch of legislation to improve safety and reduce congestion for pedestrians with the following comments:

**Intro 1177 -2016 – recommends the study of Barnes dance at 25 intersections**

Fortunately, the top 25 intersections have already been identified and published in 2013 as part of the DOT Vision Zero pedestrian safety plan. There is no need to identify new ones that would only delay the process by 6 months.

If Barnes' dances are not feasible at a given intersection we'd like to see an alternate analysis of the feasibility of split phases for all left turns at that intersection.

We are concerned that the language "could be implemented" leaves too much discretion to the DOT engineers obsessed with vehicular flow and will deliver flawed results: the language should specify that the Council's objective is to privilege safety over vehicular flow at those dangerous intersections. Further, the results should be published for each intersection as well as the reason why a Barnes' dance is or is not feasible, supported by detailed quantified analysis.

**Intro No. 1285 – recommends the study of ten locations with the heaviest pedestrian volume, and to develop strategies for improving safety and traffic flow at such locations**

We are very much in favor of this study. In fact there are two blocks in CB4 (on 8th Avenue) that are in the top 10 but to our surprise, none of them is 42nd and 8th! To help address this deficiency the language should refer to "improving safety and traffic flows at such location and associated corridor"

**Int. No. 1124-A Electric Charging station:** We are also in support of testing charging stations. However absolutely no part of these stations should be installed on sidewalks. They should be entirely contained on private property (as were gas stations), in parking garages or in the parking/loading lanes.

Joanna Oltman Smith — Testimony in Favor of Introduction 1072  
New York City City Council, Transportation Committee, November 15, 2016

My name is Joanna Oltman Smith. I'm a longtime Safe Streets Advocate and member of Community Board 6 in Brooklyn, and I'm here today to encourage the Council to support Introduction 1072, a simple solution to a deadly problem on our streets — that of intersection conflicts between drivers and people on bikes.

Like thousands of other New Yorkers, I ride a bicycle as my primary way of getting around the City. This is a calculated risk: We all know the epidemic-proportion numbers of those severely injured, even killed in traffic. However, we also know the benefits — convenience, health, environmental, economic — that continue to make bicycling the best choice for many New Yorkers.

So, I persist in my bike routine even though there are many times during my daily rides when my life is clearly at risk. I ride with the most predictability, patience, and care I can, always keeping in mind that I must do so in order to return home to my family safe and sound. Sadly, no amount of diligence on my part can protect me from drivers who choose to speed, drive distracted, block bike lanes, and fail to yield to more vulnerable street users. With so much of our well-being simply out of our hands, it's essential people on bikes should be protected whenever possible. Currently, it's a sad irony that we actually *increase* our risk when we are law-abiding and stop at red lights — a longstanding and consistent practice for me.

Simply put, starting when the vehicular light turns green puts people on bikes in the direct path of turning drivers, both left and right, who cut us off with alarming frequency as we attempt to proceed straight ahead. Whether this is due to blind-spots, driver distraction, or just a plain case of "might over right," the result is often tragic: Turns are responsible for the majority of injuries and deaths on our streets. We know this statistically and we know it in the pit of our stomachs: There is nothing like staring into the grill of large truck or MTA bus that has stopped short of one's front tire "just in time" to make one question one's transportation choices. If we ever want to achieve our citywide goal of increasing bike ridership, we must do a better job of shielding people from this chronic threat. Fortunately, there is a simple cure.

The New York City Department of Transportation already has identified numerous crash-prone intersections around the city. People walking through these problem intersections are given a few extra seconds to establish a highly visible presence in the crosswalk *before* drivers turn or go straight. These Leading Pedestrian Intervals are programmed into our existing traffic signals at minimal initial expense, and have resulted in up to 60% reductions in pedestrian-vehicle crashes according to the National Association of City Transportation Officials, (of which our DOT is a primary member.) To extend this head start to people on bikes — who, being relatively unprotected like pedestrians, also suffer major physical trauma from vehicular impact — makes abundant common sense, and has the almost unheard of benefit of being cost-free and immediate to implement.

By allowing people on bikes to use pedestrian signals where they supersede vehicular ones, we will reduce chaos and increase clarity at our city's most dangerous intersections. People on bikes will take care to give pedestrians right of way, because hitting something or someone also causes injury to the rider and is avoided at all costs. Allowing drivers to see clearly the people who depend upon their decisions to make it to the other side of the intersection unscathed increases driver awareness overall, and all street users benefit. Until New York finds a way to properly fund the major street redesigns we need to truly transform our urban environment, Introduction 1072 will make us safer than before.

New York City Council Committee on Transportation Hearing

November 15, 2016

Testimony of Hilda Cohen, founding member of Kidical Mass NYC & Make Brooklyn Safer

I am very excited to be able to give testimony for the full support of Carlos Menchaca's Intro 1072.

The action of cyclists getting a head start on traffic at intersections using the pedestrian signal, has saved my life and the life of my kids numerous times all across the city. When we cycle around the city, getting to school, synagogue, friends' houses, restaurants, and constant activities, we typically stay on streets with cycling infrastructure. Our existing cycling infrastructure puts us cyclists up at the front of vehicles, with bike boxes, because this is where cyclists are often best seen. **But we are still not always seen.**

We are still in blind spots of almost all trucks, and most large SUV's. We are often looking ahead at streets that change from two lanes to one, or have a vehicle blocking the bike lane somewhere up ahead. We are scanning the road for hazards that we will have to bike around, as a pothole or debris in the road can easily take one of us down, and if we are directly adjacent to or followed by a car too closely...it causes you to reconsider how you get around the city.

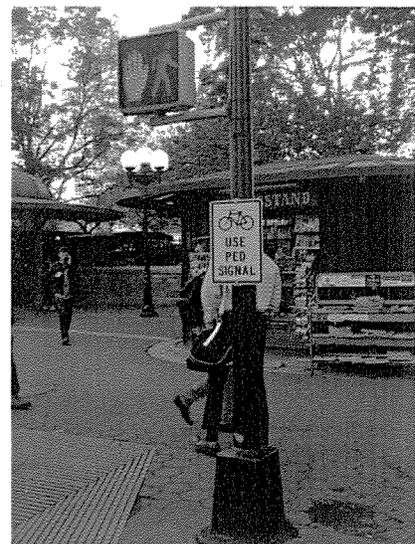


**Getting out ahead of traffic allows for us to navigate the considerably complicated NYC streets, while remaining as visible as possible.**

And there are numerous NYC locations where the Bicycle's signal is the same as the pedestrian signal. This happens at crossings along the Hudson River Greenway, at Prospect Park Grand Army Plaza, at the upgraded Union Square protected bike lane.

The shared signal is beneficial for safety, but it will also make cyclists more predictable. **It is a low cost solution for a very highly proven safety gain.**

When my kids are not with me or my husband, they are on their feet, and get around the city as most middle and high school kids do; walking and taking the subway. They are well aware of what it means to yield to pedestrians. They are also well aware that they need to look over their shoulder for vehicles at least two or three times while they cross in the cross walk with the light. Yielding to pedestrians and being an aware pedestrian are understood, and well observed.



There are also numerous locations where the pedestrian signal and the bike signal are green, to allow forward movement ahead of turning cars. The 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. protected bike lanes have this feature as part of the existing infrastructure. It works, even at the busiest intersections of the city, such as 34<sup>th</sup> Street and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.



It is incredibly intimidating to have a driver gunning the engine while we wait for the light to change, vulnerably sitting right in front of them. Half the time my son (or even myself) is not visible to the driver if their vehicle is large enough. Those previous moments the LPI allows gives us time and distance to get ahead of the vehicles, to make that transition safer for everyone.

## **STATEMENT OF THE BROADWAY LEAGUE**

### **IN SUPPORT OF INTRODUCTORY BILL 1285**

November 15, 2016

The Broadway League has been the principal trade association for the commercial theatre industry in New York State and across North America for over 80 years. It represents more than 750 theatre owners, producers and road presenters nationwide – with over 400 of its members maintaining offices in New York City. The League wishes to express its appreciation to Chairman Rodriguez and the other members of the Transportation Committee for allowing The League to comment on Introductory Bill 1285.

The League has always encouraged legislation aimed at enhancing the flow of pedestrian traffic, improving access to the Theatre District and bettering the quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses in the Times Square area. We have endorsed proposals to license pedicabs, improve oversight of street vendors and delineating pickup/drop-off locations for tour buses. We also applauded, and worked closely with, the Department of Transportation ('DOT') when it announced a plan to implement location restrictions for tip-seeking performers.

*The League wishes to express its support for this proposal to require the Department of Transportation to study ten locations with heavy pedestrian traffic and develop strategies for the alleviation of overcrowding.* Times Square is already one of New York's most traffic-infused neighborhoods, boasting a population that, unlike most areas of New York, increases on weekends with peak pedestrian traffic exceeding 480,000 people. Navigating midtown is a significant burden and frequent outdoor events regularly drive foot-traffic into the streets.

Approximately 13.3 million theatre tickets were purchased during the 12-month Broadway theatre season ending in May 2016. During that period, Broadway had a direct economic impact of \$12.6 billion on New York City. Over 80% of those tickets were sold to patrons residing outside New York City and nearly 60% of tourists reported that attending a Broadway show was a principal reason for visiting New York. Broadway spending generates over \$500 million in local tax revenue and directly supports approximately 89,000 jobs. Therefore, it is essential that lawmakers ensure every effort is taken to cultivate and maintain a

welcoming environment that includes unobstructed access to the Theatre District for our patrons, actors, stage hands, musicians and other workers this industry employs (directly and indirectly).

Midtown has simply become chaotic. The designation of Broadway (between 42<sup>nd</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> Streets) as an outdoor plaza has increased vehicular and pedestrian congestion as construction and revised traffic patterns overlapped with a proliferation of outdoor events. Accordingly, it is imperative that the City take measures to more effectively regulate congestion in and around Times Square.

The Broadway League feels this proposal is a positive step in addressing several challenging issues facing Times Square. We wish to note that we are available to work with The City Council and the DOT towards our shared goal of continuing to provide residents and visitors with a unique and safe experience. On behalf of the Broadway theatre community, the League applauds the Council's dedication to addressing this problem in a fair and balanced manner.



**Selfhelp Community Services, Inc.**  
520 Eighth Avenue  
New York, New York 10018  
212.971.7600  
[www.selfhelp.net](http://www.selfhelp.net)

**Testimony from Selfhelp Community Services, Inc.  
New York City Council Transportation Committee  
November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

My name is Sandy Myers and I am the Director of Government and External Relations at Selfhelp Community Services. Thank you to Transportation Chair Ydanis Rodriguez and the members of the committee for the opportunity to testify today on Intro 1177.

Selfhelp was founded in 1936 to help those fleeing Nazi Germany maintain their independence and dignity as they struggled to forge new lives in America. Today, Selfhelp has grown into one of the largest and most respected not-for-profit human service agencies in the New York metropolitan area, with 26 sites throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Nassau County. We provide a broad set of services to more than 20,000 elderly, frail, and vulnerable New Yorkers each year, while remaining the largest provider of comprehensive services to Holocaust survivors in North America. Selfhelp offers an extensive network of community-based home care, social service, and senior housing programs with the overarching goal of helping clients to live with dignity and independence and avoid institutionalization.

Our services are extensive and include: specialized programs for Holocaust Survivors; ten affordable senior housing complexes; four Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) programs; three intensive case management programs; five senior centers including one of New York City's first Innovative Senior Centers; home health care; client centered technology programs including the Selfhelp's nationally recognized Virtual Senior Center; court-appointed guardianship; the Selfhelp Alzheimer's Resource Program (SHARP); and New York Connects, which provides seniors and people with disabilities with the information and support they need to remain living independently in their own homes.

Selfhelp strongly supports the passage and implementation of Intro 1177. Changes in transportation policy should ensure that the City is safe and accessible to our seniors, and we believe this legislation is an important step in reaching this goal. Selfhelp's older and disabled clients often report dangerous intersections to our staff, and today I would like to share a few suggested intersections for DOT's consideration with implementing Barnes dance pedestrian crossing systems.

In Forest Hills, Queens, Queens Boulevard is often referred to as the "avenue of death" due to the short walk time to cross the street and heavy traffic at the intersection of Yellowstone and Queens

Boulevard. Members of Selfhelp's Austin Street Senior Center express concern about crossing the street and must wait for multiple rounds of lights in order to complete the cross safely.

In Kensington, Brooklyn, the intersections of Church Ave with Ocean Parkway and McDonald Avenue are especially difficult for seniors and the disabled. There are numerous lanes of traffic with cars moving at high speeds, frequently resulting in dangerous accidents. The seniors who live in this area and are clients at our Selfhelp office often comment that they are scared to cross the road out of fear that the cars will not see them when turning.

In Flushing, Queens, Kissena Boulevard is often referred to as the "boulevard of death" by local residents due to the high rate of deadly accidents. Members of the Selfhelp Innovative Senior Center are fearful that they will not be able to safely cross the street because the cars go so quickly and the lights are so short.

Seniors are the fastest growing population in New York City. We must do everything possible to make New York City accessible and safe for all its citizens. This includes developing traffic patterns and crosswalks that accommodate the needs of seniors and the disabled. We strongly encourage the passage of Intro 1177.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1072 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: Nov 15 2016

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARY BETH KELLY  
Address: 310 RIVERSIDE ST # 1707 10025

I represent: FAMILIES FOR SAFE STREETS.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL** *will answer questions,*  
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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/15/16

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Name: Matt Drury  
Address: NYC Parks

I represent: NYC Parks

Address: The Arsenal - NYC

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in favor  in opposition

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Name: Inspector Denis Fulton  
Address: 1 Police Plaza

I represent: NYPI

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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in favor  in opposition

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Name: Sean Quinn

Address: DOT

I represent: Senior Director Bicycle and

Address: Pedestrian Programs

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Name: Jenna Adams

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DOT

Address: Director of Legislative Affairs

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in favor  in opposition

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Name: Chris Woods

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Homer Logistics

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: CHRISTINE BERTHEI

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: CHEKPEDS

Address: 348 W 38th St, NY, NY

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Name: JOANNA SMITH

Address: 829 President

I represent: SELF

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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in favor  in opposition

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Name: IAN DUTTON

Address: 445 BERGEN ST #3 BKLYN

I represent: SELF

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/15/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ERIC McCLURE

Address: 423 4th ST. BROOKLYN 11215

I represent: STREETSPAC

Address: 17 BATTERY PL. SUITE 204 NY, NY 10004

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/15/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: HILDA COHEN

Address: 215 CUMBERLAND ST.

I represent: KIDICAL MASS NYC

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1072 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/15/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Julia Kite

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Transportation Alternatives

Address: 111 John Street, NY, NY 10038

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