

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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November 22, 2016
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
16th Fl

B E F O R E: MATHIEU EUGENE
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Annabel Palma
Darlene Mealy
Margaret S. Chin
David G. Greenfield
Andy L. King
Laurie A. Cumbo

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

Carson Hicks, Deputy Executive Director
Center for Economic Opportunity
Mayor's Office of Operations

Andre White, Deputy Chief of Staff
Departments of Youth and Community Development

Robert Zweig, Deputy Superintendent
NYC Department of Education's District 79

Vanda Belusic-Vollor, Senior Executive Director
Office of Post-Secondary Readiness
Department of Education's

Gary Jenkins, Executive Deputy Commissioner
Family Independence Administration
NYC Department of Social Services
Human Resources Administration,

Sarah Haas, Assistant Deputy Commissioner
Human Resources Administration

Jackie Mallon, First Deputy Commissioner
NYC Department of Small Business Services, SBS

D.C. Vito, Executive Director
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Monique De La Oz, Senior Director
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Randolph Peers, Chief Executive Officer
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Sara Burb-Sharps, Co-Director
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Andrea Vaghy Benyola, Managing Director
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Jessie Laymon, Director of Policy
NYC Employment and Training Coalition

Christian Gonzalez Rivera, Senior Researcher
Center for an Urban Future

David Collins, Assistant Vice President
Children's Village

Marjorie Parker, Deputy Executive Director
Jobs First NYC

Clayton Brooks, Director of Advocacy
Covenant House New York

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Good morning. I'm
4 Council Member Mathieu Eugene, and I am the chairman
5 of the Youth Services Committee. Today's hearing is
6 on two pieces of legislation that address youth who
7 are not in school, are in the workforce. As you are
8 already aware, the early years in a teenager's life
9 whether they graduate high school and continue their
10 education or enter the workforce are especially
11 important because having a college degree or working
12 at the early age, which make a positive impact on
13 their lifetime earning. However, a significant
14 number of New York City youth are not graduating high
15 school or entering the workforce. This means they
16 are not prepared to navigate today global economy.
17 And for years (sic) in New York City have already
18 enlightened the need for highly skilled and well
19 educated workforce to fill approximately 4,000 that
20 will require a college degree by 2020. However, the
21 city's currently workforce system is not designed to
22 meet employer's needs with already one million of its
23 residents working in low wage jobs making less than
24 \$20,000. Especially troubling is the high number of
25 disconnected youth. Today's hearing—hearing focuses

2 on disconnected youth age 16 to 24. Approximately
3 300,000 young New Yorkers in this age range are out
4 of school, and out of work, or are engaged in low
5 wage jobs where the opportunities for advancement—
6 advancements haven't mutated. The youth are more
7 likely to live in a community and communities that
8 are characterized by poverty, high unemployment, and
9 low level of educational achievement. As a result,
10 many disconnected youth cannot support themselves or
11 their families and increasingly rely on public
12 benefits such Medicaid, rental subsidies or food
13 stamps. While the City Council reports to this
14 hearing, in light of the city's plan to address
15 employment, it's underscored the need to do more for
16 youth who are not in school or out of work. In
17 particular, the report concluded that putting a price
18 in the—on the importance of equipping our youth with
19 an education and work skill suited to meet the
20 challenges of the 21st Century. We can no longer be
21 comfortable with a large labor force waiting to fill
22 low wage jobs with little to no benefit. Even
23 Congress realizes the importance of these very
24 important issues by passing the Workforce Innovation
25 and Opportunity Act that, WIOA, which places

2 increased importance on employment and training
3 services for disconnected youth. This is why I
4 introduced the two pieces of legislation, which
5 formalizes (sic) to ensure that we do not let the
6 disconnected youth because I believe with the right
7 policies and place we can provide the opportunities
8 they need to fulfill to their full potential.

9 Introduction No. 708 created a
10 disconnected youth Task Force, which re-examines the
11 problem these youth are struggling with making it
12 difficult for them to succeed. The Task Force would
13 have members from city agencies such as DYCD, SBS,
14 ACS and DOE just to name a few. Other member will
15 include providers and youth. The Task Force will
16 also be responsible for recommending solutions, which
17 will be submitted in the report to the Speaker of the
18 City Council and the Mayor.

19 Introduction No. 709 establishes a
20 Workforce Development division in the Department of
21 Small Business Services designed to address the need
22 of disconnected youth. Some of the department
23 division's responsibility will include providing
24 skilled building workshops, training opportunities,
25 resume development, interview workforce, work shops

2 and job equipment events. This would especially
3 ensure the young people of the city would be
4 adequately prepared for the future. I want to thank
5 the committee staff led by our counsel Karu De Sharu
6 (sp) Policy Analyst, and also Michael Benjamin,
7 Senior Financial Analyst, Jessica Acker and my Chief
8 of Staff David Weis (sp?) for the great job they are
9 doing to make this hearing possible, and I want to
10 take the opportunity to thank each one and every one
11 of you here, you know, for what you have been doing
12 day in and day out for the young people in New York
13 City, and I want to remind you that I'm convinced
14 that we all belong to the same team, and I say that
15 every single day, and we have the same wonderful
16 obligation. We are not fighting against each other,
17 but as a matter of fact, we come here, we come
18 together to find the best way that we can use to help
19 those young people who are in trouble. Our young
20 people they are in trouble, and if we don't come
21 together to provide them with the best opportunities
22 for them to be ready for the workforce, they don't-
23 not only they are going to suffer, but we also. We
24 are going to suffer, and we know that, you know, the
25 workforce is not the same like 20 years ago, like 15

2 years ago, and it's not going to be the same thing 15
3 years from now. We've got to get them prepared not
4 only to compete among themselves, but the competition
5 is not within the United States. It's international
6 right now, and I want to one more time to thank all
7 of you, and please let's continue to work together
8 because it is our moral responsibility. As we say
9 all the time, the young people they are the future
10 and indeed they are. And in order for them to become
11 the future of this nation, of this city, of this
12 society, we have to do our job. We have to do or
13 fulfill our responsibility by providing them with the
14 best opportunities possible, and convinced that we
15 can do it. We have the opportunities, we have the
16 opportunities, we have the resources, and we have the
17 will and we are dedicated, committed people to do it.
18 Let's do it. Thank you very much, and I want to take
19 the opportunity also to wish each one of and all of
20 you a very best and happy and Thanksgiving Day and
21 God bless you. Now, I would like to ask the counsel
22 to administer the oat to our first panel.

23 LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right
24 hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole
25 truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony

2 before this committee, and to respond honestly to the
3 Council Members' questions?

4 PANEL MEMBERS: [in unison] Yes.

5 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you. [background
6 comments, pause] Okay, so we'll begin with Mr. Carson
7 Hicks. Oh, I'm sorry, Ms. Carson Hicks, excuse me,
8 from the New York Center for Economic Opportunity,
9 and then we'll proceed with Mr. Andre White from
10 DYCD. Mr. Robert--sorry, I can't see your last name
11 here.

12 ROBERT ZWEIG: [off mic] Zweig.

13 LEGAL COUNSEL: Okay, it's White. Then
14 we'll go to Ms. Sarah Haas from HRA. Are you here?
15 [background comments] Oh, Larry James. Okay.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Gary Jacobs. Okay.

17 LEGAL COUNSEL: Okay, I got it. Sarah?
18 Is Sarah...? Okay, great and then we'll end with Ms.
19 Jackie Malone from--

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Jackie
21 Malone.

22 LEGAL COUNSEL: --SBS. Okay, great.

23 Thank you.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Great. Alright.
3 Would you please state your name and, you know, for
4 the recording and start, please.

5 DIRECTOR HICKS: Sure. Carson Hicks.
6 Good morning Chair Eugene and distinguished members
7 of the Youth Services Committee. My name is Carson
8 Hicks. I'm the Deputy Executive Director at the
9 Center for Economic Opportunity located with in the
10 Mayor's Office of Operations. I thank for the
11 opportunity to be here today to testify regarding
12 Intro 708. The proposed legislation is consistent
13 with the Center's commitment to increasing
14 opportunities for young people in New York City who
15 are not in school, and not working, i.e.,
16 disconnected. Today, I'm joined by colleagues from
17 the Department of Youth and Community Development,
18 the Department of Education, the Human Resources
19 Administration, and the Department of Small Business
20 Services. The Center for Economic Opportunity was
21 established in 2006 to build evidence in the field of
22 anti-poverty efforts with a particular focus on
23 services for disconnected youth. The Center works
24 closely with city agency partners including those
25 represented here today to conduct research, design

2 programs, monitor outcomes, and evaluate initiatives.
3 Regarding Intro 708, the Center is supportive of
4 focusing on opportunities disconnected youth in New
5 York City. We are very interested in talking more
6 with the committee about how best to realize these
7 goals. In 2015, there were approximately one million
8 youth between the ages of 16 and 24, and of these,
9 over 140,000 of them were discon-disconnected as
10 estimate by CEO's Poverty Research Unit using the
11 American Community Survey Poverty's micro sample.
12 These disconnected young adults are at risk for long-
13 term economic hardship as they miss opportunities to
14 become members of a workforce that is increasingly
15 educated and skilled. National research shows the
16 importance of education attainment and early work
17 experience for longer term labor market outcomes.
18 Young adults who obtain more work experience during
19 their earlier years have smoother transitions to the
20 labor market, higher starting wages, and higher
21 earnings 10 to 15 years after leaving high school.
22 While the overall need is great, it is also varied.
23 As a population, disconnected youth are not
24 homogenized. May youth possess the basic skills
25 necessary to enter the labor market, and may need

2 only a short-term intervention [coughs] to connect-
3 connect—excuse me—to sustainable employment or
4 educational programs. However, many also struggle
5 with low literacy skills and a lack of job readiness
6 or soft skills, and may require a longer period of
7 engagement to obtain a High School Equivalency
8 diploma and to work on skill development. In
9 recognition of this diversity of needs, city agencies
10 are currently providing a variety of targeted
11 services, which they will speak about in their
12 testimony. CEO is partnered to design and implement
13 over 25 different initiatives for disconnected and
14 at-risk youth, and we have produced over 20
15 evaluations analyzing the implementation of these
16 programs and outcomes for young people. There is also
17 several additional evaluations ongoing of
18 disconnected youth programs that we're doing. Given
19 these existing services and the overall scope of the
20 problem, the Center agrees with the spirit and goals
21 of Intro 708 to focus on the diverse needs of
22 disconnected youth and the city funded services that
23 address those needs. We further note that these
24 goals align well with much of the recent work of the
25 Youth Employment Task Force, which the Center has

2 been happy to support. The Task Force was launched
3 this fall by Mayor de Blasio and City Council Speaker
4 Mark-Viverito to develop recommendations for two key
5 youth workforce initiatives, the Summer Youth
6 Employment Program and Work, Learn and Grow. Any
7 future task force should build on this and other good
8 work underway and complement current efforts. We
9 look further--forward to further discussing with you
10 the best form for such a task force going forward.
11 SBS will provide feedback on Intro 709. Thank you
12 for the opportunity to testify today, and I would be
13 happy to take questions that you may have after my
14 colleagues have testified. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
16 Ms. Hicks. Thank you. [background comments, pause]
17 Thank you.

18 ANDRE WHITE: Good morning, Chairman
19 Eugene and members of the Youth Services Committee.
20 I am Andre White, Deputy Chief of Staff of the
21 Departments of Youth and Community Development. On
22 behalf of Commissioner Chong, thank you for inviting
23 us to testify at this important hearing on
24 disconnected youth. While the commonly accepted
25 definition of disconnected youth is young people age

2 16 through 24 who are out of school and out of work
3 with a limited level, it's actually a very divers
4 population, and each, you know, is reading on a sixth
5 grade level with no experience. It is a very
6 different service level than a 21-year-old with a
7 high school diploma and some work experience, but is
8 currently unemployed. To help the diverse needs of
9 youth who are not working, and aren't in school, DYCD
10 has several programs that focus on this population.
11 At the core for all these programs are the principles
12 of youth development. Youth development includes a
13 focus on the positive attributes that each youth
14 brings to the program, incorporating their voices and
15 program activities, creating inclusive supportive
16 environments for them to learn and thrive. These
17 programs include the or YAIP, promotes the social and
18 professional skills essential to succeed in today's
19 competitive labor market. Developing partnership with
20 the Center for Economic Opportunity, YAIP features a
21 combination of counseling, professional development,
22 workshops, short-term paid internships and placement
23 services. The program operates in three 14-week
24 courses each year. Participants are paid at a New
25 York State minimum wage, and spend 25 hours per week

2 internships and workshops. After the internship
3 ends, a minimum of nine months of follow-up begins
4 providing youth with ongoing support. The federally
5 funded Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act.
6 Workforce Innovation, WIOA, Out-of-School Youth, OSY.
7 The program offers a combination of occupational
8 outsourced training for in-demand jobs and High
9 School Equivalency and basic skills instruction. In
10 addition, OSY programs provide work readiness
11 training, paid work experiences, career exploration,
12 comprehensive case management and support services.
13 WIOA—WIOA youth programs must meet federal and state
14 outcomes related to job placement and prevention
15 attainment to participants, and DYCD programs have
16 successfully done so over the—over the past ten
17 years. In partnership with ACS, DYCD has partnered
18 with ACS to implement the YAIP Plus Program based on
19 DYCD's success YAIP model. YAIP plus provides
20 employment and education services to young adults
21 ages 16 through 24 who are currently or formerly
22 receiving foster care or Juvenile Justice services
23 through ACS.

24 The Young Adult Literacy Program, YALP,
25 also developed in partnership with CEO targets youth

2 who are reading at a 4th to 8th grade reading levels.
3 YALP provides free HSE based skills instruction and
4 comprehensive support services with the goal of
5 improving students' literacy and mathematic skills so
6 they can enroll in an HSE test preparation class.
7 Students who maintain 70% average attendance rate can
8 also obtain a paid internship with a public or
9 private employer or through service learning projects
10 to further develop their work readiness skills. Last
11 year, 6 of the 13—I'm sorry. Last year 6 of the 16
12 YALP program sites rolled out Bridge Programs, which
13 contextualized literacy instructions in specific
14 sectors. These programs integrate reading and math
15 skills instructions with occupational training,
16 provide college and career counseling with the
17 transition supports and other paid internship
18 opportunity—opportunities. Contextualized curricula
19 in healthcare and information technology sectors are
20 being used in the pilot, and the program is being
21 evaluated to identify promising practices that can
22 inform the field. In line with state and locally
23 defined goals, Neighborhood Development Area, (NDA)
24 Opportunity Youth: Supported Work Experience program
25 provides young people ages 16 through 24 who are not

2 in school or working with work readiness training,
3 counseling and paid short-term work experience in
4 jobs that matches the youth interns and provides
5 opportunities for career exploration. Activities
6 include education and career counseling, employment
7 assistance, job readiness and life skills training.
8 After their work experience, youth are placed in
9 employment, education, advanced training or the
10 military.

11 Finally, the Summer Youth Employment
12 Program (SYEP) also served disconnected youth. This
13 past summer 4,666 of the—of the over 6,000 enrolled
14 SYEP youth were out of school or out of work. SYEP
15 also specialized—has specialized services for foster
16 care, homeless and court involved youth, some of whom
17 may be out of school or out of work. This past
18 summer 3,400 vulnerable youth were enrolled in SYEP.
19 In addition to this host of services over the past
20 year, DYCD has increased our efforts to move
21 participants to one program to another providing a
22 true continuum of services. For example, when a YALP
23 participant completes the 14-week cycle, they may be
24 referred to a WIOA or OSY program depending on their
25 goals, needs and interests. We're also working to

2 connect 2016 SYEP applicants who indicated that they
3 were out of school and out of work at SYEP enrollment
4 with an OSY or YAIP program. To help facilitate
5 referrals between programs and increase coordination
6 and collaboration, we held the convening of our
7 program providers who serve old youth in late August
8 to build relationships with either other. Nearly 150
9 staff and providers operating YAIP, WIOA, OSY,
10 Runaway/Homeless Youth drop in centers and shelter
11 beds and an NDA Opportunity Youth Programs attended.
12 The attendees discussed service delivery issues, how
13 to be a resource to each other by borough and express
14 interest in future relationship building and
15 networking sessions. We are also exploring the
16 feasibility of technology and data based-database
17 systems improvement to better track program
18 participants and more to make referral more easily.

19 The leverage the assets of or our sister
20 agency programs, for the past two summers we have
21 worked with ACS and the Department of Probation to
22 identify young people in their systems who are
23 eligible for a vulnerable youth slot in SYEP. We are
24 working with HRA to support their efforts and
25 maximize education and training, and employment

2 services for their clients by connecting to our adult
3 literacy programs and OSY programs. We have also
4 announced our OSY program model to serve a broader
5 range of out of school youth by partnering with CUNY
6 to leverage their array—their array of occupational
7 trainings. This new service component creates—
8 creates a career pathway for OSY participants that
9 have a high school diploma or equivalent to enter one
10 of the several CUNY trainings such as early child
11 development, culinary arts, healthcare and
12 information technology.

13 As we have discussed, the disconnected
14 population is diverse in terms of experiences and
15 these—and the required multiple service options. The
16 number of young people in New York City who are out
17 of school and out of work is large and can't be
18 served DYCD alone. It will require continued
19 collaboration across the agencies and with the City
20 Council to help youth obtain the necessary [coughs]
21 jobs and training. Thank you for having us testify
22 today.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
24 Let me take the opportunity to do something that I
25 forgot to do, and I was supposed to do at the very

2 beginning to acknowledge that we have been joined—we
3 have—we also saw Council Member Margaret Chin. Thank
4 you Margaret. Thank you. A strong advocate for
5 youth also. I apologize for that. Thank you.
6 [laughs] Next, we get Robert Zweig.

7 ROBERT ZWEIG: Zweig.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Zweig.

9 ROBERT ZWEIG: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: It is S-I. Thank
11 you. Sorry, Robert. Thank you also.

12 ROBERT ZWEIG: Thank you, thank you and
13 good morning Chair Eugene and members of the City
14 Council's Committee on Youth Services. My name is
15 Robert Zweig, and I am the Deputy Superintendent of
16 the New York City Department of Education's District
17 79, more commonly known as D79, the district that
18 oversee the city or the city's alternative programs.
19 I'm joined today by Vanda Belusic, Senior Executive
20 Director of the Department of Education's Office of
21 Post-Secondary Readiness, known as OPSR. Thank you
22 for allowing us to testify today on this very
23 important topic. The DOE is committed to providing
24 high quality educational programming and supports for
25 all city students including disconnected youth. Our

2 transfer schools, young adult borough centers known
3 as YABCs, and the Pathways to Graduation Program are
4 specifically designed to help prevent students from
5 dropping out, re-engage, and transition back into the
6 traditional educational system when possible, or to
7 develop the skills necessary to pursue a career
8 pathway. These programs serve students under the age
9 of 21 who have struggled in traditional high schools
10 or over aged and under credited for graduating on
11 time, and those students who are new to the system
12 with limited formal education. The DOE operates 57
13 transfer high schools throughout the city that offer
14 a pathway to a high school diploma for 16 to 21-year-
15 olds who have fallen behind in high school or who
16 have dropped out. They focus on a small personalized
17 learning environment with rigorous academic standards
18 and student centered pedagogy. Students attend a
19 transfer school for a full school day, and last
20 school year over 14,437 young people were enrolled in
21 New York City transfer schools. Our YABC's also
22 located throughout the five boroughs are for evening
23 programs designed for students who might consider
24 dropping out due to being behind in their credit
25 accumulation or who have adult responsibilities that

2 make attending school during the daytime difficult.
3 Students must be at least 17-1/2 years old through
4 21, and must be in the fifth year of high school with
5 having at least 17 credits. These students graduate
6 with a diploma from their home high school. The
7 Learning to Work program known as LTW, is a component
8 of many transfer schools and YABCs across the city.
9 LTW was one launched in 2005 to increase the number
10 of overaged and under-credited students who earned a
11 high school diploma. As part of this program,
12 students receive services including: Specialized
13 supports such as assessment, individual and group
14 counseling, attendance outreach and tutoring, college
15 and career exploration and readiness training, and
16 subsidized internship and job development services.
17 LTW services are available in 13 transfer schools,
18 and all 23 YABCs through community based partnership
19 staff who are located on site to coordinate and
20 develop-deliver the specialized and personalized
21 supports needed to keep students on track for high
22 school graduation. Last year, LTW programs across
23 New York served approximately 12,000 students.
24 Lastly, D79 works with student through Pathways to
25 Graduation. The School of Cooperative Technical

2 Education and the Living for the Young Family Through
3 Education known as the LYFE program. In partnership
4 with community based agencies, Pathways to Graduation
5 offers both full and part-time High School
6 Equivalency preparation programs and wrap-around
7 services for young adults between the ages of 18 to
8 21 at more than 65 sites throughout New York City.
9 It is important to note that more than 43% of the
10 students who are enrolled in Pathways to Graduation
11 did so after having completely disconnected from
12 school. Coop Tech offers a half day model where 18
13 to 21-year-old students can attend their regular high
14 school or High School Equivalency program during
15 part of the day, and then attend one of the 17
16 certification courses such a culinary arts or
17 computing networking offered by Coop Tech during the
18 other portion of the school day. To ensure that
19 student parents can have access to childcare, LYFE
20 provides free daycare, and early childhood education
21 for the children and students who are between eight
22 weeks and three years old, along with academic
23 guidance and advocacy to support young parents as
24 they achieve a high school diploma or equivalency.
25 LYFE centers are spread throughout the five boroughs

2 of New York City. D79 also works closely with
3 several other city agencies and community partners.
4 For example, the Future Now program in the Bronx is a
5 highly successful partnership with Bronx Community
6 College where almost all students complete a high
7 school equivalency and go on to attend Bronx
8 Community College. We collaborate as well with the
9 Department of Youth and Community Development on the
10 on several CBOs including one of our largest and most
11 successful partners Opportunities for a Better
12 Tomorrow located in Brooklyn and in Queens. The New
13 York City Department of Small Business Services, and
14 Human Resources Administration are also invaluable
15 partners to the DOE and District 79. While we
16 recognize that there is more that can be done, the
17 DOE is proud of the work we do to prevent students
18 from disconnecting, to reintegrate and to support
19 students who have previously disconnected. Our goal
20 is not just to help these youth obtain a high school
21 diploma or equivalency, but also to help them grow as
22 young people so that they can transition successfully
23 into college, an adult education program or a career.
24 Thank you again for allowing us to testify today, and

2 I now turn my mic back to—to my colleague from Human
3 Resources. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
5 Thank you. Gary Jenkins, thank you.

6 GARY JENKINS: Good morning Chairperson
7 Eugene and members of the Committee on Youth
8 Services. Thank you for inviting me to discuss our
9 programs and initiatives, which are helping to give
10 young people the skills and training that will lead
11 to sustained and meaningful participation in the
12 workforce. My name is Gary Jenkins, I—and I am the
13 Executive Deputy Commissioner of the Family
14 Independence Administration at the New York City
15 Department of Social Services, Human Resources
16 Administration, and I'm joined by my colleague Sarah
17 Haas, the Assistant Deputy Commissioner. I am
18 pleased to join my colleagues in government today to
19 discuss the administration's efforts to set clear
20 pathways for youth to achieve long-term economic
21 security. HRA is the largest—is the nation's largest
22 social services agency assisting over three million
23 New Yorkers annually through the administration of
24 more than 12 major support programs. HRA also
25 administers IDNYC, the country's most successful—

2 successful municipal identification program. Among
3 other assistance, HRA provides these key supports for
4 low-income children and adults. 2.2 million New
5 Yorkers receive Medicaid through HRA and over one
6 million more through the State Health Insurance
7 Exchange. 1.68 million New Yorkers are receiving
8 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, also
9 know as food stamps, and family and-and individuals
10 receive millions of meals served in food pantries and
11 community kitchens. 685,000 New Yorkers receive home
12 energy assistance every winter. 107,000 New Yorkers
13 receive one-time cash assistance over the course of a
14 year to prevent evictions and utility shut-offs or
15 provide assistance with other emergencies, and 59,145
16 New Yorkers receive employment services including
17 11,510 18 to 24 year-olds. Approximately 250,000 New
18 York City children receive more than \$750 million in
19 child support collections each year. Low-income New
20 Yorkers depend on these vital supports to maintain
21 employment and achieve housing stability. Our
22 benefits and entitlement programs serve both employed
23 and unemployed New Yorkers, and more than 28,000 of
24 our clients receiving cash assistance are employed
25 full time. However, these incomes are so low that

2 they still qualify for cash assistance. This is why
3 it is so critical that HRA develop an individualized
4 approach to employment service delivery because New
5 Yorkers are homogenous, and arrive at our doors for
6 many different reasons. Moving away from a one-size-
7 fits-all employment approach to a new more diverse
8 individualized approach allows HRA to focus on
9 improving employment and training outcomes so that
10 more clients have to op-have an opportunity to
11 achieve economic stability, secure employment and
12 move off the caseload and out of poverty. Under-
13 under the prior approach, 34% of clients who were
14 reported as receiving employment assistance ended up
15 returning to the caseload again within 12 months.
16 HRA new-HRA's new employment services model connects
17 clients to individualized education, training,
18 employment and other services that gives them the
19 training and skills they need to compete in the job
20 market-market to reach their maximum earning potential.
21 Of the 59,145 employable clients on HRA's caseload,
22 44% lack-lack a high school diploma. Without a high
23 school education, it is difficult to earn even
24 \$20,000, and in New York City that will not take you
25 very far. This is why we work with our partners in

2 the state to provide clients with opportunities to
3 gain a high school diploma or college level
4 education. As of November 18, 2016, there were 3,798
5 HRA clients enrolled in a college or university, and
6 8,402 HRA clients enrolled in a high school or
7 equivalent program. Following the December 31, 2014
8 approval by the State Office of Temporary Assistance
9 and Disability Assistance of the HRA Employment Plan,
10 we began developing and implementing—and
11 implementing, excuse me, sufficient employment
12 program reforms. Since that time, we have steadily
13 wrote our programs and initiatives that are rooted in
14 best practices, and that focus on achieving
15 sustainable outcomes. I will briefly mention some of
16 those improvements. We've implemented a new
17 employment services contracts to ensure alignment
18 with the new vision and are no longer relying on a
19 one-size-fits-all approach. This youth spec-specific
20 approach to serving youth has been cited by the
21 Center for Law and Social Policy, CLASP. While cash
22 assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy
23 Families Block Grant is not commonly thought of as
24 youth serving program, the reality is that one-third
25 of adult recipients obtaining the benefits are under

2 age 25. HRA's new program, Youth Pathways,
3 represents one of the few large scale programs
4 nationwide to tackle this issues. We are phasing out
5 the Work Experience Program, WEP, which would—which
6 provided clients with limited opportunities to engage
7 in sim-simulated work experience in other city
8 agencies. WEP is being replaced with more meaningful
9 opportunities for internships and community service
10 that align more closely to each client's area of
11 interest. We've improved assessments to address each
12 client's actual strengths and needs. We've maximized
13 education, training and employment related services
14 to build career pathways out of poverty. We have
15 eliminated unnecessary punitive and duplicative
16 actions that lead to preventable negative actions.
17 HRA has also made policy and procedureships that
18 allows us to better serve our clients including young
19 people with limited English proficiency and/or lower
20 literacy. A few—a few of these policyships include
21 allowing two and four-year college enrollment to
22 count as a work activity in accordance with state
23 law. Encouraging participants age 24 and under to
24 participate in full-time Adult Basic Education,
25 sector based Contextualized Literacy Training

2 program, English as a Second Language course or High
3 Education Prep programs, and expanding services to
4 clients with limited English proficiency by now
5 allowing them to participate in full-time English as
6 a second language course work. While our recent
7 policy reforms—policy reforms benefit all of our
8 clients, we recognize that there are—there was a
9 particular need to focus resources on better
10 connecting low-income young people to meaningful
11 employment and training services. Youth Pathways is
12 a new HRA program recognized by a national model by
13 CLASP, and steeped in labor demand and youth
14 development principles. We anticipate that once fully
15 ramped up, the Youth Pathways model will foster a
16 more successful transition to the job market for
17 approximately 14,550 youth age 18 to 24. Defining a
18 clear career pathways—pathway for these young people
19 is critical to interrupting patterns of generational
20 poverty and dependence on public assistance. On
21 November 16, just last week, HRA selected vendors for
22 three new employment programs. In total more than
23 68,000 HRA clients are expected to benefit from these
24 programs annually. We have full confidence that the
25 selected vendors will advance our Workforce

2 Development goals and efforts for all of our clients
3 including young people age 18 to 24. We are pleased
4 to announce that Youth Pathways contracts were
5 awarded to six organizations with a proven record of
6 success including ResCare Workforce Services, America
7 Works of New York, Fedcap Rehabilitation Services,
8 Goodwill Industries of Greater New York—and Greater
9 New York and Northing New Jersey, Maximus Human
10 Services, and East River Development Alliance. These
11 vendors will be working with the following
12 subcontracts: Queens Library, Association of
13 Community Employment, Avondale Care Group, Career and
14 Educational Consultants, Community Services Society,
15 Futures and Options, Hellenic-American Neighborhood
16 Action Committee, Project Renewal, Pro-Placement
17 Solutions, Quality Employment Services and Start
18 Fresh. HRA encourages vendors to utilize innovative
19 approaches to service delivery. We feel strongly
20 that in order to yield successful outcomes, Youth
21 Pathways programs must be comprised of the following
22 components:

23 Frequent client engagement and career
24 pathway developed in accordance with the client's
25 strengths and needs;

2 One-on-one financial counseling, social
3 capital-building and connections to high quality
4 youth services;

5 Collaborative partnership with DOE to
6 enhance education, training and work-readiness
7 programming; and

8 Provision of job-readiness and skill
9 development activities for up to one year post-
10 placement.

11 While it's too early to report on
12 outcomes, we are hopeful that soon we will have many
13 positive success stories to share with this
14 committee.

15 The Youth Pathway program does not
16 represent the full range and scope of employment
17 programs and services at HRA. We also offer
18 internships related to a career pathway that meet the
19 State Department of Labor standards. This is funded
20 through a separate RFP internship placement service;
21 subsidize transitional job programs, including
22 positions at the Parks Department and in the private
23 sector, in the Shelter Exit Transitional Jobs
24 program, which has been transferred to HRA from the
25 Department of Homeless Services to promote shelter

2 move-out; and HireNYC a free program that connects
3 cash assistance clients, and low-income workers to
4 jobs generated by Economic Development projects and
5 also requires a Human Services vendor to hire at
6 least one public assistance recipient for every
7 \$250,000 receive in city funding.

8 The Support Through Employment Program,
9 STEP, which pairs unemployed or underemployed
10 noncustodial parents with a vendor Child Support
11 services through HRA's employment services contracts
12 to help them with job readiness training, placement
13 services, vocational services, and most specific—and
14 most participants who find work through STEP hold a
15 job that pay above the minimum wage. I'll refer you
16 to our Child Support program for other initiatives.

17 In closing, I would like to mention some
18 of the cross agency programs and initiatives that are
19 lifting individuals and entire communities out of
20 poverty. These programs are available to both
21 clients and on-clients and include the following:

22 Jobs-Plus: a partnership between HRA,
23 NYCHA, CEO, Consumer Affairs and YMI designed to
24 increase the level of earnings and employment among
25 residents of public housing. Services include job

2 placement and retention as well as both community
3 engagement and one-on-one financial counseling.
4 Jobs-Plus has over 12,800 members, and services are
5 offered to 23 developments across the five boroughs.
6 This program will soon expand to four additional
7 development.

8 Work Progress Program, also know as WPP
9 established by a CEO and HRA, the WPP is a subsidized
10 wage program for low-income young people enrolled in
11 youth services—enrolled in youth services provided by
12 our community-based organizations.

13 West Farms Workforce 1 Career Center: A
14 partnership between HRA, DOE and SPS targeting New
15 Yorkers age 18 to 24 who are not working and not in
16 school the Center integrates HRA support to access
17 and navigate public benefits. DOE's District 79
18 contextualized High School Equivalency preparation
19 and SBS Workforce 1 services to prepare and connected
20 candidates to job and training opportunities.

21 The Special Project Center: In October
22 2015, HRA and ACS announced a new strategic
23 partnership. HRA has made a Special Project Center
24 in Manhattan, located at 109 East 16th Street
25 available to youth who are transitioning out of

2 foster care. The office allows ACS to easily
3 communicate with to ensure the youth are receiving
4 adequate and appropriate services.

5 Reforming and improving out employment
6 programs and client outcomes will not happen
7 overnight, but we feel confident that the changes
8 we've made will promote a greater likelihood of
9 independence and self-sufficiency for young people
10 and indeed all of our clients. We welcome continued
11 collaboration with the Council and look forward to
12 answering your questions and hearing from the
13 advocates. Thank you and I look forward to the
14 committee questions.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
16 sir, and Jackie Mallon, thank you very much.
17 [background comments]

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Good
19 morning, Chair Eugene and members of the Youth
20 Services Committee.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Good morning.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: My name is
23 Jackie Mallon. I'm the First Deputy Commissioner of
24 the New York City Department of Small Business
25 Services or SBS. At SBS we are working hard to doors

2 for New Yorkers across the five boroughs focusing on
3 creating stronger businesses, connecting New Yorkers
4 to good jobs and fostering thriving neighborhoods.

5 Supporting the Mayor's Career Pathways Plan our
6 agency trains New Yorkers for good paying jobs and
7 links job seekers to employment in fast growing
8 industries with real opportunities for advancement.

9 Specific—specifically we have increased our

10 investments in support for out of school, out of work
11 youths. Through our network of 20 Workforce 1 Career

12 Centers, SBS helps more than 25,000 people find jobs
13 annually, and SBS is dedicated to ensuring that out-

14 of-school out-of-work youth are connected to these
15 services. Due to the way that WIOA funding is

16 structured, SBS is limited to serving populations

17 above the age of 18. In fact, over 25% of the

18 clients who come into our Workforce 1 Career Centers

19 are between the ages of 18 and 24, and as such, we

20 work hard to find the best opportunities for them.

21 In FY16 the Workforce 1 Career—Career Center system

22 connected over 30—3,600 individuals who are age 18 to

23 24 in both out of school and out of work youth to

24 employment. These jobs have an average wage of about

25 \$10.97 an hour, [coughing] and 80% were full-time.

2 Along with job placement services provided at the
3 centers, we also offer a number of train-of trainings
4 targeted to out-of-school out-of-work youth. SBS
5 recognizes the need to serve out-of-school out-of-
6 work youth, and we have taken unprecedented steps
7 develop programming that meets their needs. Most
8 recently, SBS launched a new set of services in
9 collaboration with the DOE and HRA dedicated to out-
10 of-school out-of-work youth. The trainings are
11 designed to provide necessary support of out-of-
12 school out-of-work youth to be successful in growing
13 industries. One of the primary ways we align these
14 industries is through our industry partnerships,
15 which work with industry, organized labor, non-
16 profits, training providers, private philanthropy and
17 workforce organizations to build a pipeline of local
18 talent to fill New York City's jobs. Through these
19 services, young adults have the ability to follow
20 three tracks that will provide a career in the
21 industrial, healthcare, and technology industries.
22 Initially, we are connecting out-of-school out-of-
23 work youth to careers as cable installers, certified
24 medical assistants and web developers. These
25 services were launched at our West Bronx Workforce 1

2 Career Center in the Bronx. The center's mission is
3 to provide integrated and seamless services
4 customized to help 18 to 24-year-old New Yorkers
5 connect their careers with family sustaining wages.
6 At the Center the city provides individualized
7 support to connect to employment opportunities,
8 prepare for and obtain a High School Equivalency
9 diploma, connect to training opportunities and post-
10 training employment. Develop skills to strengthen-to
11 strengthen jobs candidacy and connect to HRA
12 benefits. We plan to expand these services
13 throughout the-the Career Center system over the next
14 two years.

15 Regarding Intro 709, introduced by Chair
16 Eugene, SBS agrees with the bill's intent to provide
17 specialized trainings for specific populations in New
18 York City, and we've already begun implementing the
19 strategy in our Workforce 1 Career Centers. Along
20 with the West Bronx Workforce 1 Career Center in
21 partnership with HRA, we recently launched the
22 Washington Heights Workforce 1 Career Center. The
23 first location to offer tailed employment, training
24 and supportive services to the city's vibrant
25 immigrant workforce. That-that being said, we do not

2 believe the charter should be amended to create a
3 Division of Workforce Development because SBS already
4 has this charter mandate and provides free high
5 quality Workforce Development training and job
6 connection resources. Through these efforts, SBS is
7 equipping out-of-school out-of-work youth with the
8 in-demand skills necessary to build-build successful
9 careers in the 21st Century economy and ensuring that
10 local businesses have access to world class talent
11 they need right here in the five boroughs. I'm happy
12 to answer any questions you may have on the SBS
13 programs I have discussed today, and thank you very
14 much.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
16 [background comments, pause] Thank you to all of you
17 for your testimony. Today I'll start, we'll just
18 start with the Mayor's Center for Economic
19 Opportunity. My first question would be to me-to
20 Carson Hicks.

21 DIRECTOR HICKS: Yes. [pause]

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Could you tell us
23 the cost of the program? How much it costs, you
24 know, for that type of program?

2 DIRECTOR HICKS: So we fund many
3 different programs. I'm not sure if you're
4 responding--referring to a specific program.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: From disconnected
6 youth ,you know, how much do you spend, you for, in
7 terms of, you know, serving the disconnected youth?

8 DIRECTOR HICKS: Oh, I would say--

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] The
10 program that you are-- [background comments] Yes, uh-
11 huh, that was about, let's about the Project Rise,
12 for example. Thank you, uh-huh.

13 DIRECTOR HICKS: Sure. Just by maybe--

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] And
15 after that, I will go back on details for it, okay.

16 DIRECTOR HICKS: Of course.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, uh-huh.

18 DIRECTOR HICKS: By way of background
19 contracts, this program was funded through the
20 Federal Social Innovation Fund. Those were dollars
21 that were awarded to CEO in partnership with the
22 Mayor's Fund to advance New York City. So there's no
23 tax levy dollars that were in that program. There
24 was a combination of federal and private dollars.
25 The annual budget for programs here in New York City

2 was \$1.4 million. The grant that we received that
3 funded those programs has come to an end this year.
4 It was awarded in 2010, and we—we had it for about
5 five or six years. I'd be happy to discuss how the
6 non-profits that were awarded that grant have infused
7 Project Rise services into other programming.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh. So you say
9 that this is the end of the funding, is that right,
10 in 2016?

11 DIRECTOR HICKS: Yes, it was a—it was a
12 grant that we received from the Feds that came to an
13 end.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So what will happen
15 to the program?

16 DIRECTOR HICKS: So basically at many of
17 the non-profits, they have infused many of the
18 program elements into existing programming. Henry
19 Street, for an example, is one of them. I don't know
20 if they're here or not, but one of the non-profits
21 that operated the program. They incorporated a—a no
22 eject, no reject policy that they previously had not
23 adopted in their programming. Basically, any open
24 door for a young person recognizing that some—some
25 have hurdles to regular attendance. And so we have

2 also collaborated with our agency partners to make
3 sure that we share lessons learned. There was an
4 evaluation of Project Drive. This I would say was a
5 program that was—it paired both education and
6 employment services, and it really targeted those who
7 did not have a High School Equivalency degree and
8 helped them have educational gains and get some
9 workforce experience. You know, it was about a year
10 long engagement.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So how many
12 disconnected youth were served by Project Rise
13 approximately? The numbers there.

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: Right. So, here in New
15 York I think it was about 150 a year, but this
16 program also--

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: What just 150?

18 DIRECTOR HICKS: A year.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: A year? Why this--

20 DIRECTOR HICKS: In New York City but it
21 also operated in Newark, New Jersey and Kansas City,
22 Missouri. [coughs]

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So that means that
24 \$1.4 million was allocated for all those programs, or
25 for the program only in New York City?

2 DIRECTOR HICKS: In New York City.

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Only in New York
4 City?

5 DIRECTOR HICKS: Yes, and it was—that was
6 by provider. So—so one program site per program year,
7 \$1.4 million. It paid for not only staffing and
8 educational services, it paid for wages and stipends
9 for the youth and—and things like that.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So that means from
11 New York City alone, the funding was \$1.4 million,
12 right?

13 DIRECTOR HICKS: Times three. So that
14 would be—ooh. [background comments] Thank you. \$4.2
15 million.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes. So that means
17 for 150 participants?

18 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: What will be the—
20 the—let's put it—you say that the—the funding has
21 been dis—will be discontinued, you know, by 2016. So
22 what will be the impact even if you are trying to—to
23 where just, you know, the different program, what
24 will be the impact, you know, of the—the lack of
25 funding, the \$1.4 million on the program, on the

2 Project Rise? Will you be able to serve 150
3 participants or how many participants you believe
4 that you will be able to serve due to the lack of
5 fund—you know, the \$1.4 million?

6 DIRECTOR HICKS: Well, as we started this
7 conversation before Project Rise, CEO funds many,
8 many different disconnected youth programs including
9 those referenced by my colleagues. At DYCD for
10 example, the Young Adult Internship program, the
11 Young Adult Literacy program, our Work Progress
12 program with HRA. So we feel that these programs can
13 accommodate the 150, but also the Project Rise itself
14 helped these help young people basically get
15 unsubsidized employment as well as educational
16 credentials. So, the hope is that we have now put
17 them on their path so that they can have longer term
18 economic success.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So what was the cost
20 of that participant?

21 DIRECTOR HICKS: I need a calculator. I'm
22 sorry. I do have that information. It's just not
23 with me. I'd—I'd be more than happy to do follow-up,
24 and break out what was say staffing costs versus, you
25 know, money that directly went to the participant.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Please do so because
3 I would like to have this information. What about
4 the—the funding allocated to the staff?

5 DIRECTOR HICKS: I will provide that
6 also.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] You
8 will provide that also?

9 DIRECTOR HICKS: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh. So after
11 you all select the participants what is your—your—
12 your—you know, your method of outreach to select the
13 participants?

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: So, participants needed
15 to be between the ages of 18 and 24 years old, out of
16 school, out of work. Half of them had to be reading
17 between the sixth and eighth grade reading level.
18 None of them could have high school diploma. We were
19 really seeking to target the—one end of the spectrum
20 if you will of disconnected young people.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So did you—did you
22 consider also the language barriers, the cultural
23 barrier? Because you know that New York City is home
24 to so many immigrant people, so many people who came
25 from different countries. One of the challenges that

2 they are facing is number one, a language barrier,
3 but did you put in the complement, you know, in your
4 planning serve the youth (sic) with a step necessary
5 to have those who are facing a language barrier to be
6 able to benefit also from the program that you're
7 offering?

8 DIRECTOR HICKS: We did not explicitly
9 target immigrants. For sure, though, our non-profits
10 that were operating in the program who were awarded
11 in 2010 serve many immigrant communities, and
12 wherever possible we're working with young people if
13 they had language barriers.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So can we say that
15 those immigrant people who don't—were not proficient
16 in English were left out?

17 DIRECTOR HICKS: No, I would not say
18 that's a fair conclusion.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yeah, but do you
20 think that there's a need to address this particular
21 issue affecting the, you know, immigrant people?

22 DIRECTOR HICKS: More generally, yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Are you going to
24 take what type of step or effort that you are going
25 to do. In the sense you presented the program. Do

2 you believe that program will do to address this very
3 particular issue because I think in New York City we
4 should make sure that everyone regardless of where
5 they come from, what they speak, their religion they
6 believe, they've got access to the same
7 opportunities. Can you tell us about the—the effort
8 that we believe to make sure that everyone can be
9 part of this experience for learning, you know, and
10 to be ready for the workforce?

11 DIRECTOR HICKS: Yes. In 2015, we
12 received another social innovation from grants, also
13 a partnership with the Mayor's Fund to Advance New
14 York City that works with a number of non-profit
15 organizations many of whom do serve immigrant
16 communities. I don't have the list with me because
17 it's not explicitly for disconnected youth, but we do
18 focus on Arabic communities for an example, many
19 communities that have, you know, not necessarily
20 communities that may face language barriers. So I
21 would be more than happy to provide more information
22 about that and follow up. In addition, we do work
23 closely with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.
24 We worked on the IDNYC Evaluation for an example, and
25 so we would be happy to collaborate with them further

2 to thank about how better to serve the disconnected
3 youth in New York City.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
5 and I just want you to understand I'm not trying to
6 put you in the hot seat, but we are just trying to—to
7 figure out how we can better serve everybody, and I
8 think that you may do agree that is—there's a need,
9 and obligation for all of us to serve everybody.

10 DIRECTOR HICKS: Absolutely.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I thank you very
12 much. Talking about your providers, do your
13 provider-provider tied to a specific community where
14 the disconnected youth are living? I'm talking about
15 ethnicity, the demographics? (sic)

16 DIRECTOR HICKS: We don't typically
17 target specific ethnicity or demographics, but we do—
18 we're in all five boroughs, and typically high
19 poverty neighborhoods because high poverty and
20 disconnected youth often coincide, although not
21 always.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So what I'm saying
23 is that because we know that disconnected youth, you
24 know—you know, there is a concentration of

2 disconnected youth in certain areas. It's our
3 advantage that we know that.

4 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: This is a fact in
6 New York City. So I want to know, you know, what is
7 the effort of your organization to reach out to those
8 young people in the specific communities?

9 DIRECTOR HICKS: Tip--

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] What
11 type of, you know, outreach effort do they use?
12 Because when there is a problem, we have say hey
13 there's a problem there. How are we going to resolve
14 it? What is the effort? What is the strategy? How
15 are we going to come together to resolve this
16 program? We—we cannot, you know, create, you know,
17 blind programs and say we're going to do this, we're
18 going to do that, but before we do that, do we got to
19 have the same type of population that we want to
20 improve or we want to serve.

21 DIRECTOR HICKS: Typically when we issue
22 RFPs in collaboration with agency partners, we do ask
23 that proposers focus in on areas where there are high
24 poverty and/or high-high rates of disconnected youth.

2 We've done this with DYCD in particular for our young
3 adult internship program and our Literacy Program.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: We know that when we
5 talk about disconnected youth, there are many
6 components.

7 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: There are challenges
9 that the young people are facing. There are also the
10 challenges that weaken their families. There are
11 peer pressures. There are many components, but one
12 of the components, which is very important is their
13 behavior.

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Because we are human
16 beings. So when we try to serve people in need, we
17 got not only to try to fulfill the material needs,
18 the need of jobs, or social need, but the behavior
19 also to help them change their behavior, and to
20 believe that there is another positive thing to do.
21 There is hope. There's another way to behave if you
22 want to succeed, if you want to get from the negative
23 part to the positive one. What step that your
24 organization has been taking to make sure they inform
25

2 the behavior of those young people, disconnected
3 youth or to change, have them change their behavior?

4 DIRECTOR HICKS: It varies by programs,
5 but very often mentoring is a key component of the
6 programs. So there are formal and information
7 mentors. Depending, as I said, on the programs,
8 sometimes we also engage in cognitive behavioral
9 therapy very often for court involved youth, and this
10 is helping young people adjust their attitudes and
11 thinking towards work, crime and all sorts of
12 different things. We recognizes it's important young
13 people have the opportunity to, you know, change
14 thinking about the type of behavior they're going to
15 engage in.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: In terms of their
17 behavior, we know that for instance mental health
18 issues.

19 DIRECTOR HICKS: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So we need, you
21 know, medical a medical professional--

22 DIRECTOR HICKS: [interposing] Uh-huh.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --to collaborate
24 with you to address those very, very important
25 issues, very important because there's a crisis in

2 New York City, as you know, in terms of mental
3 issues. So you have medical professionals or other
4 partners who are experts, you know, in addressing
5 mental issues or, you know, behavioral issues?

6 DIRECTOR HICKS: Again, this is variable.
7 Very often social workers are present at programs.
8 They're hired by program staff through our funding.
9 In addition, I made mission of a second social
10 innovation fund grant that we received. It's called
11 Connections to Care. Now, again, no exclusively
12 focusing on disconnected youth, but for sure we have
13 youth in these programs, and what that does is it-it
14 encourages, well, requires I should say, a non-profit
15 who's operating, for an example, a Workforce
16 Development program to pair with a mental health
17 provider. The frontline staff at the non-profit are
18 trained in mental health intervention. So we are
19 collaborating with the Mayor's Fund to New York-to
20 Advance New York City and the Department of Health on
21 this specific initiative. It-it literally just
22 rolled out in about the last year, and we are also
23 evaluating it. It's part of the larger Thrive
24 Initiative.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.

3 In your testimony, you mentioned that, and so I mean

4 I want to make sure that you are know this. (sic)

5 You mentioned that many youth possess the basic skill

6 needed going to the level market, and they need only

7 a short-term intervention to connect to sustainable

8 employment or education program, and—and I thought

9 that you said that many also struggle with lower in

10 terms of a skill and the lack of job readiness of

11 soft skill, and many required a longer period of

12 engagement to obtain their High School Equivalency

13 Diploma, and to work on skill development. Could you

14 elaborate how your organization, you know, strategize

15 to address those two different, you know, population

16 of young people? One group that, you know, is closer

17 to where we want to bring them, and another group who

18 is a little bit, you know, farther than, you know,

19 the goal that we are pursuing?

20 DIRECTOR HICKS: The way we think about

21 this is if we take this population of disconnected

22 youth, we fear that the continuum, as you alluded to,

23 where on one end we have youth who are perhaps close

24 to job ready, and we have interventions like the

25 Young Adult Internship Program, which is a relatively

2 short 12-week paid internship program for young
3 people. This is a partnership with DYCD. Andre
4 referenced this program in his testimony, and then on
5 the other end of the continuum, we have programming
6 like Project Rise, which you asked about. Other
7 programming through the Young Men's Initiative like
8 Arches or AIM, which are more intensive engagement,
9 provide deeper or more wraparound supports, and
10 really sort of allow a greater period of time for the
11 young person to develop the skills and whatever else
12 they need in order to really get on the path to
13 economic opportunity. It is recognizing that this
14 varied approach is needed. Not everybody is going to
15 need those, you know, intensive, intensive
16 engagements and some kids will benefit from a lighter
17 intervention, but obviously, it depends on the young
18 person and their needs.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: If we want to talk
20 about number or percentage, you know, related to
21 those two categories, let's see category-category
22 number one, and include those young people who need
23 shorter intervention--

24 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: -what is the number
3 of young people you're talking about? What is the
4 percentage? Because you said about 150 I believe,
5 right?

6 DIRECTOR HICKS: In a specific program.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Well, yes. So let's
8 say for example it is the-what is the percentage of
9 those young people belonging to the first category
10 who-those young people will need shorter
11 intervention, and what is the number of the person
12 there with those who need more tuning or more
13 preparation?

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: Well, in the program
15 that you're asking about, Project Rise, that is all
16 for the more intensive. It's a year long engagement.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

18 DIRECTOR HICKS: Overall, we have not
19 looked at the percentage distribution for young
20 people needing a-a more limited intervention like the
21 Young Adult Internship Program, which serves over
22 2,000-close to 2,000 young people a year versus
23 something like Project Rise. We-we really see it as
24 a continuum, not two categories. You know, a lot of
25 kids fall in the middle, and we want to have

2 programming options all along the continuum to-to
3 address needs that young people may have.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, I want to go
5 back again to the language barriers because I'm
6 telling you this is one of the challenges that of
7 immigrants, you know, regardless of, you know, where
8 they come from. They come to the United States to
9 try to-to figure out where to go, if you have to go
10 left or right, and you don't access to information.
11 You are trying to, you know, to-to integrate
12 yourself, and most of the time their parents also.
13 You know, they cannot help them. So, in your effort
14 to address the issues of the two categories of young
15 people, those who need the short-term intervention
16 and those who need more training and more attention.
17 Did you include also the language in the opportunity?

18 DIRECTOR HICKS: As we discussed earlier,
19 many of the local non-profits that we work with and
20 in some programs we are very explicit about working
21 with non-profits that work with immigrant
22 communities. As a wholesale policy it has not been
23 something that we have looked at across our programs,
24 but I would be more than happy to collaborate further
25 with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, who

2 obviously does a lot of really great work in this
3 area to see if there are unmet needs in those
4 programs that we fund.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And I just want to
6 conclude, you know, by saying that before I call you
7 a mighty (sic) program, they have to connect you. I
8 just want to—to mention that it is mandatory also in
9 New York City I believe to provide all the services
10 in seven languages--

11 DIRECTOR HICKS: [interposing] Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --which is—and I
13 commend all of you on what you are doing with that,
14 and I commend the city there also, and I'd like to
15 see, you know, how we can reach all of the, you know,
16 as many immigrants possible, as many people possible.
17 So, and I would encourage you, and—and the other
18 provider to ensure that we put more, you know,
19 programs for those who don't speak English properly,
20 and with this, I want to thank you also for what you
21 have been doing, and I know that each one of you, you
22 have been doing the best that you can do to serve the
23 disconnected youth, but I do believe also by working
24 together we can have a better impact and better

2 results. Now, let me call Council Member Margaret
3 Chin for some questions.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.

5 Good morning, and thank you for the testimony. I was
6 impressed that we have five agencies here. So one of
7 my first questions is that based on your testimony,
8 Ms. Hicks, you were saying that just about—that in
9 2015, the estimate it says about over 140,000
10 disconnected youth. Where did you get that statistic
11 from? Because we have a higher number.

12 DIRECTOR HICKS: I know you do.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes.

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: Your numbers are from
15 2014.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Uh-huh.

17 DIRECTOR HICKS: Basically, these come
18 the American Community Survey, which is something
19 that's put out by the Census Bureau that's used by my
20 office to create the CEO Poverty Measure and can also
21 look at the number of disconnected youth because they
22 can look very closely within New York City. It uses
23 a geographic area called the Public Use Micro Sample,
24 which is analogous to a community district. This is,
25 I think, a really interesting and longer conversation

2 that I would love to have because I do think that the
3 numbers of disconnected young people have been
4 changing over the years and it's not clear what's
5 driving that change exactly, and I should also say
6 that the larger population of young people between 16
7 and 24 has also been changing a bit. It's possible
8 that the rate of disconnection is contingent on that
9 size of the larger population, but yes, I noticed
10 that the number was, in fact, well—we feel that it—
11 it's higher in 2014 using our same methodology.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So you are able to
13 break down by community districts?

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: When we do that because
15 it's a sample, it's unreliable at the community
16 district level meaning if we wanted to look at how
17 many young people fit the disconnected—were
18 disconnected in CD3, for an example, it would be an
19 unreliable rate. We can look across all the
20 boroughs. I was just trying to explain what that
21 public use micro area is in my testimony.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. So, I think
23 from all the—the programs that are funded by the—I
24 mean all the programs that's run by the city, and

2 DYCD, somebody is capturing the demographics I
3 assume, right?

4 DIRECTOR HICKS: Oh, for sure.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So is there a way-
6 who's collecting all these information? Like is the-
7 is the Center for Economic Opportunity-are you the
8 lead agencies, or to really-because I mean there are
9 a lot of programs, different agencies. So, who is
10 sort of like coordinating and bringing it all
11 together so that we could get a fuller picture of
12 like totally? Or, how many of these-these
13 disconnected youth are being served, and-and where
14 are they, you know, where do they live, the
15 demographics so that we could have better data in
16 terms of are they, you know, are they being served
17 from the-the poverty area in the neighborhood that
18 really it the most, and then the demographics? So
19 that we could get a fuller picture, and also, yeah,
20 the total number because we say okay, then according
21 to your data [coughing] it's 140,000. How many of
22 these youth are being served by all these different
23 programs? I mean my-one of my concerns is really the
24 coordination.

25 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I mean like DYCD
3 some of the programs that they're operating they've
4 been doing it for more than ten years.

5 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Right and they've
7 been getting, you know, very good results, and then
8 you have DOE while the--the youth is still in the
9 school system.

10 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: How do we, you
12 know, help them, and--and make sure that they don't
13 become disconnected, or when they do, do they get
14 referred.

15 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Like the kids that
17 are in--from DOE like the kids that are in--in the
18 transfer school, okay. Those are the--the older kids,
19 and--and some of them, a lot of them are immigrant
20 students, and, you know, because I do have a transfer
21 school in my district, and often time when they drop
22 out, where do they go? Do they get referred to some
23 of these programs that are serving disconnected youth
24 so that we can, you know, really help them so that
25 they could get reconnected, or at least able to get a

2 better job or get some job training versus than just
3 drop out, and—and work in some of these low-paying
4 jobs that they can do.

5 ROBERT ZWEIG: So I would say that the
6 DOE, first of all, through its YABC programs and
7 transfer schools, as you mentioned, and District 79
8 work very cohesively in reconnecting young people who
9 have dropped out. As I mentioned in my testimony, in
10 District 79's High School Equivalency program more
11 than 43% of our student enrollment from last school
12 year had completely disconnected from school. So what
13 we do is we have our own internal welcome centers,
14 [coughing] one in each with two in Brooklyn. Those
15 are staffed by guidance counselors and social workers
16 and community associate titles that reach out to
17 local communities, and bring students back into
18 school. Also, as we noted, with our YABCs, our
19 transfer schools and District 79 programs, we do
20 partner with many of the agencies plus others that
21 are sitting here at this—at this table, and then with
22 local community-based agency providers. So, the DOE
23 actually in two ways collaborates with community
24 agency providers. One, we embed teachers in
25 community-based programs. So it's kind of the flip

2 of the way people would think of school. It's school
3 bringing the academic instruction both ESL and native
4 English and bilingual Spanish to local communities.
5 We also work with agencies that come into the school
6 to provide support services for all young people, new
7 immigrants, young people who disconnected from school
8 here. So I think the DOE through partnerships and
9 through various systems that we've put in place and
10 and resources that we've invested seek constantly to
11 reconnect young people who have dropped out, and then
12 to kind of—for those who are teetering have support
13 services readily in place for them before they drop
14 out. That's the way I would best answer your
15 question.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. Department
17 of Small Business Services I mean for the—the youth
18 that actually walk into your workforce center,
19 they're already like one step up. I mean they know
20 at least to go to you if they want to look for a job.
21 So that you're able to provide them that service.
22 But, if the youth that don't know that this is where
23 they can go, I mean DYCD with the summer youth jobs
24 and all the programs, and DYCD I mean you are
25 probably the most connected to the community with all

2 the CBOs. So that's how you get the youth programs,
3 and then I guess with HRA the recent changes is very
4 welcome that—because back then I mean a lot of those—
5 those jobs that—that people are forced to do. So
6 they get anywhere because it's actually no training.
7 We see them in our neighborhood and our district.
8 They just do menial—menial stuff. It doesn't lead to
9 anything, but focusing on education, focusing on
10 language learning. I mean I think that all that will
11 I hope will really get some good results down the
12 road. Yes.

13 GARY JENKINS: And I would just also add
14 just the collaboration with our sister agencies, and
15 capitalizing on and the partnerships will—will
16 increase access to the—the youth who are
17 disconnected, who—who—who have contact with the Human
18 Resources Administration.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So can one of you
20 address coordination? I mean like do you get
21 together on a regular basis? Are there like—who's
22 the one that—which is the agency that's really
23 looking at this issue of disconnected youth and
24 coordinating everyone and—and be able to show us in
25 terms of, you know, what is the cost per participant?

2 Is the money being well spent? You know, how do we
3 make sure that we have the resources available, and
4 also how do we get the word out so that whether the
5 kids are in school, parents and community members,
6 people know about these programs. I mean a lot of us
7 we don't even know all these programs that the city
8 is offering until you provide testimony. So, I think
9 the coordination I just want to see internally how do
10 you work together to make sure that you are providing
11 services to this population, and out of 140,000, how
12 do you plan to reach all of them?

13 DIRECTOR HICKS: So there are a lot of
14 internal working groups within the city that are
15 focused on vulnerable populations that include
16 membership from the agencies and offices that are
17 represented here. I think we each do have a piece of
18 the--the pie in serving youth. DYCD obviously really
19 has the most substantial footprint when it comes to
20 serving disconnected youth. My office brings up the--
21 the sort of research and evaluation arm for this, and
22 each of the agencies here DOE, serving in-school
23 youth, offering preventative measures, HRA, SBS, DYCD
24 and us helping ensure those measures are not--not--be
25 helpful. So I think that the city is really very

2 much focused on this population. All of these
3 programs, everything we all collect program data on
4 demographics, the numbers served and everything like
5 that. So—so we do know who is being served by this
6 program?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So can you provide
8 those data for us in terms of by either community
9 board or council district for us having a better
10 picture because I think what I'm aiming at is like
11 how can we also help, you know. So that if we know
12 that we have a large number of disconnected youth in
13 our district, how can we help in terms of doing
14 outreach? Many people know what resources are
15 available, and also in budget time. I mean like
16 DYCD's budget is not that big. It's bigger than the
17 Department for the Aging, but I'm sure they could use
18 more resources. I mean bottom line that comes down
19 to it. I mean right now I still don't have a picture
20 out of the 140,000 youth that—that you presented are
21 disconnected, how many of them are being served right
22 now?

23 DIRECTOR HICKS: We took some preliminary
24 looks at this and—and I—I think it's probably not
25 going to come as a surprise that the full universe of

2 young people are not being served. I don't have fine
3 tuned estimates, and it's not really something my
4 office can do, but I'm happy to speak with my
5 colleagues here, and follow up and see what
6 information we might be able to provide collectively
7 as a group to the Council.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I thin that that
9 would be helpful because we want to see is it only
10 10%, is it 20%, is it 50%.

11 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: How much more do we
13 have to go--

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: [interposing] Uh-huh.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --and then also
16 some recommendations, you know, from all of you, from
17 agencies how much more can we do? Because we know
18 that if we invest in it now, it's going to pay off in
19 the future because when they grow into an adult, when
20 they have families, they're going to be in a better
21 situation of providing for their family. So it's a
22 good investment that we do now. So if you could
23 provide it, you know, with the demographic data and
24 the number of--of youth that's being served and also
25 the cost, you know, that we are spending to help each

2 participant, I think--because right now we don't--I'm
3 not even sure what the total budget is in terms for
4 the--the Disconnected Youth program.

5 DIRECTOR HICKS: Again, that's across
6 agencies and I'm more than happy to collaborate with--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [interposing] Yeah,
8 if you can get that--

9 DIRECTOR HICKS: --any agency to follow
10 up.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --to us and--and the
12 Mayor's Office is still here. Charlie, if you can
13 make sure we get that information. Thank you, Chair.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
15 Council Member Chin and thank you very much. Let me
16 ask you another question. In terms of disconnected
17 youth, we know that when we talk about disconnected
18 youth there are many issues there, the first thing.
19 Among the issues is the homelessness, and not only
20 youth but to add those. You know, this is a big
21 issue in New York City, unfortunately right now. So
22 could you tell us what are the steps, and what is the
23 effort that your organization has been doing to serve
24 the homeless disconnected youth, and how many have

2 you served or how many, you know, of-of them were a
3 powerful program?

4 DIRECTOR HICKS: The programming we don't
5 explicitly target homeless youth in our programming.
6 They certainly appear in-in many of the programs that
7 are served by all of us, but that is not a population
8 that we have targeted specifically.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yeah, but again, I
10 would encourage you and not only you, but all the
11 organizations, service providers to youth especially
12 disconnected youth to-to try to find a way to address
13 this issue also because this is a very important one,
14 a very, very important one. [background comments]
15 You know, this is a very important issue affecting
16 them, not only older but the young people, but if you
17 discover that one of your participants or a few of
18 your participants are homeless what do you do?

19 DIRECTOR HICKS: We would honestly try to
20 connect them with services. You know, I'm not a non-
21 profit. I represent the Mayor's Office and CEO
22 Operations.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] But
24 I'm asking what the Office of the Mayor do?

2 DIRECTOR HICKS: We would obviously want
3 to get them connected with appropriate services.
4 There clearly are young people who are, you know,
5 don't have housing. The non-profits that we contract
6 with typically do try and connect them with housing
7 supports wherever possible, and benefit. I mean
8 clearly housing is important.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yeah, you know, I
10 applaud the Office of the Mayor for all their effort
11 to, you know, they are doing to address the issues of
12 young people of youth and, you know that we have been
13 working together, you know, to make sure that our
14 young people have the summer services and the—the
15 summer jobs. We have made that progress, but there
16 is much more to be done, and especially for the
17 disconnected youth. When we are talking about
18 disconnected youth, we have—we have to sit to sit
19 down really to go through the details to know exactly
20 why there are discrepancies. (sic) What are the
21 influences? What put them in that situation? You
22 know, what really as a society, as a city what we can
23 do to help them really? When we talk about
24 disconnected youth, they are in trouble. They are
25 already disconnected. So, what about because we

2 have—we know that many of the youth, disconnected
3 youth from their parents also.

4 DIRECTOR HICKS: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Unfortunately, their
6 parents, they are disconnected, but their parents
7 also. What type of supports services that are
8 provided to them with respect to their children, you
9 know, they—they are—to have them, you know, overcome
10 the very, very important and difficult situation they
11 are facing when they become parents?

12 DIRECTOR HICKS: In--?

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes, why the Mayor's
14 office them?

15 DIRECTOR HICKS: And—and then it-it-it
16 does vary by program. There's also some great work
17 that's going on, as I mentioned, with the Vulnerable
18 Youth Working Group. Among the things that are often
19 provided are childcare vouchers. We try to ensure
20 that the young people if they're—that's—excuse me—the
21 children of the young people if they're of the
22 appropriate age getting to Universal Pre-
23 Kindergarten. We try to provide additional supports
24 to the parents to help them around parenting and—and

2 learning skills about if they need it. It really
3 does range depending on the program in question.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Did you have the
5 survey of the number of the young people who dropped
6 out from your--from, you know, from--from--from the
7 programs that you are--you are providing to the
8 disconnected youth? You know, among one of the 150 I
9 think the 150 youth--

10 DIRECTOR HICKS: [interposing] None of
11 those young people--

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --and then these
13 dropped out.

14 DIRECTOR HICKS: None of those young
15 people had a high school diploma. So in Project Rise
16 by definition, they're all drop-outs.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry?

18 DIRECTOR HICKS: By-by definition,
19 they're all drop-outs because the eligibility
20 criteria they could not have a high school diploma,
21 and they were between the ages of 18 and 24.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So they dropped out?

23 GARY JENKINS: Just the high school
24 versus the program, how many do you think dropped out
25 of the program?

2 DIRECTOR HICKS: Oh, how many dropped out
3 of the program. I'm so sorry.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes.

5 DIRECTOR HICKS: I misunderstood. Thank
6 you, Chair Jenkins. We have actually pretty good
7 retention. Now that doesn't mean that the young
8 person was there every single day, but we employed a
9 cohort model so that the young people actually formed
10 a pretty tight knit group, and so most stayed with
11 the program, and remained connected to the non-
12 profit. I think the figure is maybe close to 70%.
13 I'd have to confirm.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Seventy percent
15 dropped out or stayed?

16 DIRECTOR HICKS: No, no, no, no, stayed,
17 stayed, stayed.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [laughter] No, you
19 know, I-I want to make sure that I understand your--

20 DIRECTOR HICKS: Great.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --program. So what
22 does DOE (sic) do to re-enroll those who dropped out?

23 DIRECTOR HICKS: I'm sorry, could you
24 repeat the question?

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Those, as we know
3 there are 70%. That's a, you know, those young
4 people who dropped out from this—from the program,
5 what did you do to re-enroll them to go bring them
6 back?

7 DIRECTOR HICKS: Well, in addition to,
8 you know, there are friends in the program reaching
9 out, staff at the non-profit would reach out, and
10 make sure that they young person understood that—that
11 the—they—they, the non-profit, the staff, are there.
12 Try to get the young person to come back into the
13 program. As you pointed out, sometimes these young
14 people have other things going on in their lives, and
15 they—they may step out for a small period of time in
16 a program and the return. I think it's important
17 that they have relationships with the staff at the
18 non-profits so that they know that the door is always
19 open. So maybe it's not, you know, they need to step
20 out for a little while, but they can return.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Could you elaborate
22 a little bit more about the outreach made to—you
23 know, to recruit those young people because I—I
24 realize that in New York we may have a good program,
25 good program, but not everybody knows about the

2 program, and I know especially immigrants some of
3 them—the program is close to them, and right there
4 next door. They don't even know that. They are not
5 aware. What are you doing to ensure that the
6 disconnected young people are those people you want
7 to serve that are aware of the services that you are
8 offering?

9 DIRECTOR HICKS: Again, this varies by
10 program and across our agency. So, DYCD has—their
11 youth—[background comments]—Youth Connect Line, and
12 all sorts of things. We typically if, you know, we
13 rely on the staff at the non-profit, also word of
14 mouth among young people who participate in programs
15 is the biggest driver for bringing other kids into
16 programs. I'm sure my colleagues would concur when a
17 young person experiences—has a positive experience in
18 a program, they tell their friends about it, and they
19 suggest that that person or their friends come into
20 the program. We get a lot of young people orienting
21 into programs for that reason, and that reason alone.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I know the great job
23 that DYCD is doing, and I want to let you know that
24 even for those programs when known in the city of New
25 York makes a summer job, summer program, and our

2 cities receive in my district office parents and
3 young people who went to my office to figure out how
4 they can get their children enrolled in the summer
5 program, and summer jobs. So that means I know that
6 you are doing outreach, but I want to know if the
7 method that we are using, that you are using to reach
8 out does—a participant who need the program, if those
9 methods have been successful? What can we do to
10 reach out to those young people or participants who
11 are really in need? Because I know that, you know,
12 every time that we are doing something, we got to
13 take a moment, sit down and say that did we reach our
14 goal? If not, what can we do to reach the goal, and
15 if we did, what can we do to do it better? We got to
16 re-evaluate, to quantify, you know, the result. So
17 what I'm trying to figure out the method of what is
18 DYCD or the Mayor's Office, the method that we are
19 using to reach out to those people who are in need?
20 Are they good methods, and can we do a better job?

21 ANDRE WHITE: So, DYCD--

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] And
23 what are the challenges in reaching those, you know,
24 participants or those people need?

2 ANDRE WHITE: It's—it's really a multi-
3 prong approach that we use at DYCD. As many of us
4 are aware, young people are very active on social
5 media, and we have a very active social media
6 presence, right? So we have a Facebook page with
7 Instagram and we have Twitter. So I want—I want say
8 every day are folks in their looking at this
9 division. It's turning out various opportunities
10 that—that exist for this population. We also work
11 very closely with our providers in terms of their
12 recruitment strategy. As Carson alluded to the fact
13 that every provider recruits differently, right,
14 based on where they're located. So we want to ensure
15 that they come up with a strategy that works for
16 them. For example, at DYCD you have the Beacon
17 programs, you have the Cornerstone programs. So we
18 encourage providers to go to the Beacon programs, to
19 go to the Cornerstone programs because we know that's
20 where young people are. You're not going to find
21 young people more than likely or disconnected
22 walking into your offices. You have to go where they
23 are, or where typically, where young people typically
24 are on the corner, in developments, potentially to
25 playing basketball or in social media, right? This

2 is--someone said some of those are strategies that we
3 have used over the past couple of months to really
4 tighten recruitment. We also work very closely with
5 our partner agencies. For example, we worked with
6 HRA to their Recruitment Fair, with their
7 participants almost a year ago, and we got some young
8 people to enroll in our program through that method
9 as well. So again, it's a multi-prong approach and
10 we have to really figure out what works depending on
11 where your--your programs are located.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, you mentioned
13 social media. We all know that social-social media
14 is a good tool. They're noting--right now it seems
15 that we can't do without social media--

16 DIRECTOR HICKS: [interposing] Right.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --and my question is
18 social is it--is social is enough to reach everybody
19 because I know that, we know that up to now there are
20 certain people, and young people, too, you know, I
21 don't think they know they completely want to get
22 this in social media. One is about good things to
23 do, you know--

24 ANDRE WHITE: [interposing] Right.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --the positive thing
3 to do, and there are certain young people they use
4 the social media to be excited, to be, you know, to
5 do-

6 ANDRE WHITE: Right.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --but when it's
8 about, you know, participating in a good program or
9 stay in school and get the training that they need, I
10 don't know if we are really successful with even the
11 social media, but I'm talking about the contact, you
12 know, the--the--the close contact, that contact with
13 those participants and other methods to really bring
14 them back. Because the reason I'm saying that I've
15 been the service provider myself, and I'm still in
16 contact with my constituents, you know, mentoring to
17 the young people. I know that we need more than
18 social media. We got to get them excited. We got--we
19 need something to bring them back. If we don't do
20 that, we may spend billions, and billions that--and I
21 don't think that we will reach our goal.

22 ANDRE WHITE: Again, social media is not
23 an end all. It's just one of the methods that we
24 use, and at DYCD, what we have seen work is social
25 media. For example, I know we just released our

2 recent media. We're working with CUNY to offering
3 some occupational training, and we are in the process
4 of recruiting young people for these trainings, and
5 we worked with our youth in a division to actually
6 create a Tweet, and through just that one Tweet, our
7 Youth Connect division received many phone calls for
8 young people who wanted to sign up for an OSY
9 program. So again, I'm not saying that social media
10 is an end all, it's just one of the many methods that
11 we implement at DYCD to recruit young people into our
12 programs.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Since, you know, you
14 start many going up to DYCD now. (sic) [laughter] My
15 partner. You know, you are my partners, right, and
16 we work together for the young people. We are
17 talking about outreach, but can you tell us the price
18 by participant--

19 ANDRE WHITE: Uh-huh.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --you know, in terms
21 of, you know, OSY and YAIP?

22 ANDRE WHITE: Uh-huh.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Can you elaborate on
24 that?

2 ANDRE WHITE: Sure, yeah, absolutely.

3 So, at-at DYCD, there--there's roughly four programs
4 that target young people that are not in school, not
5 working and some might argue that SYEP should be a
6 part of that bucket. If you did include SYEP, we're
7 looking at serving roughly 9,148 young people across
8 this program.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: 90,000?

10 ANDRE WHITE: 9,148 young people across
11 those five programs, and we are roughly investing
12 \$40.5 million into this population.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: 40 what?

14 ANDRE WHITE: \$40.5 million

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

16 ANDRE WHITE: In terms of the price per
17 participant for an OSY program, it varies. It's
18 anywhere from \$8,500 to \$10,000 per young person.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry, 800?

20 ANDRE WHITE: \$8,500 to \$10,000.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: \$8,500 per
22 participant?

23 ANDRE WHITE: Per participant, correct.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So, your talking
25 about every year, right?

2 ANDRE WHITE: Yes. And for the young YALP
3 program, which is the Young Adult Literacy Program,
4 it's roughly \$6,000 per year for participants. That
5 includes the wages that they earn as well as the
6 price per participant, which is roughly \$3,200.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

8 ANDRE WHITE: For--

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Go ahead. I'm
10 sorry.

11 ANDRE WHITE: For the Young Adult
12 Literacy Program, it's roughly \$6,000 per participant
13 for the year--

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

15 ANDRE WHITE: --and for--or young--I'm
16 sorry or NDA Opportunity Youth Program, it's roughly
17 \$1,200 for the price per participants and maybe
18 \$2,600 in wages. So roughly \$4,000 per participant
19 per year.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. Could you
21 elaborate a little bit on the sources of your income?
22 Is it city, state, federalized--

23 ANDRE WHITE: Right.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --or private?

25 ANDRE WHITE: Sure.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Why does a person
3 take that, you know, \$8,000?

4 ANDRE WHITE: Absolutely. On the WIOA
5 (sic) side, it's federal funding. It's through the
6 Workforce Investment Opportunity Act, that was
7 enacted in terms of--

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] How
9 much does a person pay for the--from the federal?

10 ANDRE WHITE: It's all federally funded.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: All federalized.

12 ANDRE WHITE: It's the WIOA, the WIOA
13 funding stream, and that's roughly \$15.2 million.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

15 ANDRE WHITE: That serves roughly almost
16 1,400 young people ever year.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: On the Young Adult
18 Literacy Program side it's--it's a combination CTL--
19 it's all CTL. I'm sorry. YAIP it's--it's all CTL.
20 It's a combination of two funding agencies, right,
21 one and CEO, and that's \$12.1 million, and that
22 serves roughly almost 1,800 young people every year.
23 On the NDA Opportunity side, it's all CSEG funding,
24 which is a federal funding stream. That's \$2.2
25 million, which serves roughly 676 participants every

2 year. And on the SYEP side, there's--there's a
3 portion of young people within SYEP that are not in
4 school, and they are not working. That's roughly
5 4,666 of those young people and if you parsed it out,
6 that's roughly \$7--\$7 million that we invested in our
7 young people who are not--not in school in SYEP, and
8 that's all--well, it's not all. It's a combination of
9 CTL funding, federal, state and private dollars.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You know, I--I do
11 know that we have a great program in New York City in
12 terms of, you addressing the--the--the [coughing]
13 issues affecting young people, and--but I--I believe
14 that like the medicine some people--people are
15 coughing, you know, scratching. As a parent they're
16 sure what they need, but those are not the disease.
17 They are a symptom or the sign. If we can--like if
18 you ten heaters and, you know, and tea for those
19 patients that we want to cure them, we got to go to
20 the sources. So in terms of our disconnected youth,
21 they may be caused to different factors that created
22 that there's so many disconnected youth in New York
23 City. We have a great program, a lot of good
24 program, but could you talk a little bit about the--
25 those contributing factors that created so many

2 disconnected youth in New York City? People at DYCD
3 and what DS-DYCD is doing, you know, addressing the
4 youth issues, providing so many services. Why with
5 all the services with the money that we are, you
6 know, expanding to address the-the youth issues, why
7 we have so many disconnected youth in New York City?
8 Why you believe that. I don't think that you get
9 them support.

10 ANDRE WHITE: Right.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Give us all your
12 thoughts, what you believe that's--

13 ANDRE WHITE: Yeah, a big part of our
14 assessment when we-when we recruit young people from
15 out-for our programs it's-we have a conversations
16 around why did you drop out of school, right? Why-
17 why is it that you need these services, and it varies
18 across the board depending on the young person that
19 you talk to. We have young people who say, listen,
20 I-I got involved in gang activities, and I was a part
21 of the court system, and there's a need for me to get
22 re-engaged, right. There's young people who became
23 teen parents who felt like there was no need to
24 continue their education so they dropped out of
25 school. There's young people who became one-way only

2 (sic) particularly those who are part of the LGBTQ
3 population who their parents might not want to
4 support, you know, them being LGBTQ, and they drop
5 out of school for whatever reason. So again, it
6 really depends on the young person and there's a
7 myriad of issues that really impact why young people
8 drop out of school. Our goal at DYCD after we figure
9 out what those challenges were is to come up with a
10 plan of action for them to make sure that we keep
11 them re-engaged, keep them connected, give them some
12 credentials, give them some occupational training so
13 they could move onto a job or move onto an
14 educational training program.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You are talking
16 about after discovering exactly the specific issues.

17 ANDRE WHITE: Right.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You know, you're
19 talking about a plan of action. Could you elaborate
20 a little bit about one or two or several plans of
21 action that you believe that work.

22 ANDRE WHITE: Right.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE You know, number one
24 to prevent those young people to become disconnected,
25 and to reconnect them, to bring them back.

2 ANDRE WHITE: I'm-I'm sorry could you
3 repeat the question again?

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I said, you-you
5 mention that you-you try to identify exactly what are
6 the contributing factors--

7 ANDRE WHITE: Right.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --for each young,
9 you know, young person.

10 ANDRE WHITE: Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And after the you
12 try to-to use a plan of action.

13 ANDRE WHITE: Correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But could you tell
15 us based on your experience, base off of long track
16 record that DYCD--

17 ANDRE WHITE: [interposing] Uh-uh.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --has in addition to
19 their issues of young people? Could you elaborate a
20 little bit of-on-on the term of action and try to let
21 us understand what works, what don't work exactly?

22 ANDRE WHITE: Yes. So what we have seen
23 over the years, and it varies by programs, right, and
24 Carson mentioned this. For example, we might have a
25 participant walk through our door that might need-

2 that might need a short-term intervention. So they
3 might be a little bit work already. They might have
4 a high school diplomas. So we try to figure out what
5 program will best suit us. So that would—
6 particularly might be the Young Adult Literacy
7 Program. It might be a young person who walked
8 through the door with a high school diploma who—who
9 might need more intensive services and support
10 services. We might refer them to our OSY program,
11 and again, it really varies from young person to
12 young person. It's—it's very difficult to sort of
13 like say one prescription fits—fits all because it
14 doesn't. But—bit again when—when we are talking to
15 the young people determining a plan of action, for
16 example, there's a young lady by the name of—I'm
17 going to need her name because I want to use her
18 name, here, Maria who came through other school youth
19 program while she's a teen parent. While she is
20 doing the assessment with a provider, they learned
21 that she, you know, she had a young kid, and she had
22 no babysitting. Was able for—for that young person,
23 that provider connected her with ACS and other
24 different agencies to get a voucher for—for
25 babysitting. He also connected her to HRA to make

2 sure that she got SNAP and whatever other services
3 she was eligible for. Because—because we recognize
4 for this young person to be successful in the
5 program, we know that childcare issues is a big part
6 of why a lot of these young people drop out, and
7 retention around that is also a big problem for us at
8 DYCD. We make to make sure that we figure out what
9 the issue are, come up with a plan for those young
10 people, and make sure that they are in there and
11 getting programs. So because of those different
12 things that we did for Maria, she was able to go
13 through the program. She was able to get her
14 credential. She as able to get an internship, and
15 was offered a full-time job with a company that she
16 interned at. So that's about the strategy and
17 approach that we use at DYCD. Each young person that
18 comes in at the door a robust and rigorous assessment
19 to see where they are along the spectrum, and based
20 on whatever issues or challenges they might have, you
21 come up with a system that's going to work for that
22 young person before they continue in the program.
23 Otherwise, retention is going to impact it
24 tremendously, and they won't be successful.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You know, I have the
3 impression that—in many of our programs we are trying
4 to come after the fact. We are trying to correct
5 damages, damage control, but I believe that, you
6 know, one of the very effective techniques is
7 prevention, to prevent the dynamic of the—the young
8 people to become homeless to become, you know,
9 disconnected. If we want to do another outreach,
10 because my father they always say that, My son, every
11 time you got to spend some time to start with the
12 valued work you're doing, and to—to consider no
13 approach, no ways to resolve our issues. So is there
14 any other approach we can make, and to help us
15 prevent those young people to become disconnected,
16 become homeless? What can you, you know, say about
17 that, you know? Any preventive measures, something
18 that we can do because I get the impression that all
19 the time, almost all the programs we have to correct
20 the damages, you know, but it would be cheaper and
21 more effective I believe to work together also to
22 prevent things to happen.

23 ANDRE WHITE: Uh-huh.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Could you elaborate
25 on that?

2 ANDRE WHITE: Sure absolutely. So, as
3 you know, the Administration has really invested in
4 middle school, after school programs, right, and we
5 recognize that you need to get to get to those young
6 people at a younger age, and we—we have recognized,
7 and the research shows that this is a very important
8 state in a young person's life for engagement. And
9 if you start engaging them at a earlier age, more
10 than likely the probability of them continuing on the
11 right path increases tremendously. And—and that's
12 why the Mayor is really interested in our middle
13 school's SONYC program. That's one of the methods
14 that we have—so that I think about at DYCD.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay.

16 ANDRE WHITE: We also have other programs
17 that target young people who are currently in school.
18 For example, we have our in-school program, which is
19 targeted for young people—for high school juniors and
20 seniors with the intent of making sure that they
21 graduate from school, and providing support services
22 that they need to maintain good grades, connecting
23 them to college, connecting them to whatever services
24 they might need so they can graduate with that high
25 school diploma. There's also the Complex High School

2 Program, which is, you know, the after school
3 division at DYCD, and over the years a lot of these
4 programs have seen significant growth. So it is able
5 to serve way more participants than we were serving
6 under the old administration, and I think is just one
7 of the approaches that—that we—we—we're taking to
8 invest into young people at an earlier age to keep
9 them on the right path.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
11 We have been joined by Council Member Darlene Mealy.
12 How are you, Council Member? Considering the
13 overwhelming need of disconnected youth, to you think
14 that the programs under DYCD, the Mayor's Center for
15 Economic Opportunity, Workforce 1 Center are adequate
16 to address the need of disconnected youth? Do you
17 think that those programs adequately address the
18 needs of disconnected youth? Is there anything that
19 we additionally think that we should do?

20 ANDRE WHITE: You know, as—as Carson
21 mentioned, you know, there's a universe of 140,000
22 young people who are disconnected, and obviously
23 we're not serving the number of young people that we
24 went out to serve but—but I think what we have seen
25 over the years working very closely with Jackie and

2 Carson and folks like DOE and HRA, is that there-
3 there is a stronger coordination in terms of how we
4 work with each other. You know, there are--there are
5 tons of pilot programs ongoing with ACS from DYCD's
6 perspective with HRA. We have--we have multiple
7 pilots with SBS, and--and CEO is always there to
8 provide support on research and best practices across
9 programs. Is there more than be done? There's
10 always more that can be done absolutely, and we're
11 willing. We are committed to make--to make that
12 happen. Again, for us it is very important to
13 understand that this population has a very--they have
14 diverse needs, right. So some of the programs that
15 DYCD might not be the best fit for a young person who
16 is in the HRA system or a young person who is going
17 into Jackie's Workforce 1 Center just to get a job,
18 but what that boils down to is that a coordination in
19 terms of how we refer young people to these various
20 services and opportunities that exist, and we're--as
21 an administration we're committed to doing that.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Could you elaborate
23 about your partnership with the Department of
24 Education in terms of working together to address how

2 they drop out—drop out and also to ensure that the
3 young people remain in the program that you offered?

4 ANDRE WHITE: We work very closely with
5 District 79 in our Out-of-School Youth Program, and
6 the provide HSE prep for a number of the non-profits
7 that we work with, and they will establish a very
8 close relationship with OBCC under the leadership of
9 Randy Parris, and we have seen our program done
10 tremendously well. We have seen a lot of young
11 people obtain their—their high school diplomas. In
12 terms of working with the DOE, we work with them on a
13 number of levels, right. For example, we work very
14 closely with the CTE component under the leadership
15 of John at DOE to ensure that those young people are
16 aware the Summer Youth Employment Program. or some
17 can implement a program or the After School Program
18 (sic). We also work very closely with DOE in the
19 after school space as well. So again, across the
20 agency at DYCD, we are very engaged with DOE across
21 the board not only the Workforce space, but also in
22 the after school space as well.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: In terms of
24 priority, what type of federal services are offered
25 to the participants of YAIP and OSY. You know,

2 because we know that the follow-up services for OSY,
3 you know, is offered only for 12 months.

4 ANDRE WHITE: Correct.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So what are—what are
6 them after that?

7 ANDRE WHITE: So, it's—it's one year of
8 programming, right. So during this year there are a
9 number activities can—that can be gotten
10 concurrently. A young person might be receiving
11 occupation training in a specific sector. They are
12 not receiving HSE prep. Again, depending on the need
13 of the young person, you tailor whatever they—
14 whatever they need at that point. After they exit
15 the program, we provide one-year follow, and again,
16 if varies by the young person. The provider is
17 expected to engage this young person to ensure that
18 they are connected to a job or connected to advanced
19 training to make sure that they're not dropping out
20 of whatever they were connected to before. So if a
21 young person needs help with resume development, or
22 they might need help with mock interviews, if they
23 might need help with connecting them to some sort
24 social service, the provider is there to provide that
25 for them for an additional year.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, you know, if
3 you have to make a recommendation in terms of
4 improving the--the jobs or the training that we are
5 offering to the disconnected youth, what would it be?
6 There's something that we can use to do a better job?

7 ANDRE WHITE: With that we have come a
8 long way.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: No, number one, do
10 you believe that we are successful, 100% successful
11 in addressing the need of the disconnected youth?

12 ANDRE WHITE: Yeah.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Are we successful
14 100% successful? Yeah.

15 ANDRE WHITE: So--so let me--

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] We had
17 a victory. That's great. So we have done a good job?

18 ANDRE WHITE: Right.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You believe that we
20 can say that?

21 ANDRE WHITE: I think we have some--

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] If we
23 have to grade ourselves from A, B, C, D, would you
24 give us an A grade or A plus or an F or D?

2 ANDRE WHITE: So let me put this in
3 context. You know, I-I--

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] And
5 I'd be honest. We are a team, you know.

6 ANDRE WHITE: Well, yeah, absolutely, but
7 I just want to put it in context. There are a number
8 of programs that we have at DYCD that have been in
9 existence, as you said, for many years, right, and we
10 have recognized over the years while we--our CBOs are
11 amazing at youth development and providing support
12 services and wraparound services. We recognize that
13 there are folks in the field that struggle with
14 providing the skills that's needed for this
15 population. Because of that recognition, we
16 developed a new RFP last year with the intent of
17 connecting our providers to CUNY who are experts
18 around providing educational and occupational
19 training, and have connections to industry, right.
20 So, from our experiences, we have learned that there--
21 there was more that could be done, and we as a team
22 we do with various folks in the field recognize that,
23 you know, we should talk to folks who have--they are
24 experts in this area. And that's something that we
25 just launched this summer. I'm sorry, this fall.

2 So, this is really the first class. I think it
3 started last--last week around early child education.
4 So I think what we're going to see from--from this new
5 RFP is that we're going to see a lot more young
6 people getting credentials. We're going to see a lot
7 more young people getting connected to jobs at a
8 higher rate because these are the experts who are
9 able to connect to industry and connect them to the
10 credentials that are needed based on what they see in
11 the field. Obviously, there's always more to be
12 done, and we're always talking to our partners around
13 the table to figure out how we could work together,
14 and Jackie has been amazing around talking to
15 industries, and--and really driving us along the way
16 in terms of what are the next steps in terms of what
17 industry is looking for around healthcare, IT or--or a
18 manufacturing--industry manufacturing. So again,
19 there's--there's always more to be done, but if I
20 should give us a grade, it would be difficult. Yeah.
21 [laughter]

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I like that, you
23 know. He's a very smart guy. I love it. You know,
24 I love it. I love it, but I--I do love it. But you
25 say that--

2 ANDRE WHITE: [off mic] [interposing] I
3 love it even more.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: you say that
5 there's--there's many to be done. Okay, but did you
6 start--start doing something?

7 ANDRE WHITE: Absolutely, and--and that's
8 through the--

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] And
10 what is it?

11 ANDRE WHITE: --CUNY training portion,
12 where we're working with seven CUNY schools, and
13 providing various trainings for young people, and I
14 could give you some examples. At Bronx Community
15 College we're providing Early Child Age Training for--
16 for young people, and they're going to get a
17 certification the CECP, our Child Development
18 Associate credential. We're working BMCC providing
19 CISCO CCNA training for young people; New York City
20 Tech for mechanics training around refrigeration and--
21 and also electronic security system installation as
22 well. We're working with colleges on the Island to
23 offer forms of technician training to young people.
24 Also at some of the colleges we're offering patient
25 care technician training as well. He's working with

2 a college, which is known for a very robust technical
3 (sic) arts program. We have worked out a plan with
4 them to offer training to young people with interest
5 in this field as well. And at Queens Community-
6 Queens Borough Community College we are offering a
7 training in board certified-I don't know if I'm
8 saying this right, hemodialysis technician. Those
9 are young people who work with folks on dialysis. So
10 again, we have never had this sort of breadth of
11 training before. It's very new to our portfolio, and
12 the beautiful thing about these trainings are you're
13 getting a credential that employers are looking for.
14 So connecting to a job will be much easier for
15 participants.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You had mentioned-
17 you were talking about a RFP, but there are certain
18 things that I needed, you know, to grasp, properly
19 catch, you know. Could you elaborate a little bit
20 more about the RFP, the RFP?

21 ANDRE WHITE: Sure.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Because often--

23 ANDRE WHITE: [interposing] Which one?

24 There are a number of RFPs in the works.

25 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: In general.

2 ANDRE WHITE: Okay.

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes.

4 ANDRE WHITE: So when we—when we release
5 RFPs at DYCD, there are a number of things that we
6 try to focus on. We look at communities where
7 there's high poverty levels and there is high
8 unemployment for young people, right. We also want
9 to ensure that the CBOs that we're awarding these
10 contracts to have a very strong presence in these
11 communities, and are aware of the needs of the
12 communities. So that's very intentional in our
13 process when we release RFPs. And what we have seen
14 over the years because of this method our programs
15 have been successful, the outcomes have been great
16 for the most part. In our OSY program, we're meeting
17 more than 80% of the performance measures that the
18 state and also the federal government stipulates.
19 And again, it's very important for the RFP to really
20 demonstrate, right, what the program model should
21 look like, and also what we're looking for, for that
22 program to be successful. And I think they've seen
23 it across the board with all our programs.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
25 but the reason I want to ask you to go back to the

2 RFP I know that we got to make sure that we get two
3 organizations—organizations with experience,
4 organizations that are capable to provide the
5 services that we are offering, but by the same token,
6 I think there is a gray area. There is some issue
7 with that, not issue, but some consideration that we
8 have to make also. Because I know that there are
9 many community based organizations, but they are
10 small organizations also. They don't have the
11 resources--

12 ANDRE WHITE: [interposing] Right.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --in order to
14 address the need of the RFP. They don't have expert
15 writers to write for them, and they are struggling to
16 respond to the RFP. What type of support services
17 that DYCD provides to them to make sure also they can
18 get access to the resources because those not-for-
19 profit organizations they are small organizations,
20 and there are people who are the wheel with the—the
21 education to help their communities, but they don't
22 have the resources, you know--

23 ANDRE WHITE: [interposing] Right.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --to-to respond
3 properly to the RFP. What type of-of support that
4 DYCD provide to them?

5 ANDRE WHITE: So at DYCD we have a very
6 active capacity building division where we provide TA
7 for our current providers, but also we're-we also
8 provide TA for prospective folks who might want to be
9 a part of our portfolio of the programs that we
10 offer. We also encourage, and I'll go back to the
11 RFP question afterwards. What we do with a lot of
12 our RFPs we recognize that there is an option to
13 subcontract, right? And this allows smaller groups
14 or unfortunately not enough of the organizations have
15 the capability to offer the program at scale in terms
16 of what the RFP is asking for, or they could
17 definitely work with one of those larger
18 organizations to be a subcontractor to-to provide
19 some element of what the program requires. And this-
20 this and this element they're-they're able to I guess
21 compete for-for the RFPs when those are released.
22 HHS Accelerator I'm sure you guys are familiar with
23 have really streamlined the RFP process a lot more.
24 I think before HHS Accelerator folks at DYCD would
25 have to send it where, you know, recognition and we

2 call these dissertation responses to our RFPs, and
3 we—we understand at that time, you know, if you are
4 from a large organization, more than likely you have
5 the resources to hire a competent speech writer—I'm
6 sorry, not speech writer. A competent proposal
7 writer, but HHS Accelerator has really kind of
8 leveled out the playing field in terms of how the
9 questions are structured, and in terms of the
10 responses. So I think even if you don't have a
11 proposal write of may not necessarily have the
12 breadth of experience like some of these larger
13 agencies might have, you're still able to compete at
14 a certain level for contracts.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Very good. Thank
16 you very much. Let me—let us go to the Small
17 Business Workforce 1. Becky?

18 BECKY: Yeah.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I know that
20 Workforce 1 also has been in the community for a long
21 time, and providing services also. So, in terms of—
22 because we are very interested in the disconnected
23 youth.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Uh-huh.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You know, this is a
3 very important portion of our community, and could
4 you tell us how many young people between 16 and 24
5 years old who are served by Small Business our
6 Workforce 1.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: So zeroish
8 between--

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Zero between
11 16 and 18. Our--the way WIOA is structured, we are--we
12 are prohibited from working with people that are
13 under 18 years of age. So our universe is going to be
14 the 18 to 24-year-olds.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Make sense?
17 As I--

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Yes.

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --said in my
20 testimony, about 25% of our--our traffic, and--and,
21 therefore, people can connect to them.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] You
23 know, I'm sorry, you got to--I mean you say zero?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Between--

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing]

3 Between 16 to 20.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --these are
5 the 16 to 24.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: I'm saying
8 we don't serve people below the ages of 18, the age
9 of 18.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yeah, you got 18 to
11 24.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: That' right.
13 I just wanted to clarify to make sure--

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] So
15 that makes sense, because I mean you are--

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --of that.
17 So it's going to the 18 to 24.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You are in the range
19 of disconnected youth?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Alright, okay.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: So about a-a
23 quarter or so of the people that we serve in a given
24 year--

25

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Uh-
3 huh.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --are
5 between the ages of 18 to 24.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: That's about
8 100 to 125,000 people in a given year, and about
9 2,500---

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] That
11 we can consider to be disconnected, is that correct?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: That's the
13 total universe.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: The total universe.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: So take a
16 quarter of that.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: So 25,000
19 to-to 32,000 or whatever are 18 to 24.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: And the-the
22 number of people that we-we connected to-to work
23 around 25 to 30,000 in a given year, and another-just
24 again take a quarter of that. It's 8 to 10,000 are
25 18 to 24. There's a--does that make sense?

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But-but we are
3 talking about disconnected youth.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: You mean
5 people who are--

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Not in
7 school.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Not in
9 school.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Not working.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: And-and not
12 working. The universe is--

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Yes.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --is a
15 little smaller than that. It's more like 4,000 are
16 connected to-to-to jobs.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Four thousand?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Yeah, and
19 to-to be-well, actually while a lot of people think
20 about people who aren't in school and-and aren't in
21 the work field, so think about out-of-school out-of-
22 work youth or disconnected youth, which is a field I
23 don't really like. We think about people who are in
24 low-end jobs as well, and try to connect them to-to

2 services that will get them on a better career path
3 so that's my own personal discourse.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, when we talk
5 about demography--

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:
7 [interposing] Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --do you target this
9 specific area or specific population of where those
10 young people who are disconnected, you know, live or
11 congregate?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Well, we're
13 in lots of locations throughout the city, and also
14 have a fairly robust network of community partners
15 that we rely on to--to help drive traffic to our
16 centers. [coughs] The overwhelming majority of
17 people that--that come and seek our services through
18 the Career Center system are interested in this very
19 specific job opportunity that we are recruiting for.
20 That's the biggest driver of traffic for us, and so
21 that's a long-winded answer to your question. This
22 is yes, we do target areas in the city that--that have
23 high concentrations of out-of-school out-of-work
24 youth, and as I mentioned earlier in my testimony, we
25 most recently partnered with HRA and--and DOE to set

2 up a center in the West Farms area of the Bronx where
3 the is a-a high concentration of out-of-school and
4 out-of- work youth to deliver more intense and robust
5 integrated services specifically for out-of-school
6 out-of-work youth.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So that means you
8 have on center in the Bronx, right?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Sure,
10 currently.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Currently?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: So we-
13 currently that-it has tailored services specifically
14 to serve out-of-school out-of-work youth

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: How many centers
16 that you have--

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:
18 [interposing] Twenty.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --for the city?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Twenty.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Twenty. Where are
22 they located?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Throughout
24 the five boroughs.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Throughout the five
3 boroughs?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Yeah.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. So, what is
6 the price and, you know, if you want to--what is the
7 price of the budget that, you know, you are using in
8 term of serving the disconnected youth or the youth
9 between 18 to 24?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: It--I could
11 get back to you because we'd have to probably do a
12 little bit of calculation if you--we're open to
13 everyone the--the Career Center system as a whole.
14 That's part of the rules. We are consistently
15 serving--a quarter to a third of our--our--our
16 customers are 18 to 24, some small--so you have to
17 take the total budget and divide by that number I
18 guess plus the series of--of more recent programs that
19 we've developed in partnership with our sister
20 agencies, and then, in fact, our own that are longer
21 term occupational skills training. So the long-
22 winded way again, right, I'm like on--on a roll here
23 with that. I could get back to you with a more
24 specific number that isolates the--the--the budget
25 specifically for 18 to 24-year-olds.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Well, please do so.

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Yeah.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Tell us about your--
5 your sources of funding youth. Yeah, you know, DYCD
6 is all funded from the city still for that government
7 or--?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:

9 [interposing] The overwhelming--

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --the private or--

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --majority
12 of our funding for Workforce Development is federal
13 WIOA dollars and it's specifically to serve adult--the
14 adult population--

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --18 and
17 over. We get a relatively small percentage--it's like
18 \$42 millionish. A little bit of money from the city
19 in support of Career Pathways. It's under \$5
20 million. I remember it in my head, and a very little
21 bit of--of private dollars to support certain
22 initiatives.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So again, we're--
24 we're are trying to figure out how much--how many
25 services that we offer to homeless, you know, youth,

2 disconnected youth, or if you want the youth in all
3 cases.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:

5 [interposing] Yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You know, do you
7 have services dedicated or specific to homeless youth
8 between 18 and 24, you know, your target population?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Not-not
10 tailored specifically to-and-and-and not targeting
11 specifically homeless youth. [coughing] I would be
12 surprised if we're not serving some, but--

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: No.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But do you think
16 that there's a need to do so, and let me ask you the
17 same question: If you-or you encounter or you
18 realize that some of your participants that the young
19 people that you are serving they are homeless, what
20 is the effort, what is the-what are the steps that
21 you take to address the issues?

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Sure so we
23 would have not-as I said, we have a fairly robust
24 mini-partner network. So our-our staff has to work
25 some career centers whether it be housing or

2 transportation or child care or cash or whatever sort
3 of supportive service they would need that would help
4 them connect to employment. We would make a
5 referral. With the exception of--of the program that
6 we just rolled out at--at West Farms in Bronx where we
7 are co-located with the--the DOE team and the HRA team
8 where--where folks could get directly connected to a
9 variety of supportive services.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: It is good, you
11 know, to have partners, you know, to work in
12 partnership and to help, you know. I don't believe
13 that one institution and one elected official can
14 resolve the--the issues that the New Yorkers are
15 facing.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Yes, we
17 agree.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm glad that, you
19 know, you partner for the organizational. You will
20 be stronger and, you know, have a--a better attack.
21 But when you refer your participant or your client to
22 another organization tell me about the follow up to
23 ensure that, you know, these participants or clients
24 receive the services that you refer to her and him
25 for? What is it about the--the--the follow up--

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:

3 [interposing] I'm-

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --to make sure that-

5 -

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:

7 [interposing] Yeah, yeah, no, I would—I would, I mean
8 we have certainly a formal process in place that we
9 would attract referrals from community quarter who
10 are sending ups people who they think are a good fit
11 for jobs that we are trying to fill.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: I don't—I
14 guess we don't really have as—as a strong a tracking
15 mechanism for—for when we refer people out to—to
16 community partners. We—it's not as formal. We have
17 a sort of semi-formal reading system that is in place
18 to—to be sure that we feel that the—the organizations
19 we're partnering with have the adequate resources to
20 support our folks, but we could probably improve
21 there.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes, but I—I think
23 that it would—it would be necessary to have a follow-
24 up or, you know, a process--

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Uh-huh.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --on that because
3 when you--we are serving disconnected youth, you know,
4 I don't think so. That person may have difficulties,
5 many challenges. They come to you for a specific,
6 you know, issue, but they are facing many other
7 issues?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Uh-huh.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I think it is--will--
10 it will be very important to have the process to
11 follow up with them to make sure that they are doing
12 good, that they receive the services that need
13 because this is the same situation in my district
14 also, you know, and Margaret's office. So when the
15 customers come to us, we cannot provide all these--all
16 these services. Impossible. Some of them we refer
17 them to other institutions. But we want to know if,
18 you know, if they have been served, if their--their
19 issues have been resolved, or what is the status of
20 the--of the--the--the needs.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Uh-huh.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So I think I would
23 encourage you on that, and all the providers also to
24 follow up, to find out, you know, if funded that

2 clients, our participants received the core services
3 that he or she needs.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Agreed.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. What about
6 helping, you know, participants overcome the language
7 barrier and country barrier?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: So, we—we
9 do, as I mentioned in my testimony, we—we do have
10 recently set up and rolled out services that are
11 tailored to meet the need of foreign born New Yorker—
12 -

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: --and that's
15 in partnership with HRA, and our first—the first
16 place we're—we're delivering those services in Wash—
17 is in Washington Heights, and there are con—a series
18 of con—for example, a series of contextualized
19 English as a second language course that are—are
20 inte-integrating occupational skills training that
21 while a person is learning a specific hard skill,
22 they're also—they're also improving their English.
23 So that's an example of—of some of the—the tailored
24 services that we're delivering today, and we're just
25 getting started. So we—we—we hope to be very

2 successful and roll them out to-to other locations
3 and in other occupations as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
5 We have been joined by Council Member Laurie Cumbo.
6 Thank you, council member. Thank you. Actually,
7 privately she goes out fishing (sic). Usually, she's
8 very talkative, you know, aggressive. Thank you very
9 much, Council Member Laurie. Thank you and maybe
10 I'll conclude by asking you asking you another
11 question that I think this is very important. I
12 mentioned that before. There is an issue-I believe
13 this is an issue in New York City, and in terms of
14 providing services not only, you know, related to
15 youth because they're everywhere.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Uh-huh.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You know, good
18 programs, good services, but the people-many people
19 who are in needs they don't know about those
20 programs, those services. What do you do to make
21 sure that you reach out to people who are in need of
22 the services that you are providing?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Well, every-

24 -

25

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] What
3 is the measure of outreach?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: We-like my-
5 my-my colleagues--

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] And
7 doe it work?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: I couldn't
9 agree-I-I and I think our-our Commissioner couldn't
10 agree with you more that-that outreach is such an-an
11 important component of the work that we do, and-and,
12 of course, all of our services not just-just
13 workforce, and we're working as hard as we can.
14 We've invested a lot more in resources to support our
15 efforts to get the word out about our services, and
16 yes, I-I think we could always do more because we-we
17 don't reach everybody. There's-there's no doubt
18 about it, but our efforts include connections
19 thorough community partners, social media, actual
20 paid media campaigns, you know, subway, bus,
21 whatever. We have also got a-a team of-of folks who
22 go out in the field and-and sort of walk the streets
23 letting people in different commercial quarters
24 letting them know about our services. We try email
25 is a big part. Everything we can to get the word

2 out, but-but anything that you guys can do to-to help
3 us do that would much, much appreciated. It's a-it's
4 a-one of the-the biggest challenges I think that we
5 have because it's a big city, and it's hard to reach
6 everybody.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I love the last-

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: We reach
9 better.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I-I love all of it,
11 and-and the last part of your statement. You know,
12 everything that we can do to help you. Well, that's
13 exactly what I was going to say. We are 51 council
14 members throughout the city of New York. We reach
15 out to our constituents. We go everywhere,
16 community, borough down there, too. Yes, Council
17 Member Cumbo. Council Member Cumbo.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [off mic] Yes,
19 sir.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: What I'm say that we
21 are 51 council members.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [off mic] True.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: We go to the
24 churches, to the communities, to everywhere. We have
25 news raters. We reach out to our constituents. I

2 think that we can create a good partnership with all
3 of you all here. You know, the--the organization, the
4 providers. I think if we work together, you work
5 together with the city council members that will make
6 a big difference. We send newsletters--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: True.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: We send, you know,
9 information to our constituents, but you have a good
10 program unit that you are providing to the New
11 Yorkers. I think that will be a good idea to reach
12 out to the council members, and let us know what you
13 are doing. We will be more than happy--

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:

15 [interposing] Terrific.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --to inform our
17 constituents and the people that we serve. This is
18 our job because we got to remember we have a common
19 reference. So we get more responsibility, and by
20 working together, we'll be able to have a better
21 impact. Thank you very much to all of you.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON:

23 [interposing] Thank you very much.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [off mic] I have a
3 question. (sic)

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I know that.
5 Council Member Cumbo has a question, and when she say
6 one question, we're ready. [laughter] Council
7 Member Cumbo, please.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I tried. Wanted
9 to ask just in looking at your testimony are any of
10 the programs that are offered, are any of them
11 somewhat mandatory or required given maybe a certain
12 situation or predicament that a young person my fight
13 themselves in? So, if they've been arrested or they
14 have a truancy issue in their school or there are
15 other things that could mandate that they participate
16 in some of these types of out-of-school programing,
17 or there's an expense—they've been expelled, or
18 they've been suspended, those sorts of dynamics?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Uh-huh. Not
20 at SBS. I don't know if—

21 ANDRE WHITE: Oh, not—not at DYCD.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So there are no
23 required proframs for youth in any of the programs
24 that you offer?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MALLON: Not at-at
3 our two agencies. They would probably go after-

4 GARY JENKINS: [interposing] At the Human
5 Resources Administration yes there's a requirement to
6 be engaged, but there is always an opportunity to
7 speak with a client if they're as we call-what we
8 call good cause, we will exempt them from the
9 activity.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay. So,
11 [coughs] let's say do you have direct outreach to
12 young people that are what we would know as at risk,
13 and not just at risk because of where they're living,
14 their economics, but they're at risk because it's-
15 it's been noted they-they may have been arrested
16 before. They may have dropped out of school before.
17 Is there any way to catch those young people who are
18 not only at risk, but they are vulnerable in the
19 sense that they have a track record of behavior that
20 makes them even more vulnerable.

21 ROBERT ZWEIG: I take a stab. So in the
22 Department of Education we operate programs for court
23 involved youth specifically at Rikers Island, East
24 River Academy, a program for younger youth called
25 Passages Academy, and then another program perhaps

2 less well known called Restart Academy that works
3 primarily with young people who are substance abuse
4 treatment centers. In all of those instances,
5 obviously those are youngsters that have some
6 mandate, perhaps not the substance abuse. Some of
7 that can be voluntary, but sometimes even there
8 there's kind of a court mandate or-or strong
9 encouragement by a judge to seek substance abuse
10 treatment. In all of these environments, the New
11 York City Department of Education embeds teachers,
12 guidance counselors, education associates and
13 supervisors to oversee those programs. We have
14 systems in place within the DOE and specifically
15 within District 79 for when those young people are
16 exiting whatever one of those settings that I just
17 mentioned. That we have with our referral centers,
18 it's kind of an internal welcome center within the
19 DOE, and specifically within D79 [coughing] social
20 workers and guidance counselors who work with getting
21 those young people back into school when they leave,
22 when they're exited from whether it be Rikers Island
23 or Passages or one of the Restart drug treatment
24 programs. And so we do have systems in place. We
25 have robust student support all to re-acclimate the

2 students to school and to—to the extent possible
3 accelerate learning, catch up with whatever gaps
4 might have arrived—arisen along with that. We work
5 with various community-based agencies. One I don't
6 believe it's funded by DYCD, but it's called GOSO,
7 Getting Out Staying Out in East Harlem, and another
8 agency called Friends of Island Academy. Those are
9 private not-for-profit community-based programs that
10 we also embed teachers. So they provide the support
11 services for young people that are coming out of the
12 situations I just referenced. And we through the
13 Department of Education provide the academic
14 instruction and to the extent possible student
15 support. Those are wrapped around with paid
16 internships, counseling, as well as the academic
17 instruction.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: What happens when
19 a—what happens when a young person decides that they
20 are going to drop out of high school? So they've
21 made the decision in let's say eleventh grade that
22 they're going to drop out. Is there a series of
23 steps or circumstances or situations or programs or
24 services that are immediately provided to that young
25 person? Is there some sort of exit conversation that

2 happens with their guardian or a parent, or is it a
3 child just stops coming, and they stop coming and
4 that's the end of the at?

5 ROBERT ZWEIG: Well, I-I think-I think
6 those are two different but related situations. I'll
7 go into the last part first. Regrettably, there are
8 young people that just stop coming. They-they
9 withdraw. So within the DOE, you know, we're-we're
10 always tracking the data of our young people. Good,
11 you know, it's positive results and-and not so
12 positive results. In those instances, we do have
13 outreach. The-the DOE invests heavily in attendance
14 teachers, guidance counselors, various kind of out of
15 classroom positions to re-engage those young-those
16 young folks. With District 79 in particular, we-we-
17 we have established in every borough with two in
18 Brooklyn, referral centers. So these are kind of
19 one-stop shopping centers that are staffed by
20 guidance counselors and social workers for young
21 people to come if they want to re-engage, and largely
22 in those instances, it's for a High School
23 Equivalency diploma that they're-they're pursuing
24 though not all the time. We also make connections
25 from our referral centers to YABC programs and to

2 transfer schools The DOE more broadly has
3 enrollment centers that are open year round and at
4 certain times of the year they open even more centers
5 throughout the city. So when a youngster disengages
6 from school, he or she can always re-engage through
7 one of those vehicles, if you will.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And that sounds
9 like a very proactive approach that would have to be
10 on the part of that particular young person.

11 ROBERT ZWEIG: There is some of that,
12 yeah.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I'm—I'm more so
14 asking is there any proactive approach that DOE or
15 any of the other agencies participate in saying a
16 young person has dropped out. Here's what we do in
17 response to that?

18 ROBERT ZWEIG: So we collect data in
19 District 79 looking at young people who have dropped
20 out and those who are teetering. There's something
21 called the Long-Term Absence List, and so we collect
22 that data citywide and do direct outreach to those
23 young people to try to re-engage them and reconnect
24 them back to school through the year in which they
25 turn 21 years of age. So that's—that's one thing

2 that I--that I think that we do in a proactive kind of
3 way, and then with our agency partners who do a lot
4 of kind of--for lack of a better term, grass roots
5 outreach. In working with out community based
6 partners, they'll do local community outreach to try
7 to reconnect and re-engage young people. So I think
8 those two examples are where we would be proactive.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Do you feel like
10 that's maybe what the policy is, but do you feel like
11 if you brought some young people and some parents in
12 and all that they would like yeah, yeah, yeah.
13 That's what happens. That's what happens, uh-huh.
14 It did for me or they'd be like I ain't never heard
15 of any of these people that you're saying.

16 ROBERT ZWEIG: I think either of these or
17 both having experienced--(sic)

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [interposing]
19 Okay.

20 ROBERT ZWEIG: Right, that's right. In--
21 in--in response to the Chair's questions earlier, I
22 think we have to hit from all angles. So I--I do
23 believe that in many respects we have systems and
24 policies in place that are working very well, and at
25 the same time we can always get better. And I think

2 one of the things that we need to do is be more
3 equipped to serve those young folks that speak
4 different languages. So a lot of the conversation
5 this morning is about--been about new immigrants.
6 They don't always know how to access those systems,
7 and I think we need to do a better job in being
8 proactive with--with that particular segment of the
9 population. Similarly, I think with young people who
10 have experienced failure in school, and have great
11 literacy needs in particular, and experiences just
12 have been bad. I'm not casting aspersions, but the
13 experience just not been good. I think we can always
14 get better at--at being proactively engaged. I'm
15 happy to say, you know, I've been doing this a long,
16 long time working for the public school system. I had
17 a full head of hair when I--when I started. [laughter]
18 I had a full head of hair a few years ago. But--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [interposing] Me,
20 too.

21 ROBERT ZWEIG: --I--I think what [laughs]
22 I think what's gotten better--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [interposing] Over
24 three years.

2 ROBERT ZWEIG: --is the--the way we
3 partner. I think it needs to happen. There weren't
4 as many agencies, and we sometime I felt worked in
5 competition, and we didn't always maximize resources.
6 I think in recent years we've done a much better job
7 in maximizing resources, but heck, there's a lot more
8 to do. So there would regrettably be parents and
9 young folks who would say I don't even know what
10 you're talking about.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Right.

12 ROBERT ZWEIG: So, I--I mean that's just
13 an acknowledgment that we have to face, but I think
14 we've got the systems in place both at the higher
15 levels and--and at the community base levels that we
16 can combat--continue to combat this much, much more
17 effectively

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I guess finally,
19 what is the percentage, and this might have been
20 asked by the chair earlier and also in your
21 testimonies, what is the percentage that we are
22 losing because they drop out every year? [background
23 comments, pause]

24 VANDA BELUSIC-VOLLOR: [off mic]

2 ROBERT ZWEIG: But the DOE does say that
3 for four-year cohort there's a 9% drop-out rate. So
4 that's for students who entered in one year, entered
5 and graduated four years later, and so for that
6 number 9% drop-out within that four-year cohort. As
7 Vanda said, we have a lot of programs for fifth and
8 sixth year students where that data we don't have at
9 this point. I mean that speaks to the DOE's
10 commitment re-engaging young people who may be at the
11 verge of dropping out, or-or young people who haven't
12 gotten to that high school diploma in the four years,
13 but with the data that we have right now, it's saying
14 9% that drop out within that four-year cohort, and
15 four is the goal, right, for-for graduation from high
16 school?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I think it would
18 be also interesting to know with more statistical
19 information the amount of those that do drop out
20 relative to how many do go on to get their GED would
21 be helpful for us to have an understanding of where
22 we are in this process, and there is-I would need
23 further understanding, and we could do that later in
24 terms of clarity around a four-year, five-year, six-
25 year student, how that relates to the drop-out rate

2 and do some of those five and six years also then
3 drop out. And I have one more final question. I
4 told you, Council Member Eugene, I just wanted to ask
5 one question.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I got used to it
7 that's why I don't worry about it. [laughter]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COUMBO: There's been a
9 lot of discussion around Algebra, and how Algebra
10 relates to being one of the deciding factors as to
11 why young people drop out that if they get that
12 Algebra education, it makes it very difficult for
13 them to move on, and to proceed successfully in high
14 school. Is that something—have we begun to put
15 implementation and programs in place in order to make
16 sure that young people are on track mathematically so
17 that they can keep up all those four years, and not
18 find themselves in situations where they feel it
19 necessary to drop out.

20 ROBERT ZWEIG: I'm going to turn to my
21 colleague Vanda for that one.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: You might have to
23 maybe speak into the microphone so that others could
24 hear you.

25 REGINA WILSON: Okay.

2 VANDA BELUSIC-VOLLOR: [off mic]

3 RANJU BATRA: Yes, Please.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Maybe you could
5 switch places with a colleague briefly. [laughter]

6 REGINA WILSON: I was going over there.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You're free.

8 [laughter]

9 VANDA BELUSIC-VOLLOR: They are all so
10 kind. So, yeah, there's a number of things in place.
11 First I would say that the Algebra--the statistics on
12 Algebra are more so about math, and there's number of
13 nuances to them that I'm happy to go through was
14 helpful, but in terms of Algebra specifically, the
15 Mayor's Equity and Excellence Agenda has us working
16 on Algebra for All, which is [coughing] intended to
17 start the--the title is a bit misleading. Algebra for
18 All will actually--

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Excuse
20 me.

21 VANDA BELUSIC-VOLLOR: --start in fifth
22 grade.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Excuse for
24 interrupting you, but will you please state your name
25 for the record.

2 VANDA BELUSIC-VOLLOR: I'm so sorry.

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Just don't worry
4 about it.

5 VANDA BELUSIC-VOLLOR: I am Vanda
6 Belusic.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay.

8 VANDA BELUSIC-VOLLOR: Vanda Belusic-
9 Vollor at the Department of Education, Senior
10 Executive Director at the Office of Post-Secondary
11 Readiness. Sorry. So Algebra for All is intended to
12 ensure that young people have the fundamental skills
13 they need to be successful in higher level math in
14 high school. What the research says is a number of
15 things: (1) Higher level math courses those above
16 Algebra predicts success in-in persistence in non-
17 remedial courses at the higher education level. And
18 so we're doing all we can to make sure that young
19 people have the skills they need when they get to
20 high school to (a) take and succeed I Algebra, but
21 then also to pursue higher level courses where they
22 then utilize their four years in high school to
23 continue to take math. Right now, you only need six
24 credits in high school to graduate—six—excuse six
25 math credits in high school. So theoretically even

2 if you're on track, you could stop taking math
3 courses in junior year. That lapse in not taking
4 math in senior is also a negative predictor in
5 college success. So you could be on track taking
6 math your entire career, but state regs say you don't
7 actually have to take math in senior year. So we're
8 working with schools to use—to maximize senior year
9 to that the courses young people are taking will have
10 them ready for college and careers.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay, thank you
12 all. I'll turn it back to Chair Eugene. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Thank
14 you very much Council Member Cumbo. As I said, don't
15 worry about it. I got used to it. Well, thank you
16 for—for your question also. So I want to thank each
17 one of you from the panel. Thank you for your
18 testimony, and let's continue to do another wonderful
19 job by partnering together to serve the young people.
20 Thank you very much. Have a wonderful day and also
21 have a blessed-- You know, I'll thank you then.
22 [background comments, pause]

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So now we want to
24 call D.C. Vito [background comments] from the LAMP;
25 Monique De La Oz from Phipps Neighborhoods; and

2 Abodes (sic); I think this is Randolph Peers from
3 Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow; Sara-Burb Sharps
4 from Measure of America. [background comments,
5 pause] Thank you. [pause] Okay, thank you very much
6 for being part of this very important public hearing,
7 and you start any time. Each one of—anyone of you.
8 But before you start speaking, I would ask you to
9 state your named for record, please.

10 D.C. VITO: My name is D.C. Vito, and I
11 run an organization called the LAMP. Thank you,
12 Chair Eugene for the opportunity to testify. My name
13 is D.C. Vito, I'm the Executive Director of the
14 LAMP, an education non-profit serving low-income New
15 Yorkers. Our Digital Career Path Program has
16 provided digital literacy and basic technology skills
17 training to hundreds of high school out-of-work youth
18 citywide since early 2013 wherein which we first
19 partnered with Opportunity for a Better Tomorrow.
20 With more than 70% of our students going on to
21 advanced training, internships and jobs. I applaud
22 the creation of this task force to explore ways the
23 city of New York can open doors for young adults, and
24 help them realize their potential as active engaged
25 citizens of their communities. I particularly

2 applaud the proposed inclusion of youth leaders so
3 that constituent voices and concerns can be
4 represented. I'm here today to support an assistance
5 of the—and offer the assistance of the LAMP, but also
6 wish I—because I wish to underscore the importance of
7 teaching critical media and digital literacy skills.
8 As has been demonstrated in the latest presidential
9 election it is imperative the young people today
10 learn and practice critical thinking skills around
11 media content and messaging. The recent boom in
12 teaching coding out of school out of work youth does
13 have benefits to be shared. However, coding is not a
14 silver bullet for solving the complex problems around
15 poverty and marginalization. I have been dismayed to
16 find that codeing classes in academies rarely, if
17 ever, teach young people how to decode the same media
18 the share and disseminate with their newfound skills.
19 This task force will have an opportunity to make
20 recommendations impacting the lives of young New
21 Yorkers on the cusp with their responsibilities as
22 eligible voters. I wish to urge in the strongest
23 terms possible that the task force explore issues
24 around how media influences the lives of those out of
25 school out of work youth. For example, how

2 stereotypes can affect one's sense of self-worth, and
3 opportunity. How bias can change one's decision in
4 the voting booth. How misinformation affects the
5 choice one makes about one's personal health and
6 wellbeing, and so on. In nearly ten years of running
7 the LAMP, I've seen how a lack of critical thinking
8 skills around the—are impacting vulnerable
9 populations. I've spoken with youth who in one
10 breath claim that advertising doesn't affect them,
11 and in virtually their next breath describe a new
12 pair of high-end sneakers they simply must have.
13 Many of the youth who came as the LAMP's Digital
14 Career Path are unaware that LinkedIn exist, or if
15 they are, treat their LinkedIn profile no different
16 than their Facebook profile. They typically lack
17 awareness of other online tools, and resources they
18 can use to develop their careers, and don't now how o
19 distinguish credible information from falsehoods and
20 half truths. We teach them how to use the Adobe
21 Career Suite wherein they learn how to use Photo Shop
22 Premier, the video editing software and illustrator.
23 We also teach them how these tools are used to make
24 all the media we encounter in our daily lives.
25 Throughout the program, they are building their own

2 personal digital portfolios so that they can share
3 this with prospective employers or educational
4 institutions. Given the trajectory of current trends
5 in Workforce Development training for youth, I full
6 anticipate that the recommendations from the task
7 force will include support for helping marginalized
8 young adults join New York's growing Media and
9 Technology Center. Again, I urge that the task force
10 investigate the needs for this population with regard
11 to critical thinking about media or what is known as
12 media literacy, the ability to access, analyze,
13 create and critique media in a variety of forms. The
14 LAMP has been a leader in this field, and is new
15 nationally recognized for its work and practice with
16 the young people and educators. On behalf of the
17 LAMP's staff and board, I want to again wish to offer
18 our support and than you for the opportunity to
19 testify today.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
21 sir. The next speaker.

22 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Good morning. My name
23 Monique De La Oz. I'm the Senior Director of
24 Learning and Career Development at Phipps
25 Neighborhoods. [pause] So Phipps Neighborhoods is a

2 non-profit organization in the Bronx that works
3 towards a New York City where no one is caught in the
4 cycle of poverty. With that goal in mind, we
5 specialize in providing children, youth and families
6 in low-income neighborhoods the opportunities they
7 need to thrive through comprehensive education in
8 career programs and access to community resources.
9 We serve approximately 10,000 clients a year, and 80%
10 of our annual \$25 million budget is comprised of city
11 and state contracts. Throughout my professional
12 career, I've had the honor and privilege to oversee a
13 multitude of programs serving disconnected youth, and
14 adults in New York City. Today, I would like to
15 speak to you about disconnected youth specifically
16 those that fall between the ages of 16 and 24 years
17 old who are neither connected to an educational
18 institution or to the workforce. I would also like
19 to address our specialty services that include career
20 exploration and counseling, interpersonal
21 communication skills building, and job training that
22 is specific to the population being served. First
23 and foremost, I would like to highlight the assets of
24 this—this population. These young adults are
25 youthful, energetic, creative, resourceful and

2 resilient. They serve as the city's talent pipeline
3 and makes the city stronger to invest in their
4 talent. Our constituents primarily are from the West
5 Farms, Murrells, Morrisanis, Soundview and Crotona
6 Park areas of the Bronx. Because these are
7 impoverished communities that face high crime rates,
8 staggering poverty rates, low graduation rates, and
9 lack access to essential resources, despite that
10 fact, according to the United States Census Bureau,
11 the South Bronx is the poorest congressional district
12 in the United States. I wake up each morning feeling
13 hopeful and optimistic and ready to both live and
14 serve this community on a daily basis. It's no
15 surprise that Phipps' mission is to combat poverty by
16 supporting each client and respective households
17 overall. We are fortunate to have it and provide an
18 array of quality Workforce Development programs and
19 education programs throughout the Bronx. In
20 addition, all too often I witness our-our
21 disconnected youth deal with issues like police
22 brutality, failing school systems, intergenerational
23 incarceration, poor housing systems, broken families,
24 gang violence, which can cause these individuals to
25 be marginalized by society. In light of the recent

2 election, it is very scary to think that we do not
3 have any certainty into the future of our funding
4 streams and could, in fact, face additional budget
5 cuts, which will limit our ability to serve and reach
6 the population of youth and adults that truly are in
7 dire need of our services. Further, the Bronx
8 disconnected youth face a multitude of employment
9 barriers that include, but are not limited to, mental
10 health services. Community based organizations and
11 non-profits need additional funds to provide non-
12 traditional types of therapy: Art therapy, writing,
13 horticulture, and music therapy just to name a few.
14 These will help to destigmatize and reframe the
15 outlook of mental health services, and open lines of
16 communication for their chosen family.

17 Childcare Services: Many of our youth do
18 not have the proper support system to engage in our
19 job training or adult literacy programs. They don't
20 always have the ways and means to pay for the
21 childcare services out of pocket. I urge you all to
22 provide additional funds and childcare subsidies for
23 early Head Start programs to serve newborns to
24 toddlers.

2 Transportation Costs: DYCD should foster
3 a relationship with the Metropolitan Transportation
4 Authority to provide free or discounted MetroCards to
5 engage youth in job training programs. If students
6 that attend the DOE school can qualify for free or
7 [coughing] discounted train or bus passes, why
8 couldn't a disconnected youth do the same for a job
9 training or education program? Currently,
10 transportation costs alone are hefty cost factor for
11 program budgets that are already limited as it is.
12 To provide another example, the Summery Youth
13 Employment Program is a six-week program, and program
14 participants do not get paid until week three.
15 Because students don't have the monetary resources to
16 purchase a weekly MetroCard, in many cases they are
17 not willing to explore outside of the four corners of
18 their block. I also share this information because
19 times are changing. Situations are becoming hard for
20 our youth especially the city is subject to yet
21 another MTA fare hike [bell] in the coming years.
22 And the last one.

23 Imbalance in Program Design in Addressing
24 the True Needs of Populations: For the last two
25 years, the de Blasio Administration has been working

2 on the Career PathwaysNYC where all New Yorkers
3 should be able to support their families. That's
4 incredibly hard for the majority of our program
5 participants. For example, for the Neighborhood
6 Development Area, Opportunity Youth program which
7 services out of school out of work youth,
8 participants involved in this program don't get paid
9 for the 20-hour student orientation, but students in
10 the Work, Learn and Grow program are paid for their
11 20-hour orientation. In other cases students are not
12 allowed to be employed until ten weeks of a 14-week
13 program, but yet, they only work for ten hours a
14 week. This makes it a competitive labor market for
15 us, and many times students leave programs because
16 they want money, and they need to get access to jobs.
17 There needs to be more community involvement for
18 direct service providers on program design when
19 developing requests for proposals.

20 Justice Involved Youth: There is clearly
21 a disproportionate number of African-American and
22 Latino young men and women being criminalized. While
23 there are a limited number of Workforce education
24 programs, sole serving this population, we both have
25 the Arches Transformative Mentoring Program, and

2 Bronx Justice Corps. These programs help court
3 involved youth that are currently on probation,
4 parole, coming out of the Rikers Island Prison
5 Complex or other correctional facilities.
6 Unfortunately, over the years both programs have
7 experienced a reduction in budgets. Therefore, the
8 number of youth served citywide has declined. We
9 must break the school to prison pipeline by
10 increasing funding and yielding the programs onto the
11 city.

12 In closing, I would like to leave with
13 you with a story of a 22-year-old Bronx young woman
14 who came to our program called Career Network
15 Healthcare. She was unemployed at the time of
16 enrollment and was quite unsure of the non-clinical
17 career opportunities, but she had a strong passion to
18 be in the healthcare field, and development customer
19 service skills to aid her growth. While interning in
20 the HR Department at Montefiore Medical Center, she
21 quickly developed a passion for health
22 administration. She successfully completed our 32-
23 week program, and due to her hard work and dedication
24 she then became a full-time service patient care
25 representative at Montefiore earning \$40,000 a year.

2 According to this definition, she was once
3 disconnected urban youth, and through our services
4 she is now making strides in her professional career
5 connected to her community, the support system
6 employment and an Allied Health credential is on the
7 horizon. In closing, I urge that this disconnected
8 youth task force and elected officials continue to
9 allow for these forum where direct service providers
10 can partake in these pertinent discussions. Our hope
11 is that you will take the necessary steps to further
12 enhance and take into and read it—excuse me—and take
13 into consideration some, if not all, of our proposed
14 recommendations. I want to thank Council Member
15 Mathieu Eugene, Margaret Chin and Brad Lander and the
16 Disconnected Youth Task Force for holding this
17 hearing on the challenges faced by the urban youth
18 and adults. Thank you for allowing me the
19 opportunity to offer this testimony on the education
20 and Workforce Development issues impacting
21 disconnected youth in New York City. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
23 Randolph Peers. Thank you.

24 RANDOLPH PEERS: Good afternoon.
25 Chairperson Eugene, thank you for hosting this—this

2 committee meeting. It's important for all of us to
3 sort of give you our perspective. Thank you to
4 committee counsel, too, because I know you guys do a
5 lot of work sort of setting the stage for this. So
6 we appreciate that work as well. OBT, Opportunities
7 for a Better Tomorrow, we're currently the largest
8 provider Workforce Development and education services
9 specifically focusing on the opportunity youth. I
10 didn't say disconnected, the opportunity youth
11 population 17 to 24 not working and not in school.
12 We are currently under contract with DYCD. We have
13 four out of school youth contracts, and we also have
14 four young adult internship contracts as well. I'm
15 going to skip through a lot of my testimony just to
16 sort of get to the meat, and then address some of the
17 other things that came up in discussion because I
18 thin that's equally as important. First off, I think
19 in terms of Intro 708, which is the Youth Task Force,
20 I think myself and most of the providers would
21 support such a task force. Anything that could bring
22 the voice of the young people to the table, we think
23 is a good and positive thing. Intro 709, unless we
24 misunderstand the intention and the scope of the
25 legislation, we don't support it. I think it's

2 instructive that we heard testimony from SBS itself,
3 which would be impacted by this legislation, but even
4 they don't support Intro 709. From our perspective,
5 whether was intentional or not, it seems to give more
6 authority to SBS over the youth portfolio, and
7 generally speaking, we don't think that that's a good
8 shift. In fact, we believe DYCD is in a much better
9 position because of its youth development
10 perspective, its long history with working with young
11 people, and with the fact that it leverages all of
12 its programs in a continuum of services for young
13 people, that they are best agency to serve the—the
14 opportunity youth population. In fact, a little
15 history here. In 2008, SBS actually had a portfolio
16 of special populations contracts, which included
17 limited English proficient, low basic skills,
18 homeless adults, and others, and that was actually
19 the first set of contracts that feel by the wayside
20 when the Workforce 1 Career Center rightfully so
21 needed to expand across the city. So once again,
22 unless we're misunderstanding the intention and the
23 scope of this legislation, we don't think that it is
24 appropriate for the young people of the city of New
25 York to sort of shift authority to SBS in terms of

2 working with those young people. Now, a lot of
3 things came up in discussion that I thought were
4 very, very interesting, and I think Chairman Eugene,
5 you probably are, you know, wanted to hear a lot of
6 this come out, but coordination is an issue. In
7 fact, you asked the question about coordination even
8 just data coordination. How is happening? Where is
9 it happening. Well, it's not, and I think anything
10 that could help further coordination I think is a
11 positive—is a positive impact for the city of New
12 York. Maybe it's through this task force. I don't
13 know. The other thing I'll say is, you know, we
14 focus a lot on outreach getting young adults to—to
15 the table so to speak in terms of this myriad of
16 programs that are being offered. I would suggest to
17 you that it's actually we don't have a referral
18 system that effectively takes the right young adult
19 and walks them to the right program at the right time
20 in their life. I think that that's the bigger
21 challenge, less so outreach. We can get to the
22 youth. We know where the youth are. You all know
23 where the youth are. They're in your communities.
24 They're on the basketball court. They're at the
25 YMCAs. They're in the barber shops. They are at the

2 NYCHA community centers. We can get to the youth,
3 but do we have a system in place citywide that
4 effective refers these young adults to the right
5 program at the right time in their life. And I think
6 if we approach it from that perspective, there is
7 some system building to be one. We have to
8 acknowledge that in order to get a young person to
9 the right program, it actually takes resources. I
10 have, you know, we had talked about an OBT
11 internally, and externally through my work at the New
12 York City Employment and Training Coalition to sort
13 of pay for the Assist program, right? Just as in
14 basketball. We have a whole category of assists
15 right? You don't get points, but you get
16 acknowledgement for making sure that you set up the
17 score. Why don't we have a similar system here in
18 New York City to ensure that our young people are
19 getting to anyone of these programs at any given time
20 that is right for them. I think that's some work
21 that we can do on that. The other thing I'll say is
22 with respect to data, and resources, the private
23 foundations in New York invest a significant amount
24 of money in this disconnected youth programming. It
25 would be great if we could invite them to the table

2 to discuss their investments, and not just focus on
3 the city's investments because millions and millions
4 of dollars are being spent by private foundations in
5 order to support this population, and they have a
6 particular perspective in terms of how that
7 investment should be used. I think there was a
8 missed opportunity with HRA's Youth Pathways program.
9 We talked a little bit about it today. The spirit of
10 that program is good, and right and it's an
11 appropriate shift. Unfortunately, OBT did not
12 participate in soliciting in writing a proposal to be
13 part of the Youth Pathways project mainly because the
14 cost per participant was so low, less than \$600 per
15 person. In fact, the Youth Pathways program is
16 really an—should really be used as an ancillary set
17 of resources that could actually support some of the
18 bigger programs that we had talked about, OSY, YAP.
19 There are a lot of young adults who are on public
20 assistance, can benefit from OSY, YAP, if we can get
21 through HRA's Youth Pathways program, and we can
22 serve them more effectively, I think that those are—
23 those are dollars well spent. Unfortunately, they
24 went for value. Okay, they went for quantity and not
25 quality, and that's why I think the program is going

2 to fall short ultimately. We just can't serve 9,000
3 young adults on \$600 per person. It just doesn't
4 work. Lastly, you mentioned social—it was mentioned
5 social media as an outreach strategy. I think
6 Chairman Eugene, you actually said hey, you know,
7 social media is not the end all when it comes to
8 outreach. But where it is effective is as a
9 secondary outreach mechanism. So, when a young adult
10 hears about a program from a friend, from a cousin,
11 from their guidance counselor or whomever, they turn
12 to social media in order to verify that that's where
13 they want to be. So organizations like OBT like the
14 LAMP like Phipps and others we use it as a secondary
15 outreach strategy to verify the work that we do so
16 that they feel more comfortable actually making the
17 call and walking into our sites in order to solicit
18 those services. The city can do the same thing. So
19 these agencies shouldn't look at it as a primary
20 means of outreach, but more so as a secondary means.
21 And, in fact, that's what DYCD does. Their youth
22 hotline really does connect the young adults to the
23 different programs, and verifies that that's where
24 they need to be, but we could do that with social
25 media, too. So I think there's a lot of opportunity

2 there as well. One other organization that wasn't
3 mentioned, but in terms of outreach and where we get
4 our kids from, Department of Probation. I have to
5 tell you we work very effectively with the Department
6 of Probation. There are very thoughtful probation
7 officers who steer young adults to programs like
8 ours, and we have found that working with probation
9 officers is sort of an extra pair of eyes and ears
10 when we think about that retention equation that you
11 all talked about, and when we think about follow up,
12 right? Because they're also working with these young
13 adults and they want to see them succeed as well. So
14 I think there's a lot of different strategies that we
15 could employ to address some of the coordination
16 issues that you all have brought up. I think that
17 that's where the real work needs to be done, but with
18 respect to the two intros, we support 708
19 wholeheartedly. We'll work with you on that. Like I
20 said, unless we misunderstand 709, which seems to
21 transfer authority to SBS, we can't support it under
22 those circumstances. So thank you for the time, and
23 thank you for listening.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
25 Thank you so very much, Mr. Peers. Thank you.

2 SARA BURB-SHARPS: Hi. My name is Sara
3 Burb-Sharps. I' the Co-Director of Measure America.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Would you give me
5 one second, please? [background comments]

6 SARA BURB-SHARPS: Absolutely.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Hi, did you have a
8 testimony with you?

9 SARA BURB-SHARPS: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you. Thanks.
11 [pause] Thank you very much. You may continue.

12 SARA BURB-SHARPS: Great. Thank you.
13 Thank you for the invitation to testify today. My
14 name is Sara Burb-Sharps. I co-direct Measure of
15 America, which is a non-partisan research project at
16 the Non-Profit Social Science Research Council based
17 in Brooklyn. I really want to start by applauding
18 the Council's efforts to address youth disconnection
19 in our city. Our work in other cities and counties
20 provides evidence that solutions exist that can both
21 reconnect today's youth and prevent disconnection the
22 future. Our focus is on improving people's wellbeing
23 and expanding their choices and opportunities, and
24 one recent area of increased data analysis and
25 research for us, is youth disconnection because of

2 the way it stunts young people's wellbeing at a
3 critical moment in their lives, and can leave scars
4 that endure years later. In New York City roughly
5 180,000 teenagers and young adults in this age range
6 16 to 24 are neither working nor in school, but what
7 our research tells us is that there areas of
8 astonishing disparities within the city by race and
9 place, and those disparities really help give clues
10 as to where to focus or energies and to target our
11 activity. While the overall rate of disconnection in
12 New York City is 15.8%, in Manhattan's 17th Community
13 district, the Upper West Side and the West Side,
14 youth disconnection is 3% translating to 391 kids.
15 On the other hand in South Bronx Districts 1 and 2 in
16 Hunts Point, Longwood and Mott Haven and Melrose, the
17 rate is 11 times higher. It goes from 3% to 33%
18 representing 8,423 kids, and we've calculated the
19 rate by community district for all 59 community
20 districts. It ranges from 3% at one end of the
21 spectrum to 33% at the other, an enormous disparity
22 within one city. Racial and ethnic disparities,
23 which haven't been talked about much today, are also
24 vast. In the Greater New York Metro Area, the white
25 rate of youth disconnection is 9%, which is

2 considerably lower than the U.S. average. The Latino
3 rate is 17%, which is slightly higher than the U.S.
4 average, and the black rate is more than double the
5 white rate at 19%, which is also slightly lower than
6 the U.S. average. Because of limitations [coughs] on
7 Census Bureau data from the American Community Survey
8 just recently we couldn't calculate the Asian this
9 year, but we've calculated it in the past. In my
10 written testimony I've included some additional data
11 by borough, change over time, et cetera. But with my
12 limited time I wanted to focus now on our research
13 about the most important factors associated with
14 youth disconnection. I will focus right now only on
15 four factors. A couple of them have come up so I'll
16 be very quick with them, but I think this is
17 something that people know pretty well, but the
18 research shows that disconnected youth are nearly
19 twice as likely to live in poverty. They are three
20 times as likely as connected youth to have a
21 disability, something that hasn't come up so much.
22 The third thing is that while personal
23 characteristics like persistence, like willingness to
24 work hard, impulse control, et cetera, are critical
25 for young adults to succeed. Programs that focus only

2 on personal attributes are missing a vital point,
3 which is that disconnected youth overwhelmingly come
4 from disconnected families and disconnected
5 communities. Places where their parents and the
6 other adults in that community also struggle with
7 connection to staying in education, to the workforce,
8 et cetera. These are communities that are more
9 isolated from transportation options to where jobs
10 are, where schools and other public institutions are
11 chronically underfunded, and really importantly,
12 there are places where adults tend to have limited
13 access to broader social networks that are so vital
14 for helping kids find employment, get internships,
15 get apprenticeships, find mentorships, et cetera. A
16 fourth surprising and somewhat disheartening factor
17 is that youth disconnection rates 15 years ago are
18 highly predictive of what's happening today. And we
19 found that this relationship holds true even when you
20 control for population growth and demographic change.
21 So what does this tell us? It's suggests [bell] an
22 absence of meaningful change for far too long, and it
23 tells us that in neighborhoods where its youth
24 disconnection is almost the norm, seeing older
25 siblings and teenage, you know, neighbors adrift sets

2 a poor example for young kids and shapes their own
3 expectations about the future. So taking action
4 today is not only important for the kids who are
5 caught in this loop right now, but it can change the
6 narrative and the lives of the next generation of the
7 kids who see them and see this as the norm in their
8 communities. So with the above factors, and there
9 are others and we've got them in some of the reports
10 that we've done. But what these factors point to is
11 that youth disconnection isn't a spontaneously
12 occurring phenomenon. It's a problem many years in
13 the making. Engaged young people from middle-class
14 neighborhoods rarely drift away from the world of
15 school and work for very long. So in order to reduce
16 youth disconnection, we need to support these kids in
17 the context of their communities, and I'm heartened
18 to hear today that many of the interventions that are
19 going on are—do have this broader support built into
20 the programs, you know, that have been mentioned.
21 And I—and I just want to say that I think this is
22 something that we're moving away from, but we need to
23 really make sure we do move away from it: Summer
24 jobs or youth jobs program, they do offer young
25 adults valuable things from self-confidence, a bit of

2 money in their pocket, and understanding about the
3 expectations in the workplace. But rigorous
4 evaluations consistently show a few years later that
5 these one off job placement programs don't tend to
6 have lasting effects. The lasting effect comes when
7 you reconnect kids, and you include additional
8 supported interventions what-whatever they-they will
9 be, and some of them have been mentioned this
10 morning. I just want to finish by making four
11 recommendations. As you move forward on the basis of
12 my knowledge of a lot of these programs, and as of
13 the conversations this morning. The first one is
14 that there is a need for more granular data on this
15 problem by neighborhood, by race and ethnicity, by
16 gender to understand better, you know, not to just to
17 have, you know, satellite offices here and there, but
18 to target where-where we're working, and to target
19 which are the particular challenges that-that certain
20 groups face. Some groups face challenges with the
21 employment of the equation. Some groups face
22 challenges with the staying in school piece of the
23 equation. Some groups face challenges with the
24 childcare piece of the equation. Data exists to be
25 able to pinpoint this more accurately, and to have

2 programs that area more targeted. So that's the
3 first thing, data. The second thing I would say is
4 that we've talked to people for instance in NYCHA who
5 have said there are lots of not-not-for-profit
6 organizations that are offering different job
7 placement programs, but that many of the kids there
8 and-and they sometimes feel that they're kind of
9 being barraged by them, but many of the kids can't
10 take them up because they have remedial needs,
11 numerous illiteracy, et cetera, or no GED or nor high
12 school diploma that they can't meet the minimum
13 qualifications. So I think it's important to realize
14 that-that there is an unmet need for remediating
15 before kids can take advantage of some of the
16 programs that exist. The third that I would say is
17 it's really important in the task force and in the
18 other work to include the voice of youths themselves
19 at the table with us talking about the challenges
20 that they face so that we have a good dose of the
21 reality, of the complex reality that they face. And
22 finally, somebody did mention a connection to
23 industry, and I think that New York City isn't doing
24 as much as many other cities are in terms of making
25 connections between industry and not-for-profits and

2 the city to try to look at—you know, to try to design
3 apprenticeships that, you know, give kids a
4 credential and lead them into something. So that's
5 it. We're available to help in this effort in any
6 way. We are going to go back and do some more
7 research and make it available to you. I think the
8 granular data is really needed, and we really look
9 forward to the City's investment in our kids. Thank
10 you.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
12 For your testimony, and thank you to each one of you
13 for your testimony. I'm going to start with OBT.
14 Mr. Peers, let me first and foremost thank you for
15 your testimony, and I appreciate your coming about
16 Intro 709, but I want to say that that this is
17 exactly the process of legislation. The reason that—
18 the reason why also we have public hearing in order
19 to examine maybe, you know, to go through to analyze
20 what we propose to do, and there's no perfect
21 legislation. It doesn't exist. So I do believe that
22 working together we can shape it. We can get to a
23 common ground to have something that works, and
24 something can be beneficiary for—for the people that
25 we are serving. That means they are disconnected

2 youth and the New Yorkers and stuff like that, and I
3 don't exactly—I appreciate your comments, and your
4 advice on that because I do believe, and I said it at
5 the very beginning, we all belong to the same team,
6 and sometimes I don't believe that myself for the
7 committee or, you know, members of the committee
8 ourselves we can, you know, resolve it. It's
9 impossible. As a matter of fact, you get the
10 experience. You are doing the service day in and day
11 out. You know—you know your stuff, and also we know
12 something, too. One of the things I think that we
13 will meet, you know, I know that we would meet, and
14 we would go through the legislation and share ideas,
15 and see what we can do together because the goal is
16 to serve, to better serve, you know, the young people
17 and New York City, and I do believe. I say that all
18 the time, that all of us we have the same moral
19 obligation, and I think by working together we'll
20 have better results. So your comment has been taken
21 into consideration. Another thing that I loved when
22 you said, we know where the young people are. We
23 know where they are, the basketball court. You said
24 by themselves on the street. As a matter of fact, I
25 remember two years ago, if I'm right one of my

2 responsibilities on the City Council is to provide
3 jobs to the disconnected youth those who are not in
4 school, those who are not working because we're
5 there, they are on the street. They are part of the
6 negativities not because they want to do that, and
7 I'm saying that there is an experience. Before I was
8 elected as City Council member, I was also on the
9 other side providing services to the young people.
10 As a matter of fact, I used to go to DYCD, too
11 sometimes

12 SARA BURB-SHARPS: Uh-huh.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And those young
14 people I know first hand if we provide them with the
15 opportunities that they need, we will be taking them
16 from the negative part and send them to the negative
17 part and to the world of success and empowerment.
18 Some of them they are in the negative part. They
19 don't have any other option. It doesn't mean that we
20 don't offer them the option, but I agree with you
21 that we have to go where to congregate to bring them
22 to the positive part-part, and to convince them, and
23 to motivate them for them take advantage off from the
24 services that we are providing. And I think that we
25 will be able to do that by working together, and I-

2 myself I'm willing to work together with one of you,
3 and we have been doing that, right. And the members
4 of the committee, and the council members that's what
5 we are looking for working together to get the best
6 result. Alright? Thank you very much for your
7 testimony.

8 RANDOLPH PEERS: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But I do have one
10 question, and you were talking about coordination. I
11 agree with you. I always say that life is a system.
12 The human body is a system. The car is a system.
13 The microphone we are using as a system. There are a
14 different component, and we have to coordinate them
15 with, you know, the handset of that. You what? I'm
16 tired. I'm not going to forward to youth who will
17 be a man, and the-I, you know, mostly I'm not going
18 to share the food. I'm not going to die here to eat
19 the food. There are bodies going to be in trouble,
20 but I'm saying that, you know, we belong to a system.
21 There are many services, many organizations. It is
22 very important that we coordinate everything properly
23 for the-the better result, and any suggestions,
24 ideas, and advice? Any commendation you could
25 provide us in terms of coordinating the different

2 programs or organization that we are providing or we
3 have already in the system?

4 RANDOLPH PEERS: So I—I mean I think what
5 was brilliant about today's discussion was the fact
6 that just the process of bringing all the agencies
7 together we realize that there needs to be more
8 coordination, right? Because sometimes when the
9 agencies, and they all do great work, but we real—but
10 when they're doing the work, the coordination is not
11 foremost on their mind. I think part of it is we
12 need to just—we need to really decide whether this is
13 a Workforce Development issue or if it's a youth
14 development issue because on the Mayor's Office on
15 the citywide level, there's an Office of Workforce
16 Development.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

18 RANDOLPH PEERS: There's an Office of
19 Immigrant Affairs, right. The Mayor's Fund has a
20 Youth Services component, but if we really believe
21 that this is a comprehensive challenge around youth
22 development from DOE, by the way, ACS, too, could
23 have been here sitting at this table, from HRA to SBS
24 to DYCD. Then there has to be someone who
25 coordinates it from the perspective of youth

2 development because as we noticed today, it's not
3 just about the job with a lot of these young adults.
4 It's about the support services. It's about the
5 academic support services. Its about the counseling.
6 It's about getting connected to something that they
7 need to feel part of, right? All of these issues,
8 which makes it a lot different than just a Workforce
9 Development perspective, right? I mean my colleague
10 here really did talk about some of the youth not
11 being ready for a Workforce program. No doubt that's
12 why they don't walk into a Workforce 1 Career Center
13 because they are not ready for that opportunity. So
14 we need to step back and say on a--on a citywide
15 level, is this a Workforce Development issue or is it
16 more a holistic youth development issue.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [background
18 comments] Yes, sir, uh-huh. Thank you very much. I
19 agree with you, but you're--you're right and when we
20 talk--when we are talking about the issues affecting
21 young people, especially disconnected youth, we are
22 not talking about one issue. They made a complement,
23 and that's the reason I think that, you know, by
24 coming together we will be able to do a better
25 service, and I agree with you there is Youth

2 Department. At DYCD there is the Workforce. There
3 are different institutional agencies serving New York
4 City and serving New Yorkers and serving the youth,
5 but I think that the idea, you know, of the-of
6 taskforce even, you know, with the two legislations,
7 is to come together with our skill, and our different
8 skill and expertise to see how we can team up toward
9 a better structure to better serve the young people,
10 and I think there is room for all of us to sit down
11 together, and to get a better result. You know, one
12 area could be DYCD Workforce 1, and OBT. All of us I
13 think we can sit down together to fight the right
14 problem because I always want to say that. You may
15 be a preeminent, you know, person, you know, 18
16 years, doctors or a brilliant, you know, student, but
17 to resolve a problem of mathematic or science or
18 chemistry or biochemistry, you have to have the right
19 formula. It doesn't matter how intelligent you are,
20 but if you don't apply the right formula, you are
21 won't resolve the problem, and I believe that if we
22 come altogether we apply the right formula, we will
23 be able to do a better job, a better-around the
24 better services for our young people. Alright?

2 RANDOLPH PEERS: And I think that's why
3 we're all encouraged by the taskforce because it's
4 going to bring us all to--and the young people to the
5 table themselves, too--

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Uh-
7 huh.

8 RANDOLPH PEERS: --you know.

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
10 and I like, you know, the--when we talk about just
11 maybe not the--like--like the primary, you know,
12 outreach with that. But we can use it. We can use
13 all the components that we have. Because for
14 somebody who have been serving young people in
15 Brooklyn, I know that we want to get them, you know,
16 to something, such for me that they use it some of
17 the time. Not so much they use it, but there's
18 something they are looking for in social media. They
19 know what they use the social media for, things they
20 are excited about, but when it's about, you know,
21 training or get them in school, so we got to do more
22 than social media. To get them in the program that
23 we are providing, we have to do more than social
24 media. I agree with you. You mention about, you
25 know, your partnership also with the Department of

2 Probation for their outreach and to recruit
3 participants. Can you tell us about that? At what
4 stage exactly--

5 RANDOLPH PEERS: [interposing] Yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --you know, you-you
7 reach out or-or you-ore you work together with the
8 Department of Probation--

9 RANDOLPH PEERS: [interposing] So--

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --in the beginning,
11 why they are inside or--

12 RANDOLPH PEERS: [interposing] Yeah.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --when they're
14 getting released. How does it work?

15 RANDOLPH PEERS: So now it's-it's sort of
16 all of the-the various-right now. It-it started with
17 a very funny story.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

19 RANDOLPH PEERS: About eight years there
20 as one young adult referred by one probation officer
21 who came to our program in Bushwick, Williamsburg,
22 and this young adult became a super success story.
23 He got his High School Equivalency program diploma,
24 got a job, got promoted, and this one probation
25 officer who really cared about the young adults that

2 he was working with, sent his entire caseload to OBT
3 the next week. Here was the challenge with that.
4 They weren't all ready for OBT. So that sparked an
5 idea on behalf of our team: Let's invite a group of
6 probation officers in because they all must be
7 working with some young adults who need support, and
8 let's explain what we can offer so that they can
9 upfront start to communicate with these young adults
10 about what the expectations are, and that could make
11 the referrals. That's how it all started, very
12 informally with one probation officer, but what we
13 found is that many of them are very thoughtful, and
14 concerned about the young people that they're working
15 with, okay, and they are—they have a mandated role to
16 check in on them, but they want to see them succeed,
17 and then they created some pro—so then Probation
18 created some programs as the Arches program, I
19 believe. Evelyn, in—at the YMCA runs—at our Jamaica
20 Y Roads Center to sort of formalize that partnership
21 between thoughtful probation officers and community
22 based providers who are working with young people in
23 terms of their education, and in terms of academics—
24 workforce support, implement support. So, you know,
25 it would be great if we can invite them to the table

2 as well in these discussions, and also ACS. I mean
3 ACS plays an important role with a subset of our
4 young adults, right, the ones who are aging out of
5 foster care. And I, you know, Chairman Eugene, you
6 know this, but we wait too long before we start to
7 think about self-sufficiency for these adults who are
8 aging out of the foster care system, and then have
9 less and less available to them. And it's not ACS'
10 fault. It's not the individual provider's fault.
11 Their caseloads are large. The problems are complex,
12 but the Workforce organizations like OBT we will go
13 to the agencies themselves, the foster care agencies,
14 and we will do the work at the agencies where they're
15 assigned to if we can just have better coordination.
16 So once again, I think it gets back to is this Youth
17 Development issue or is it a Workforce issue, and I
18 would—I would say it's more Youth Development, and
19 there are a lot of youth in a lot of different
20 categories that could be served better if we all come
21 together as you say, including Probation, including
22 ACS.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
24 Mr. Peers. Thank you. Now, let me go to Ms. De La
25 Oz

2 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Thank you also for
3 your testimony, and to all of you thank you for the
4 services that you are providing to our young people.
5 Thank you very much. You make our city a better
6 place. Could you tell us about your process or
7 method of outreach recruitment, you know?

8 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: So for Phipps
9 Neighborhoods, we have through our Theory of Change
10 process for different areas of the Bronx that we
11 focus on. So all the points that were discussed
12 earlier today, social media is definitely it. Word
13 of mouth is better. I think our program's success
14 brings the young people in because the graduates and
15 alumni go out there into the community. They bring
16 their cousins, their friends, their boyfriends and so
17 forth back into our program. But in addition to that,
18 we also have change our stacking pattern, and we have
19 to develop roles within our programs and allocate
20 programming money to have community liaison
21 positions, to have outreach and intake specialist
22 positions. So that there are targeted monies full
23 time where staff are out there in the community
24 working in particular I would say with the religious
25 institutions, working with NYCHA, working with DOE

2 and so forth [coughing]. So it was twofold, looking
3 at how we work with the young people, but also
4 looking at our staffing pattern, and realize that we
5 have to change how we were operating so that we can
6 bring the folks home.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh. What about
8 the budget you are using, your current budget?

9 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Yeah, so right now
10 the--predominantly 80% of our budgets are city state
11 funded. I think to Mr. Peers' point about the
12 private foundations, one of our biggest success
13 stories is through a program that's 100% funded by
14 private foundations. So we do have donors that come
15 in and support our Workforce Development programs. So
16 I definitely echo everything that you stated because
17 there's a lot of knowledge there that I don't think
18 is necessarily heard in these bodies because a lot it
19 is focused on city, state and federal money.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. So, your--you
21 received--did you receive more funding from the city,
22 from the state, or from the private? Which is
23 funded?

24 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: [interposing] Yeah,
25 mostly DYCD, and--

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Mostly
3 DYCD?

4 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You mention also
6 MetroCard. Do you believe that providing Metro Card--
7 Metro Card to the young people can give them some
8 incentive or inspiration to be part of the programs
9 that we are providing? Can you elab--

10 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: [interposing] I'm
11 sorry. I didn't understand that.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You mention about
13 Metro Cards.

14 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Metro Cards.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes.

16 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Sorry. Totally not
17 what I heard.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So, yeah.

19 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So do you believe
21 that, you know, providing a Metro Card to the young
22 people--

23 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Uh-huh.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --and give them the
25 incentive or motivation--

2 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --to be part of the
4 program or the training that we provide?

5 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Yeah, so I have--

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] And
7 how do you work with that?

8 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Yes, so right now
9 unfortunately—I can give different examples because
10 we have a multitude of programs. Financial Literacy
11 is everything that we speak about within our
12 Workforce Development programs. So whether the
13 participant is earning a \$50 stipend or \$125 stipend
14 or they're earning minimum wage, we're talking to
15 them about financial literacy. I think the
16 challenges pertain to respective programs. So for
17 example with SYEP because the students don't get paid
18 for three weeks into the three-week program, many of
19 them they don't want to go to Manhattan. We're in
20 the Bronx, right. So we may have employers that we
21 work with CBS in Burlington, and they have stores in
22 Manhattan, but the student may not have the ways and
23 means to get there. So I think it's something that
24 can be done on a case-by-case basis. I think a lot
25 of times we may look at this population as a

2 victimized population, and many of them do have the
3 monetary opportunity and they have savings, but a
4 majority of them don't. So I think that for those
5 students that their families need a Metro Card
6 whether it's at a discounted rate in working MTA or
7 whether it's a free card just for the duration of
8 that program or for a portion of it, I think it will
9 help their—I think it will help them at work, with
10 family and their personal lives because they're able
11 to sustain themselves. And many times these students
12 are not earning enough money to then take—what is it,
13 a \$31 Metro Card. For the month it's \$130. They
14 don't even make that much money in order for them to
15 sustain themselves, you know, and I think a lot of
16 what we've been talking about is self-sufficiency.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. So, as I
18 mentioned before, and I thank the other speakers, you
19 know, who have mentioned that also. When we're
20 talking about disconnected youth, they are facing
21 several challenges, not only jobs, not only
22 education, not only mental issues, but do you partner
23 with organizations to—in order to be in a better
24 position to address the different issues facing those
25 young—young people?

2 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Yes, we--yes we do, but
3 I think the transportation piece--

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

5 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: --is one of the areas
6 that we haven't necessarily cracked that nut unless
7 I'm taking the money out of my programs. And for
8 some programs, I'm giving them round trip Metro
9 Cards. I'm giving them weekly Metro Cards, but not
10 all my programs can sustain that because going back
11 to again the point. I have one program that's \$324
12 per participant. I have another program that's
13 \$10,000 per participant. So that program obviously
14 I'll be able to have the money there to do that, but
15 that again it's privately funded. So I think it
16 varies. The transportation is that one area where I
17 think--I know for us we can use that support, but for
18 mental health, and I know the type of situations that
19 may come up in childcare. We do have external
20 partners that we work with in the Bronx, as well as
21 intern and live-in folks. (sic)

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Is there just--

23 RANDOLPH PEERS: [interposing] Can I add,
24 Chairman?

25 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes, please.

2 RANDOLPH PEERS: Unstable housing is the
3 other challenge that—

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

5 RANDOLPH PEERS: --we can't solve.

6 There's no partnership in the world that's going to
7 be able to address the issue of homeless youth and
8 unstable housing. You know, when I started ten years
9 ago at OBT, and before that I worked at CAMBA, and
10 other organizations in your community, there were
11 issues around childcare, issues around mental health.
12 These are things you can partner, and we do partner
13 with a lot of organizations to address this. But
14 over the last five or six years, unstable housing has
15 risen to the top in terms of the most significant
16 social service need facing our young adults, and
17 there are no easy answers. There are, you know,
18 it's—it's—we have a small partnership in Jamaica,
19 Queens through the YMCA where they actually reserve
20 some of their residences at the Jamaica branch for
21 youth that find themselves in a crisis, but even
22 that, that's just a temporary one-month sort of
23 solution. The shelter system is overwhelmed, as we
24 know, and once again it's not just the youth, but
25 it's their families who are facing the unstable

2 housing issue. Try and participate in one of the DOE
3 programs. Try and participate in one of our long-
4 term training programs when you don't have a stable
5 roof over your head. I mean that's really become a
6 significant issue, and—and I don't—I don't have the
7 answers for that, and—and, you know, partnerships are
8 great, but I'd love to figure out how we can do a
9 better job of making sure that there is stability in
10 terms of their living situations because it's become
11 a huge, huge crisis for our kids.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I agree with you
13 because earlier we're talking about prevention.
14 Because as I said, I-I have the impression that we
15 are trying to—to do damage control to bring some
16 solution to something that happened already, but I do
17 believe that, you know, our prevention is the best
18 method, best everything, medicine and everything.
19 So, now with respect to the housing issue, I think
20 this is one of the—the biggest crisis right now. We
21 all know that, and I agree with you, there is no
22 single answer to that, and I'm afraid that it is
23 going to be worse, you know, from bad to worse
24 because it is a big issue, a big, big issue. So
25 because I remember when I was the Chairman—Chairman

2 of the Veteran Services, and I was advocating for
3 many services for veterans, those great men and women
4 in uniform who made the utmost sacrifice for all of
5 us who put their life in danger to defend our
6 liberty, and democracy and to provide us, you know,
7 with the opportunities that we are enjoying now. I
8 was talking about all the good services that I want
9 the city to provide to them. You know, have
10 services, jobs and everything, educational. One of—
11 of them said, Council Member, I agree with you. We
12 need all of that, but there is a missing component,
13 and this is—this one is the first one, the basic one,
14 the most important one. We need a place to live.

15 MONIQUE DE LA OZ: Uh-huh.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: They said that if we
17 don't have a place to live, you cannot have a job.
18 When you go to apply for a job, the first thing they
19 ask you, where do you live? So if somebody doesn't
20 have a place to live, they really don't know his or
21 her life is going to be the same. That is going to
22 be a big challenge. I hope that, you know, sometime
23 we would come together, the city, state and federal
24 government it would come together to address that
25 because this is a very—this is a major, major, major

2 part of this because that affects all the services
3 that we are making an effort to provide to our
4 constituents, and I agree with you. Now, maybe—thank
5 you very much, Ms. De La Oz, and Mr. Vito, I—I
6 commend you for all the services that you are
7 providing to the young people, and my question to you
8 could you elaborate about--[coughs] excuse me—the
9 require—the requirement, you know, that the young
10 people should meet before they get involved in your
11 program. How do you equip your young—your young—the
12 young people to be involved in your program? What
13 are the requirements? Can any young person go and
14 come to you and say yeah, I want to be part of the
15 program? Is there any requirements they have, you
16 know, to fulfill, a DCD requirement?

17 D.C. VITO: We hold a unique position I
18 think amongst the groups up here because we partner
19 exclusively with the groups.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: With them?

21 D.C. VITO: Yeah. So we partner with OBT
22 Program and provide our services to their youth. We
23 provide services to Educational Alliance, Henry
24 Street, New Settlement. So we're always working in
25 partnership with an agency. So the requirements for

2 the young people to be-participate in our program are
3 based by the site, not ours. We do not have any
4 requirements. So we've seen some of the-some of our
5 programs be very basic in terms of the requirements
6 for-for-for entry into the-into the program, and then
7 we've seen some with a little bit more advanced
8 requirements. It's really dependent upon what the
9 partner is asking from us.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So that means there
11 are other-let's say for example there-there is a
12 young person, a younger person who would like to be
13 involved in your program, if he or she is not part of
14 the different group that you mentioned, so she or you
15 won't be able to-to be part of this program, right?

16 D.C. VITO: Correct. That's only because
17 we don't make that decision. They partner or
18 organization does. Does that make sense? Because
19 we're not-we're not-we're not running a center like-
20 like Phipps and-and OBT. We're bringing our services
21 to those centers.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I see. So how many
23 young-how many youth or disconnected youth you
24 believe that you are serving?
25

2 D.C. VITO: A year we're serving close to
3 220, 250 a year.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: 20-220?

5 D.C. VITO: 220 to 250.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Are they all
7 disconnected youth or just young people, but among
8 them you have also served disconnected youth?

9 D.C. VITO: Those are the disconnected
10 youth. We serve—we service close to 1,000 youth
11 entirely for all of our--

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

13 D.C. VITO: --programs. Of the--of the--of
14 that number, 220 or 250 are disconnected youth.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Are disconnected.

16 MALE SPEAKER: [off mic]

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: What's your name.

18 MALE SPEAKER: [off mic]

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Oh, okay. Alright,
20 they--that in partnership works, right?

21 D.C. VITO: Yeah.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. Now, it is
23 good to provide young people or anybody, you know,
24 adult with skills, knowledge and, you know, for them
25 to be prepared for the workforce. What about placing

2 them, the placement, have them connected to jobs or
3 to e able to use what they learn, and also to win
4 again some income, you know.

5 D.C. VITO: Uh-huh.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: What is the follow
7 up after they--they--they--they have their diploma or
8 their certificate--

9 D.C. VITO: Uh-huh.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --after they finish
11 it to receive the skill and the knowledge that they
12 moved to go to the workforce? Is there any follow-
13 up, any assistance for them to get jobs?

14 D.C. VITO: That is not our specialty.
15 That is also going to be the specialty of our
16 partners. So that's going to be OBT's specialty in
17 New Settlement up in the Bronx. Hudson Guild in
18 Chelsea. They provide those follow-up services in-in
19 almost every one the--the programs that they've had
20 that--that follow-up, and certainly the placement.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh. Can you
22 please elaborate on that?

23 RANDOLPH PEERS: Yeah. So for those young
24 adults and we work with about 1,300 opportunity youth
25 a year. For those young adults that come in

2 exclusively for job training and job placement
3 services--

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Uh-huh.

5 RANDOLPH PEERS: --72% of them are
6 getting the jobs. So where are we placing these
7 young adults? So we--and, you know, we've been doing
8 this for 34 years. Some of these relationships that
9 we have with employers go back decades. We have a--a
10 very particular niche within corporate neighborhood
11 (sic) operations companies, right, and Chairman
12 Eugene, you know a little bit about program model.
13 It's very business skills oriented. It focuses on
14 three principles, confidence, discipline and
15 professionalism. We structure our day, our workforce
16 training day as a corporate work environment. So we
17 have a dress code. We have standards--high standards.
18 We have performance evaluations, but we place these
19 kids in a lot of different places: In banks usually
20 in the retail banking site; mail room operations
21 companies that work with large Fortune 500 companies
22 based in Manhattan. Brooklyn District Attorney's
23 Office historically has hired a lot of our kids as
24 file clerks, and then a lot of those kids move on and
25 up the ladder even going into careers in law

2 enforcement. We're working with King Teller Services
3 to place kids as 311 operators. So this is all part
4 of the mix for us. Like I said, some of these
5 relationships go back decades, and we also work with
6 the small businesses in the communities that we
7 service. So, one of our strongest employers in
8 Sunset Park is Julian Heard (sp?) and Associates,
9 which does bio-suppression systems. So they do the
10 sprinkler systems. They hire our kids as customer
11 service representatives. Many times the language
12 skills that our young adults are bringing to the
13 table are actually one of their biggest assets
14 because they're bilingual. I link was Spanish,
15 bilingual Chinese and the like. So we—we sort of
16 package it all, and focus on the strengths of these
17 young adults. But after they get placed, yes we're
18 required to do a year follow up. But we actually
19 have something called the State at Work Program. So
20 once a month the young adults can come back the same
21 night every month, come back to the—to the OBT site,
22 and they get \$20 for showing up, and slice of pizza,
23 and we do group counseling around transition issues
24 that they may be facing on the job. You know, these
25 are some things that they might not have had to deal

2 with in the past. You know, how are they dealing
3 with difficult co-workers? How are they dealing with
4 their supervisor, or how do they ask for a raise?
5 You know, these are—these are sort of questions that—
6 that they've never really experienced. So they can
7 come back to OBT for the Stat at Work program, and we
8 can counsel them, continue to counsel them, and I
9 have to tell you we have people for five years, you
10 know, and then coming back to the Stay at Work
11 Program. They had actually taken on a mentor role
12 for the ones that are coming back like five years
13 late, but they could also come back for continuing
14 services, college access programming, [coughing] re-
15 employment if they lose the job. So we like to say
16 that once you enroll in OBT, we're with—we're with
17 you for the rest of your life if you want us to be
18 there because we are not going away. So these young
19 adults really do know that they have a home to come
20 back to especially when they're facing some
21 challenges in the workplace, or they're looking to go
22 in their careers and head to college.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. Thank you much
24 sir. [coughs] Excuse me. Ms. Burb-Sharps, thank
25 you also for your testimony. In your testimony you—

2 you were—you mentioned some type of disparities,
3 disparities and you mention also that disconnected
4 youth, you know, come from disconnected families and
5 disconnected communities. I agree with you know.
6 Sometimes because I think first he was author, I
7 think he was Pascal Aruso (sp?) said that the man or
8 human being, you know, is the product of the society,
9 the environment. I agree with you. So, what do you
10 think because I—I believe in prevention. I believe
11 in, you know, trying to do something before the
12 thing, you know, the tragedy occurs. So in terms of
13 disparity, and also the issues that the disconnected
14 youth are facing in their families, in their
15 communities, what do you think that we should do as a
16 society, as a city to actualize those issues? I know
17 there are so many. It won't be about to give an
18 answer for all of them, but I just want to know what
19 would be your advice? What do you think that we as a
20 city we can do to at least to decrease the number of
21 disconnected youth to—to have a better result?

22 SARA BURB-SHARPS: Thank you. I think the
23 good news is that a lot of the things that rigorous
24 research shows work are being undertaken in the city,
25 but in many cases they're just starting or they're

2 being undertaken at scale that's too little. Pre-K,
3 Universal Pre-K is said to be one of the biggest
4 investments you can make for kids making it through
5 college and---and getting, and having success in
6 young adulthood. So Universal Pre-K is one really
7 important program. I was thrilled when that became,
8 you know, a big priority of this administration. The
9 second thing is to really target those schools with
10 high drop-out rates, and I mean the DOE is doing that
11 to a certain extent but it's still true that there
12 are schools in the city with drop-out rates of two
13 percent, and there are schools in the city with drop-
14 out rates of 50%. So that's an areas where there's
15 still a lot more—a lot more that can be done. I
16 think that there is increasing understanding of what
17 the warning drop-out-drop-out warning signs are and
18 it means, you know, the kind of, you know, serious
19 wrap-around efforts to—to focus on those schools
20 where—where the drop-out rates are high, and those
21 community districts and those neighborhoods where
22 kids in particular are going to high schools with
23 high drop-out rates. So, that's a second area, you
24 know, reducing drop-out, and then a third area is
25 really it has to do with guidance counselors, and

2 there is some effort to step up the ratio of guidance
3 counselors to kids, but I mean what has been
4 happening until recently is that guidance counselors
5 were across the board telling every kid they should
6 be aspiring to a four-year college. And that's
7 [coughing] it's true that every high school kid in
8 New York City needs something beyond high school to
9 be able to, you know, compete in today's economy.
10 But it doesn't necessarily have to be a four-year
11 college degree, and a four-year college degree is not
12 necessarily the best choice for every kids.
13 Increasingly, guidance counselors are offering other
14 options that have big need, that have a pathway to
15 alternative, you know, opportunities, vocational and
16 technical education, apprenticeships, et cetera. But
17 their scope for a real expansion in those kind of
18 programs in—in New York City it's something pretty
19 recent. You know, we sort of abandoned
20 apprenticeship, the idea of apprenticeships and—and
21 industry collaboration many years ago for all kinds
22 of reasons, both financial and ideological. I think
23 people are realizing now it doesn't have to be seen
24 as sort of the second best. You know, sort of the—
25 the option for those who can't, you know, do the

2 other thing, and those-- There is real scope, I
3 think, for--for improving apprenticeships,
4 apprenticeship opportunities for kids. And then I
5 would say that all of the things that the city is
6 doing to try to reduce poverty in really low-income
7 neighborhoods are--are directly, you know, going to
8 have an impact on--on reducing youth disconnection,
9 but, of course, those programs are--are expensive.
10 They take a long time. They require a sustained
11 investment, you know, over multiple years.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
13 With respect to data--you manage with the data, or
14 processing, it seems that there is really some type
15 of--I don't know if it's difficulties or a challenge,
16 because when we ask some civil organizations even the
17 very important organizations, institutions, you know,
18 about the data, you know, can they provide us with
19 numbers? We have a survey that could educate that
20 they succeed or they don't succeed. It has been a
21 very difficult program to provide that. What would
22 be your advice on that? Should we work hard to make
23 sure that we--they have a stronger way to preserve
24 data, and to--to deal with the numbers, or--because
25 it's--it's not--I don't think that this is correct for

2 an organization to come and say, you know, I'm
3 serving 2,000, 3,000 young people or disconnected
4 youth, and our citizens participate. But when you
5 ask, you know, how many female and male, how many are
6 disconnected, how many others, and they cannot
7 provide that. That's—I think we—this is—that should
8 be part of the program or the services to know
9 exactly, you know, how many people? Who—who is in
10 prison? Who—who we are serving? So, how do you
11 think that we can address this issue?

12 SARA BURB-SHARPS: So I mean just—just to
13 start out by saying there's kind of two data issues.
14 You know, one issue is really measuring who they are,
15 where they live, what are the challenges they face,
16 and the other is what programs are serving who and
17 how much it's costing. I am less qualified to talk
18 about that than these people here who are doing
19 these, and I can guarantee you that in order to
20 continue to get the grants that they're getting, they
21 are keeping track, you know, of who they're serving,
22 of what their profile is, of how much it costs, et
23 cetera. What I have experienced in other cities—
24 we've been doing some work with disconnection in
25 L.A., in Phoenix a little bit, is that what sometimes

2 is missing is leadership to say these are the
3 definitions that we're looking at. This is the
4 population we want you to tell us about. These are
5 how we want you to calculate sort of pure-per
6 participant cost, and with that with some
7 standardization of definitions, these organizations
8 probably have the information that they would need to
9 contribute to that, and I do agree that you should be
10 able, the City Council should be able to ask those
11 questions, and should be able to get a pretty clear
12 answers. Because we know how many kids there are.
13 We know where they live. We know what their racial
14 and ethnic, what-what race and ethnicity there. So,
15 the demand, the need, you know, can-can be pretty
16 clear. It hasn't been collected systematically in
17 New York City, and we-I think out of participating in
18 this hearing, we're going to try to do a fact sheet
19 for New York City like we've done in other cities
20 just so-so to really have the data clear that clearly
21 defines. And also that you can sort of see what's
22 the, you know, who's the group that you're dealing
23 with, and-and where are they? But I think in terms
24 of the-you know, all of the excellent-many, many
25 excellent programs that are going on, it is true it

2 would be great to have a more centralized set of
3 information about, you know, how many kids are being
4 served. And even, you know, if there's overlap of
5 kids who are being served by multiple programs, and
6 that is possible to do, but it takes leadership. It
7 takes, you know, setting the definitions in a
8 standardized way, and then it would it would take
9 requiring-acquiring the information. But I'm sure
10 that these guys can also speak to, you know, sort of
11 how they could most effectively contribute to some-to
12 some kind of system like that. But I mean it was
13 clear to me from the conversation this morning that
14 there is really a need, and I know that sharing data
15 across agencies is very challenging as well. But
16 there's really a need to have a quicker answer to-to
17 your questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
19 Thank you to each one and all of you for your
20 participation and your testimony, and the wonderful
21 job that you are doing on behalf of our young people.
22 Thank you. The next panel, please. We want to call
23 Andrea [pause] Demueller (sp?), Jessie Layman or
24 Laymon. Jessie from New York Employment, and Andrea
25 from the Door. (sic) Thank you, and Chris-Christian

2 Gonzalez Rivega-Rivera from Center for Urban Future,
3 Abana Fletcher, Adrea Bowen, United Liberal Houses.

4 [background comments, pause] Debbie Collins from
5 Children's Village. [background comments, pause]

6 Thank you very much. About for the sake of time, we
7 are going to ask you to limit your statements to
8 about two minutes. Alright? Thank you so very much.
9 You may start, please.

10 FEMALE SPEAKER: [off mic]

11 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: If you could just
12 please turn on your mic.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

14 ANDREA VAGHY BENYOLA: Okay. Sorry about
15 that. We are a--do you want me to start over or--?
16 Okay, good afternoon and thank you for the
17 opportunity to testify on Intro 708 and 709. I am
18 Andrea Vaghy Benyola, Managing Director of Career and
19 Education Services at the Door. We are a four-year
20 old Youth Development organization that serves 10,000
21 young people a year from--throughout New York City,
22 many of whom are facing homelessness, unemployment,
23 poverty and deportation. We provide a range of
24 services from health education and mental health
25 services, education and career services, creative

2 arts, food and nutrition, legal and immigration
3 services, and supportive housing. In today's
4 testimony we hope to contribute to the dialogue
5 regarding methods for best supporting disconnected
6 youth in New York City. We applaud the effort of the
7 Council to create a disconnected youth taskforce. We
8 hope that the task force has a very clear directive
9 regarding what it hopes to accomplish during its
10 existence. The Door serves, as I mentioned, serves
11 nearly 10,000 young people each year. About 80% of
12 Door members are disconnected youth many of whom are
13 struggling with housing, homelessness, lacking a High
14 School Equivalency, unemployed. In our Career and
15 Education programs, we serve about 1,200 of those
16 8,000 young people a year who are disconnected,
17 receive career and education services. We are
18 strongly advocating that the newly formed
19 disconnected youth task force include representatives
20 who are able to represent and speak to the broad
21 spectrum of needs of disconnected youth. We would
22 like to recommend that the task force include
23 representatives from the Human Resource
24 Administration to represent issues on public
25 assistance, homelessness and HIV-AIDS as they relate

2 to disconnected youth as well as the representatives
3 from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to
4 address issues related to health and mental health as
5 they impact disconnected youth. We also are strongly
6 advocating for a selection of non-profit appointees
7 such as the Door, who have a demonstrated track
8 record of achieving positive outcomes for
9 disconnected youth. As these individuals will best
10 be able to contribute to discussions of feasibility,
11 best practice and scale. In regards to Intro 709,
12 [bell] create—Okay, the Door commends the Council's
13 efforts to explore ways to better address the needs
14 of disconnected youth although we do not support this
15 effort. We—we feel like it is very similar to what's
16 already being provided through the Workforce 1 Career
17 Serve—Service Centers, which we feel right now are
18 not effectively addressing the needs of disconnected
19 youth. We are also concerned given that most of the
20 youth funding resides with DYCD that this will
21 further fragment the system for disconnected youth
22 and make it more difficult for them to find the
23 correct career and education pathways. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.

25 So at this time we are going to go on time. I'm

2 sorry about it because we still have, you know, more
3 speakers. Thank you.

4 JESSIE LAYMON: Alright, it's about the
5 clock. My name is Jessie Laymon. I'm the Director
6 of Policy for the New York City Employment and
7 Training Coalition. The Coalition is the umbrella
8 organization for the roughly 170 providers in New
9 York City, community based organizations, educational
10 institutions, labor unions and others to provide
11 various different sorts of job training and skills
12 development and employment services for New Yorkers.
13 Collectively, those 170 organization serve
14 approximately 800,000 New Yorkers a year, and my
15 testimony today really is in large part just to echo
16 that—that of our members who have also testified here
17 today. I think we've heard from Phipps, from
18 Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, from the Door,
19 and I think United Neighborhood Houses is here as
20 well. There are probably other of our members that
21 will testify, and we concur and support much of their
22 testimony, and really all of it. I'll try to quickly
23 hit a couple of points, and then make a couple of
24 observations about discussion that's already
25 happened. We also agree that Intro 708 is a step

2 forward, and a good idea. There should be a task
3 force focused on youth career development. I wanted
4 to just highlight that that should certainly include
5 voices of providers and clients, young people in
6 organizations OBT and the Door that serve them, and
7 also I don't think that Intro 708 specifically
8 mentioned CUNY, but CUNY should have a voice in-in
9 this task force as well. We also agree regarding
10 Intro 709 that as written now, we don't see it as a
11 step forward as a-a new entity that would serve a
12 non-duplicative role within-within the already
13 existing Workforce Development system of New York.
14 There are already so many entities that provide
15 different-both leadership and direct service roles
16 from city agencies. We're not sure that creating a
17 new division is-is the way to go, but we're certainly
18 open minded about whether this bill in the future
19 through refinement could be-could be something
20 positive. [bell] I'll just quickly make a couple
21 other observations that came up from previous
22 discussion. I just-if that's alright. I'll just-
23 I'll be real quick. Okay, I'll-I'll--

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Once again, one
25 again.

2 JESSIE LAYMAN: I'll come back to and
3 probably ask that. [bell]

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You'll be back when
5 I ask you a question, okay.

6 JESSIE LAYMAN: That's right, that's
7 right.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: That's right. Next
9 one.

10 CHRISTIAN GONZALEZ RIVERA: Okay. My
11 name is Christian Gonzalez Rivera, and I'm Senior
12 Researcher at the Center for an Urban Future. We're
13 a non-partisan public policy think tank based here in
14 Manhattan that publishes studies about how New York
15 could expand economic opportunity while expanding the
16 city's economy. For 20 years we have been writing
17 about and influencing workforce policy in New York
18 City, and in the states. So thank you for the
19 opportunity to testify, and thank you for holding
20 this hearing. So the Center for an Urban Future
21 supports the—the premise of Intro 708, which calls
22 for a task force of disconnected youth. And so I
23 want to share with the—with the Council this
24 testimony. A few issues that our researchers suggest
25 such a task force should look into and prioritize.

2 At the end of the previous mayoral administration we
3 published a study called Bridge of the Misconnect,
4 which outlined the ways in which the city's Workforce
5 Development system was failing to serve youth and
6 young adults and presented a series of
7 recommendations for what the de Blasio Administration
8 could do to serve them. And so we thank the de
9 Blasio Administration and also the Council for acting
10 on many of these recommendations including creating
11 the Center for Youth Employment within the Mayor's
12 Office of Workforce Development, expanding Ladders
13 for Leaders and the Young Adult and Internship
14 Program. Creating a separate track for youth who are
15 connected to HRA, and also starting the process of
16 revisiting SYEP. But there's still much more to be
17 done, and the first issue that we recommend the task
18 force investigate involves finding ways to create and
19 strengthen partnerships among providers of youth
20 workforce development services, and this goes to what
21 Mr. Peers was talking about earlier during his
22 testimony. While New York City has many good
23 organizations that work with youth, organizations can
24 only provide the services that they have available,
25 which may not be all the services that the young

2 person who is coming in may actually need. Yet it's
3 difficult for organizations to cooperate with one
4 another to serve individuals because fund
5 instructions only give credit to the organization
6 that generates a specific outcome. Not all the
7 organizations that may have helped get to that
8 outcome. I mean it's similar to what Mr. Peers had
9 said before. So we have a good model and we have a
10 good model here in New York in the Lower East Side
11 Employment Network lesson where six organizations
12 serve Lower East Side Youth, all share a common job
13 developer position that is supported through
14 philanthropic dollars, and this allows the
15 organizations to share clients. So the youth win
16 because they're able to enter any door of any of
17 these organizations, and receive the services of six
18 organizations. And the organizations win because all
19 of them get credit for the work that they do. The
20 second set of issues is around strengthening the
21 Department of Education's connection to the workforce
22 system. One of the ways that the DOE could be
23 brought into the field is by enlisting them to
24 connect to—connect disconnected youth to services.
25 And so for this model we can look across the—across

2 the country to L.A. Los Angeles has youth source
3 centers where counselors from the—from the Unified
4 School District there actually contact youth who have
5 dropped because since they have these lists and are
6 able to connect them directly to services. So this
7 is work that the DOE could be more involved in doing.
8 The DOE should also look into creating careers
9 exploration programs starting in middle school
10 because, you know, we have a system now where the—the
11 students are going from having the DOE serve them at
12 \$19,000 a head within the school going and they're
13 dropping out [bell] and going to a program where
14 they're being served with a fraction of that amount.
15 So the DOE should be more involved in that.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you. Thank
17 you very much. [background comments]

18 DAVID COLLINS: Thank you. Hi, my name
19 is David Collins. I'm an Assistant Vice President at
20 the Children's Village. We work with some of New York
21 City's most vulnerable children and families through
22 a wide range of programs including community
23 prevention, foster care, affordable housing and
24 mentoring. We also provide one of the nation's only
25 long-term privately funded after care programs for

2 teens leaving foster care, which can stay with youth
3 until they turn 25. I'm just going to share four
4 very brief recommendations with you. First, as
5 Measure of America said earlier, we must reckon with
6 the widespread disproportionality by race, and by
7 place. I'll just note that in 2012, they reported
8 that New York is actually the most disparate city of
9 all America's large cities when it comes to
10 disconnected youth in terms of neighborhood by
11 neighborhood, and as a child welfare Juvenile Justice
12 provider, these are the same neighborhoods that we
13 producing a lot of contact with ACS and other city
14 agencies. Second, as CUF noted in their report that
15 was just referenced, we also really need to increase
16 our focus on high need and vulnerable youth including
17 LGBTQ youth, immigrants, homeless youth, foster
18 children and others with complex needs or cross-
19 system involvement. This costs more and it requires
20 more coordination, but it also provides the greatest
21 opportunity for impact because these are the young
22 people who are most at risk. Third, we need to
23 accept that the path to success for disconnected
24 youth is usually neither short nor direct, and I'm
25 saying this not because we want to create permanent

2 entanglement in social services, but based on our
3 understanding of the normal developmental path of the
4 young adults. MDRC noted in 2013, the youth
5 disconnection is a dynamic phenomenon. Most of the
6 time young people actually make several attempts to
7 re-engage with the system. And finally, we recommend
8 that you focus on ease of access and coordination
9 among city agencies. We certainly need more
10 resources, but we also need to simplify the process
11 of accessing services for young people. Thanks very
12 much.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much
14 to each one and all of you. I'm not going to ask you
15 questions because we have another panel, but I think
16 that, you know, your testimonies represent a great
17 source of information and advice, and I have all of
18 them, and I guarantee you we're going to review them
19 and read them, and take into consideration a lot of
20 advice and recommendation that are, you know, in our
21 testimonies. Thank you so very much. Thank you for
22 the wonderful job that you're doing on behalf of the
23 young people, and we will get in touch with you.
24 Thank you very much. [pause] The next panel Clayton
25 Books-Brooks from Covenant Houses-House. Thank you.

2 Is it Marjorie Parker? [background comments, pause]
3 Job First NYC. Thank you. Veda-

4 VEDA: Oh, that's cool.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Is that Veda Bell?
6 Is it Vetazee? (sp?) Alright. Thank you very much.
7 You may start. Please state your name before you
8 start speaking.

9 MARJORIE PARKER: Good afternoon.
10 Marjorie Parker, Deputy Executive Director at Jobs
11 First NYC. Council Member Eugene, thank you for
12 convening such an important hearing, but today I'd
13 like to tell my team that real leadership is about
14 discipline, and I'm going to stick to exactly what I
15 wrote.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.

17 MARJORIE PARKER: Jobs First NYC--

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] But
19 inn two minutes.

20 MARJORIE PARKER: --is, yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

22 MARJORIE PARKER: Is leader and focuses
23 on the issues of juveniles who are out of work and
24 out of school or underemployed. For several years,
25 we have been documenting a number of out of school

2 and out of work juveniles in New York City. In fact,
3 we have identified 18 communities where those young
4 people reside, and we can share that data with you.
5 We support the convening of the task force. We think
6 it is important. We want to recommend that in
7 addition to convening the task force, that you
8 considering convening for the Council and the Mayor a
9 standing advisory board on this issues that will
10 continue to support you even after the--the--the focus
11 group is--is finished. We also recommend to some of
12 our colleagues that you should have CBOs and young
13 people on the Board, but we're also adding that you
14 should have employers, convene employers for their
15 input. They should have policies agencies like Jobs
16 First being a part of your focus group. We want to
17 talk more--a little bit more about the--regarding 709.
18 So we support 708. 709 we support the creation of
19 any workforce development division dedicated to
20 connecting more out of school and out of work young
21 adults training and employment. As a non-profit
22 agency focusing on this population, we can't just
23 have a passive no, say no. What we are concerned
24 about is that we want to make sure that it's
25 targeting other young job seekers who are not being

2 served under the current OSY structure. So we want
3 to—we want to broaden the pot. We want to reach more
4 people, and so we conditionally—conditionally support
5 Introduction 709, and we do that even though SBS says
6 no because we've been in the system long enough to
7 know that things change. So we've compiled a list of
8 questions here that we think are important for any
9 discussion and best to be raised with SBS. We heard
10 all the information [bell] given today, and we didn't
11 agree with some of the data share. And I just want to
12 quickly say two things. We urge the City to conduct
13 thorough review of the wide range of existing [bell]—

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Thank
15 you very much. We—we have your testimony. We will
16 go over it.

17 MARJORIE PARKER: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you so much.

19 With all—with all due respect--

20 MARJORIE PARKER: [interposing] Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --thank you so much.

22 MARJORIE PARKER: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Next speaker.

24 Covenant House. (sic) This is the next speaker,
25 please.

2 CLAYTON BROOKS: Good afternoon, Chairman
3 Eugene, Committee Council and everyone else. You
4 stuck it out. My name is Clayton Brooks. I'm the
5 Director of Advocacy at Covenant House New York.
6 We've spoken a fair amount today about youth
7 homelessness. We are one of those places that houses
8 homeless youth. So Covenant House is an
9 international agency. We have 30 locations in the
10 U.S., Canada and Latin America, but Covenant House
11 New York has been around since 1978, and over the
12 last year, we housed 1,744 unduplicated youth
13 throughout the course of the year. About every night
14 we house 300 young people in our facility, and so
15 these are the youth—Well first of all, they
16 absolutely fit the definition of disconnected youth
17 on just about every measure. But these are youth
18 that have been failed, to be blunt, by our city's
19 safety net. These are youth that have often accessed
20 services by any of the number of city agencies that
21 spoke earlier, but have for whatever reason been
22 failed by the systems. Many of our young are
23 products of the child welfare system. Many of our
24 young people are criminal justice involved. Many of
25 our young people are working towards resolving their

2 immigration status in this country. Many of our
3 young people were kicked out of their homes for being
4 LGBT. Many of our young people are products of—of
5 homes where their parents struggle with drug
6 addiction, domestic violence, and they are forced to
7 leave their homes. So these are exactly the type of
8 young people that we're talking about, and so because
9 of that, we would like to proposed two amendments to
10 Intro 708, and also two suggestions respectfully. So
11 these are—these are mentioned in the testimony on the
12 second page. The amendments are just a language
13 thing. We want to really highlight the—the—the
14 reality of homelessness in these conversations and in
15 this task force that you're proposing creating. And
16 so we propose just two language additions to
17 specifically reference [bell] housing and homeless.
18 Then we also would like to propose on the task for
19 that (1) homeless agency for youth be included.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

21 CLAYTON BROOKS: Yep.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.

23 CLAYTON BROOKS: I gave the testimony.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I got your testimony
25 and I think this is a very important part of it.

2 CLAYTON BROOKS: Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you so very
4 much on behalf of all the young people and their
5 parents in the great City of New York. Thank you for
6 the wonderful job you—that you are providing. You
7 are doing it on behalf of the young people, and like
8 a wonderful embrace. Thank you for that. Thank you
9 very much.

10 CLAYTON BROOKS: Thank you and happy
11 Thanksgiving.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: God bless you.
13 Thank you. And with this, the meeting is adjourned.
14 [gavel Thank you all. Thank you to all of you.
15 Thank you.

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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 20, 2016