

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE OF EDUCATION

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April 24, 2017
Start: 10:37 a.m.
Recess: 11:12 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: DANNY DROMM
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Vincent J. Gentile
Daniel R. Garodnick
Margaret S. Chin
Stephen T. Levin
Deborah L. Rose
Ben Kallos
Andy L. King
Inez D. Barron
Chaim M. Deutsch
Mark Levine
Alan N. Maisel
Antonio Reynoso
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Helen K. Rosenthal
Mark Treyger
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.

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

2 [sound check, pause] [background
3 comments] [gavel]

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good morning. Today
5 the Education Committee will vote on Proposed Intro
6 1254-A, sponsored by Council Member Treyger whom I'd
7 like to thank for sponsoring this legislation at the
8 request of the Brooklyn Borough President. Proposed
9 Intro No. 12554-A would expand upon legislation that
10 we passed in 2013. That bill was sponsored by
11 Council Member King, requires the Department of
12 Education to distribute information on college
13 savings plans and other information about tuition and
14 financial aid to every student upon entering into
15 kindergarten grade 6 and grade 9 and to every student
16 who enters this school as a new student. The
17 proposed bill would expand the distribution of a
18 college savings plan materials by DOE to include pre-
19 kindergarten students. The bill would also require
20 the DOE to include additional information in the
21 materials about other resources available to assist
22 students and families with financial planning for
23 post-secondary education. Proposed intro No. 1254-A
24 would also require the Department of Health and
25 Mental Hygiene, DOHMH, to send information on college

2 savings plans to parents or guardians within three
3 months after a child is born. The bill would require
4 both the DOE and DOHMH to make the materials
5 available in multiple languages. The earlier
6 families start saving for post-secondary education,
7 the better the outcomes for their children. As
8 college costs continue to rise, and even with the
9 availability of financial aid, related costs for room
10 and board, books, computers and other materials can
11 become an obstacle to graduating. This bill will
12 help families plan so that post-secondary education
13 can be an achievable goal for all—all students
14 regardless of the language they or their parents
15 speak or their socio-economic background. Let me
16 also introduce all the council members who have
17 joined, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Council
18 Member Chaim Deutsch, Council Member Debbie Rose,
19 Council Member Margaret Chin, Council Member Inez
20 Barron, Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Council
21 Member Mark Treyger, Council Member Ben Kallos,
22 Council Member Alan Maisel, and Council Member Mark
23 Levine, and with that, I am going to turn the floor
24 over to my colleague Council Member Mark Treyger for
25 his remarks regarding Proposed Intro 1254-A.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Good morning and
3 thank you to Chair Dromm and my colleagues for
4 holding this vote today on Intro 1254-A a bill I
5 introduced in partnership with Brooklyn Borough
6 President Eric Adams. This legislation is designed
7 to help new parents save for their child's post-
8 secondary education by raising awareness of New
9 York's 529 College Saving Program and other college
10 saving plans and financial literacy resources. As
11 you may know, the 529 College Savings Program is a
12 flexible investment tool that assists parents in
13 saving for the child's post-secondary education
14 whether their children attend a four-year college, a
15 two-year college, a trade school or any other post-
16 graduate degree. This program offers participants an
17 annual \$10,000 deduction withdrawals from which can
18 be used for tuition, books, supplies, electronics or
19 room and board. These withdrawals are tax free, and
20 the program can provide significant assistance for
21 parents who may otherwise struggle to pay for the
22 rising costs of post-secondary education. Many
23 students already receive college savings plan
24 materials in school as a result of great legislation
25 previously introduced by our college Council Member

2 Andy King. Intro 1254-A would expand this
3 distribution of information on college savings plans
4 to include pre-kindergarten students, and add
5 additional information on the costs and scholarships
6 available for our CUNY and SUNY schools as well as
7 other financial planning resources. In addition,
8 this legislation would require the Department of
9 Health and Mental Hygiene to provide substantially
10 similar information to new parents within three
11 months of their child's birth. The bill also
12 contains language access provisions to ensure that
13 all parents are able to receive this important
14 information that will help them plan for their
15 children's futures. As a former educator, I believe
16 strongly that every child deserves the opportunity to
17 pursue some sort of post-secondary educational
18 avenue. For young people looking to forge their own
19 career paths to find high paying jobs with career
20 mobility, it has never been more important to possess
21 more than just a high school diploma. Yet, such
22 educational opportunities have never been more
23 expensive than they are today. That is why it is
24 imperative for parents to learn as early as possible
25 about every potential opportunity they and their

2 children will have to receive assistances with the
3 prohibitive costs of college or other post-secondary
4 programs. The earlier parents can begin saving for
5 their child's post-secondary education, the likelier
6 their children are to receive—to receive one.

7 Compound interest on college savings plan accounts
8 means that the earlier parents and relatives begin
9 saving for a child's future, the greater the return.

10 This bill is based on a relatively simple premise
11 that every parent wants to provide their child with
12 every possible opportunity to live the—their best
13 life. Whether a child dreams of a four-year liberal
14 arts degree, cosmetology school, engineering school
15 or vocational education and information technology,
16 the materials that Intro 1254-A mandates will equip
17 parents with the information the plan and provide for
18 the post-secondary education that they and their
19 child choose. Again, I'd like to thank Brooklyn
20 Borough President Eric Adams for his partnership on
21 this legislation as well as his staff Ryan Lynch and
22 Sandra Chapman for their work. I'd like to thank
23 Council Member Andy King for leading the way on this
24 issue last term. I want to give a big thanks to our
25 Chairman Danny Dromm and the Education Committee

2 staff for prioritizing this important issue. I'd
3 like to thank the Speaker, Speaker Melissa Mark-
4 Viverito, Ramon Martine, Laura Popa, Rob Newman, Matt
5 Gewolb, Gary Altman and Elizabeth from the Council's
6 staff who have been helpful. I'd like to thank Asia
7 Schaumburg (sp?), Smita Dishmukh, and Sylvester
8 Yavana for their work in crafting and refining of
9 this bill. I'd like to thank the Mayor, John Polupo,
10 Rick Rodriguez and Charlie Arnok (sp?) for their
11 willingness to find compromise and creative solutions
12 to ensure that more parents are receiving this
13 information. I'd like thank also Anna Scafe, my
14 Deputy Chief of Staff for steering this bill from an
15 idea to its current version and lastly and not least-
16 last, but not least, I'd like to thank the advocates
17 for their valuable feedback and insight, and I
18 respectfully ask my colleagues to vote yes on Intro
19 1254-A. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for your
20 time.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much,
22 and congratulations on this piece of legislation.
23 I'm now going to ask our esteemed clerk, Matt
24 DiStefano to please call the vote.

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2 CLERK: Committee Clerk Matthew DiStefano
3 Committee on Education. Roll call on Intro No. 1254-
4 A. Chair Dromm.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I vote aye.

6 CLERK: Rodriguez.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye and I
8 would like to add my name on this bill.

9 CLERK: Chin.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [off mic] Aye.

11 CLERK: Rose.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye and request
13 that my name be added to the sponsorship.

14 CLERK: Barron.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye and
16 also request that my name be added as a sponsor of
17 this very significant education. Thank you.

18 CLERK: Deutsch.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye.

20 CLERK: Kallos.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

22 CLERK: Levine.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: I also will be
24 voting aye, and would like to ask that I be added as

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2 co-sponsor and congratulations Council Member Treyger
3 on your great bill.

4 CLERK: Maisel.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

6 CLERK: Rosenthal.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Aye and I'd
8 like to also add my name to this important piece of
9 legislation, and congratulations to Council Member
10 Treyger.

11 CLERK: Treyger.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you to all
13 my colleagues and the Chair. I vote aye.

14 CLERK: By a vote of 11 in-in the
15 affirmative 0 in the negative and no abstentions, the
16 item has been adopted.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very
18 much and I'd like to keep the vote open for about a
19 half hour or so that we can accommodate those who are
20 other-at other hearings, and I've been walking back
21 and fort to the other room as well for a hearing in
22 the Woman's Committee. So I want to thank everybody
23 for coming and we'll hold that vote open for another
24 half hour. [background comments] Yes and if
25 everybody who is on the Transportation Committee can

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2 go across the street to vote, we would very much
3 appreciate it [laughs] even the chair. [pause]
4 [background comments]

5 CLERK: Con-continuation of roll call on
6 Intro 1254-A, Committee on Education, Council Member
7 Reynoso.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I vote aye on
9 all.

10 CLERK: The vote now stands--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: [interposing]
12 Thank your very much, and congratulations to Council
13 Member Mark Treyger.

14 CLERK: Okay, the-the vote now stands at
15 12 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no
16 abstentions. [pause]

17 CLERK: Continuation of roll call, Intro
18 1254-A, Committee on Education. Council Member
19 Salamanca.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Aye on all.

21 CLERK: Thank you. [background comments,
22 pause]

23 CLERK: Committee on Education
24 continuation of Roll call on Intro 1254-A, Council
25 Member Levin.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye on all.

3 CLERK: The vote now stands at 14 in the
4 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

5 [pause]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Oh, I'm sorry.
7 Can I do it again? Can I also request to be signed
8 on as a co-sponsor of Intro No. 1254-A, please?

9 Thank you. [pause] [background comments]

10 CLERK: Committee—Committee on Education
11 continuation of roll call on Intro 1254-A, Council
12 Member Garodnick.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you very
14 much. I vote aye, and with that this committee is
15 adjourned. Thank you. [gavel]

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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 April 2, 2017