

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

CITY COUNCIL CHARTER MEETING

----- X

January 3, 2018
Start: 12:02 p.m.
Recess: 1:56 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: CITY CLERK

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Adrienne Adams
Alan N. Maisel
Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Andrew Cohen
Andy King
Antonio Reynoso
Barry S. Grodenchik
Ben Kallos
Bill Perkins
Brad S. Lander
Carlina Rivera
Carlos Menchaca
Chaim M. Deutsch
Corey Johnson
Costa G. Constantinides
Daniel Dromm
Deborah L. Rose
Diana Ayala
Donovan J. Richards
Eric A. Ulrich
Fernando Cabrera

Francisco P. Moya
Helen K. Rosenthal
I. Daneek Miller
Inez D. Barron
James G. Van Bramer
Joseph C. Borelli
Jumaane D. Williams
Justin L. Brannan
Kalman Yeger
Karen Koslowitz
Keith Powers
Laurie A. Cumbo
Margaret S. Chin
Mark Gjonaj
Mark Levine
Mark Treyger
Mathieu Eugene
Paul A. Vallone
Peter A. Koo
Rafael Espinal, Jr.
Rafael Salamanca. Jr.
Ritchie Torres
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Robert F. Holden
Roy I. Lancman
Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Stephen T. Levin
Steven Matteo
Vanessa Gibson
Ydanis A. Rodriguez

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

Invocation Delivered by:
Bishop Sylveta Gonzales
Q Kingdom Ministries Inc.
1313 Union St, Brooklyn, NY 11225-1607

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CLERK: Okay, at this time I asks that
4 the still photographers please got to the pen.
5 Please retreat back the pen. Thank you. We'd like to
6 get the Charter Meeting underway. [background
7 comments, pause] Please, can I have your attention,
8 please. Can I please have your attention. At this
9 time please place all electronic devices, all
10 electronic devices to vibrate. [pause] [gavel] This
11 meeting will come to order. I am Michael McSweeney,
12 the City Clerk and the Clerk of the Council. I hereby
13 call this meeting to order pursuant to Section 42 of
14 the New York City Charter. Please rise for the Pledge
15 of Allegiance.

16 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise.

17 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: [Pledge Allegiance
18 recited by all] Thank you. Please be seated. On
19 the 11th of December 2017, the Council of the City of
20 New York received, ordered, printed and filed M565 of
21 2017 the communication from the Board of Elections
22 certifying the election of all 51 members of the City
23 Council in the 2017 General Election. I now direct
24 the clerk to call the roll of those duly elected
25

2 members of the council for the purposes of
3 ascertaining the presence of a quorum. Roll call.

4 CLERK: Adams.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Present.

6 CLERK: Ampry-Samuel.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Present.

8 CLERK: Ayala. Bronx Community College.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Sorry. Present.

10 CLERK: Barron.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Present.

12 CLERK: Brannan.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Present.

14 CLERK: Borelli.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Present.

16 CLERK: Cabrera.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Here.

18 CLERK: Chin.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Here.

20 CLERK: Cohen.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Here.

22 CLERK: Constantinides.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Present.

24 CLERK: Cornegy.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Present.

2 CLERK: Cumbo.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Present.

4 CLERK: Deutsch.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Here.

6 CLERK: Diaz.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: We're present.

8 CLERK: Dromm.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Here.

10 CLERK: Espinal.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Here.

12 CLERK: Eugene.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Present.

14 CLERK: Gibson.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Here.

16 CLERK: Gjonaj.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Present.

18 CLERK: Grodenchik.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Here.

20 CLERK: Holden.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Here.

22 CLERK: Johnson.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Here.

24 CLERK: Kallos.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Present.

2 CLERK: King.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Present.

4 CLERK: Koo.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Present.

6 CLERK: Koslowtiz.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Here.

8 CLERK: Lancman.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Present.

10 CLERK: Lander.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Here.

12 CLERK: Levin. Levine.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Present.

14 CLERK: Maisel. Matteo.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Here.

16 CLERK: Menchaca.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Presente.

18 CLERK: Miller.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Present.

20 CLERK: MOYA.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Present.

22 CLERK: Perkins.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Here.

24 CLERK: Powers.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Present.

2 CLERK: Reynoso.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Present.

4 CLERK: Richards.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Present.

6 CLERK: Rivera.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Present.

8 CLERK: Rodriguez.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Presente.

10 CLERK: Rose. Rosenthal.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Here.

12 CLERK: Salamanca.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Present.

14 CLERK: Torres.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Present.

16 CLERK: Treyger.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Here.

18 CLERK: Ulrich.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Still here.

20 [laughter]

21 CLERK: Vallone.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Here.

23 CLERK: Williams. Van Bramer.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Here.

25 CLERK: Yeger.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Here.

3 CLERK: Mr. Clerk, we have a quorum.

4 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: Having recognized
5 that a quorum is present, I now request that the
6 Council Members please stand for the oath of office.
7 Council Members please raise your right hand and
8 repeat after me: State your name.

9 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] [Council
10 Member stating their names.]

11 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: Do solemnly
12 swearing or affirm.

13 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Do Solemnly
14 swear or affirm.

15 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: That I will
16 support the Constitution of the United States.

17 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) That I will
18 support the Constitution of the United States.

19 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: And the
20 Constitution of the State of New York

21 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) And the
22 Constitution of the State of New York.

23 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: And the Charter of
24 the City of New York.

2 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) And the
3 Charter of the City of New York.

4 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: And that I will
5 faithfully discharge-

6 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) And that I
7 will faithfully discharge-

8 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: The duties of the
9 office of--

10 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) The duties
11 of the office of--

12 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: --Council Member--

13 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) Council
14 Member--

15 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: --in the--state
16 your district.

17 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (Stating their
18 respective districts.)

19 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: In the--state our
20 borough.

21 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (Stating their
22 respective boroughs.)

23 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: In the county of--
24 state your county.

2 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (Stating their
3 respective counties).

4 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: In the City of New
5 York.

6 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) In the City
7 of York.

8 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: According to the
9 best of my ability.

10 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) According
11 to the best of my ability.

12 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: Council Members,
13 congratulations. [cheers/applause] [background
14 comments, pause] Okay. I now ask everyone in the
15 Chamber to please rise for the invocation--

16 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: interposing] All rise.

17 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: --which will be
18 delivered by Bishop Sylveta Gonzalez of the Q Kingdom
19 Ministries in Brooklyn.

20 BISHOP GONZALEZ: Eternal and ever wise
21 true and living God our father and our mother. Today,
22 we celebrate this pivotal moment in the history of
23 our city with the election of our Council Member, the
24 Honorary Corey Johnson, our first gay male Speaker of
25 the City of New York Council. Council Member Johnson

2 provides a crucial representation of courage,
3 confidence and success in his leadership role for our
4 transgender youth and for those that are struggling
5 under pervasive challenges of oppression and
6 rejection. Most holy God, you are no respecter of
7 person. You do not discriminate against your human
8 creation. You are the God who loves all members of
9 our humanity, including our LGBTQ future generation
10 and our brothers and our sisters. You are the God
11 who chooses ordinary people to do extraordinary
12 things. Therefore, unveiling a glimpse of your
13 divine force working in every fiber of our society.
14 We are grateful that you have brought to our great
15 city esteemed workers from various walks of life who
16 are committed to standing up for the freedom and
17 justice of all. You have inspired them to work
18 together and set goals, pass legislation that then
19 answers the development and sustainability of our New
20 York City the city we love. We beseech thee, oh, God
21 that you inspire our leaders in the City Council to
22 make decisions that will bring relief to all members
23 of our city who are struggling, all members
24 regardless of their race, color, religion, creed or
25 gender. Our great spirit of life and light and truth

2 we invoke your mighty presence to shower our newly
3 elected and to shower all those profound members of
4 the New York City Council. Give them your life
5 giving spirit. Fill them with love of truth, and
6 shackled their optimism, and motivate their spiritual
7 exuberance. Help them to walk upright, have mercy
8 and let justice roll down like a mighty stream. We
9 invoke your presence to surround these magnificent
10 leaders. Bring them together to be servants for the
11 poor, providing for them the highest level of dignity
12 in our great city. Show up, oh, God. Inspire their
13 wiliness to promote the highest good for their fellow
14 human beings. Restore upon them the power to perform
15 their duties to obtain the ultimate benefits for
16 those that are marginalized in our beloved New York
17 City, the greatest city in the world. Show up, oh,
18 God and inspire our leaders to speak on the behalf of
19 the voiceless, the underserved, the weary and the
20 down trodden of our great city. Most merciful God,
21 come in all your glory. Fill the Chamber of the City
22 Council with your blessing. Fill it with your mercy.
23 Fill it with your peace that passes all human
24 understanding. Fill it with your love. Be not
25 silent eternal God, but be a silent listener to every

2 conversation and a spiritual healer for every wound.
3 Show up, oh, God in your mercy and bless us all.
4 Bless our city, bless our Council Members and bless
5 the United States of America. Amen.

6 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: Amen. [applause]

7 Please be seated. Thank you. I now recognize
8 Council Member Laurie Cumbo to spread the invocation
9 upon record.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: [interposing] Please,
11 keep it down.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you. Good
13 afternoon. I proud recognize Reverend Hamilton
14 Gonzalez who is the Founder and Chief Executive
15 Officer and Bishop of Q Kingdom Ministries, Inc. Q
16 Kingdom aid an interfaith community based
17 organization comprise of the New York Ecumenical
18 Convocation, the Mystical Temple of the Rose and
19 Flame, the Intercultural Awareness Council, the
20 Education and Advancement Program, QK Scholarship
21 Foundation, Women of Great Esteem Award, MACADEMY
22 School of Science and Technology where students are
23 educated, inspired and advanced, QK International
24 Student Exchange Program and the Interfaith Academy.
25 It is my hope and desire that my son will also attend

2 the Academy when he gets old enough. Bishop Gonzalez
3 graduated Summa Cum Laude for the College of New
4 Rochelle where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in
5 Psychology and Religion and received the Medal of
6 Honor for Academic Excellence. She later went on to
7 receive a New York Theological Seminary where she
8 received her certification in Christian Ministry.
9 The many facets of Bishop Gonzalez's mission are
10 culminated in her synthesis of the spiritual, social,
11 and political. Many political leaders throughout the
12 city and this country go to Bishop Gonzalez for her
13 guidance, for her counsel and her blessing. She is a
14 dynamic leader who has worked relentlessly to develop
15 Q Kingdom Ministries and its subsidiaries. Bishop
16 Gonzalez is also an internationally known outstanding
17 educator, and motivational public speaker. She is an
18 asset to our community. She inspires youth from all
19 over the world. She's developing and creating each
20 and every day the next generation of leaders in our
21 city, and move today that today's invocation by
22 Bishop Hamilton Gonzalez, which was inspirational,
23 powerful and right on time for today, be spread in
24 full upon the record. Thank you.

2 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: So ordered. We
3 now move onto M1 of 2018, the continuation of the
4 2014 and the 2017 Rules of the Council as amended. I
5 now recognize Council Member Margaret Chin.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I move that
7 pursuant to Section 46 of the New York City Charter
8 that the 2014 to 2017 Rules of the Council, as
9 amended, be continued and in effect until new rules
10 shall be adopted or set rules shall be otherwise
11 amended or modified.

12 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: Thank you, Council
13 Member Chin. All those in favor of the Motion by
14 Council Member Chin, please say aye.

15 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) Aye.

16 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: All those opposed.
17 All those abstaining. The ayes have it and the Rules
18 of the Council are continued and in effect. We now
19 move on to the nomination of the Speaker, M2. I
20 hereby open the floor for nominations for the office
21 of the Speaker of the Council of the City New York
22 pursuant to Section 44 of the New York City Charter
23 for the term commencing January 1, 2018 and
24 terminating December 31, 2021. I now recognize
25 Council Member Inez Barron.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Mr.
3 City Clerk. It's time for a Black Speaker. In
4 challenging situations for models and for
5 inspiration, I look to historical figures in similar
6 contextual circumstances. Forty-six years ago the
7 radical Shirley Chisholm became the first African-
8 American woman to run for president. She said she
9 ran because somebody had to do it first. In her book
10 *The Good Fight*, she says: "I ran for the Presidency
11 despite hopeless odds to demonstrate the sheer will
12 and refusal to accept the status quo." Mrs. Chisholm
13 spoke about the revolutionary possibilities of
14 electoral politics. When asked if more women
15 specifically Black women should become involved in
16 electoral politics she said yes, "Women in this
17 country must become revolutionaries. We must refuse
18 to accept the old, the traditional role and
19 stereotypes. She said, "What made me decide to run
20 for president was that I felt the time had come that
21 a black person or a female person could and should be
22 president of these United States of America, not only
23 white men, and I decided somebody had to get it
24 started." Her sentiments expressed my feelings that
25 it's our turn for a black speaker. Some members of

2 the Black, Latino and Asian Caucus said that they had
3 a preference for a person of color as Speaker for the
4 New York City Council, and there were several
5 candidates, but when the black candidates for City
6 Council would not commit to come, to this day the
7 nominations and selection for Speaker occur, it
8 erased all possibility for a black Speaker. I had
9 declined a request to run, and it was not my initial
10 intention to be a candidate, but the realization that
11 there would be a return to the structure that had so
12 long dictated who the nominee would be, created a
13 void that compelled me to submit my name as a
14 candidate. White men, white women and a Latina have
15 been Speaker, but we have never had a black Speaker
16 in this a city where Black, Latino and Asian are the
17 majority. Like Ms. Chisholm, I felt the time had come
18 for a black Speaker. [applause]

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it
20 down, please.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Again, citing Ms.
22 Chisholm, "I think it's quite well known that I do
23 not enter most things with the blessings of any
24 party. Anyone who's followed my political career
25 knows very, very keenly that I am the only unbought

2 and unbossed politician, [cheers/applause] and I mean
3 that literally. I think that you have got to
4 recognize that I'm not white, not male and that I'm
5 not going to get the blessings of the power structure
6 of this country. They knew I was not afraid to chart
7 a new course in the history of this country." Now,
8 here in today's Charter Meeting, the results of the
9 vote will soon be recorded. I am proud to have taken
10 actions that call for a paradigm shift. I have
11 packed—I have picked up the baton, and have brought
12 it across the finish line to this day for the vote of
13 Speaker. Once before in 2010 another Council Member,
14 Charles Barron my husband, put his name and
15 nomination for Speaker, [applause] and I now adopt
16 that strategy. In this city, which labels itself
17 progressive, it is unconscionable and unacceptable
18 that in 2018, the Democratic Party has resurrected
19 the vestiges of racist chattel slavery, segregation,
20 and Jim Crowism and has conspired to prevent a black
21 person [applause] from becoming Speaker.

22 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down, please,
23 keep it down.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: In 2018, we
25 should not let them take the black vote for granted.

2 Today, we have an opportunity to refuse to accept the
3 status quo, the dictates of bosses, the directives of
4 masters and the influence of cronyism and the
5 machinations of back room deals. [cheers/applause]
6 Dr. Martin Luther King said that, "Our lives begin to
7 end the day we become silent about things that
8 matter." Well, I say race still matters. Some will
9 loudly decry its presence, deny its presence. Others
10 may tacitly acknowledge its grip. Others will
11 definitely be silent, but I say that racist policies
12 and practices are embedded in every facet of the
13 social, political and economic institutions and
14 systems of this country, and until we face that
15 reality, the results will continue to yield
16 disenfranchisement, underrepresentation, and
17 oppression of black and brown people. At her eulogy,
18 Ms. Chisholm was described as a person who, "Stood up
19 and spoke up." I extend to each of you the
20 opportunity to be an upstander. Irrespective of your
21 vote today, I call on you to stand up now for the
22 right to be a trailblazing radical revolutionary
23 irrespective of your vote today, I call on you to
24 stand up for the right to call out racist policies,
25 and irrespective of your vote today, I ask are there

2 any among you who will stand to support my right to
3 be a nominee for Speaker of the New York City
4 Council? [background comments, applause] Is there
5 any? [applause] Is there one? Thank you, and with
6 that, Mr. City Clerk, I proudly submit my name Inez
7 Barron as a nominee for Speaker for the New York City
8 Council for 2018. Let's make history. Thank you.
9 [applause]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER: [Chanting Inez Barron,
11 Inez Barron] [background comments]

12 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: Thank you, Council
13 Member Barron. I now recognize Council Member Laurie
14 Cumbo.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you. Good
16 afternoon, everyone. It is an honor and a pleasure
17 to be here once again for another four years. I want
18 to salute Council Member Barron for her decision to
19 decide to run. Running for office is certainly
20 always a challenge and to me growing up, you as well
21 as your husband have been living legends in almost
22 every African-American household in New York City and
23 beyond. And so, I recall very clearly when Council
24 Member Barron ran for Speaker, and in my mind being
25 on the outside looking in I couldn't understand why

2 the body would not support Council Member Barron.
3 He's qualified. He's here, he's present, an
4 outspoken voice, and now to fast forward, I was very
5 proud just to take it back when Council Member
6 Julissa Ferreras-Copeland [bell] decided that she
7 wanted to run. Instantly because of her track record
8 as Finance Chair, a dynamic powerful woman, former
9 Chair of the Women's Issues Committee, she ultimately
10 became the front runner, and this body very
11 collectively it appeared had almost decided that that
12 was going to be the decision that they were going to
13 make as a body. And it showed to me that we were an
14 evolved body that a black woman, an African-American
15 man, a gay white man, a straight-gay white woman,
16 whatever the situation is, everyone has an
17 opportunity to serve here. So, in my opinion from
18 what I've seen in the four years, everybody has the
19 opportunity to be able to serve this body. I was
20 very upset with Council Member Johnson appeared to
21 become the front runner. Everything was attacked
22 about his identify that he is a-a substance abuse
23 survivor, that he comes from a single parent
24 household, that he comes from public housing, that
25 he's gay. They challenged his educational career

2 that he grew up in public housing and that he as HIV
3 positive. These are things that while many will say
4 are things that he shouldn't be a leader, in my
5 estimation those are exactly the reasons why he
6 should be a leader because he has overcome things
7 that many of us would have been—had our whole world
8 rocked by. How many of us here think honestly that
9 if we were HIV positive that we would be able to come
10 forward and utilize that as a platform to inspire
11 individuals to get tested, to provide resources and
12 critical services that so many in our community need.
13 I think that Corey coming out and becoming from those
14 challenges one of the youngest people to become Chair
15 of his community board, to run the campaigns of
16 candidates like Mark Green and H. Carl McCall. For
17 him to be one of those individuals that at 17 years
18 of age came out that he was gay on his football team.
19 These are all things that he's been challenged by,
20 but it's not where you come from. It's where you are
21 today. He has been a progressive voice in this
22 particular Council. He has passed legislation in
23 regards to domestic violence, runaway teens, HIV and
24 AIDS, housing, substance abuse, homelessness, and so
25 many other issues. And so for us as a Black, Latino

2 and Asian Caucus, I, too, would like to see us have a
3 black or Latino or person of color to run this body,
4 but we have to take accountability for some of those
5 issues as well. In our body of the Black, Latino and
6 Asian Caucus we had seven members running. If we
7 wanted to be serious about a candidate emerging from
8 our body, we should have proposed to elect one person
9 that we would have all stood behind for the last year
10 to get to that particular place so there's
11 accountability on our end. We would have won a year-
12 long campaign that would have held and supported.
13 I'm here in this body, and the work that I do as a
14 Council Member is because I'm working to make sure
15 that there is equality across the City of New York,
16 and those that work the hardest are those that are
17 rewarded. I believe that everyone in this council in
18 this body cannot deny that Council Member Corey
19 Johnson worked harder to become the Speaker of the
20 New York City Council than anybody in this body, and
21 because of that he is qualified. He has
22 demonstrated that he has put the work forward, and he
23 has demonstrated that he can help assist and work
24 with members all across this board. Whether you're
25 black, white, Asian, gay or straight, he has

2 demonstrated that, and it is because he has worked
3 harder than anyone else is why I nominate Corey
4 Johnson to be the Speaker of the New York City
5 Council. Thank you. [applause]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I now recognize
7 Council Member Karen Koslowitz. [background
8 comments]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Thank you. In
10 the four years that Corey Johnson and I have worked
11 together, I have learned a lot about him. Corey is
12 strong, independent, honest and trustworthy. He has
13 been my good friend, and a fierce advocate always a
14 voice for those who cannot be heard. I know that he
15 will lead this council with fairness and integrity,
16 and he will work with the Mayor and the
17 administration to make this an even greater city. I
18 have served as a member of the New York City Council
19 for 19 years, and it gives me great pleasure and
20 fills me with enormous pride to second the nomination
21 of Corey Johnson as Speaker of the New York City
22 Council. [applause]

23 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: I now recognize
24 Council Member Robert Cornegy.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Thank you,
3 Clerk. As a black man, and as a person who actually
4 ran for Speaker of the New York City Council, and by
5 all accounts ran a fair and hard race, and actually
6 was a runner-up, I resoundingly second the nomination
7 of Corey Johnson for Speaker of this Council. I
8 joined this distinguished body of legislators in the
9 same class Council Member Johnson four years ago, and
10 have had ample opportunity to observe his—to observe
11 his leadership style. One that I believe, leaves him
12 well equipped to serve this body as Speaker. I look
13 forward to working with closely with Speaker Johnson
14 for the next four years to ensure the full extent of
15 the Council's resources, and powers are brought to
16 bear in addressing the needs of all New Yorkers.
17 Thank you. [cheers/applause]

18 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: I now recognize
19 Council Member Mark Treyger.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Today is a day
21 of celebration, and it is with great joy that I
22 second the nomination of someone I'm proud to call
23 not only my colleague, but also a friend Corey
24 Johnson. Everyone who knows Corey, knows that he is
25 hardworking, intelligent, and unbelievably driven.

2 Most importantly, he's a fighter. Corey will never
3 back down from doing the right thing because it's the
4 people he's fighting for. Corey has always been an
5 advocate for people whose rights are often blatantly
6 disregarded. He has made tremendous strides for the
7 LGBTQ community. This is one community like far too
8 many others that has historically been marginalized,
9 but Corey is the type of leader who fights to make
10 everyone gets a seat at the table. Our city knows
11 that Corey will continue to be a voice for all New
12 Yorkers. This is because Corey just doesn't just
13 talk about it, he gets things done. As his
14 colleagues, we know this and we have seen it time and
15 time again. His strength is evident in the actions
16 he takes to make sure no one slips through the
17 cracks. He has true grit, and he works hard every
18 single day to make sure the city is stronger and more
19 fair. He's a voice for young people, especially
20 working to serve our city's Runaway and Homeless
21 Youth population. He approaches legislation with a
22 long-term view and a true progressive vision. He
23 cares about the health, wellness, freedom and
24 happiness of the people of our city, but above all
25 else, he cares about fighting for the rights of New

2 Yorkers who are too often ignored. I'm proud to have
3 gotten to know Corey over the past four years, and
4 witness first hand his effective leadership. With
5 all the threats our country faces on a national
6 level, it is an amazing relief to know that we have a
7 true progressive who is representing our City
8 Council. Corey doesn't look to divide, he looks to
9 unite. He knows how to bring people together to
10 build a city that is better for all New Yorkers.
11 When his inclusive, honest, and courageous hard work
12 met opportunity, the well deserved speakership of
13 Corey Johnson was born. Congratulations to the next
14 Speaker Corey Johnson. [cheers/applause]

15 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: I now recognize
16 Council Member Ritchie Torres.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I first heard the
18 name Corey Johnson 18 years ago. It was the year
19 2000. I was 12 years old, and I stumbled on a 20/20
20 documentary featuring a young Corey Johnson who was
21 captain of his high school football team. He found
22 the courage to come out publicly in a conservative
23 small town. He did so in a place where coming out
24 could have meant painful ostracism from the only
25 community he had ever known. I remember listening

2 intently to Corey's story as an adolescent coming to
3 terms with my own identity, and I remember being
4 inspired then by his courage. Never once in those
5 years did I imagine serving under the leadership of
6 the very trailblazer whose story inspired me nearly
7 two decades ago, but here I am. Here we all are on
8 the verge of elevating Corey Johnson to the
9 Speakership of the New York City Council. Corey's
10 self-willed rise from small town poverty to political
11 leadership in America's largest city, his rise
12 reminds us that we are not simply selecting a
13 Speaker, but by voting for Corey Johnson, we are co-
14 authoring the latest chapter in a bona fide American
15 dream story. What is most inspiring about Corey is
16 not so much his rise to the Speakership, it is where
17 he has risen from, and how he has risen. It must be
18 said lest there be any confusion that Corey has not
19 only won the Speakership, he earned it. He earned it
20 on the strength of his incomparable work ethic. He
21 earned it on the strength of the deep and durable
22 friendships he forged in the trenches of public
23 service. He earned it the same way he has earned
24 everything in his life by working for it, and by
25 working harder than everyone else around him. Corey

2 Johnson is a formidable public servant, and the city
3 of New York will be stronger for having him as one of
4 its leaders. I am honored to call him my colleague.
5 I'm even more honored to call him my friend, but I
6 will be most honored to call him my Speaker. Mr.
7 Clerk, I proudly second the nomination of Council
8 Member Corey Johnson as the Speaker of the New York
9 City Council. [cheers/applause]

10 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: I now recognize
11 Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
13 First of all, I'd like to say happy birthday to my
14 daughter, [cheers/applause] and as the great leader
15 of the City of New York Scott Stringer our
16 Comptroller said he was here when he was a little
17 boy. Now my daughter is here. You know, I have
18 mixed feelings today. Since that day, we lost the
19 only position that we have as a Latino in the city of
20 New York. My daughter been raised knowing that she's
21 black, she's Dominican, she's American. At least in
22 the American community can say that you have a
23 minority leader of the Senate. You have a Public
24 Advocate. You have a Speaker of the Senate. In the
25 City of New York Latinos make up 29% of the Latino

2 population—ore the New York City population, the
3 second largest group. We don't have—we will not have
4 the voice any more. However, at the moment that we're
5 losing that voice, the question is who is the closer
6 ally? I have no doubt someone that lived through the
7 struggle, someone like—someone who knows what it is
8 like to be raised in a poor family, someone who knows
9 what it is to be openly gay, someone who knows that
10 everything has to be seen from the perspective of
11 social class. We need to look from that—from in this
12 room here and look to all faces. Only in this great
13 city we are building this great institution with the
14 diversity that we deserve. I'm proud to second my
15 next speaker because he understand it that when we
16 talk about lack of diversity in government, it's not
17 only a voice at the city wide or the state level
18 wide, there's 10,000 leadership positions in the
19 agency of New York City. Only 200 are Latinos. So,
20 we need to check not only the Council. We need to
21 check the city and we need to check the state. It's
22 not enough in 2018, [Speaking Spanish] to say that we
23 identify with the culture. It's about putting our
24 effort working 24/7. So with Corey Johnson, not only
25 do we have a friend, a great Speaker, but he will

2 work 24/7 to bring the diversity that we deserve
3 where Black, Asian, White and Latino live to the
4 opportunity that we deserve. Everyone have lived
5 with discrimination in this city from the Jewish, to
6 the Irish to the Italians, to the Asian to the Latino
7 to African-American. It is time for us to work
8 together to build a New York City full of opportunity
9 for everyone, and I have no doubt that with Speaker
10 Johnson we will have a voice. Thank you.
11 Congratulations. [cheers/applause]

12 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: Hearing no further
13 candidates, I now close the nominations and direct
14 the clerk to call the roll. Council Members, when
15 your name is called, please state the name of the
16 nominee you are electing.

17 CLERK: Adams.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I am proud to cast
19 the first vote for the next Speaker of the New York
20 City Council, Council Member Corey Johnson.

21 CLERK: Ampry-Sam-Ampry-Samuel.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I'll be
23 voting for Corey Johnson.

24 CLERK: Ayala. Corey Johnson.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I proudly cast-
3 cast my vote for myself Inez Barron.

4 [cheers/applause]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER: Speech-speech.

6 CLERK: Brannan.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: On behalf of the
8 people of Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, Bath Beach and
9 Bensonhurst, I proudly case my vote for Corey
10 Johnson. Good luck.

11 CLERK: Borelli.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Corey Johnson.
13 Good luck.

14 CLERK: Cabrera.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Corey Johnson

16 CLERK: Chin.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I proudly vote for
18 Corey Johnson.

19 CLERK: Cohen.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Corey Johnson

21 CLERK: Constantinides.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES. I proudly
23 vote for my friend and future Speaker Corey Johnson.

24 CLERK: Cornegy.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Corey Johnson

2 CLERK: Cumbo.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Permission to
4 explain my vote?

5 CLERK: So ordered.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I want to
7 congratulate every one who put forward their desire
8 to be the Speaker of the New York City Council.
9 Today again I salute Council Member Barron for
10 continuing to be the voice and consciousness of the
11 body and yours is a critical voice that continues to
12 push us all further, and to expand the realm of
13 possibilities of what can happen. I proudly vote
14 today for my very good friend who I know is going to
15 represent us with class, dignity, strength and most
16 importantly inclusiveness in this entire body, and
17 I'm prod to work with you and I'm proud to work with
18 this body, and I proudly vote for Corey Johnson.

19 CLERK: Deutsch.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Of course, Chaim
21 Johnson, I mean Corey Johnson. [laughter] Yes.

22 CLERK: Diaz.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: [off mic] May I
24 explain who I'm going to vote for?

25 CLERK: So ordered.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: [on mic] Mr.
3 Chairman, Mr. Speaker to be, Mr. Clerk, ladies and
4 gentlemen, I am moved today in the Chamber and I know
5 that during process-process, there were so many good
6 candidates, so many-so many friends-friends of mine,
7 Ritchie Torres, Robert Cornegy that were-were
8 qualified, good friends, and one them, Ydanis
9 Rodriguez that went all the way out to join me in my
10 aspiration for coming so- But, out of all of them,
11 I was a person, I was a man that was a-a person that
12 show such-such a human sensitivity such a skill I
13 could-I could call them. So, I was in the hospital
14 three years ago with a major surgery, major surgery
15 and was there with my family but suddenly, you know,
16 the door opened and there came a person that don't
17 believe what I believe, a man that doesn't agree with
18 what I say, a man that I don't see him coming, but I
19 don't even knew about him at that time. And he came
20 with a friend of mine, Senator Tom Duane to visit me.
21 We're there, when he arrived I told my wife and to
22 myself this guy will be-it will be very difficult for
23 anyone else to beat him or to go outsmart him because
24 they're well-they're well qualified. They're all
25 aware, but this person Mr. Corey Johnson came to see

2 me in the hospital and showed not only that he's
3 skilled, not only that he is qualified, not only that
4 he's got the experience, not only that he's the best,
5 he showed a human sensitivity and that's why today
6 I'm proud to vote for Mr. Corey Johnson. Thank you.

7 CLERK: Dromm.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Permission to
9 explain my vote.

10 CLERK: So ordered.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very
12 much. Today is a historic day for those of us in the
13 LGBTQ community. We are electing the first openly
14 gay, first openly HIV positive Speaker of the New
15 York City Council. It should also be noted that
16 we're joined by Senator Tom Duane who 30 years ago
17 was also the first [applause] openly gay HIV positive
18 person [applause] elected to the City Council, and as
19 somebody who has been an openly gay teacher in the
20 New York City public school system, Corey's election
21 today is going to send a clear message of hope to all
22 youth in New York City that if you're LGBT, all
23 things are possible. I proudly cast my vote for
24 Corey Johnson. Thank you. [applause]

25 CLERK: Espinal.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Permission to
3 explain my vote.

4 CLERK: So ordered.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Yeah, so it's no
6 secret that Corey Johnson is a good friend of mine. I
7 actually met him before we ran for office, and we
8 came out of a restaurant. It was about 11:00 p.m.
9 and he had a clipboard collecting signatures at 11:00
10 p.m. in the middle of Manhattan, and I was walking
11 with him and thinking like who is crazy enough to do
12 this? But I learned that he was doing this every
13 single night because he was determined because the
14 dude works hard. So, when we got elected to Council,
15 I told him early on you should run for Speaker, and I
16 did that not because we were friends, but because he
17 showed me that he works hard. I've learned that he's
18 compassionate. I learned that he's dedicated to this
19 body and he lives and breathes this city, and he
20 lives and breathes the work he does, and I am
21 confident that he will work hard to make sure that we
22 all are represented well in the City Council. So, I
23 proudly vote aye, and I proudly vote for Corey
24 Johnson.

25 CLERK: Eugene.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Corey Johnson.

3 CLERK: Gibson.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Permission to
5 explain my vote.

6 CLERK: So ordered.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you so
8 much, Mr. Clerk and good afternoon to all of my
9 colleagues. Happy New Year to each and every one of
10 you. If risk and foremost want to congratulate all
11 of my colleagues who are beginning a new term, and
12 certainly my warmest regards and welcome to all of
13 our new colleagues who are joining us here in the
14 City Council family. I want to join Council Member
15 Cumbo in acknowledging the strength and the courage
16 of Council Member Inez Barron. Thank you for always
17 speaking true to power and I look forward to working
18 with you as a member of the Women's Caucus. Today is
19 certainly a great day in the City Council. I am so
20 honored and privileged to join with all of you in
21 calling Council Member Corey Johnson one of my
22 friends as well. I am so honored because he and I
23 worked together as I introduced my very first piece
24 of legislation here in the Council, which amended the
25 Student Safety Act of 2015 to focus on breaking down

2 the school pipeline to prison, and addressing school
3 discipline, understanding the disproportionate impact
4 that these harsh penalties have on low-income
5 students of color and students with disabilities and
6 LGBTQ students, and immigrant students. And
7 certainly after that, Corey and I have worked closely
8 together on so many pieces of legislation, on
9 fighting to end the AIDS epidemic, on funding for
10 Runaway and Homeless Youth, and certainly resources
11 for many of our young people like Summer Youth.
12 Matthew 22:14 says, For many are called, but few are
13 chosen. God has chosen you [coughing] for such a
14 time as this to lead this incredible City Council.
15 God may guide your path and your leadership of public
16 service. I will always, always support you, and I
17 pray that in this new role you always remain humble
18 and thankful for your blessings. You have the
19 passion, the purpose and the God has given you the
20 plan to lead this body forward. Onward and upward,
21 my friend, my colleague, I look forward to our
22 partnership in this season. May God bless you. I
23 proudly cast my vote for my colleague and my friend
24 Corey Johnson. Love you.

25 CLERK: Gjonaj.

2 MARK GJONAJ: For the captain on the
3 field and off the field, Corey Johnson. [laughter]

4 CLERK: Grodenchik.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: May I briefly
6 explain my vote?

7 CLERK: So ordered.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I first want
9 to recognize two living legends in the City of New
10 York Mayor David Dinkins and Speaker Peter Vallone.
11 [applause] The future Speaker just told me that that
12 comes off my speaking time, but I'll—I'll forge
13 forward. I got to know Corey very well when we went
14 to Israel this past February and myself and him and
15 our dear friend Fernando Cabrera spent a wonderful
16 day in and around the Holy old city of Jerusalem, and
17 I also learned that day that the most dangerous place
18 in the old city is between Corey Johnson and a
19 pomegranate juice vendor. He likes that—he likes to
20 drink pomegranate juice. [laughter] Corey, we had a
21 wonderful day. We visited so many holy places, and
22 this young may who grew up in New York City public
23 housing proudly cast his vote that's entrusted to him
24 by the people of the 23rd District for you the next
25 Speaker, Corey Johnson. Thank you. [applause]

2 CLERK: Holden.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Corey Johnson.

4 CLERK: Johnson.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Corey Johnson.

6 [laughter]

7 CLERK: Kallos.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I'm proud to vote
9 for my friend for over the past ten years in the Mark
10 Green Campaign, a partner in reform and someone who
11 will stand up to this body and its members Corey
12 Johnson.

13 CLERK: King.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Peace and blessings
15 to all in 2018. I just ask on this special day for
16 my family, which would have been my dad's 81st
17 birthday, I want to say to Corey Johnson, you have my
18 vote and may your perseverance in life be a guiding
19 light to leadership over this body. Congratulations.

20 CLERK: Koo.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I proudly support my
22 friend and my colleague Corey Johnson.

23 CLERK: Koslowitz.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: May I be
25 excused to explain my vote?

2 CLERK: So ordered.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I, too, want
4 to recognize our past Mayor, the Mayor Dinkins and my
5 Speaker Peter Vallone, and Scott Stringer and Tish
6 James. I've worked with all of them, but I also want
7 to recognize Corey's mom. [applause/cheers] Always
8 remember it's because of her that Corey is here.
9 [laughter] I proudly cast my vote for Corey Johnson.

10 CLERK: Lancman.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Corey Johnson.

12 CLERK: Lander.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: With
14 congratulations and with optimism that working
15 together toward a more just compassionate and
16 inclusive New York City, Corey Johnson.

17 CLERK: Levin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Permission to
19 explain my vote.

20 CLERK: So ordered.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very
22 much Mr. Clerk. I am incredibly proud and humble to
23 be able to vote for my good friend Corey Johnson for
24 Speaker. Corey represents the best in public
25 service, honesty, decency, character, grit and

2 compassion, and I know that he will lead this body
3 with all those principles at the forefront, and so on
4 behalf of my daughter Frances [background comments]
5 and all the residents of the 33rd district [applause]
6 I vote proudly for my friend Corey Johnson.

7 CLERK: Levine.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Permission to
9 explain my vote.

10 CLERK: So ordered.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Okay, thank you,
12 Madam. Thank you—it's not Madam Public Advocate
13 today. It's Mr. City Clerk. Happy to have you in
14 that role. I want to offer my heart felt
15 congratulations to Council Member Johnson. I know
16 that Council will benefit from his passion, from his
17 fighting spirit and from his smarts. We need your
18 talents, Corey. The Speakership is an incredibly
19 difficult job even in the best of times. More so now
20 when our city faces so many daunting challenges, but
21 I know you are up to the task, and we need you to
22 succeed. We need our Speaker to succeed for the good
23 of this body and for the good of this city, and so I
24 look forward to supporting you as we confront the
25 challenges ahead. And to my colleagues, over the

2 past year or so I had the opportunity to spend time
3 with each and every one of you in your neighborhoods
4 campaigning with you, seeing you in action at local
5 events, soaking in the energy of the district
6 offices, chairing countless meals with you in local
7 restaurants and coffee shops, and I came away utterly
8 inspired by the unique ways in which of you pour your
9 heart and soul into improving the lives of your
10 constituents and into having an impact on this city.
11 New Yorkers are incredibly lucky to be represented by
12 you, and I am incredibly lucky that I get to serve
13 with all of you over the next four years. I look
14 forward to working with each of you, and with our
15 soon to be Speaker Corey Johnson on behalf of the
16 body and the city that we all love so much, and I, of
17 course, will be proudly casting my vote for Corey
18 Johnson. [applause]

19 CLERK: Maisel.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Corey Johnson.

21 CLERK: Matteo.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Corey Johnson.

23 CLERK: Menchaca.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Permission to
25 explain my vote.

2 CLERK: So ordered.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you. So,
4 we start this new session, this new City Council
5 session with great hope and with great courage. The
6 hope to continue to stand up, and the courage to move
7 into since and effective action. We are the voice of
8 our neighbors in our districts. Our New Yorkers, our
9 families place their faith in us to represent, but
10 this Council is divided. You just heard a black
11 woman rise and put herself out there, and she's
12 expressing her hope and her courage, and that is why
13 I stood up after to make sure that I acknowledged
14 that and to support that as we continue this new
15 session with great hope and with great courage. I
16 cast my vote today for an exceptional hardworking
17 man, yes, a gay man, and yes someone who is HIV
18 positive, but beyond that, he is someone that has
19 great compassion and understanding. For me, he came
20 out and helped me win my race. He stood with me at
21 the doors and understood from the people directly
22 what the issues were. He walked through NYCHA with
23 me. He walked to the waterfront, and he understands.
24 He did that with so many of you, and so today ware
25 not going to be defined by our roles or our committee

2 chairmanships. We are going to be defined by the
3 unity that we place in ourselves as a body. Our
4 house starts a little divided, and I put that
5 accountability on you, on me and everyone else in
6 this room to unite for the work that is ahead. Thank
7 you and I cast my vote for Corey Johnson.

8 CLERK: Miller.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Permission to
10 explain my vote.

11 CLERK: So, ordered.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you. I
13 like many of my colleagues in this room in particular
14 members of the Black, Latino and Asian Caucus, the
15 BLAC causes and many of—from the communities that we
16 serve throughout the city also was of the mindset and
17 shared the values that it was time for a Speaker of
18 color for sure that we embodied that and worked
19 toward that goal for several months now. But that
20 did not come to fruition. It became obvious that it
21 would not come to fruition, but Corey Johnson is not
22 a consolation. Corey Johnson is an ally. Corey
23 Johnson is the cream that rise to the top, and became
24 Speaker of this body here, this great body that we
25 all represent. We will collective work to nurture

2 and cultivate that next generation. We will
3 collective make sure and ensure that we represent—
4 that we are represented and that we do have a Speaker
5 of color in this body here as we move forward. But I
6 will be honored and privileged to serve with my
7 neighbor and little brother over the next four years.
8 I vote for Corey Johnson. Thank you.

9 CLERK: Moya.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I proudly vote for
11 Corey Johnson.

12 CLERK: Perkins.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Thank you. As
14 per the stern instructions of my wife Pam, I
15 obediently and proudly vote for Corey Johnson.
16 [laughter]

17 CLERK: I support Corey Johnson.
18 Congratulations, good luck and I'll see where we meet
19 in Times Square.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO:

21 CLERK: Reynoso.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Permission to
23 explain my vote.

24 CLERK: So ordered.

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I just want to—I
3 want to speak in Spanish a bit. Corey, I'll
4 translate for you later. [laughter] [Speaking
5 Spanish] So, I vote aye for Corey Johnson.

6 CLERK: Richards.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Permission to
8 explain my vote.

9 CLERK: So ordered.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr.
11 Clerk and first off I'd like to start by thanking my
12 family, especially my wife and my two-year-old son
13 known and D3, my staff and all the people who
14 encouraged, supported and had a little faith that a
15 young black man from Southeast Queens become the New
16 York City Council Speaker. In 2003, I arrived here
17 at the City Council as an intern motivated to get
18 involved in community service after the murder of my
19 childhood friend Darnell Patterson. I wanted to
20 change the world and to keep his legacy alive. Who
21 would have ever imagined nearly 15 years later that I
22 would have been a contender for the New York City
23 Council Speakership. To Darnell and those who saw
24 something in me that I did not see in myself, I hope
25 I made you proud. To my colleagues who have endured

2 meeting after meeting with me for the past year
3 explaining my path to victory, I apologize.
4 [laughter] It's been an honor to learn about your
5 district and see your passion to get work done for
6 your communities. I hope you enjoyed the cups of
7 coffee lunches and dinners while they lasted because
8 you will be footing the bill for yourselves from now
9 on.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER: oh, man. [background
11 comments/laughter]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: But in all
13 seriousness, I've been so honored and humbled to be
14 merrily mentioned in the conversation among seven and
15 now eight of my colleagues who decided to run for
16 Speaker. To all of you who had the courage to run, I
17 want you to know you've all gained my highest
18 respect. No one will truly know the sacrifice we all
19 made including giving up family time, countless
20 resources, vulnerability, and most of all, our own
21 wellbeing because we love this city so much that we
22 wanted to fight to make it a better place. Every one
23 of us brought a unique voice and story to this merry-
24 go-round of a race. Thank you, Joe Crowley in the
25 Bronx. We have—we've all are just in tidbit waiting

2 for this thing to be done. From Ritchie Torres a
3 product of public housing to Ydanis Rodriguez who was
4 a dishwasher at 18 years old and who emerged as major
5 voice for the immigrant community, and lastly another
6 young man who knows first hand what it means to face
7 the same issues as so many other New Yorkers. Hailing
8 from Massachusetts to a teen-age mother just like
9 myself, born in a union household, having the courage
10 to come out publicly in high school and begin—then
11 again as being HIV positive, and someone who will now
12 assume the role of the second most powerful position
13 in city given—in city government, Speaker Corey
14 Johnson. I'm wrapping up. Corey, it's been a true
15 honor to sit next to you in these chambers and serve
16 with you over the past four years. There's no doubt
17 in my mind that over the next four years he will lead
18 this body in a direction that will ensure the most
19 marginalized communities have a voice in their city
20 government. At a time when looming federal and
21 disinvestment over our city budget and policies are
22 being put in place that threat this diverse metrop-
23 metrop-metropolis we call New York City, I have faith
24 that Corey Johnson will be the leader we need to get
25 through these times. I also have to acknowledge Inez

2 Barron because there's a lot of truth in what she
3 said. But on this day, I vote for Speaker Corey
4 Johnson, my good friend and who will no longer be my
5 neighbor to be the Speaker. God bless you and
6 congratulations and I wish you God Speed. Thank you.
7 [applause]

8 CLERK: Rivera.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Permission to
10 explain my vote.

11 CLERK: So ordered.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: My vote very
13 briefly. So, among the incredible candidates you are
14 all really amazing and I've—I've had a real privilege
15 getting to know all of you over the past few months.
16 Today I am proud to cast my vote for a friend from
17 I've learned so much. Corey, I think we recognize in
18 each other our relentless work ethic and an
19 incredible admiration for our mothers and, of course,
20 a lot for our communities and taking care of all New
21 Yorkers. You've been incredibly supportive and I
22 look forward to showing you that same respect over
23 the next four years. Inez, thank you for standing
24 up. As one of only 11 women, you—your strength is
25 inspiring and I want to thank you for doing that.

2 And to everyone here I'm so excited for the next four
3 years. It's been an awesome birthday so far, and I'm
4 really looking forward to it. So, today I proudly
5 cast my vote for Corey Johnson for Speaker. Thank
6 you. [applause]

7 CLERK: Rodriguez:

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Permission to
9 explain my vote.

10 CLERK: So ordered.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
12 Congressman Crowley for your leadership in the city
13 and in our nation. We need more voices like you
14 standing for immigrants as we are on the attack. To
15 our friend here, Corey, I know that he will be
16 marching with us, organizing with us, fighting for
17 immigrants. [Speaking Spanish] We are not begging.
18 The Latino are not begging, neither we are asking for
19 favors. We are putting the number on the table. We
20 are 29% of the New York City population. In the 1900
21 census we are not counting. Our numbers are
22 different today, but today we have an ally, and as I
23 give credit to my great sister here and Colleague,
24 Council Member Barron, we will be working together in
25 the committee that you will be working, but I know

2 that today, it's a lot of moving, continuing moving
3 forward. We cannot go backwards s this President
4 wanted to take us. We leader leaders who understand
5 that we are in the same boat that were in a different
6 place a 100 years before, and now we have to put our
7 vision for the next 100 years. [Speaking Spanish] I
8 hope that with my friend here I will have—we will
9 have a champion fighting the most segregated
10 educational system in the whole nation being here in
11 New York City. I hope that with my friend we're
12 going to be opening more doors-opportunities for the
13 funding for the Cultural Affairs should change. In
14 the Black and Latino institutions, they also should
15 get the same funding as the other groups get.

16 [Speaking Spanish]

17 CLERK: Rose.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] She
19 isn't here.

20 CLERK: Rosenthal.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Corey Johnson,
22 and may I explain my vote?

23 CLERK: So ordered.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you. I
25 want to start by congratulating Council Member

2 Johnson. You know, as the only out member of the
3 body who supported Mark Levine, I did not get taken
4 out for meals. No one visited my district and no one
5 helped me, but and I released Mark so he would be
6 helping others. But I have to tell you Corey, over
7 the last month I've learned more about you than I
8 have known about you over the last four years, and
9 I've come to understand and—and truly appreciate your
10 hard work, and your—your amazing abilities. So
11 together under your leadership I do believe this body
12 will do a tremendous amount of good work for the
13 people of the city of New York. We're now positioned
14 to build upon the foundation we've established over
15 the past four years, and I'm thinking about our
16 partnership and the Council's efforts to attack to
17 attack the city's affordability crisis and all the
18 work, though, that we have left to do especially when
19 it comes to protecting rent regulated tenants from
20 harassment and displacement. Corey you and I co-
21 sponsored legislation that was one piece of the Stand
22 for Tenant Safety Package, and I know that you share
23 this mission. We also have a responsibility to
24 broaden this body's vision. For example by taking on
25 the city's public transportation crisis. I was so

2 impressed when I saw in the papers about your vision
3 for the MTA and your commitment to make sure that
4 there are critical reforms to the MTA before we put
5 in any new investment. I appreciate how eagerly you
6 signed onto our letter calling for just that. In
7 fact, you were the first person to sign on, and I
8 think I asked you to sign on so you possibly signed
9 on twice. So, I really do appreciate that, and so
10 because of these shared values, I'm proud to support
11 my neighbor to the south. I look forward to your
12 leadership and your partnership over the next four
13 years. Thank you.

14 CLERK: Salamanca.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: I proudly vote
16 for Corey Johnson. Thank you.

17 CLERK: Torres.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Permission to
19 briefly explain my vote?

20 CLERK: So ordered.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I just want to
22 say I feel a deep affinity with Corey. The two of us
23 are products of strong mothers, products of self-
24 education. Corey might be actually the best resident
25 historian in New York City political history in the

2 New York City Council, and I'm under clear
3 instructions from the most important person in my
4 life, my mother, to vote for Corey Johnson so--
5 [background comments]

6 CLERK: Treyger.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Permission to
8 briefly explain my vote.

9 CLERK: So ordered.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: [Speaking
11 foreign language] No, I'm just joking. [laughter]
12 What not that? [Speaking foreign language] That's
13 mine. Okay. I'd like to first commend all of the
14 Speaker candidates including my Brooklyn colleague
15 Council Member Inez Barron. We've all worked very
16 hard. This is not an easy process and I commend both
17 of them for their courageous hard work and their
18 sacrifice including my colleague as well here Mark
19 Levine. As a proud—as a proud son to Ukranian Jewish
20 immigrants, the only Russian speaking member of this
21 body, as a proud former public school teacher who
22 believes in the promise and the power of public
23 institutions, and as the proud son of Brooklyn, my
24 home beloved borough, I proudly cast my vote for
25 Corey Johnson.

2 CLERK: Ulrich.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I'm proud to vote
4 for my good friend Corey Johnson. I also want to
5 offer my heart felt congratulations to our newly re-
6 elected minority leader of the Republican Delegation,
7 Steve Matteo. It will be an honor to serve another
8 four years with him as he leads a delegation of 3-1/2
9 maybe 4. I think we're still working on that, but
10 [background comments, laughter] I don't know that's
11 going to—we'll—we'll know at the next stated how that
12 turns out, but we know for today who the Speaker is,
13 and he's a wonderful guy. He's going to do a
14 terrific job. I'll let Bob speak for himself later.
15 Anyway, but—but Steve is a phenomenal advocate for a
16 small, but very important minority in this body, and
17 I'm proud to call him a friend and colleague, and my
18 leader. Congratulations, Steve. Thank you.

19 CLERK: Vallone.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Permission to
21 explain my vote.

22 CLERK: So ordered.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you. You
24 know, it's—it's a very rare thing when you get to
25 rise in the presence of your parents and the greatest

2 many I've ever known is here today, and he has spent
3 this whole life for each one of us to create this
4 amazing body called the City Council to give us
5 [applause] today, my father Peter Vallone. It was
6 over 30 years ago that he was elected our very first
7 Speaker, and as of 2018, now dad, your-your legacy
8 continues. Your sons have gone on now. For 45 years
9 in a row there has been a Vallone in City Council and
10 that is because of your stewardship, your leadership,
11 your faith, family and country have always been with
12 you. They are in this body today because of you and
13 I proudly vote for my brother who will be the next
14 Speaker who will follow in your footsteps, Corey
15 Johnson. Thank you. [cheers/applause]

16 CLERK: Williams. Van Bramer.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Permission to
18 explain my vote.

19 CLERK: So ordered.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
21 very much. I came out of the closet in 1989, and one
22 of the first things I did was see the documentary
23 film the *Life and Times of Harvey Milk*, and Harvey
24 Milk's victory in the '70s sent a message to all LGBT
25 people that we could fight back, and that we could

2 use political change to affect societal change that
3 would give us the ability to be who we are. And I
4 decided that my life would be about getting involved
5 in politics and empowering the LGBT community through
6 electoral work. The summer of 1991, I spent the
7 entire summer volunteering for Tom Duane, and I was
8 there that night in September of '91 on 8th Avenue in
9 Chelsea at his victory party, and I looked around as
10 a very young gay man and saw older gay men and women
11 crying literally in tears. It was so powerful to
12 elect openly LGBT people to office, and I am proud to
13 be on now five open gay LGBT members from this
14 Council, but also very proud to elevate today an
15 openly gay man to that position of the City Council.
16 It was only about a month ago that Joe Crowley's
17 holiday party that Corey Johnson and I sat down, and
18 I explained to him that I would be proud to vote from
19 him as Speaker because that would mean for me also
20 that part of my work was continuing elevating the
21 LGBT community making sure that so many people all
22 over the city, all over the country could see us in
23 positions of power, strong people, proud people,
24 effective people working not just on LGBT issues, but
25 all issues. I also want to say thank you to Corey's

2 mom because there are few things as beautiful and as
3 important as mother's love for her gay son. Thank
4 you. [applause] And just to end with quote because
5 Harvey Milk all of us or LGBT elected officials stand
6 on the shoulders of all those who came before us
7 including Harvey Milk and he said while he was still
8 alive: If you are not personally free to be yourself
9 in that most important of all human activities, the
10 expression of love, then life itself loses its
11 meaning. Corey, today you joined Harvey Milk and a
12 pantheon of LGBT leaders. I proudly vote for Corey
13 Johnson. Thank you. [applause]

14 CLERK: Yeger.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: May I explain my
16 vote, Mr. Chairman.

17 CLERK: So ordered.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: When your name
19 begins with Y, you quickly learn two things:
20 [laughter] Everything that you wish to say has been
21 said, and keep your remarks brief because I stand
22 between my colleagues and the door. So, I-I will
23 just speak very briefly, and I also know there's a
24 clock on me, Mr. Chairman. To my colleagues, my new
25 colleagues, some are old friends, some are new

2 friends. The eight of you who did not win today who
3 put your names forward to become Speaker of this
4 body, I congratulate you for making me a better
5 Council Member for the next four years. I believe
6 you did, for making this body stronger for the next
7 four years. I believe you did and for engaging in a
8 process that gave us a Speaker who I believe will
9 continue in the great tradition of one of my mentors,
10 Speaker Vallone. Corey has shown himself over the
11 last couple of year as he's campaigned throughout
12 the city as he's talked to people long before I was
13 in the race for City Council, and understating of our
14 neighborhoods or understanding of our issues. And as
15 Council Member Rosenthal said, I've learned more in
16 the last four weeks I think than I learned in the
17 last four years even though I've known Council Member
18 Johnson over the last couple of years, probably over
19 a decade. He is somebody who bring his drive, his
20 compassion, his understanding of every different type
21 of community, the ones that I represent and I believe
22 the ones that Council Member Barron represents
23 throughout city, and he will serve us with honor,
24 with integrity, with love for an institution that you

2 have made better. I cast my vote for you, Corey
3 Johnson. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. [pause]

4 CITY CLERK MCSWEENEY: The Council duly
5 elected as the Speaker of the Council of the City of
6 New York for the term commencing January 1, 2018 and
7 termination December 31, 2021 is Council Member Corey
8 Johnson. Mr. Speaker, you have the floor.

9 [cheers/applause]

10 SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank
11 you all. I love you, mom. Thank you. [cheers/
12 applause] Alright, thank you. Thank you so much.
13 Thank you. [cheers/applause] Thank you. Thank you
14 so much. Thank you. Thank you. Let's get this show
15 on the road. [laughter] I want to say thank you to
16 my friends and my colleagues. I want to thank you
17 all for your support. Words cannot express how
18 honored and humbled I am by the confidence that
19 you've placed in me. I'd like to recognize some of
20 the honored guests who are here with us in the room
21 today, the former Mayor the City of New York David
22 Dinkins. [cheers/applause] Thank you, Mr. Mayor.
23 He's been acknowledged many time and he deserves it,
24 a former Speaker of the New York City Council, Peter
25 Vallone, Sr. [cheers/applause] One of the most

2 decent, honorable, good guys and human beings that
3 I've ever been able to get to know in politics, our
4 incredible Congressman Joe Crowley from Queens I want
5 to recognize, [cheers/applause] and I want to thank
6 Jerry Sweeney and Mice Rice (sic) and Ann Marie
7 Ansalone who are up in the balcony as well.
8 [applause] A former member of this body who now
9 represents our great city in Congress, Congresswoman
10 Yvette Clark who's in the balcony. [cheers/applause]
11 Our Public Advocate Letitia James. [cheers/applause]
12 She and I danced together in the Pride Parade. We're
13 going to keep that going. [laughter] Our Great
14 Comptroller and my former Manhattan Borough President
15 who was very helpful to me when I was on the
16 Community Board before I was elected to the Council
17 Scott Stringer. [cheers/applause] Assembly Member
18 Charles Barron was here. He may have left, but I
19 wanted to recognize him as a former member of this
20 body and as his great wife and our colleagues said,
21 someone who presented himself for Speaker eight years
22 ago. I want to recognize Council Member Barron and
23 his presence here today. [applause] Someone who
24 preceded me in this seat who broke barriers long
25 before I came around who ran for office as an openly

2 gay man who came out about HIV status at the height
3 of the epidemic when protease inhibitors did not
4 exist, when people were dying, he ran the first time
5 and barely lost to Carol Greitzer and then ran the
6 second time, and had an overwhelming victory, the
7 first openly gay member of this body, my friend and a
8 mentor and a family member to me, former State
9 Senator and former Council Member Tom Duane.

10 [cheers/applause] I want to acknowledge former
11 Assemblyman Keith Wright, the Chair of the Manhattan
12 Democratic Party in support. [applause] I want to
13 recognize former Council Member Dr. Una Clark who's
14 sitting up in the balcony. [applause] One of my
15 closest dearest friends, I don't see him her, but I'm
16 sure he's here, former Council Member Jimmy Vacca.

17 [cheers/applause] Where is he? Former Council Member
18 and former Minority leader of this body, Council
19 Member Vinny Ignizio who's here. [applause] Former
20 Council Member Dominick Recchia, Jr. who is in the
21 houses. [cheers/applause] Former Council and the
22 former Chair of the Land Use Committee Council Member
23 David Greenfield who just started a big new important
24 job with the city of New York. Former Council Member
25 and savant when it comes to political history my

2 friend Mark Weprin who's up in the balcony.

3 [applause] Former Council Member Diana Reyna who
4 proceeded Antonio Reynoso in this body. [applause]

5 Former Council Member-at-large, he's not that old ,
6 Council Member Ed Wallace who is here as well.

7 [cheers/applause] I want to acknowledge an incredible
8 labor leader in this city, someone who was one of my
9 biggest supporters, someone who has been thoughtful,
10 honest and an incredible advocate for his members.

11 Someone who I've gotten to know in an incredible way
12 and who I am deeply, deeply grateful for his

13 friendship and support, the President of the Hotel
14 and Motel Trades Council, President Peter Ward who's

15 here. [cheers/applause] I want to acknowledge

16 Gerald Fitzgerald, the President of the Uniformed

17 Firefighters Association, President George Miranda of
18 Teamsters Joint Council 16. [applause] An amazing

19 guy and labor leader in our city the President of the
20 Central Labor Council Vinny Alvarez, [applause] and

21 there are other labor leaders who were not able to be
22 here today, and I look forward to thanking them in

23 person for all they did in this process. Even if

24 they didn't support me, they played a very important

25 role in the process and they play a really important

2 role in the city of New York. So, I want to thank
3 all of you for your dedication and service to New
4 York city. To my good friends Robert, Ydanis, Jimmy,
5 Mark, Donovan, Jumaane who is not here today, Ritchie
6 and Inez, and inspired by each one of you and your
7 dedication to your constituents, your districts and
8 the City of New York. I'm proud to call you friends,
9 and I look forward to learning from you and
10 partnering with you to do great things over the next
11 four years. Some people who are very special to are
12 here today. I don't want to get emotional, but one
13 person in particular my mom, Ann, drove down from
14 Massachusetts to be here. [cheers/applause] My-my
15 family never had it easy, and my mom worked
16 incredibly hard to provide for my sister and me. She
17 taught me the meaning of overcoming adversity and she
18 taught what unconditional love is. She taught me the
19 importance of service to others, and she taught me
20 that fierce women get things done. [laughter] You
21 are my best friend [applause], you are my rock, and I
22 wouldn't be here without you. I love you more than
23 words can possibly describe. Thank you, mom.
24 [applause] To my stepfather Rod, who drover a Pepsi
25 truck day in and day out to provide for his family

2 and who died six months before I was elected to the
3 City Council and to my biological father who was
4 adopted from Seoul South Korea and brought here by an
5 American couple when he was three years old, and he
6 died a few months into my first term who I never had
7 the opportunity to meet, I wish you could both be
8 here, but I want you to know that I love you very
9 much, and I have no regrets. I have so many other
10 people that I could thank. I could spend the next
11 four years naming them, but all of you know who you
12 are and I am eternally grateful for your friendship
13 and for your support. We stand on the shoulders of
14 leaders who came before us. Again, I want to thank
15 former Speaker Peter Vallone who is with us today,
16 Speaker Gifford Miller, Speaker Christine Quinn, and
17 Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for their strong
18 stewardship of this body. It is because of your
19 leadership that my colleagues and I are inheriting a
20 strong inclusive and independent City Council. Over
21 the last four years under the leadership of Mayor de
22 Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito and the members of this
23 Council, our city has made significant progress on a
24 number of critical issues: Free Universal Pre-K for
25 every 4-year-old in New York City; historically low

2 crime rates, and a dramatic decrease in the truly
3 harmful and corrosive practice known as stop and
4 frisk. Tens of thousands of new units of affordable
5 housing, a dramatic drop in traffic fatalities, the
6 lowest unemployment rate in decades, paid sick leave
7 and living wage laws that are benefitting working
8 families without killing a single job in this city,
9 but the problems and challenges we continue to face
10 are of historic proportions. The affordability
11 crisis gripping our city threatens the very existence
12 of our neighborhoods. New Yorkers who have lived in
13 the same community their entire lives now find
14 themselves priced out unable to afford their rent, or
15 even groceries. Many working families are living pay
16 check to pay check. One misshift or one medical
17 expense away from eviction. Our shelter system is
18 overflowing with families who are working full-time
19 jobs, but can't afford homes for themselves and for
20 their children. Mom and pop small businesses are
21 finding themselves unable to compete with deep
22 pocketed chain stores. Subway riders are
23 experiencing the consequences of years of
24 disinvestment in our infrastructure, and shamefully
25 racial disparities persist in nearly every aspect of

2 life including life expectancy, health outcomes,
3 criminal justice and education, and the coming fiscal
4 realities presented by Washington and Albany will
5 only deepen the challenges that we face. These
6 problems are incredibly complex and entrenched, but
7 the future of our city depends on our ability to
8 confront them, and confront them we will. We believe
9 in a New York where every person has access to good
10 paying jobs, affordable housing, quality healthcare,
11 and good public schools. We believe that small
12 business owners with big dreams should be given a
13 fighting chance to succeed without getting evicted
14 from their storefronts. We believe the poorest New
15 Yorkers should have access to public transit that
16 they can afford. We believe that women must be
17 properly represented in government, and that includes
18 here in the New York City Council. [cheers/applause]
19 We believe—we believe that a person's health outcome
20 should not be determined by their zip code. We
21 believe that no person should be stopped and frisked
22 based on the color of their skin. [applause] We
23 believe that in a New York where no—we believe in a
24 New York where no one is targeted simply because of
25 who they are: Muslim New Yorkers, immigrants, the

2 undocumented, Jewish New Yorkers, transgender New
3 Yorkers. We reject hate in all its forms and stand
4 united against bigotry and racism during these
5 difficult times. [applause] There has never been a
6 more important time to ensure that our city has a
7 strong unified and independent Council to take on
8 these challenges. [applause] I know that with the
9 immense talent, wisdom and experience of this body
10 and of all of you, we will prevail, and we must
11 defend these principles while renewing our focus on
12 the hyper local issues that our constituents ask us
13 for help with everyday. Residents of all
14 neighborhood are entitled to clean and safe streets,
15 well maintained public parks and city agencies that
16 are actually responsive to their needs. Running for
17 Speaker took me to nearly every neighborhood in all
18 five boroughs. If I ever write a book about the
19 Speaker's race, which I don't think I ever will,
20 [laughter] I'm going to call it the *End of the Line*
21 because I rode literally every subway line to the
22 final stop many, many times. I don't own a car. One
23 thing that struck me as I spoke with New Yorkers
24 around the city was how much their Council Members
25 mean to them. People care deeply about their

2 neighborhoods and they see their local Council Member
3 as their neighborhood champion, their advocate down
4 at City Hall. We are the people's house, the voice
5 of millions of New Yorkers who wake up every single
6 morning in Brooklyn, in Queens, in the Bronx on
7 Staten Island and Manhattan. New Yorkers who had to
8 work or school or church to build their futures brick
9 by brick, block by block. Their voices, your voices
10 need and deserve to be heard. We have one mission:
11 To better the lives of our constituents who day and
12 night place their trust in us to represent their
13 interests and advocate for their needs. We must not
14 and will not forget who sent us here. We are the
15 bodega owner in Bay Ridge forced to choose between
16 the lights on, and buying his daughter's textbooks.
17 We are the teachers at PS-150 in Sunnyside Queens who
18 nurture the hearts and minds of their children, lay
19 awake at night wondering how to afford necessary
20 supplies for the classroom while still making their
21 own rent. We are the senior citizen in Hells Kitchen
22 who wonders if next year, she'll be able to climb up
23 to her fourth floor walk-up. We are the high school
24 graduate in the Bronx who gets a scholarship to her
25 dream college. We are the homeowners on the southern

2 most tip of Staten Island--hear that, Burley?--who
3 keep watch for the next storm and wonder if we are
4 truly ready. We carry these voices in us. Their
5 stories motivate us to work harder, to sleep even
6 less and to be ever more responsive to their needs.
7 If we become unmoored and lose our way, we need only
8 listen to the voices of those who we represent to
9 correct our course. At this time, 32 years ago, in
10 this very Chamber in this very room, the City Council
11 considered legislation that would finally outlaw
12 discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, in
13 housing, employment and public accommodations. As
14 the AIDS epidemic was decimating and ravaging the gay
15 community, supporters and opponents of the bill
16 engage in a long and bitter fight in this very
17 Chamber. The City Council passed that bill.
18 Opponent said the bill would lead to societal
19 acceptance of the LGBT community and guess what?
20 They were right. [cheers/applause] Let us continue
21 to take on the important issues that may be
22 considered controversial today, but will be
23 indisputable tomorrow. Let us continue to use the
24 power of this body to expand opportunity for all, and
25 be the voice for the voiceless, the champions of the

2 most vulnerable. Let us continue to be a source of
3 light, and love and hope in this very turbulent
4 world. Dear colleagues, I am incredibly honored by
5 the confidence that you have placed in me. I have the
6 chills saying it. To Adrienne, Allen, Alika, Andy,
7 Andy, Antonio, Barry, Ben, Bill, Brad, Carlina,
8 Carlos, Chaim, Costa, Daneek, Daniel, Danny, Deborah,
9 Diana, Donovan, Eric, Francisco, Fernando, Helen,
10 Inez, Jimmy, Joe, Jumaane, Justin, Kalman, Karen. I
11 love you, Karen. [laughter] Lori, Margaret, Mark
12 G., Mark L. and Mark T. [laughter] Mathieu, Paul,
13 Peter, Rafael L. and Rafael S., Ritchie and Rob,
14 Robert, Rory, Reverend Ruben, Sr., Steve, Steven,
15 Vanessa and Ydanis. I don't know if I could do that
16 in a memorized way. I want you to know that in good
17 times and in bad, through thick and thin, I will
18 always have your back. Those of you who supported
19 me, those who didn't support me, those who ran for
20 Speaker, and those who have been here in this body,
21 and those who are new, I will have your back in this
22 body. [cheers/applause] I want to thank you for
23 your support. I want to thank you for your
24 friendship. I want to get to work, and lastly I want
25 to end just with this story, which I didn't plan on

2 telling today. You know, my mom is my best friend,
3 as you all know, and—and really the—the love of my—of
4 my life and I talked a little bit about my growing
5 up, and I don't want my actually dear Republican
6 friends to be offended by this story because they are
7 incredibly valuable members of this body and close
8 friends of mine. When I came out at 16-years-old, I
9 was suicidal, despondent, and didn't want to live.
10 I told my mother that I was gay, she told me that she
11 loved unconditionally without hesitating. A few
12 months later, the patriarch of our family, my
13 grandfather who had ten children—my mom is one of
14 ten—and had nearly 60 grandchildren who helped raise
15 me. My mom dropped me off at his house for me to
16 give him the news that I was gay, and he was an 82-
17 year-old, old Irish Catholic guy. He went to mass
18 every single day, and I walked into his home, and
19 when I walked in he said, Corey, sit down. We're
20 going to make you supper. So, I sat down and he
21 looked at me and he said, What's the matter? And I
22 said, Oh, grandpa, I have something to tell you, and
23 he said, You're killing me. Spit out and I said,
24 well, I—I told mom and dad that I'm gay, and he says,
25 Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I thought you were going to

2 tell me you were a Republican. [laughter] He says,
3 You can be gay. You just have to be a Democrat.
4 [applause] Well, I look up, well, grandpa, I've
5 lived up to that end of the bargain. I am gay and I
6 am a Democrat, and each one of us in this body has a
7 story like that. Every single one of us no matter
8 where we've come from, no matter what our unique life
9 experiences, that is the great thing about our city.
10 It's the most diverse city in the world. I came here
11 on a wing and on a prayer, and on a dream with two
12 bags at the age of 19 years old knowing two people,
13 not knowing where I was going to live. Each one of
14 us had that experience. This body is an incredible
15 body because of the work and influence and power that
16 we have to shape and change and support the lives of
17 8-1/2 million New Yorkers. I look forward to doing
18 that with all of you. Thank you, very, very much.
19 [cheers/applause] Mr. um-

20 CLERK: Quiet, please, quiet please.

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet please. Keep it
22 down.

23 SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Mr. Clerk,
24 pursuant to Rule 3.00 of the Rules of the City
25 Council, I hereby--I hereby call upon Letitia James,

2 Public Advocate for the City of New York to serve as
3 Acting President pro tempore of this body.

4 [cheers/applause] [pause]

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Congratulations,
6 Mr. Speaker. Messages and papers from the Mayor.

7 CLERK: None.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Communication
9 from city, count and borough offices.

10 CLERK: None.

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
12 Chambers, please.

13 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down, please.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Petitions and
15 Communications.

16 CLERK: M3 Nomination and election of the
17 Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections.

18 SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: I nominate the
19 following Council Members as members of the Committee
20 on Rules, Privileges and Elections of the City
21 Council: As temporary chair of this body, I'd like
22 to nominate Council Member Rory Lancman. I'd like to
23 also nominate Council Member Adrienne Adams, Margaret
24 Chin, Robert Cornegy, Rafael Espinal, Vanessa Gibson,
25 myself, Corey Johnson, Karen Koslowitz, Minority

2 Leader Steven Matteo, Ritchie Torres and Mark
3 Treyger. [pause] Oh, for this roll call the
4 question on the floor is whether the Council would
5 agree with and adopt such nominations. Will the
6 Clerk call the roll.

7 CLERK: Adams.

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS #1: [interposing]

9 Quiet, please.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS #2: Keep it down,
11 please.

12 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: #1: Keep it quite,
13 please.

14 CLERK: Council Member Adams.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I vote aye.

16 CLERK: Ampry-Samuel.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Aye.

18 CLERK: Ayala.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Aye.

20 CLERK: Barron.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye.

22 CLERK: Brannan.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye.

24 CLERK: Borelli.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Aye.

2 CLERK: Cabrera.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

4 CLERK: Chin.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye.

6 CLERK: Cohen.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

8 CLERK: Constantinides.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye.

10 CLERK: Cornegy.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye.

12 CLERK: Cumbo.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Aye.

14 CLERK: Deutsch.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye.

16 CLERK: Diaz.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Aye.

18 CLERK: Dromm.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

20 CLERK: Espinal.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Aye.

22 CLERK: Eugene.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

24 CLERK: Gibson.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: I vote aye.

2 CLERK: Gjonaj.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Aye.

4 CLERK: GRODENCHIK.

5 CLERK: Holden.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Aye.

7 CLERK: Kallos.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

9 CLERK: King.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Aye.

11 CLERK: Koo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

13 CLERK: Koslowitz.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Aye,

15 CLERK: Lancman.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Aye.

17 CLERK: Lander.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye.

19 CLERK: Levin.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.

21 CLERK: Levine.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye.

23 CLERK: Maisel.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

25 CLERK: Menchaca.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yes.

3 CLERK: Miller.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Aye.

5 CLERK: Moya.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye.

7 CLERK: Perkins.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Aye.

9 CLERK: Powers.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Aye.

11 CLERK: Reynoso.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Aye.

13 CLERK: Richards.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Aye.

15 CLERK: Rivera.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Aye.

17 CLERK: Rodriguez.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

19 CLERK: Rosenthal.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Aye.

21 CLERK: Salamanca.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Aye.

23 CLERK: Torres.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Aye.

25 CLERK: Treyger.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Aye.

3 CLERK: Ulrich.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Aye.

5 CLERK: Vallone.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Aye.

7 CLERK: Van Bramer.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

9 CLERK: Yeger.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Aye.

11 CLERK: Matteo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

13 CLERK: Johnson.

14 SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Aye.

15 CLERK: Speaker Johnson. Excuse me.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SPEAKER JOHNSON: I vote

17 aye. It's okay Billy. I have to get used to it,

18 too. [pause]

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: The item passed

20 49 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative.

21 M4 Designation of Minority Leader. Mr.

22 Speaker.

23 SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: After a duly

24 convened meeting—this is for the Republican Minority

25

2 Leader, I believe. I want to call upon Minority
3 Leader Steven Matteo to make brief remarks.

4 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: Thank you, Mr.
5 Speaker. First, I would like to welcome back my
6 returning colleagues and wish everyone a happy,
7 healthy and safe New York. I'd also like to welcome
8 our new colleagues who are standing in this Chamber
9 for the first time as duly elected Council Members. I
10 remember how that felt almost as if it was yesterday.
11 It's inspiring and it's an unforgettable feeling. My
12 advice to you is to soak in this moment. Also,
13 remember when you bang your head against the wall
14 during budget hearings that seem to have no end. I
15 look forward to getting to know each of you, to
16 working with you, and certainly to opposing
17 legislation that you introduce. [laughter] That is
18 a joke. Not really. [laughter] I want to thank my
19 Republican colleagues for once again choosing me to
20 lead the Minority Delegation. I am humbled and
21 honored by your confidence. While we are small in
22 number, the Republicans in this body play a vital
23 role as strong, but respectful voices of dissent and
24 fierce advocates for everyday New Yorkers, homeowners
25 and the middle-class, and for all those who do not

2 believe that more government is the solution to every
3 perceived problem. Picking on the veterans tax
4 exemption we passed last year, this delegation will
5 continue our goal of providing much needed property
6 tax relief. I know many of our colleagues across the
7 aisle share our priority to reform our city's
8 inequitable property tax system, and to provide more
9 relief to families who are feeling the squeeze of the
10 skyrocketing cost of living. We hope to work with our
11 new Speaker and our colleagues to make property tax
12 relief a reality in 2018. For me personally, I look
13 forward to continuing the venerable tradition of the
14 City Council Minority Leader and working with my
15 colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help
16 shape this body's-

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
18 [shushing for quiet]

19 MINORITY LEADER MATTEO: --policies and
20 legislation. This mantle is held with distinction by
21 my predecessors from Staten Island, Vinny Ignizio and
22 our now Borough President and my predecessor and
23 political mentor Jimmy Oddo. Before I comment about
24 our next Speaker, I also want to thank all the
25 Speaker candidates who took the time to meet with me,

2 and our delegation to discuss their ideas about
3 leading this body for the coming four years. We
4 appreciated your willingness to seek common ground
5 with us, even with our considerable ideological
6 differences. For that we thank you and we look
7 forward to working together in our new terms. I
8 would also like to thank my wonderful mom who is home
9 watching. I'd also like to thank my amazing wife
10 Annie, and to my dad who is looking proudly from
11 heaven. I couldn't be here without you and the rest
12 of my family. So, I wanted to thank you. I love you
13 all. Our delegation is always put in a rather
14 awkward situation when it comes to the Speakers race.
15 Let's face it, the Republic Delegation is going to
16 vote for someone we will disagree most of the time.
17 So, the race comes down to more than simply
18 qualifications and policy positions for us. It comes
19 down to someone who we—we will—we believe are able to
20 work with us on those issues with which we can agree.
21 For me personally, it also came down to someone who
22 has already proven he can do just that. Well before
23 I became Minority Leader, and well before the Speaker
24 campaign began, Corey Johnson and I developed not
25 just a great professional relationship, but a

2 personal bond. I have come to trust and respect him,
3 to know his decency as a person, and despite our
4 ideological differences, to appreciate his commitment
5 to this body and to making the city a better place to
6 life for everyone. I believe in this institution. I
7 believe in the important work we do on a daily basis
8 whether it's passing legislation, passing a budget,
9 providing constituent services or holding agencies
10 accountable. I believe it is our responsibility to
11 improve the quality of life of those that we
12 represent. I know that our new Speaker believes that
13 as well. I believe his hard work and dedication as a
14 member and throughout the Speaker's race is a sign of
15 things to come. I know that we will work to find
16 common ground to achieve our shared goals for our
17 constituents. As his friend, I'm very happy to have
18 been able to cast my vote for Corey as Speaker of
19 this Council. Our friendship certainly transcends
20 politics. As the Minority Leader, I am confident
21 that he will treat our delegation fairly and with an
22 open mind, and that he will continue to work together
23 on those issues upon which we do agree. If nothing
24 else, history is on our side. The combination of the
25 Minority Leader from the 50th Council District and

2 the Speaker from the 3rd Council District has
3 produced some pretty good results from our
4 constituents in the past. While Corey and I have big
5 shoes to fill, I am confident we can build on that
6 success and I look forward to getting to work on
7 behalf of our constituents and all New Yorkers, and
8 with that, I congratulate my friend Corey Johnson for
9 Speaker. [applause]

10 CLERK: M5, Designation of Minority Whip.

11 SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Received,
12 Ordered, Printed and filed. This Charter Meeting of
13 January 3, 2018, is hereby adjourned.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: We're adjourned.

15 SPEAKER COREY JOHNSON: Thank you all
16 very much. [gavel] [cheers/applause]

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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 January 15, 2018