

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

----- X

November 29, 2016
Start: 10:33 a.m.
Recess: 11:07 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:

VANESSA L. GIBSON
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Steven Matteo
Vincent J. Gentile
James Vacca
Robert Cornegy, Jr.
Chaim Deutsch
Rafael Espinal, Jr.
Laurie Cumbo
Julissa Ferreras-Copeland
Jumaane D. Williams
Rory I. Lancman
Ritchie J. Torres

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

CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Good morning, colleagues. I am Council Member Vanessa Gibson of the 16th District of the Bronx, and I'm proud to serve as Chair of the Committee on Public Safety. I welcome all of you here this morning for today's Committee vote on a very important piece of legislation. Today we are voting on Proposed Intro 1147A relating to establishing an Office of Crime Victim Services. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this legislation and want to recognize our prime and lead sponsor Council Member Laurie Cumbo and our Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, and I want to thank all of the fellow co-sponsors who've joined on this bill. I'd also like to say that we are very excited about this bill because earlier this year during the speaker's State of the City speech she outlined a very robust Criminal Justice agenda that included the creation of the Office of Crime Victim Services. While there are several offices currently that serve crime victims through various agencies such as the NYPD, the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic violence and other

1
2 not-for-profit agencies. There is not one
3 centralized location that a victim can turn to.

4 **[AUDIO OVERLAP]**

5 This new office will coordinate the service
6 providers including City agencies to insure that
7 crime victims are being served. These providers will
8 include organizations that provide social services to
9 crime victims such as emergency and transitional
10 shelter, language services and trauma services. In
11 addition, the Office will publish an annual update of
12 a directory of all service providers in the City by
13 the type, the location of services, the hours of
14 operation and services that are provided. Finally,
15 this Office would prepare an annual report that would
16 include a needs assessment of where there should be
17 an increased coordination for victims of crime.

18 Through this legislation, we will continue to support
19 our communities with all the tools that are available

20 to us. I thank all of my colleagues for being here
21 and just certainly want to say that I applaud the
22 efforts of our Speaker and Council Member Cumbo.

23 Several months ago we heard this Bill on our agenda
24 and we had a lot of support from an array of service
25 providers such as Safe Horizon and, you know, the

1 Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, Sanctuary
2 for Families, many of our providers that serve
3 victims of domestic violence, but we recognize that
4 there are many New Yorkers that are victims of crime
5 sadly every day, and we want to make sure that
6 there's a coordinated and an integrated effort that
7 provides an array of services. Many of us work with
8 families that are impacted by gun violence and we
9 know that families, parents, siblings are all
10 affected deeply by the endless cycle of gun violence,
11 and so when you look at victim services, it is
12 obviously emergency housing, social and human
13 services, access to health care, and especially for
14 me, making sure that their public safety is
15 maintained. So, I thank all of my colleagues for
16 their support of this Bill and I encourage all of you
17 to vote in favor of this legislation on our agenda
18 today. I'd also like to recognize and thank the
19 staff for putting this hearing, this vote together,
20 our Committee Counsel, Deepa Ambikar, Legislative
21 Counsel, Beth Golub [sp?], our Policy Analyst, Casey
22 Addison, and our Financial Analyst, Steve Riester
23 [sp?], and I also want to thank our Finance Director,
24 Latonya McKinney. I'd also like to recognize that
25

1
2 we've been joined by our Minority Leader, Council
3 Member Steve Matteo, Council Member Vincent Gentile,
4 James Vacca, Robert Cornegy, Chaim Deutsch, Rafael
5 Espinal, and we also have one of our sponsors, the
6 prime sponsor that introduced Intro 1147A, and I'd
7 like to ask her to say a few words in support of this
8 legislation, Council Member Laurie Cumbo.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you Chair
10 Gibson. Today is certainly "her" historical [sic] and I
11 want to thank all of my colleagues for being there.
12 I want to thank the Public Safety Committee for all
13 of their work in making today possible. This is a
14 really very important piece of legislation, because
15 we recognize that while there are several City
16 agencies and not-for-profits that provide service,
17 there is no centralized point of contact where a
18 victim can go to be connected with the various
19 services available in the City. Today, that will
20 change, and as we've seen while so many forms of
21 crime are down in New York City, unfortunately crime
22 as it pertains to issues around sexual assault,
23 attacks against women have continued to escalate and
24 rise in the City of New York. We have to continue to
25 do all that we can and to work with all the mayoral

1 agencies to make sure that we end violence against
2 women, that we make sure that we provide proper and
3 appropriate services should a crime happen and as
4 well as we've seen in the Presidential election,
5 there has been a normalizing of sexual assault and
6 crime against women. It's so important that we
7 continue to raise and amplify our voices whenever we
8 have an opportunity to do so to end the cycle of
9 crime that continues to impact women. So this is an
10 important piece of legislation. I want to thank
11 Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, who in her State of
12 the City spoke very passionately about the creation
13 of this office and collectively together along with
14 Chair Gibson and the entire members of the Public
15 Safety Committee as well as the Women's Issues
16 Committee have worked very hard to bring this piece
17 of legislation to fruition. We hope that it will
18 impact and it will help so many that have become
19 victims to actually utilize that experience to become
20 survivors and also to help so many. Thank you again,
21 Chair Gibson, for all of your support and I'll now
22 turn it back to her.

24 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Thank you very much
25 Council Member Cumbo, and thank you for your

1 leadership and your partnership in working extremely
2 hard to get this bill to the floor to the Committee
3 so that we can take a vote. Do any of our colleagues
4 have any questions on the bill before we begin the
5 vote? Okay, seeing none. I will ask our Committee
6 Clerk, William Martin, to call the roll.

7
8 WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you. Good
9 morning. Roll, Committee on Public Safety roll call
10 vote of Introduction 1147A. Chair Gibson?

11 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: I proudly vote aye.

12 WILLIAM MARTIN: Gentile?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: May I explain my
14 vote?

15 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Okay, thank you.
17 I want to thank Council Member Cumbo, because I often
18 said when I was in the Special Victims Bureau that
19 not only did I have a J.D. but I probably qualified
20 for an M.S.W. because of all the social services that
21 were needed for the victims in the Special Victims
22 Unit and particularly those with domestic violence,
23 those who are victims of sexual abuse, and it became
24 the job of the Assistant District Attorney to try to
25 set up the types of services that you're proposing

1
2 now come together in an Office of Victims Services,
3 and while I was more than willing to do so, I always
4 thought there should be some coordination for those
5 services. That's what this bill does, and so I thank
6 you for it, and I proudly, proudly vote aye on it.

7 WILLIAM MARTIN: Vacca?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Like to explain my
9 vote.

10 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I would like first
12 to be added as a co-sponsor of the bill. I think
13 it's fantastic. When I was a district manager of a
14 Community Board and now as a Councilperson, I can't
15 begin to tell you how many times people who are
16 victims of crime come to my office and they don't
17 know where to go, and they don't know what services
18 are available, and many times these are senior
19 citizens who are the victims of scams. Many times
20 these are people who are attacked on a bus. The
21 gambit of crime victims in our City and the fact that
22 they have not had a voice for so long makes this
23 legislation essential. Hopefully, this will serve as
24 a central clearing house for information and
25 coordination, because we have a lot of people out

1
2 there who want to help, who do what they can, but
3 they're not totally aware of every nuanced service
4 that's available to crime victims. We do our best as
5 elected officials, of course, and the Community
6 Boards I'm sure do and so many of the non-profits,
7 but here we're giving voice to a situation that has
8 long not been addressed. So I'm proud to vote aye.

9 WILLIAM MARTIN: Cornegy?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN: Deutsch?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yes, I'd like to
13 congratulate my rock star colleague, the honorable
14 Laurie Angela Cumbo, on this bill and this bill will
15 protect all New Yorkers. So thank you for this
16 amazing bill. Thank you.

17 WILLIAM MARTIN: Espinal?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: A big
19 congratulations to my colleague Laurie Cumbo, I vote
20 aye.

21 WILLIAM MARTIN: Matteo?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

23 WILLIAM MARTIN: By vote of 7 in the
24 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
25 Introduction 1147A has been adopted by the Committee.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Thank you very much,
3 and thank you colleagues. Thank you Council Member
4 Cumbo, and thank you to our speaker. We're going to
5 keep the roll open to allow other members of the
6 Committee to join us, and I will also just add as we
7 close that in your Committee report, just so my
8 colleagues are aware, the NYPD is launching a three-
9 year program to create a crime victim advocate
10 program in each of our police precincts, and I'm very
11 proud to say that the contract was awarded to Safe
12 Horizon, and they're going to have staff in every
13 precinct throughout the City, all 77 precincts and
14 PSA's to provide an array of services working in
15 conjunction with the NYPD. So thank you, Safe
16 Horizon, and thank you to all of my colleagues who
17 have joined us today. Thank you.

18 WILLIAM MARTIN: Continuation roll call,
19 Committee on Public Safety. Council Member Williams.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I vote aye.

21 WILLIAM MARTIN: Final roll Committee on
22 Public Safety. Introduction 1147A has been adopted
23 by a vote of 8 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative
24 and no abstentions.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

12

CHAIRPERSON GIBSON: Thank you very much all of my colleagues who were here that voted in the affirmative on Intro 1147A. I'd also like to acknowledge for the purpose of calling into the record, we've received testimony of Michael Pollenberg, Vice President of Government Affairs at Safe Horizon, in support of Intro 1147A on today's agenda. This Committee hearing of the Committee on Public Safety is hereby adjourned.

[gavel]

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 15, 2016