

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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June 6, 2017
Start: 12:54 p.m.
Recess: 1:19 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E:

JULISSA FERRERAS-COPELAND
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Ydanis A. Rodriguez
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Corey D. Johnson
Mark Levine
I. Daneek Miller
Helen K. Rosenthal
Steven Matteo
Ritchie J. Torres

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

TRANSCRIPTION NOTE: Spanish [00:18:19]

Council Member Gibson.

[sound check]

[pause]

[background comment]

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Good

afternoon and welcome to today's Finance Committee

meeting. My name is Julissa Ferreras-Copeland; I'm

the chair of the Committee. I want to begin by

welcoming my colleagues that have joined us this

afternoon -- Council Members Cumbo, Matteo,

Rodriguez, Miller, Cornegy, Levine, and Majority

Leader Van Bramer. Today the Finance Committee will

take the necessary actions to allow the City Council

to adopt the Fiscal 2018 Budget which totals

approximately \$85.2 billion. The Committee will vote

on 18 budget-related items, along with three land use

items.

Before we begin, there are many people to

thank who helped take us to today's budget adoption,

so please be patient.

Today is a bittersweet day for me; as

this will be my final budget as a member of the

Council. The opportunity to serve my district here

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2 has been a true privilege; my experience has only
3 been enhanced by the remarkable individuals that I've
4 been able to work alongside these past few years.

5 First and foremost, our Speaker... shhhhh...
6 our Speaker, Melissa Mark-Viverito; the Speaker has
7 been a tireless advocate for the people of the City
8 and a fearless leader for the members of this
9 Council. Throughout the past four budget cycles she
10 has listened to the concerns and priorities of each
11 of us and our constituents and has approached budget
12 negotiations with clear purpose of ensuring that the
13 Council's vision for the City is reflected in each
14 budget. Because of her leadership more young people
15 than ever before can get summer and year-round jobs,
16 more immigrants have access to education, health, and
17 legal services, more police officers keep our city
18 safe, and more students have access to affordable,
19 healthy school meals. This year's budget delivers
20 even more victories for New Yorkers and I believe the
21 Speaker can be proud of what she has delivered in her
22 final budget.

23 I also want to thank the Speaker's Chief
24 of Staff, Ramon Martinez [cheer] for all of his work
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1
2 on behalf of this institution and for all of us as
3 members.

4 Thank you to my fellow Finance Committee
5 members for their partnership over the last three
6 years and a half; they are: the Majority Leader Van
7 Bramer, Minority Leader Steve Matteo, the Council
8 Members Corey Johnson, Helen Rosenthal, I. Daneek
9 Miller, Laurie Cumbo, Mark Levine, Robert Cornegy,
10 Vanessa Gibson, and Ydanis Rodriguez.

11 This year the Committee heard nearly 100
12 hours of testimony from agency heads about their
13 operations and goals for the upcoming fiscal year and
14 questioned each of them thoroughly. We also heard
15 the vital testimony of our public. Throughout this
16 process we shared the information we obtained from
17 these hearings with our colleagues, which helped
18 inform the creation of a budget that reflects the
19 Council's priorities. Thanks to each of you for
20 being my partner throughout these past four budgets
21 and I will miss working with each and every one of
22 you.

23 And of course, I must express my enormous
24 gratitude to our dedicated and talented Finance
25 staff. This begins with Latonia McKinney, our

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2 amazing Finance Director. One of the things that I'm
3 most proud of about my tenure as Finance Chair is
4 that for the first time the Council was represented
5 by three women in the City's budget process and
6 negotiations. [cheer] Latonia, you have been a
7 fantastic leader, negotiator, advocate, friend, and
8 just a fierce woman overall. Thank you. [cheers,
9 clapping] All... all 51 of us know that none of the
10 budget successes we have achieve would have been
11 possible without the committed effort that you and
12 your staff have put; it has been a pleasure working
13 with you.

14 I also want to thank the staff of the
15 Finance Division individually, each of you has played
16 an essential role in bringing us to today's adoption,
17 and I thank you for the long hours you have worked on
18 this budget, responding to Council Members' requests
19 -- the many, many Council Member requests -- and
20 questions, and guiding the delegations and B and T
21 [sic], and our wonderful Finance Division is: Deputy
22 Director and Chief Economist Dr. Ray Majewski, Deputy
23 Director Regina Poreda Ryan, Deputy Director Nathan
24 Toth, Deputy Director Paul Scimone, Assistant
25 Director Emre Edev, Finance Counsel Eric Bernstein,

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2 Supervising Economist Paul Sturm, the Finance Unit
3 Heads Eisha Wright, Chima Obichere, John Russell,
4 Dohini Sompura, and Crilhien Francisco; and the
5 Finance Analysts and Economists in alphabetical order
6 -- that's what it says; that's why I said that
7 [laughter] -- Jessica Ackerman, Aliya Ali, Maria
8 Enache, Sarah Gastelum, Kenny Grace, Zachary Harris,
9 Elizabeth Hoffman, Sheila Johnson, William
10 Kyeremateng, Jin Lee, Prince Mensah, Jeanette
11 Merrill, Nameera Nuzhat, Kaitlyn O'Hagan, Jimmy
12 Reyes, Steve Riester, Jon Seltzer, Kendall
13 Stephenson, Brandon West, and Davis Winslow.

14 I'd also like to thank the Finance
15 support staff: Nicole Anderson, Roberta Caturano and
16 Maria Pagan.

17 And last, but not least, my incredible
18 team: my Chief of Staff Catalina Cruz, my Deputy
19 Chief of Staff Ivan Acosta, Cheyenne Aguayo, Lillian
20 Zepeda, and everyone at the district office who has
21 helped keep things running smoothly throughout this
22 process.

23 With thanks to all of you, let's move on
24 to adopting the budget.

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2 The Fiscal 2018 Budget is the culmination
3 of several months of hearings, negotiation and
4 advocacy from New Yorkers across the five boroughs;
5 it reflects the Council's vision for a budget that
6 strengthens our community and plans responsibility
7 for changes that may lie ahead. These wins will
8 benefit the people of the City through the programs
9 and services we fought to include, along with
10 additional long-term budget stabilization measures
11 that allow New Yorkers to be confident that the City
12 is prepared in the event of an economic downturn.

13 This year we entered budget negotiations
14 aware that the new political climate in Washington
15 threatens many of the program services and freedoms
16 that New Yorkers hold dear. The Council was
17 determined that the final budget would demonstrate
18 our support for our city's diverse communities,
19 invest in the most vulnerable among us, and budget
20 prudently to guard against economic risks. I feel
21 strongly that we have negotiated a budget that
22 accomplished these goals and incorporates many of the
23 Council's signature priorities for the coming fiscal
24 year. I want to highlight a few items in particular.

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2 First, the Council has repeatedly made
3 youth jobs a top priority, believing that our city's
4 young people can grow to their maximum potential -- I
5 mean they could become Finance Chairs if you are an
6 SYEP participant -- if given the right opportunities.
7 The Fiscal 2018 Budget continues our unprecedented
8 investment in youth jobs by adding an additional
9 \$9 million to provide a record 70,000 summer jobs,
10 along with \$20 million to provide an additional 6500
11 year-round jobs. The budget also includes \$60
12 million for COMPASS programs, supporting after school
13 youth programming; in addition, this budget includes,
14 among other priorities: \$12.5 million to expand the
15 Universal Lunch Program and provide breakfast in the
16 classrooms for all elementary school students and
17 expansion to the Veterans Tax Exemption that will
18 provide hundreds of dollars in savings per veteran on
19 their tax bill; \$28.89 million baselined funding for
20 senior services; \$17.6 million for indirect contract
21 rate increases for our human services providers,
22 among \$12.7 million for model contracts in ACS
23 Runaway Homeless Youth and Adult Protective Services;
24 \$110 million in increased capital funding for
25 libraries, and \$7.2 million to expand the Emergency

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2 Food Assistance Program, and \$4 million to provide a
3 second pair of boots to our brave firefighters who
4 keep us safe each and every day.

5 Furthermore, we have boosted many Council
6 investments in essential programs and services
7 including immigrant services, with \$10 million -- I'm
8 gonna give you guys the biggest gift -- I'm gonna
9 skip a couple pages, 'cause... [background comments]
10 why not; I'm the Finance Chair; we're gonna move on.
11 [background comment] Yes, I'm sure you want to hear
12 all of it.

13 With that said; [laughter] I will turn
14 now to the items that the Finance Committee will vote
15 on that will actually make these accomplishments a
16 reality. I'm going to be reading all of this again
17 on the floor, so I just want to take this opportunity
18 for us to really acknowledge the amazing Finance
19 team, so please let's give them a very, very big
20 round of applause.

21 [applause, cheers]

22 Finance Committee members should have a
23 budget packet that contains all budget-related
24 legislation that must be voted on by the Committee
25 and again by the Full Council at the Stated Meeting.

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2 The packet also includes supporting schedules that
3 are not voted on but filed with the Committee, as
4 well as other non-budget-related items that are being
5 voted on today.

6 I want to strongly emphasize that the
7 Finance Committee members will be given only one
8 budget packet, so please do not distribute. After
9 you vote on the packet items you must bring your
10 packet and all of its contents to the Stated Meeting
11 to vote it out again. Council Members who are not on
12 the Finance Committee will be given their budget
13 packets at the Stated Meeting.

14 Our Committee Counsel emailed a
15 description of all the items to you, so I will simply
16 list the items that are on the agenda today that
17 require a vote.

18 First item is Reso A Capital Budget; 2nd
19 item is Reso B Capital Budget, which is the capital
20 budget as amended by Reso A; the 3rd item is the
21 resolution adopting the contract budget; the 4th item
22 is the resolu... well there's only 85 items, you all...
23 the 4th item is the resolution adopting the expense
24 and the revenue budget; the 5th item is the
25 resolution to improve the amendment to the five-year

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2 Education Capital Plan; the 6th item is the ten-year
3 capital budget strategy; the 7th item is the
4 resolution approving the 44th year of a community
5 development program and the 43rd year reallocation;
6 the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th item is a
7 partridge in a pear tree -- are resolutions approving
8 the discount rate, interest rates and nonpayment of
9 the property taxes and the interest rates for
10 nonpayments of water and sewer rent; the 13th, 14th
11 and 15th items are the three property tax
12 resolutions; the 16th item is the resolution
13 approving an expense budget modification; the 17th
14 item is a resolution approving a revenue budget
15 modification; 18th item is a transparency resolution;
16 and the 19th through 21st items are the land use
17 items and other documents in your package which are
18 not required separate votes are. [sic]

19 A list of the terms and conditions
20 adopted by Fiscal 2018 Schedule C and Borough
21 Presidents' proposed changes. As a reminder to
22 members, Schedule C is a schedule of the expense,
23 revenue and contract budget and the appropriations
24 for the organizations listed in Schedule C are in the
25 expense, revenue and contract budget. We do not vote

1 on Schedule C separately. Council Members will have
2 to sign a disclosure form indicating whether a
3 conflict exists with any of the groups listed in
4 Schedule C or Reso A. If any Council Member has a
5 potential conflict of interest with any of the
6 organizations included, he or she has the opportunity
7 to disclose the conflict at the time of their vote.
8 If you have not yet signed the disclosure form, staff
9 from the General Counsel's Office is here in the
10 Committee Room to guide you through the process, so
11 please see one of them before you vote.
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13 As a further reminder, please disclose
14 any conflict you may have with a proposed
15 subcontractor used by any organization sponsor.
16 These disclosures must be made before the subcontract
17 can be approved. As I mentioned, the staff from the
18 General Counsel's Office is here if you have any
19 questions.

20 In addition to the budget we will also be
21 voting today on a transparency resolution that sets
22 forth the new designation and changes in designation
23 of certain organizations receiving local aging and
24 youth discretionary funding and funding pursuant to
25 certain initiatives in the budget. Organizations

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2 appearing in the resolutions that have not yet
3 completed the pre-qualification process conducted by
4 the Mayor's Office of Contracts, the Council or any
5 other entity are identified in the attached chart
6 with an asterisk (*).

7 As with all transparency resolutions,
8 Council Members will have to sign a disclosure form
9 indicating whether or not a conflict exists with any
10 of the groups on the attached list. If any Council
11 Member has a potential conflict of interest with any
12 of the organizations listed, he or she has the
13 opportunity to disclose the conflict at the time of
14 their vote. As a reminder, please disclose any
15 conflict you may have with proposed subcontracts used
16 by organizations sponsored by discretionary funding.
17 These disclosures must be made before the
18 subcontractor can be approved. Rohan from the
19 General Counsel's Office is here and other members of
20 the General Counsel.

21 Finally, the Committee will be voting on
22 three land use items. The 1st resolution would
23 provide a partial 40-year Article XI tax exemption to
24 support the construction of 45 units of low-income
25 rental housing in Speaker Mark-Viverito's district in

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2 the Bronx. The Speaker has expressed support of this
3 resolution.

4 The 2nd item concerns the 140-26 Franklin
5 Avenue apartments located in Council Member Koo's
6 district in Queens. This resolution would provide a
7 partial 40-year Article XI tax exemption for the
8 preservation of 54 units of housing for middle-income
9 families. Council Member Koo supports this
10 resolution.

11 And the final resolution would provide a
12 partial 40-year Article V tax exemption for Sutter
13 Gardens apartments in Council Member Barron's
14 district in Brooklyn. This exemption would preserve
15 259 units of low-income rental housing. Council
16 Member Barron also supports this resolution.

17 Before we go to a vote, do any members
18 have any questions on these or any other items?
19 [background comment] That was the short version; I
20 skipped a couple pages. I will now ask Billy Martin,
21 Committee Clerk, to call the roll.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
23 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Finance;
24 all items are coupled. Chair Ferreras-Copeland.

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2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And
3 humbly and for the last time, I vote aye.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rodriguez.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: **[inaudible]**
6 [laugh] I, in full disclosure, I would like to say
7 that my child is associated to the Association of
8 Dominican Classical Artists as a participant of one
9 of the programs and also she is on the swimming team
10 of Asphalt Green; those two institutions being funded
11 by the Council.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I proudly
14 vote aye and I would like to thank and acknowledge
15 the Finance Chair for her amazing work and also our
16 long friendship; she has been an amazing chair to
17 libraries to culturals that are reflected in this
18 incredible robust budget for libraries in our
19 cultural sector, so I proudly vote aye and I'll talk
20 more about the successes in the budget later. But I
21 too am disclosing on the record of the Council
22 proceedings that Breaking Ground is funded in the
23 budget we're adopting and my sister, Dawn Van Bramer
24 is associated with this entity -- and my sister Dawn
25 Van Bramer is also getting married on Sunday, so we

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2 are very, very happy for her. So with that; I vote
3 aye.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK: Gibson.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Permission to
6 briefly explain my vote. So I'm voting aye on all
7 and I just want to just thank you, Julissa, for being
8 an incredible and amazing chair; we are sad to see
9 you go, but it has been an honor serving with you on
10 this committee. I always tried to get her on time at
11 10:00 and I know we tried to start on time, but I
12 really do appreciate; this has been a great team, and
13 I'm proud of all the work we've done under the
14 leadership of our Speaker and you and Latonia -- the
15 trio of dynamic women -- thank you so much for
16 everything and to the entire Finance team. I
17 particularly want to highlight my former Budget
18 Director who has now joined the Finance Division,
19 Kaitlyn O'Hagan, for finishing your first budget,
20 congratulations, and I also want to thank my new
21 Budget Director for completing her first budget,
22 Wendy Gallego. So onward and upward; my continued
23 blessings to you and your family and thank you for
24 always being a woman of dignity, style and grace and
25 completely compassionate for not just your district,

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2 but for all New Yorkers. So God bless you, [00:18:19
3 **Spanish]** and I vote aye on all.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK: Cornegy.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Permission to
6 explain my vote. I proudly vote aye on all and would
7 like to just say briefly, it's been a pleasure
8 working with you and I have a feeling that we'll
9 continue to work together in some capacity somewhere
10 somehow; I'm gonna miss for real.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Cumbo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Permission to
13 explain my vote. First, I am disclosing on the
14 record that the New York City Department of Education
15 is funded in the adoption we are adopting and my
16 sisters are employed as teachers with the Department
17 of Education.

18 I proudly vote aye and I just wanna say,
19 as chair of the Women's Issues Committee, you have
20 done a phenomenal job and Chair Ferreras-Copeland, a
21 whole new generation of young ladies are gonna grow
22 up and know what they can be now because you have set
23 the example, and our young people can't be what they
24 cannot see, and because of you they can see so much
25 further. So thank you so much for your service,

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2 thank you for your leadership, thank you for your
3 strength; for your dedication. And I wanna thank our
4 Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito; I wanna thank Latonia
5 McKinney; you all are rock stars, you've changed the
6 game totally and political world and everyone around
7 the world is going to know how dynamic you are and
8 the phenomenal changes you've made here in New York
9 City, and because we are the leaders throughout the
10 world. Thank you.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Levine.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Permission to
13 briefly explain my vote. I will be voting aye on
14 all; first let me read the following disclosure,
15 which is that the Columbia Secondary School is funded
16 in the budget we are adopting and my child is a
17 student at this school and Friends of New York County
18 Courts is funded in the budget we are adopting and I
19 am a voluntary council representative with this
20 organization.

21 Madam Chair, first let me remind you; you
22 have six more months to preside over this committee,
23 so that was not your last time voting aye on one..
24 [background comment] on... on the budget, that is true,
25 but we'll be modifying for months to come,

1 [background comments] so if there's... if the...
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3 [laughter] so we can take some solace in knowing that
4 we get to enjoy your leadership for many more months.
5 Your departure really leaves a gaping void in this
6 body that will not be easily or soon filled. I am
7 full of admiration for the way you are leaving, on
8 your own terms, you've struggled with issues that
9 every person in politics has and you've had the
10 courage to make a difficult decision that has I think
11 caused a lot of us to look inward and I admire you
12 for it, and you will continue to be a great
13 inspiration for me and many others. Thank you.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Miller.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Permission to
16 explain my vote. Yes? Thank you. I just wanna say
17 that it has been an absolute pleasure and honor
18 working with you over the past four years on this
19 committee; learned so much from you; your leadership
20 has been absolutely phenomenal. We did have the
21 opportunity to work in other capacities prior to the
22 Council and we saw then what you would become today
23 and you certain... all those things have come to
24 fruition and because of that, our city is much better
25 off. So I just wanna add my sentiments that all that

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2 have been said about you and your leadership here
3 that it's been an absolute pleasure working with you.
4 And with that; I will be voting aye on all except for
5 the tax rates, on which I'll be abstaining.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rosenthal.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I vote aye on
8 all with deep admiration and I want you to know that
9 -- you are a role model, of course, for women
10 everywhere -- and I want you to know that my 21-year-
11 old daughter gave me grief for not spending more time
12 with her after she heard what you were doing, and
13 [laughter, background comments] it's really... no, it's
14 really... you're an impressive, very impressive leader,
15 Julissa; thank you for everything you do for all New
16 Yorkers.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Matteo.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you. I'm
19 gonna start off with a few no's, and I'm sure no
20 one's surprised -- [laughter, background comments] --
21 you have to have the minority leader, the republican
22 on the Committee... [background comment] except the
23 vets -- 6257, 6258, 6273, 6274 I'll be voting no on;
24 I'll be voting aye on the rest. Some disclosures --
25 my three children that attend school attend IS51,

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2 Susan Wagner, PS30; we are funding them; **[inaudible]**
3 Arts and Susan Wagner we are funding, my brother
4 works at Richmond University Medical Center, which we
5 are funding.

6 Julissa, as I became minority leader two
7 years ago and we had a chance to work daily and
8 during these budget processes we've become extremely
9 close friends; you have been an extremely effective
10 Council Member, you were an extremely effective
11 staffer before that; this Council is going to miss
12 you; you're gonna leave a void in the Finance
13 Committee, but more importantly, I'm gonna miss you
14 as a dear friend and I wish you and your family
15 nothing but the best.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: All items on today's
17 Committee on Finance agenda have been adopted by a
18 vote of 10 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and
19 no abstentions, with the exception of T Nos. 625
20 [sic] and 6258 have been adopted by a vote of 7 in
21 the affirmative, 1 in the negative and no
22 abstentions, and the two tax-fixing resolutions have
23 been adopted by a vote of 8 in the affirmative, 1 in...
24 [pause] Council Member Johnson.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Permission to
3 explain my vote. I wanna congratulate the Chair on
4 this budget, I know she's worked really hard, not
5 just this year, but for the last few years; we're
6 gonna miss her, and the last four budgets have been
7 great progressive budgets, we've been able to do a
8 lot of good things. So I want to thank her for her
9 hard work and service chairing this committee and I
10 proudly vote aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote and all
12 items in today's Committee on Finance have been
13 adopted now by a vote of 8 in the affirmative, 1...
14 excuse me... 11 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative
15 and no abstentions, with the exceptions of T Nos.
16 6257 and 6258, which are now adopted by a vote of 10
17 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and 1
18 abstention, and the tax-fixing Resos which now are
19 adopted by a vote of 9 in the affirmative, 1 in the
20 negative and 1 abstention.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Well
22 thank you, and of course, I never wanna leave this on
23 a somber note; I'm only an Amtrak away, people
24 [laughter] come out and visit me, and I've gotta
25 believe someone's gonna hire me in Maryland, I gotta

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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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believe. But again, thank you for this really wonderful opportunity; I'll see everybody on the floor. Make sure that you take your packets with you. It's been a pleasure and I'll see you at our next meeting. Thank you.

[applause, cheers]

[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 June 30, 2017