

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

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June 25, 2018
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm, 14th Fl

B E F O R E: Costa G. Constantinides
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.
Stephen T. Levin
Carlos Menchaca
Donovan J. Richards
Eric A. Ulrich
Kalman Yeger

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

A P P E A R A N C E S

Anastasios Georgelis - Deputy Commissioner for Water and Sewer Operation in the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Michael DeLoach - Deputy Commissioner of Public Affairs and other DEP staff

April Mclver - Executive Director of the Plumbing Foundation City of New York.

Arthur Clark - Training Director for Plumbers Local Union Number One

Marcia O'Brien - President of the 140th Drive and Community Block Association

Jacque Campbell - Community Board 13 Member - Founder/President of the Rosedale Blocks Committee Association

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Gavel. Good
3 afternoon, I am Council Member Costa Constantinides.
4 Chair of the Environmental Protection Committee and
5 today the committee will hear three bills addressing
6 sewer system maintenance. I want to recognize first,
7 we have two of the colleagues who is on this
8 committee, Council Member Rafael Espinal from
9 Brooklyn and Council Member Carlos Menchaca from
10 Brooklyn. Thank you both for being here. Today
11 we'll be hearing INTRO 424 in relation to reducing
12 sewer system backups. INTRO 425 in relation to
13 requiring the city to prepare a plan to prevent sewer
14 backups and INTRO 268 in relation to backflow
15 prevention devices. The City Department of
16 Environmental Protection (DEP) is responsible for
17 managing the city's sanitary sewer system which
18 includes fourteen in city sewage treatment plants and
19 7500 miles of sewer infrastructure conveying 1.3
20 billion gallons of sewage every day. In addition to
21 the identified sewage infrastructure, the DEP
22 maintains approximately 148,000 catch basins. The
23 DEP operates the system pursuant to the New York
24 State Department of Environmental Conservation State
25

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2 Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit and
3 recently more proactive and maintain the system with
4 digital tools and innovative practices. The SPDES
5 permit mandates that the system be properly operated
6 and maintained in accordance with the terms of the
7 permit. If the system is not properly maintained,
8 people are exposed to sewage backups in basements,
9 streets and yards. In August of 2016, the US
10 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that the
11 DEP experienced an excessive number of sewage backups
12 between 2011 and 2015, more than 17,000. There are
13 also numerous instances of repeat backups in the same
14 locations due to capacity issues or infrastructure
15 maintenance. Sewage can contain a number of
16 biological hazards including bacteria, fungi,
17 parasites, viruses, bloodborne viruses. Exposure to
18 sewer backups can result in a variety of adverse
19 human health effects stemming from exposure to
20 pathogens such as E.coli, shigella, salmonella,
21 giardia, cryptosporidium, lamblia, and hepatitis A
22 and B. That's almost as hard as saying my last name.
23 On August 31, 2016, due to a significant number of
24 confirmed and unconfirmed sewage backups, the EPA
25 issued an administrative compliance order based on

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2 its conclusion that DEP's waste water treatment
3 violated the clean water act. The EPA ordered the
4 DEP to prepare an operation and maintenance plan for
5 its collection system and that was approvable and
6 then upon approval immediately commenced
7 implementation of the approved O&M plan. In May of
8 2017, the EPA issued a sewer backup prevention and
9 response plan. The plan focuses on three areas,
10 operation and maintenance, grease, and a new
11 proactive data driven sewer inspection program called
12 Targeted Sewer Pilot Inspection (TSIP). The sewer
13 backup prevention and response plan does not address
14 the presence of tree routes in customers lines or the
15 department infrastructure. There's been ongoing
16 conversations regarding who should be responsible for
17 sewage backups resulting from intrusions in the sewer
18 lines from city owned trees. DEP determined grease
19 was the root cause of the most confirmed sewer
20 backups. There is also evidence that broken catch
21 basins may have had an impact on sewer backups.
22 Local law 48 of 2015 required DEP to inspect all
23 catch basins annually. By the end of 2017, DEP had
24 inspected 98.3 of the more than 148,000 basins in the
25 city. The first mandated report pursuant to local

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2 law 48 of 2015 identified thousands of catch basins
3 that were clogged and broken. The most
4 malfunctioning catch basins were located in southeast
5 Queens with community districts 11 and 13 showing the
6 highest numbers in the city followed by community
7 district 12. The EPA suggested DEP should further
8 explore the cause of sewage backups to ascertain if
9 any relationship between the increased sewage backups
10 and clogs of malfunctioning basins. Regarding
11 backflow devices, they prevent cross-connections
12 between potable and nonpotable water in order to
13 carry out its responsibility pursuant to the public
14 health law. DEP as a supplier of water must
15 determine if the facility poses a potential hazard to
16 the cities water supply. If a facility should pose a
17 hazard due to its operations, the DEP commissioner is
18 required to direct the installation by the owner of
19 an approved backflow device prevention system. INTRO
20 424 require the DEP to take maintenance measures
21 needed to assure when a sewer backup occurs more than
22 once at the same location within a twelve-month
23 period. The portion of the sewer system causing the
24 second or subsequent backup identified and cleaned
25 within ten days of such subsequent backup. INTRO 425

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2 would require by December of this year the DEP
3 Commissioner submit a plan to prevent sewer backups
4 to the Mayor and the Council. Such plan is to be
5 posted on the DEP website and INTRO 268 would improve
6 transparency and efficiency and the installation of
7 backflow devices and enforcement for failure to
8 install backflow devices. Thank you to our Attorney
9 Tamara Swanston and our Policy Analyst Nadia Johnson
10 for help putting this hearing together today and now
11 we will hear from the administration to be sworn in.

12 ADMINISTRATION: Will you please raise
13 your right hand. Do you swear or affirm to tell the
14 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth
15 today?

16 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I do.

17 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright,
18 please begin your testimony.

19 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Good afternoon
20 Chairman Constantinides and members of the committee.
21 I am Anastasios Georgelis, Deputy Commissioner for
22 water and sewer operations in the New York City
23 Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). With
24 me is Michael DeLoach, Deputy Commissioner of Public
25 Affairs and other DEP staff. Thank you for this

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2 opportunity to testify on these three bills.

3 Introduction 268 relating to reporting on backflow

4 prevention devices and Introductions 424 and 425

5 related to sewer backups. The Bureau of Water and

6 Sewer Operations (BWSO) oversees approximately 14,000

7 miles of water and sewer maintenance and 150,000

8 catch basins in New York City. Our work includes

9 day-to-day management of the underground water and

10 sewer infrastructure, emergency response to events

11 like water main breaks as well as capital planning

12 and oversight of water and sewer infrastructure

13 projects. INTRO 268 of 2018 would repeal and replace

14 existing provisions in the administrative code

15 relating to reporting on the installation and testing

16 of backflow prevention devices BPD's. Protecting New

17 York City's public water supply is of paramount

18 importance and backflow prevention is one aspect of

19 affording this protection. I would like to mention

20 that DEP's extensive water quality testing and

21 monitoring program is the frontline defense in

22 insuring the quality of water in the distribution

23 system. New York City tests its drinking water in

24 the distribution system for approximately 240

25 chemical constituents, well above regulatory

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2 requirements. We perform more than 1,100 tests
3 daily, 34,000 monthly and 400,000 on an annual basis
4 on over 36,000 samples collected from about 1,000
5 sampling stations throughout the city. Test results
6 are reported to our regulators and are summarized in
7 our annual report on the quality of New York City's
8 drinking water. While we agree with the intent of
9 this bill, we would like to work with the Council
10 regarding new reporting requirements related to
11 backflow prevention devices and replacing subdivision
12 d of section 24-343.1 of the Administrative Code.
13 DEP has developed a comprehensive cross-connection
14 control program, in which we first concentrate on
15 those facilities representing the highest risk of
16 possible contamination of our public water supply
17 through cross-connections. To assist building
18 owners, we're constantly upgrading our program
19 guidelines. Most recently in May of 2017 we have
20 made extensive efforts in the identification,
21 inspection, enforcement, and reporting of backflow
22 prevention devices. Since 2012, we have reorganized
23 the program by setting up individual units within the
24 BWSO that focus on specific areas of expertise. The
25 three units are inspection, enforcement, and cross-

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2 connection review. Our active program far exceeds
3 our commitment to New York State Department of Health
4 and we continue our progress towards insuring that
5 any facility that requires a backflow prevention
6 device has one. DEP also maintains an active
7 database comprising records on 104,258 properties, up
8 from 101,033 properties in my testimony last October.
9 The number of properties tracked in this database is
10 dynamic and changes due to the nature of the
11 properties usage profile. We have been compiling
12 more detailed and current information about the
13 number of buildings in the city that require backflow
14 prevention devices via both data mining and field
15 inspections. Small residential properties such as
16 one to four family homes are not a subject of
17 concern. Our approach has been a target, our
18 inspection resources more efficiently and by
19 identifying the types of commercial and residential
20 properties that are most likely to pose a risk. Our
21 inspection unit uses a JIS mapping system along
22 information from the Department of City Planning that
23 generate a citywide map that targets potentially
24 high-risk areas and buildings. Each year we aim to
25 inspect 4,000 properties citywide. For calendar year

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2 2017, we conducted 4,569 inspections. The results
3 from these inspections were 1,104 properties did not
4 require a device. The remaining 3,458 properties
5 required actions from our enforcement unit. In
6 calendar year 2017, the enforcement unit sent 2,263
7 Commissioners orders. Of which, 1,882 properties
8 were newly notified of the need to install a backflow
9 prevention device and 381 were for the need to
10 replace a broken device, install an additional
11 device, or plans previously approved but no record of
12 an installed device. In calendar year 2017, 956
13 NOV's were issued for failure to install a device.
14 Additionally, the enforcement unit processed 6,440
15 NOV's for failure to conduct the annual test. As it
16 relates, the review process in calendar year 2017,
17 our review unit reviewed 6,546 initial test reports
18 for newly installed devices and an additional 41,172
19 annual test reports for existing devices. We
20 continue to enhance our knowledge by employing
21 inspectors in the field to do a labor-intensive job
22 of inspecting previously identified properties. As
23 mentioned earlier, we agree with the intent of this
24 bill and we would like to work with the Council
25 regarding new reporting requirements. Moving now to

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2 INTRO 425, which would require that by December 31,
3 2018, DEP submit and post on its website a plan to
4 prevent sewer backups SBU's and INTRO 424, which
5 would amend the administrative code to require that
6 where an SBU occurs more than once at the same
7 location within a twelve-month period, the portion of
8 the sewer system causing the second where subsequent
9 backup is identified and cleaned within ten days of
10 such subsequent backup. Over the last decade, DEP
11 has shifted from a reactive to a proactive data
12 driven approach to operate and to maintaining the
13 sewer system. DEP employs the principals of adaptive
14 management to continually improve our sewer
15 maintenance program while balancing our overarching
16 responsibility to deliver high-quality drinking water
17 and treat waste water every day in an affordable and
18 sustainable manner. DEP also targets its efforts on
19 reducing the amounts of fats, oil, and grease (FOG)
20 discharge to the sewer system. These efforts include
21 regulations that mandate the use of grease into
22 sectors in certain commercial establishments such as,
23 restaurants as well as extensive public outreach to
24 inform New Yorkers about actions they can take to
25 prevent the improper disposal of grease into the

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2 system, a primary cause of SBU's. DEP stepped up its
3 FOG outreach efforts in 2015 to inform the public
4 about grease problems in sewer infrastructure. To
5 date, we have reached over 80,000 households in
6 targeted communities throughout a combination of
7 activities including door-to-door canvassing and
8 workshops with community organizations and local
9 houses of worship. Additionally, our education staff
10 conducts classroom and assembly programs that has
11 developed a special curriculum for teachers on the
12 topic of grease and its proper disposal. We have
13 established a compliance consultative program focused
14 just on food service establishments and DEP has just
15 recently initiated a behavioral change advertising
16 campaign with the Department of Health and Mental
17 Hygiene to further educate residents in all
18 neighborhoods. We have also reached out to other
19 utilities to ensure we are using the best practices
20 of the industry to reduce FOG to the sewer system.
21 Throughout the city there are park it areas that
22 experience repeat sewer backup complaints. In these
23 cases, we use analytic tools to identify streets that
24 have a higher frequency of sewer backups. Once we
25 identify these streets, we conduct a detailed

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2 inspection to identify the root cause of the backups.
3 Since 2011, we have done this robust analysis on over
4 2,500 locations. Once a root cause identified we
5 employ a targeted programmatic cleaning program to
6 resolve this issue and monitor the site to ensure the
7 sewer continues to function. If further issues arise
8 on a site within twelve months, DEP will employ an
9 even greater level of evaluation to identify what
10 other contributing factors maybe causing the sewer
11 backups. Since 2012, DEP has done this level of
12 analysis on 541 locations. Over the last ten years
13 we have seen a 49% decrease in total sewer backup
14 complaints citywide and a 70% decrease in the number
15 of confirmed sewer backups citywide. Starting in
16 July 2017, we began a three-year pilot program to
17 conduct targeted sewer inspections in parts of the
18 city that have a relatively higher rate of SBU's.
19 The targeted areas we have chosen for this pilot
20 program are Brooklyn Community Boards 13 and 15 and
21 Queens Community Boards 12 and 13. We are currently
22 finishing year one of the pilot program and have
23 completed our inspection target of 10,000 sewer
24 segments. We will use the information glean from
25 these 10,000 sewer segments and those we inspect over

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2 the next two years of the pilot to deepen our
3 understanding of the traits specific to these
4 locations and what has caused the repeat complaints.

5 Together INTRO's 424 and 425 mandate identification
6 of locations with more than one SBU during a twelve-
7 month period and ensuring cleaning within ten days.

8 However, our three-year pilot incorporates escalating
9 levels of response and investigation, which will
10 allow us to accurately determine the causes of the
11 increased rate of SBU's in our targeted areas.

12 Understanding the root cause is a prerequisite to
13 developing the solution. The most effective remedies
14 flow from understanding the problem. The static
15 timelines of 424 and 425 will not allow this. We
16 have committed considerable resources to this pilot
17 and have collected a years' worth of data.

18 Legislation requiring us to shift focus to locations
19 with less frequent SBU's will interfere with the
20 progress of our pilot. We must be allowed to
21 properly diagnose the root causes and then develop
22 appropriately targeted remedies which can involve
23 cleaning, flushing, degreasing, debris removal and
24 vactoring to name a few. To do otherwise is
25 backwards. We need time to complete our analysis of

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2 the data and we need to continue our methodology as
3 is to keep the integrity of our data. We will be
4 glad to share our insights into root causes, best
5 remedies, and best timelines as our pilot progresses.
6 However, we ask the Council not to require that we
7 experiment with arbitrary cures before we finish
8 identifying the disease. Given DEP's robust
9 commitment of staff and resources that has resulted
10 in demonstrated success in continuing reduced SBU's,
11 we ask that the Council defer actions on INTRO's 424
12 and 425 until the completion of the three-year pilot
13 in 2020. We are committed to keeping the committee
14 apprised of our efforts and findings and welcome your
15 comments and recommendations going forward. Again,
16 thank you for this opportunity to testify. I will be
17 glad to answer any questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I recognized
19 that we're joined by Council Member Kalman Yeger from
20 Brooklyn as well. Alright, so how much is the budget
21 for your outreach relating to degreasing?

22 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Ah, I don't have
23 that figure.

24 MICHAEL DELOACH: I don't think we have a
25 total figure based on salary and all the different

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2 costs that go into it. We can definitely pull it
3 together for you.

4 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, I
5 guess we want to know how much – what sort of
6 outreach we're doing and where? How much we're
7 spending? Is that something – we just went through a
8 whole budget process. Is this something we have to
9 increase in the future? You know, how often are we
10 going before Community Boards and where? Because, I
11 mean I know that in the past you said that the grease
12 is part of the largest reason for backups correct?

13 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yeah, about 70%.

14 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, if that
15 is the cause of the backups then I would hope that
16 we're proportionally spending dollars to do that
17 outreach considering you know, its 70% that we're
18 saying right?

19 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, correct and a lot
20 of the – we focused a lot on southeast Queens on the
21 outreach but we're working with DOH right now on
22 doing a bigger campaign citywide to make sure that we
23 educate a bigger you know section of this.

24 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, what
25 have we've been doing in southeast Queens?

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2 MICHAEL DELOACH: We've been going to
3 community board meetings, NYCHA meetings, we've been
4 in the classroom, their education department
5 educating young people. We have giveaways called
6 Cease the Grease that have all kinds of things you
7 can use to get rid of grease properly. We go to all
8 kinds of you know community events, family days etc.

9 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: As we're all
10 doing. We're doing all that sort of outreach?

11 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, we've done a
12 done, so I can pull together sort of an overview and
13 give you the - give a specific staff of going out and
14 doing it so.

15 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Great, if
16 you could send me sort of an overview of what they've
17 been doing over the last year or, so we can kind of
18 look at it as a committee, thank you.

19 MICHAEL DELOACH: Absolutely, sure.

20 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uhm, how
21 much is caused by debris?

22 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I don't have that
23 figure in front of me but after grease, debris is the
24 next largest bucket.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Are there
3 things that we can do that are avoidable in relation
4 to debris, or its just people - it's coming from our
5 catch basins or where is this debris coming from?
6 Flushing things down the toilet I mean, where is the
7 debris coming from?

8 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: It could be stuff
9 getting into our system through an open manhole or
10 something, but it's just as the sewage goes through
11 the process of traveling to the waste water treatment
12 plants, sometimes it's just settlement of whatever is
13 in the flow.

14 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Do we have
15 any idea why people are either placing debris or
16 grease into our systems? Is it lack of knowledge?
17 Is it - so what are our thoughts on why this is going
18 on the way that it is?

19 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, I just think
20 it's behaviorally for the most part and people when
21 they have grease in their kitchen, they like to
22 dispose it probably the easiest way they can and be
23 pouring it down the drain, which is what we'd like to
24 encourage them not to do and try to package it
25 somehow where they could dispose of it properly.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Have we
3 thought about doing something on the subways or the
4 buses to tell people that's a bad idea?

5 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, that's what we're
6 working with DOH now to do a big campaign with all
7 those different components.

8 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And when do
9 we expect to see that?

10 MICHAEL DELOACH: At the earliest
11 probably like fall, but I'm assuming probably the
12 beginning of next year. We're just starting to put
13 an RFP together, creative team to help us sort of
14 best describe it but its going to be substantial. I
15 don't think we finalized the budget yet but it's
16 definitely going to be a big campaign that we'll
17 again, reach citywide.

18 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: What's our
19 social media effort when it comes to this?

20 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, I mean our social
21 media doesn't reach - isn't as efficient or effective
22 as some of the other agencies but we definitely are
23 posting about things and you know, educating people
24 about how to properly dispose but the main thing that
25 we're doing is going out into the communities and

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2 giving the stuff that holds the grease so that you
3 know, we think largely people don't know what to
4 actually do with it, so we're trying to give people
5 something to use to put it into and that's - we're
6 going to continue to expand that and do more of that.

7 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, I mean
8 for the work that we've done this far, how would you
9 sort of feel the impact is of your you know, Cease
10 the Grease campaign in southeast Queens and other
11 areas that you focused?

12 MICHAEL DELOACH: It's hard - I can't
13 quantify it in terms of actual results in the system,
14 but I do know that just you know going out and being
15 around we've engaged with so many people that you
16 know that people are being educated and are aware. I
17 don't know how it actually translate into actual
18 infrastructure.

19 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, we have had a
20 decrease in the number of SBU's over the decade,
21 SBU's have dropped. Sewer backup complaints have
22 dropped about 70% over the last ten years. You know,
23 I can't point my figure exactly that's it changing
24 behavior, cleaning methods, the way we're approaching
25 it, but I think it's a combination of everything.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, I
3 mean so – does the current mapping system
4 applications provide for adequate display of sanitary
5 sewer system components and applicable features?

6 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: If we have a map
7 of our sewer system?

8 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Hmm, hmm.

9 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yeah.

10 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I mean, is
11 it an updated map? Do we feel good about where that
12 map currently is and how we're able to sort of track
13 what's going on?

14 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yeah, we have a
15 robust GIA system that could show us all our sewer
16 infrastructure.

17 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, and
18 I mean it's a question I have relating to my last
19 question on this and then I'll just quickly do some
20 backflow stuff and then I'll pass it on. I see that
21 we're joined by Council Member Richards from Queens.
22 Another Queens member in the house, I was feeling a
23 little lonely but how do we reconcile the large
24 number of complaints and issues in southeast Queens
25

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2 with also the large number of catch basins that are
3 inoperable there?

4 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, in southeast
5 Queens the catch basins that you refer to as
6 inoperable, a lot of them are seepage basins which
7 aren't connected to the sanitary or the storm sewer.
8 They were just big dry wells basically and the water
9 would just percolate into the ground. Now with the
10 big push for bringing storm infrastructures in
11 southeast Queens, the Mayor committed to spending
12 \$1.9 billion, that's where we're going to actually
13 start building the storm infrastructure in southeast
14 Queens and that should help a lot with the flooding
15 and actually have the catch basins connected to our
16 storm sewer, which currently they're not.

17 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, which is
18 a coincidence that we have these two large - these
19 sort of numbers and of large numbers of catch basins
20 not working and a large number of backups?

21 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yeah,
22 unfortunately in southeast Queens, some of the
23 infrastructure has struggled to keep up with the pace
24 of development and with this big push on the storm
25 infrastructure, it's going to come. It should help

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2 with the flooding and the catch basin issues. In
3 addition, we have realized that in certain parts of
4 southeast Queens, we have problems with sewer backups
5 and that's why we targeted our pilot program to
6 incorporate Community Boards 12 and 13 in Queens.

7 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And I'll
8 come back to that piece on my second round. I'll
9 just go into the issue of the backflow devices. I
10 know the big issue for me is that we are seeing - I
11 know that you had said that your one to three, four
12 family homes are not our concern, but the larger
13 buildings are. We see development all over New York
14 City. Large buildings going up on a consistent
15 basis. How are we keeping up like inspecting about
16 4,000 buildings a year and our number is about
17 150,000, so how are we planning on keeping up with
18 the need with so many new buildings coming online,
19 large buildings that could potentially need backflow
20 devices? If only doing 4,000 a year, how are we sort
21 of keeping up with the pace here?

22 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, after 1987
23 it's required that any new building coming up that
24 requires a backflow prevention device has one
25 installed.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay.

3 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: And prior to that,
4 DEP won't give them a certificate of occupancy with
5 that standing.

6 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And we're
7 doing inspections to make sure they're there but
8 prior to inspection?

9 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Uh, we don't
10 inspect the buildings. I think they file with the
11 Department of Buildings and they issue a certificate
12 that its installed, so it's a first - the test, they
13 show us that it works and then have to file annual
14 tests from there.

15 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, so
16 they have to - there is some mechanism -

17 MICHAEL DELOACH: There's accountability
18 for it.

19 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: There's
20 accountability that we have. Really, the buildings
21 we're talking about now are buildings that are pre-
22 1987 buildings and after this issue of notice of
23 violation, we're going back and doing inspections
24 afterwards? Or they have to provide some sort of
25 evidence to DEP that they reconciled these -

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2 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, they have to
3 file with their records that their plan on to install
4 it and then after they install it, they have to give
5 us the document that's from a certified plumber that
6 they've installed the device.

7 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And they
8 won't have the violation removed until such time they
9 show us that certificate that they've installed?

10 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Correct.

11 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay and
12 what buildings present a higher than average risk of
13 cross-connections between potable and non-potable
14 water?

15 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, on our
16 website, we do have a brochure that explains the
17 process and it lists all the different types of
18 buildings that are at a higher risk and the ones that
19 should have the device. If you give me a moment, so
20 it's all body shops, beauty salons, butchers,
21 chemically treated boilers, dry cleaning
22 establishments, buildings with large boilers, booster
23 pumps, hotels, motels, gas stations, heat exchangers,
24 pharmacies, it's all listed and its on our website
25 and it shows you which ones are -

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: These are
3 the locations that we're most concerned about?

4 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Correct.

5 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And if an
6 older building has a new use, that's one of those
7 uses we're also requiring them to submit before they
8 can sort of take – before a pharmacy can move in or
9 some other kind of business can come in, they have to
10 have that certificate?

11 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, they're
12 required to install a backflow prevention device and
13 that's where our inspection team focuses on. So, you
14 know, the buildings and then what their use is and
15 then we'll see if maybe their use has changed over
16 time and that's when we'll pick up sometimes where a
17 building doesn't have the device and we issue them an
18 order to install.

19 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright,
20 because you have an older building, it used to be you
21 know, very often a drug store or something else will
22 take over. A clothing store, which may not have been
23 a backflow you know, needed device and then all of
24 sudden it's something that needs one.

25 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yeah.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, we're
3 going in there and making sure that they have it
4 correct?

5 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Correct.

6 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, alright
7 great. With that any — alright so at this time I'll
8 turn it over to Council Member Yeger.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr.
10 Chair. I apologize for my tardiness. I was sitting
11 next to you at the technology across the street and
12 you got to leave a little earlier than I did. Deputy
13 Commissioner, I have a question. Your testimony at
14 the last page says the static timelines of INTRO 424
15 and 425 will not allow you to have enough time to
16 develop the remedies necessary to identify the
17 problems, understanding the root causes a
18 prerequisite to developing the solution. It goes on
19 to say, we need to time to complete our analysis of
20 the data and we need to continue our methodology as
21 is to keep the integrity of our data and then you go
22 on to say, that you ask the Council to defer actions
23 on INTRO's 424 and 425 until the completion of the
24 three-year pilot in 2020. Okay, some of that's a lot
25 of lawyer speak, I'm a lawyer so I recognize with

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2 this lawyer speak, but 2020 is a long time away from
3 that and what we've asked you to do in our bills -
4 one of which I co-sponsored with our Chair, is
5 specifically INTRO 424 to take maintenance measures
6 needed to ensure that sewage backups occur no more
7 frequently than 50 per 100 miles of sewer line
8 including quarterly cleaning for at least once a
9 year, but specifically, it says that if more than
10 once in a - this is the la-man's version of it
11 because I'm not an expert like you are. If more than
12 once in a 12-month period a particular sewer system
13 line requires or has a backup, then we would require
14 you to identify and clean within 10 days of the
15 second. So, in other words, you get one free pass
16 for there to be a broken thing. You know, its an old
17 system, we understand that but the second time it
18 happens, you got to do it within 10 days. Why is
19 that not good?

20 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, we have
21 selected the community boards that are in our pilot
22 program, all the ones that exhibited the largest
23 number of SBU's per 100 miles of sewer and what we're
24 trying to do is even prevent that one instance of an
25 SBU because to me no SBU's are a good thing. So,

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2 that's what we're trying to do is we're going out and
3 this has been a change in the way we've approached it
4 in the past. We're actually going out and
5 proactively inspecting all the sewer manholes without
6 any complaints coming in. So, the idea is to hit all
7 the manholes in those four community boards twice
8 over the next three years and from the data that we
9 collect, we want to find what's happening from when
10 we inspected today and in a year from now when we
11 inspect it, whats the condition in the sewer? Did we
12 find debris going? Is the flow moving as fast as it
13 can? And we want to use that data that we collect
14 and we're going to capture the size of the pipe, the
15 type of material, when it was installed and then
16 we're going to take it and see which segments have an
17 experience in SBU after we've inspected it, after
18 we've cleaned it and the frequency that we'll get in
19 SBU. Then we're going to try to use that data to
20 find out if there's any kind of pattern. So, if we
21 can find an idea of whats causing or where we have
22 the more frequent problems, then we want to develop a
23 program where we were going to go out and try to
24 maintain those segments before we even experience a
25 backup. So, right now it's kind of early, but we

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2 might find that certain sewer segments we have to go
3 to every three months or every six months and flush.
4 Maybe it's every two years but the goal is manage not
5 having any SBU's in those areas.

6 MICHAEL DELOACH: So, there's a lot to
7 the question you asked but I'm assuming the ten days
8 on the second one is particularly what your
9 interested in right? So, specific to the ten days on
10 the second one, I think we already meet or -

11 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, when we get a
12 sewer backup complaint through 311, our target goal
13 is seven hours. So, in general we respond to any
14 complaint that comes in within - right now I think
15 we're about four hours. So, we'll come out inspect
16 the sewer and perform some type of cleaning activity
17 within that time frame.

18 MICHAEL DELOACH: So, yeah, we're not
19 talking about the response time that we want to
20 negotiate with you on, it's more the time of the
21 actual SBU's overtime, right?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: 424 is a very
23 simple law. It says the Commissioner of
24 Environmental protection shall insure that where a
25 sewer backup occurs more than once at the same

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2 location within a twelve-month period, the portion of
3 the sewer system causing the second re-subsequent
4 backup is identified and cleaned within ten days of
5 such subsequent backup. You're beating the goal,
6 you're doing it by seven hours. We're giving you ten
7 days. You should be happy with this, we're giving
8 you a little more time.

9 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, just going out
10 and cleaning it isn't finding the root cause.
11 Looking and finding the root cause could take weeks.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Deputy
13 Commissioner, we want you to find the root causes no
14 doubt about it. We don't want to get in the way of
15 your work but what we're saying is we're giving you a
16 hard stop deadline of ten days. Ten days to get it
17 done, just the cleaning. Just to get it operational
18 again, so that peoples sewers are not backing up into
19 their homes. You know and going to the pilot program
20 that you discussed you know, pivot quickly to that, I
21 don't want to monopolize all the time because I have
22 colleagues who want to get in some questions and the
23 public wants to talk, but you identified I believe,
24 four Community Boards, two in borough, two in Queens.
25 One of those boards happens to be one that I have a

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2 tiny amount of representation in. Uhm, it's
3 Community Board 15 but Community Board 15 is
4 surrounded by Community Board 11, Community Board 13,
5 Community Board 12, Community Board 14, Community
6 Board 18, Community Board 10. They all have around
7 the same number and I notice this as I look at the
8 map of sewage backup complaints, which is in our
9 committee report and I'm sure that you have access to
10 it. The Community Boards with the most number of
11 complaints or with whatever number, whether it's the
12 low number or the high number, they're all clustered
13 around the same number. So, Manhattan all the way up
14 through Central Park - all the way up really to the
15 top of Washington Heights, it's all in the 100's from
16 101 to 112 and then the Bronx it's - the entire Bronx
17 is basically from 201 to - the 220's and where I
18 represent it's you know, 311, 315, 312, 314, 318,
19 310. Uh, up north, where my colleague Council Member
20 Espinal 301, 302 ,306, 307 and then in Queens of
21 course it's up to 400. So, but it's all clustered.
22 It's all around the same number. Every Community
23 Board has around the same numbers. So, it's not
24 about whether - I mean to me because I don't know
25 anything about sewers other than that there down

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2 there and we flush into it but to me it looks like
3 you know, we have 300, or thereabouts in my
4 neighborhood, sewer complaints, this is 2016. I'm
5 not saying you broke them, I'm just saying it's a
6 very old system and what we're saying is that if in
7 ten days, after a twelve-month period, if there's
8 another backup in the same place within ten days, get
9 it fixed. I don't think it's like a heavy lift.

10 MICHAEL DELOACH: Buy the disconnect is
11 that you're saying cleaning it. That doesn't equal
12 fixing it. That's what we're trying to make there.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: You want us to
14 write in the law fix it. We'll write in the law fix
15 it.

16 MICHAEL DELOACH: We wouldn't be able to
17 - I mean, you can write it in, but I don't think we
18 would be able to necessarily do that. Like he was
19 saying sometimes these problems take weeks to fix.
20 So, if you want us to go look at it and try to start
21 figuring out what it is -

22 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: So, lets
23 brainstorm together because you're here and I'm here
24 and you know, we write the laws. You obey them I
25 guess. What if we wrote in the law that within 24

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2 hours of getting the complaints, you got to get in
3 the ground and look at the sewer and then within ten
4 days, you have to come up with a plan to fix it and
5 its got to be done within 30 days.

6 MICHAEL DELOACH: I think that's much
7 worse than what you actually have.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: No good. Whats
9 your number? Give me the number.

10 MICHAEL DELOACH: I don't think we can
11 quantify fix. I think that's too difficult to do
12 because there are such different instances. Its all
13 different depending on what the SBU is and the second
14 one might not be the same cause or an impact from the
15 first one. They could be totally unrelated.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And no question
17 then. That's why we're using the barometer as -
18 because we have to pick something you know, we're not
19 going to tell you every single sewer break or sewer
20 backup in the entire city of New York you have to get
21 in there and fix it within ten days, but what we're
22 suggesting is that if there is a sewer backup within
23 a particular place within a year - within a twelve
24 month period, it's indicative to us as layman you
25 know, nothing Council Members that maybe there's a

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2 greater problem you need to get in there and what
3 we're saying is we want to put a hard deadline. So,
4 what I'm asking is give us that information that you
5 would be okay with legislating. There's got to be
6 something because otherwise we're just going to pick
7 a number and then you're going to have it. So, what
8 we're saying is give us the number that makes sense.
9 What is it? Is it 10 - is it 11 days. Is it not
10 fix? Is it repair? Is it investigated? Is it
11 speculated? Is it map it out? What's the right
12 wording? Whats the right number? It can't just be
13 Council Members go away until 2020 and in the
14 meantime peoples sewers are going to backup and we'll
15 come back to in three years and we'll give you an
16 answer as to what you should then legislate because
17 some of my colleagues are leaving office in 2021 and
18 they would like to - I'll still be here, but sorry -
19 but they would like to you know, have this resolved
20 and this - You know I was on a Community Board for 18
21 years and I could tell you that in my neighborhood,
22 and I could do it almost by block, I know when it
23 rains, where it's going to backup into peoples houses
24 and its not because you broke the sewer system. It
25 has to do with the fact that houses that were built

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2 for three people are now having eight or nine or
3 twelve people living in it. That single family homes
4 were knocked down and six story condos were put up.
5 That is the City of New York. We know that, but we
6 also know that that means that the sewer lines have
7 to be addressed. What we're saying is that in a
8 twelve-month period, you already know that one thing
9 happened, we're suggesting that during that period
10 after the first thing happened, you've identified,
11 you've gotten in there, surely within the twelve
12 months you know, three months later, you've taken a
13 look. You figured out that there's something - if
14 it's a bigger problem. We need to replace a mile
15 worth of lines, four miles worth of lines. We need
16 to bring in a horse and buggy to whatever, something
17 but there's got to be a number and there's got to be
18 the wording that you're okay with. So, that's why
19 I'm asking, don't just come down here with respect
20 Deputy Commissioner and say defer action. I promise
21 you the Council is not going to defer action. There
22 are members here who have been hearing this - the
23 Chair, he was on the Council in the last term. The
24 other sponsor of the bill was on the Council on the
25 last term. I'm a new guy, so I don't really know

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2 anything, but folks want to get this done and again,
3 I was on a Community Board for 18 years. Before
4 that, I worked for a borough president that worked
5 for a City Council Member in the 90's. This is not a
6 problem that started yesterday but it has been
7 getting worse and worse and worse. It doesn't mean
8 that you haven't been addressing it, but it means
9 that we need to come up with some kind of legislative
10 solution that says, this is the barometer by which
11 you measure whether or not a thing needs to be done.
12 What that thing is we don't know. Is it not repair?
13 Is it fix? Is it inspect? What is it? So, come
14 back to us and tell us and we'll do right by the
15 agency, but we also have to do right by the people
16 who are frankly having sewage backup into their
17 houses and by the way, uh, I am a renter so luckily
18 it never really affected me in the sense that I've
19 had to pay for it, but you know, anybody who knows
20 anybody. My parents have had sewer backups in the
21 home that they live in, the home that I grew up in.
22 You know, everybody has this in every neighborhood
23 and I could literally identify the blocks in my
24 neighborhood, in my neighboring council district.
25 Probably the three council districts surrounding my

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2 home because it was all on my community board where
3 these problem areas are over time. So, I'm not that
4 smart. If I could do it, you guys can do it and
5 we're saying give us the information to help us craft
6 a law that you'll be comfortable with but that we're
7 able to turn to the communities that we represent and
8 say DEP knows what they got to do. They're on the
9 job.

10 MICHAEL DELOACH: Understood and we're
11 definitely anxious to share that information and have
12 a conversation about how we can do that.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Super, how soon
14 will you tell the Chair what language you'd like?
15 Because it's his bill.

16 MICHAEL DELOACH: I mean we're talking
17 already so I think we'll do it quickly.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Quickly, okay
19 perfect. Uhm, I'll be really quick on the second
20 question Mr. Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Now you got
22 my full attention, go ahead.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I had one question
24 by the way. That was all one question.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Your
3 advocating for my bill pretty well. Please continue.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And I appreciate
5 the indulgence of the Chair and not putting a clock
6 on me, but I will be very quick. My second question
7 involves the second bill 425. Okay, all we're asking
8 for is a plan. We're not asking you to do anything.
9 We're just asking you to come up with a plan. It
10 doesn't even have to be a good plan. It could be a
11 half thought, incomplete plan. It could be anything
12 you want, but it's a plan and we're saying by
13 December 31, 2018. You are already deep into this
14 because you already have the pilot going. You have
15 your data going. You're crunching the numbers.
16 You're doing it on a daily basis. We know that your
17 folks are working really hard. You're asking for us
18 to defer action on 425 until 2020. All we're saying
19 is give us a plan and what's the right answer for
20 that? Does that also have to wait for two years?

21 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: We're willing to
22 work with the Council on whatever you think is best.
23 We do have online now, we call it a state of the
24 sewer report which we had started in 2012 and 2013.
25 We'd stopped for a couple of years, but we have put

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2 it on the last two years that do describe programs
3 and give metrics broken by borough on how we're
4 performing. Now if the Council can look at it and
5 see if that's adequate or if you want to do something
6 additional, then we can look at doing something
7 additional, but we think that state of the sewer
8 report is a good snap shot of what we currently do
9 regarding sewers.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Does that report –
11 I'm not going to pretend I read it because I don't
12 want you to catch me in a lie but does that report
13 indicate a schedule for the citywide rollout of
14 remote sewer monitoring devices?

15 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: No, it doesn't.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay. Does that
17 plan indicate a citywide assessment of the impact of
18 fats, soils and grease on the sewer system? I know
19 you testified earlier that your working on engaging
20 New Yorkers on better ways to dispose of the
21 materials that should not properly be thrown down a
22 drain. I fully support that – I pour my oil in the
23 garbage. I'm sure that doesn't make the garbage
24 shoot happy, but I do not put it down the drain.
25 More New Yorkers need to do that of course but do you

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2 have a – does that report indicate a citywide
3 assessment of the impact of fats, oils, and grease on
4 the sewer system?

5 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: It does mention
6 what we do regarding FOG.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, does that
8 report indicate an identification of areas with on
9 average more than one sewer backup in the twelve-
10 month period?

11 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: No.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, does that
13 report indicate a targeted cleaning and maintenance
14 schedule for areas with on average more than one
15 sewer backup in a twelve-month period?

16 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: No.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so we're
18 giving you some great ideas, I think. Uhm, and Chair
19 Constantinides and I will sign onto that bill now
20 because I generally do not like to sign on to
21 reporting bills. I think that when legislatures get
22 involved in the business of mandating city agencies
23 to stop what their doing and write us letters, it
24 gets in the way of your good work, but I think here
25 we have a situation where I think your reporting by

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2 December 31st of this year, which is six and a half
3 months from now, would give us a barometer by which
4 we could measure not just your good work, because I
5 know your work is good but whether or not we can give
6 you legislation that would give you the broad picture
7 of what it is we anticipate and expect that your
8 agency could be doing. So, I will sign onto that
9 bill Mr. Chair, but my question again is you know,
10 you've asked us to defer for doing 425 until 2020.
11 That's two year, two and a half years from now. What
12 would be so bad if we ask you to give us a report by
13 December 31st. I mean, do you need until January?
14 Do you need until February? Do you need until March?
15 What's good? What would be so bad if we asked you to
16 within six in half months give us some kind of
17 report? I mean it's not going to be under oath. I
18 assume it's going to be truthful. We're not going to
19 call you back and bother you about every paragraph,
20 but some kind of general report back on how you guys
21 are doing because what you do now, you do have a
22 report which I haven't read but it doesn't hit any of
23 these items that - well with the exception for a
24 citywide root control strategy, subsection 6 of
25 subsection B of section 245013.1. So, that's -

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2 you're working on the root thing, but you can tell us
3 a little more right by December 31st? It's not so -
4 it's a little long - I mean I have to do reports all
5 the time.

6 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: We can work with
7 Council to see what kind of report -

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Alright, alright,
9 okay, alright - look I appreciate very much what you
10 guys are doing and I don't - don't take my Brooklyn
11 snark or lawyer lees to be indicative of disrespect
12 for your work because I do know that by the way that
13 when a district manager in my neighborhood calls DEP
14 about a sewer backup, you guys are there within a day
15 or two. You're out there. You're looking into it
16 and sometimes what we think is a sewer backup is
17 actually DOT's fault for not doing the street well
18 enough or not keeping the street in well enough
19 repair that's causing ponding. Our immediate thing
20 when we see a puddle is its DEP fault. We know
21 that's not true and so, I will say that publicly - I
22 will also say publicly that I know on the community
23 boards that I represent particularly in southern
24 Brooklyn, you are responsive. That is 100% true.
25 Anybody that says otherwise has to meet me outside,

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2 but what we're doing is we're giving you some
3 barometers I think, Deputy Commissioner that you can
4 wrap your arms around and get back to the Council so
5 that at least we can pretend that we're doing
6 something for the people who sent us here.

7 MICHAEL DELOACH: We will. I just want
8 to clarify one thing. I think that the work that
9 we're doing in the pilot is going above and beyond
10 and its actually going to lead to long term solutions
11 and so we're anxious to get the data and figure out
12 what the actual solutions are as opposed to coming to
13 you and saying it could be these different things,
14 when we know we're going to know over time. So, if
15 there's a way to sort of give you updates to the work
16 that we are doing to show how we're going to get to
17 the overall remedy to make sure that we're reducing
18 SBU's, I think that's sort of where we're anxious to
19 talk and figure out - or having the grand plan before
20 we actually have all the details, we want to make
21 sure to show you what we are doing to get to the end
22 goal that's a shared goal for both of us but not
23 maybe put the cart before the horse a little bit.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, we don't
25 like to put the carts before the horse - we don't

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2 even like to use horses anymore. We're not allowed
3 to in the city but what we - I think that's a good
4 idea and I think you can discuss with the Chair and
5 with Council to Committee of how we can structure
6 that a little better but what I'm saying is that
7 you're already deep into this investigation inquiry
8 work involved to do the root cause thing. What we're
9 asking for is with the exception of the root cause,
10 which is asking for stuff that's already knowledge -
11 I mean its in your information. You know, how often
12 is the sewer backed up on Avenue M in east 19th
13 street is the kind of thing that you can pull up with
14 a couple of buttons I assume.

15 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeap.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, alright.
17 Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you
19 Council Member Yeger. I appreciate your advocacy and
20 I'm just going to piggy back on that before I hand it
21 over to Council Member Richards. I will say that I
22 am concerned, I was going to say this in my second
23 round but its on upon your completion of your three-
24 year pilot in 2020, which doesn't mean you're asking
25 us to defer until 2020. You're actually asking us to

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2 defer beyond that because you have to then look at
3 the data from your three-year pilot plan. So, we're
4 talking about your asking us to defer until sometime
5 in 2021, correct?

6 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, I think we're
7 flexible on the timing. I think we want to get to a
8 point where we feel like we're getting towards
9 critical mass of the data. 2020 is something that I
10 think you know, we're totally flexible with.

11 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, I think
12 we're looking forward to accelerating that timeline
13 but let me again pass this on to my colleagues and
14 continue the amount of questioning. Council Member
15 Richards.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you Chair
17 and I promise to be really short unlike someone who
18 said they were going to be short. [LAUGHTER]. But
19 uh, thank you Commissioner. To Mike, thank you for
20 being here. So, let's hop into southeast Queens for
21 a second. So, obviously we passed a catch basin
22 bill. Can you speak to how many catch basins we have
23 successfully cleaned in southeast Queens this fiscal
24 year?

25

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2 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Not specifically
3 southeast Queens, but our inspection cycle is ending
4 on June 30th and I believe -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So, you don't
6 break that - you wouldn't have a break down by -

7 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I don't have it
8 memorized by areas. We could get it but what I'm
9 going to say is last time I checked, we inspected
10 143,000 basins.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And you did it
12 based on what? Why are you're doing it?

13 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Because you asked
14 us to inspect them annually and that's what we're
15 doing.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Because the
17 City Council passed a what?

18 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: A law.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: A law to make
20 you better. There you go.

21 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yeah, and what
22 we're doing and to your credit, last year we took out
23 somewhere around double the material we did the prior
24 year. So, we are cleaning a lot more basins. We're
25 inspecting them.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Hmm, hmm and I
3 do want to give you credit because I saw you outside,
4 I saw you on Brookville Boulevard cleaning out just
5 yesterday and I was like, look at this. This is a
6 miracle. It's happening but go ahead, I'm sorry. I
7 interrupted you, good work.

8 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: And our street
9 flooding complaints have dropped.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: But southeast
11 Queens is still a leader in this area and I know what
12 you're going to give me, that old grease complaint
13 because southeast Queens is the only place with
14 grease in New York City. So, do you actually have,
15 and I know you spoke to some of this stuff in the
16 bills, but can you break down or give us an
17 indication, what are you really doing around
18 decreasing if grease seems to be the reason only in
19 southeast Queens. It's the number one reason for
20 sewer backups.

21 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, grease is an
22 issue all over the city. It's not just southeast
23 Queens.

24

25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So, you're not
3 blaming southeast Queens specifically anymore for
4 this issue. Alright, that's a change.

5 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: It's a citywide
6 issue.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, that's
8 good.

9 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: What we do have is
10 when we go out, the complaints regarding grease and
11 we find that it's a repeat backup. Where it comes
12 multiple times and every time it's from grease what
13 we do is we put those segments on a program. So, we
14 call it the liquid degreasing program. So, what we
15 do is depending on how severe and how frequent the
16 backups come out, we put it on a program and put it
17 on the frequency where we think we're going to be
18 able to prevent those backups from happening again.
19 So, we might have locations that we come out every
20 year and what we do is we flush the sewer but while
21 we flush the sewer, we put a liquid degreaser in the
22 sewer to break up the grease.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, now you
24 said might. So, do you not — why not have a more
25 robust schedule around dealing with grease?

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2 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Well, maybe I
3 threw a might, but its not. We do put it on a
4 program. So, it could be annually and -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Could be is not
6 is. So, could be and doing is two different things.
7 I'm a stickler for language.

8 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, when we find
9 the problem is grease.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay.

11 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: We put it on the
12 program.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay.

14 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, in Queens, in
15 the whole Queens I know its got the majority of the
16 locations that are in the program.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: But if grease
18 is 70% of your sewage backups, is that correct?

19 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yep.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Your saying a
21 cause of 70%, why might or could? Why wouldn't you
22 come with a more definitive plan? If that is the
23 root cause that according to you is the major
24 contributor to sewage backups -

25

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2 MICHAEL DELOACH: I mean the root cause
3 for large - a lot of this is actual infrastructure
4 right Anastasios, so the fact that we're spending 1.9
5 -

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: The department
7 has -

8 MICHAEL DELOACH: In southeast Queens -

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: No listen, I'm
10 about to get into that but I got to start with the
11 hard question first but according to you at least
12 where catch basins exists 70% of sewage backups are
13 because of -

14 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Primarily in
15 southeast Queens, the catch basins are seepage
16 basins. They're not connected to the system, so
17 there just going to the ground.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Right.

19 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, the grease and
20 the sewers and the catch basins aren't interrelated.
21 Now the \$1.9 billion is going to be a good start on
22 building the sewer infrastructures in southeast
23 Queens where we get those catch basins that currently
24 aren't hooked up to the system, get them hooked up to
25 a storm sewer and we'll get those basins functioning.

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2 Now, as seepage basins, we know that those are dry
3 wells and it just takes time to percolate in the
4 ground and because of the soil conditions in
5 southeast Queens, they haven't been as effective as
6 other parts -

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Now do you
8 differentiate and do you have a different plan that
9 address seepage. That sounds like that needs to be
10 where you put the emphasis. Seepage basins are - go
11 ahead.

12 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: That's not why
13 we're building out the storm infrastructure.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Right, right
15 but in the meantime, if the seepage basins are the
16 biggest issue are we addressing those more.

17 MICHAEL DELOACH: There not connected to
18 the system.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: I know, I know
20 what a seepage - I get it. I used to be in a
21 committee, but what I'm saying is do you not have a
22 more aggressive approach towards seepage basins, if
23 that seems to be the number one contributor? I mean
24 well not contributor but since your dealing with
25 seepage basins in southeast Queens opposed to catch

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2 basins, do you treat them differently or do you treat
3 them all the same is what I'm saying.

4 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, we'll inspect
5 them, and we maintain them with limited capabilities.
6 So, if we could clean them, we'll clean them.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: If, or do you?

8 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: If its going to
9 help.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: If, or do you?

11 MICHAEL DELOACH: He's answering your
12 question. It depends on the nature of the seepage
13 basin. Some are not fixable.

14 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Exactly, some of
15 the seepage basins have passed there prime or they've
16 had limited time lives for it. So, if they've
17 exceeded it, then we can maintain it every day. Its
18 still not going to function any better.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Now there's no
20 new model of seepage basins out there that other
21 municipalities are using. We're still sort of stuck
22 in the 70's and 80's I think in terms about
23 infrastructure there. So, in the meantime and once
24 again, very appreciative of the work that the
25 department is doing and your commitment and the

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2 Mayor's commitment with \$1.9 billion but in the
3 meantime, some of these capital projects are going to
4 take a long time to get off the ground. So, in the
5 short-term, are we looking at newer technologies?
6 Are there some new models of seepage basins since we
7 still have some that have been in the ground since
8 1970? Are you entertaining changing them? Are there
9 seepage basins that could have a bigger foot print
10 that would give you a bigger impact? So, that's what
11 I'm trying to get at, or are we just stuck in well,
12 this is what it is?

13 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: The soil
14 conditions in that part of Queens isn't conducive to
15 any new -

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: I don't want to
17 hear that answer. Have we looked at newer -

18 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: What we have been
19 doing is working with finding the locations that are
20 the biggest problem regarding flooding and ponding
21 and trying to coming up with solutions and that's
22 where we try to extend the sewers and try to get them
23 connected to some kind of drainage system and that's
24 the only way you're effectively going to really drain
25 the system and we've worked successfully on a number

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2 of locations and we'll continue to work with any
3 other locations that's identified if there's a
4 temporary measure we could do until the program comes
5 along, we'll be happy to do it.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Now have we got
7 an update and I have civic leaders here I want to
8 acknowledge from Rosedale. Both Jackie Cambo[SP?]
9 and I have the president of [Inaudible 59:10]
10 CO Bryan. So, for the Brookville triangle and I
11 understand the work has started I believe on Francis
12 Lewis now. Can you speak to where we're at with that
13 - the Brookville triangle which is right before Stake
14 Road as you know. Uhm, so we have had conversations
15 I think last month on with the status of that project
16 is and I believe where we left off there was some
17 acquisitions. So, do we have anyone who can answer
18 questions on where we're at with acquisitions.

19 MICHAEL DELOACH: We'll work on getting
20 you an update while we -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, by the
22 end of today?

23 MICHAEL DELOACH: I don't know off hand,
24 but I do know we're making progress, so we'll get the
25 update.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, I
3 promised I would be short, sorry Chair. I'm going to
4 move to my bill INTRO 268. So, you're in support of
5 this bill?

6 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Working on
7 reporting so we can work on most of the ones that
8 you're suggesting and the ones that we can't, we
9 would like to work on coming up with a -

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Now which ones
11 are problematic for you?

12 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Uh, I think one -
13 one - the first one was a little problematic, but we
14 also think we can offer some additional metrics to
15 make it more transparent.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, and uhm,
17 just let's go through the backflow devices. How many
18 times last year did the Commissioner give a directive
19 to building owners to install backflow devices?

20 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, if you give me
21 a minute I have a chart here.

22 MICHAEL DELOACH: So, again those would
23 be ones that we have found after the fact that
24 required - I mean there's tons that are proactively
25 doing that per their requirement but you're talking

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2 about specifically ones that we've inspected and
3 found?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Yeah, and then
5 the question is have we – so DEP likes to give an
6 estimate on figures when it comes to backflow
7 prevention devices and compliance rate. So, are you
8 moving away from just giving estimates now? Or
9 obviously my bill is going to make you do more but –

10 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: We'll give you
11 whatever you want. I don't like estimates myself.
12 If we could give you numbers, we're going to give you
13 numbers.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, so you're
15 going to report actual figures?

16 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Yeah. So, I have
17 here a summons is issued for failure to install
18 backflow devices 956 for 2017.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And that's out
20 of a universe of?

21 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: We have 40-
22 something plus thousand buildings that have devices.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And how many
24 are not in compliance?

25

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2 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I don't have that
3 figure right in front of me.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, so we're
5 looking for more info on that and what enforcement
6 actions do you take if a building owner doesn't
7 comply?

8 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, we send them
9 an NOV and they have to report to the oath for to see
10 a judge and then they get penalties and fines and
11 they have time to come into compliance. If they
12 don't, they get another penalty.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: How much time?

14 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: From the
15 Commissioner's order, I think its 30 days and then
16 from the NOV, when they go to oath, I think its
17 another 60 days for them to comply.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And you find
19 how often do people comply?

20 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I don't have that
21 in front of me. We could get you any metrics or any
22 numbers you want.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Now the fines
24 are between \$500, it could vary between \$500 and
25 \$5,000, right?

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2 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Uh, they vary but
3 that sounds right.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Yeah, and
5 mostly most of the time its roughly at the lower end,
6 correct?

7 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, that's per oath,
8 we don't have any -

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So, what I'm
10 getting at is there are individuals in the city who
11 will eat the fine because a backflow device can cost
12 between \$3,000 and \$20,000.

13 MICHAEL DELOACH: I think over time, it
14 won't remain on the small - the fine will be heavier
15 than that amount over time.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: How often does
17 that happen? And what does over time look like?
18 Because I think from what we see most of the time
19 it's the lower end -

20 MICHAEL DELOACH: So, for the first
21 offense is -

22 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: And then the
23 second offense the cost escalates.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Alright can you
25 give city a cost?

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2 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I don't have them
3 in front of me but if we want to work on raising the
4 fines -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Yeap.

6 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I'm happy to work
7 with the Council in coming up with whatever we think
8 is appropriate.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Alright, so
10 that's something we're definitely interested in
11 having further conversations on. Alight Chair, I was
12 short, I think. We look forward to working with you
13 on this bill and one of the reasons we believe in
14 reporting bills is because transparency equals
15 accountability. So, although I really and I agree, I
16 hate doing reporting bills but without them - you
17 know without information its very hard to make an
18 educated decision. So, I look forward to working
19 with you on this bill, thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you
21 Council Member Richards. Council Member Menchaca.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you and
23 thanks for being here today and thanks to my
24 colleagues and our Chair for this very important
25 discussion about sewers in our communities and I

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2 think the only thing that I wanted to add to the
3 conversation was really around or questions around
4 the idea of having feedback from the community. The
5 circle of feedback and how you get to say in INTRO
6 424, know what the frequency is for backups and how
7 you're thinking about that in terms of how you do
8 things today and how you do things post law being
9 enacted.

10 MICHAEL DELOACH: Clarify your question
11 just a little.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I want to know
13 how you know what you know on the ground. If sewers
14 are being backed up.

15 MICHAEL DELOACH: I mean we know through
16 largely through 311 complaints.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: So, that's the
18 only way that you get to see the understand of -

19 MICHAEL DELOACH: Its not the only way
20 but it's the biggest way. I mean, we get things from
21 Council Member, we get things through elected
22 officials, there's different ways that we get
23 information but its all kept track internally but 311
24 makes up the bulk of that metric.

25

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2 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: And we encourage
3 everyone to call 311 when their experiencing a
4 problem because that's what we use for us to use our
5 data and to mapping and see where the problems are.
6 We always encourage for more feedback because the
7 more feedback we get, then we can try to solve the
8 problems. If we don't know that you're experiencing
9 a problem we can't help or start to solve the
10 problem.

11 MICHAEL DELOACH: It's the easiest way
12 through all agencies to be able to get track follow
13 up on an issue. Some elected officials prefer not to
14 use it, but we strongly advocate for people using it
15 because it's also how data is interpreted and
16 analyzed across agencies. So, it's a useful tool.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: And it sounds -
18 well, I guess I want to get the multiple access
19 points to information from the community. So, 311 is
20 one way. Elected officials will call in an issue, is
21 another way. What other ways do you currently get
22 information about whats happening on the ground?

23 MICHAEL DELOACH: I mean we have a
24 community affairs department that's out in the
25 community. We have borough coordinators that are out

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2 at community board meetings, at all types of
3 different civic association meetings, so we capture
4 data through that. You're not talking specifically
5 about SBU's, I assume. You're just saying generally
6 in terms of -

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I think
8 generally would be a better sense.

9 MICHAEL DELOACH: I mean we also have
10 6000 staff at DEP that work in the city. So, we have
11 our ears open and you know, we're running into things
12 all the time.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: And the reason
14 this bill 424 is really built around a sense of
15 understanding whats going on in the ground. So, if
16 you have some communities who just like
17 underreporting for whatever reason and there could be
18 many barriers, it would be interesting to hear from
19 you what barriers currently exist 2311 being a kind
20 of true or closest to the truth about whats happening
21 in the neighborhood but I think that there are issues
22 with some of the people that I represent. The
23 residents that I represent that are either - take Red
24 Hook for example, who just don't call anymore because
25 it doesn't work, nothing happens is the sentiment.

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2 Though I know we're working really hard in Red Hook,
3 I know that, so I want to acknowledge that openly,
4 but that's not necessarily the sentiment of a home
5 owner who just hasn't yet seen any relief what so
6 ever because this is a big problem and I can't
7 imagine whats happening in southeast Queens or other
8 areas. So, 311 is the only place where you can get
9 data and elected officials but we're just still one
10 person. We're not - I can pretend like I know
11 exactly whats happening on every single home owner or
12 renter's basement but I'm just trying to really pose
13 a bigger question about how do we get to that fuller
14 sense?

15 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, I think we're
16 more than happy to hear of other suggestions or other
17 you know, methods that we should be doing of how best
18 to capture people that are either frustrated or
19 unaware of how to access our services. We're - I
20 feel like we have a pretty aggressive outreach unit
21 and I don't think we're that hard to find when people
22 have problems. It seems like we hear problems a lot
23 and are helpful but if there are things that we're
24 not doing or other agencies or best practices that we
25 could use we're all ears of what else we can do.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: One final
3 question on just the outreach. How often are getting
4 non-English 311 complaints about sewers?

5 MICHAEL DELOACH: I don't - we do track
6 the different language that come in through 311 and
7 obviously 311 is capable of handling any language but
8 I don't know specifically the numbers.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Is it something
10 you can get back to the chair on?

11 MICHAEL DELOACH: Sure.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I want to get a
13 sense of and there's like a heat map too of the city
14 where certain communities - and I'd like to with the
15 Chair kind of analyze that with you because I think
16 that's another barrier that I'd like to just get a
17 better sense about. What that barrier is and then
18 try to figure out how we can solve that.

19 MICHAEL DELOACH: Sure.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: To anticipate a
21 better sense of how effective you're being and maybe
22 do some pilot stuff in Red Hook to re-galvanize
23 people's attention to this issue and I think there's
24 a lot of fix in myself kind of situation but its

25

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2 connected to the broader system and the broader
3 system is broken.

4 MICHAEL DELOACH: We'd be happy to
5 partner on that and interpret the data together and
6 see what else we could be doing.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Great, thanks
8 to both of you.

9 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you
10 Council Member Menchaca. Let's just piggy back on
11 that. For the Cease the Grease materials and the
12 interactions that we have with food establishments.
13 What languages are we prepared to speak on or how are
14 we interacting with the community in different
15 languages?

16 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, so we're
17 complying, I'm sorry I'm forgetting the local law but
18 we're complying - we're in the process of getting
19 everything to comply with the language access of I
20 believe its thirteen languages that we're required to
21 have - the critical information in so we're
22 translating that. We have the ability when people
23 call to transfer them to an interpreter to be on the
24 phone with us or people out in the field have that as
25 well as internally and for Cease the Grease, I think

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2 right now it's just managing English, but I think
3 we're looking to build that out and do more languages
4 as well. So, it's a work in progress. We're getting
5 better every day.

6 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay because
7 we're a city of so many languages, what 190 I think
8 it is. It is somewhere in that realm and being able
9 to interact especially not only residents but
10 business owners on compliance is extremely important.

11 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, agreed and again
12 just to reiterate, there's a phone program that we
13 have if you encounter a communication issue, you can
14 call and then they can help facilitate a conversation
15 that all of our folks have, so it is very valuable.
16 Its not limited to 13 or 11.

17 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, so if
18 someone goes from DEP to a food establishment and
19 starts talking about you know the compliance program,
20 they can be transferred. They can put someone on the
21 phone who can speak the language, so we can get that
22 —

23 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah, right.

24

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: How many
3 food service establishments have we inspected for
4 compliance with fats, oils, and grease program?

5 MICHAEL DELOACH: I don't have that
6 available right now, but I'm happy to get it for you.

7 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: How many
8 miles of sewer have been chemically treated for root
9 control?

10 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, root control,
11 we don't have a problem in the city sewers. Root
12 control is more of a problem in homeowner's service
13 connections. That's where you see a greater amount
14 of roots in sewers.

15 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: How many
16 miles of sewers have been inspected using CCTB
17 technology?

18 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: I don't have that
19 figure in front of me, but it is a number we report
20 on every year and we could get that for you.

21 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Great. How
22 many miles of sewers have been cleaned that's part of
23 a preventative maintenance program?

24 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: So, I don't have
25 that number with me, but we could get that for you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay. It's
3 rough going here today. Rough going today. Alright,
4 I mean I certainly feel that we have enough common
5 ground here to put together a 424 and a 425 that
6 aren't connected to results that are coming in 2021
7 right. I think that we're talking about for the
8 residents who live throughout the city, who have
9 sewer backups, I'm sure their very, very, glad that
10 you're doing the pilot program as am I, but they want
11 to see some action sooner. They want to see a plan
12 sooner. They want to see that government is
13 responding to them much sooner. I really believe
14 that we can find some common ground as my colleagues
15 have happily stated. So, I think that I look forward
16 to working with you and my co-sponsors on the bill to
17 come up with pieces of legislation that makes sense
18 and that we can deliver that don't interfere with
19 your pilot but still get the results that we're
20 looking for.

21 MICHAEL DELOACH: Yeah and I think we
22 believe that we're making a lot of great progress and
23 there's a way that we can definitely help to
24 demonstrate that and show that we look forward to
25 working with you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Great, I
3 appreciate that and with that we'll end the
4 questioning for this particular panel. Thank you for
5 being here.

6 MICHAEL DELOACH: Thank you.

7 ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Our next
9 panel is Arthur Clark and April Mclver. If you could
10 step forward. Alright, so as long as you're not
11 reading me a four-hour presentation, we're going to
12 forego the clock and allow you guys to give - both
13 panels to give their testimony as needed. So, as
14 long as it's not a four-hour power point
15 presentation, I think we're good. So, if you want,
16 go ahead.

17 APRIL MCLVER: Okay, sure. Good
18 afternoon. My name is April Mclver and I am the
19 Executive Director of the Plumbing Foundation City of
20 New York. The Plumbing Foundation was founded in
21 1986 and is a non-profit organization of small and
22 large, union and non-union plumbing contractors,
23 engineering associations, supply houses, and
24 manufacturers whose mission is to protect the public
25 health and safety through the enactment enforcement

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2 of safe plumbing codes. We strongly support Council
3 Member Richards bill INTRO 268 but we are here today
4 to provide recommendations on how to strengthen the
5 bills provisions. In an effort to not reiterate my
6 entire written testimony, I will highlight some of
7 our major points. As you all know backflow can occur
8 when street pressure pushes water into buildings
9 where dangerous materials and chemicals may exist and
10 no device prevents that now contaminated water from
11 reentering the drinking water supply. There have
12 been countless cases of contamination caused by car
13 washes, dry cleaners, and the biggest culprit mother
14 nature. All of which effect many homes and
15 businesses throughout the city. With the increase of
16 major whether events due to climate change, this may
17 become a more frequent occurrence. The issue of
18 backflow dates back decades. In 2007, the New York
19 Times reported 85,000 large residential and
20 commercial buildings lacked backflow prevention
21 devices and that 26,000 buildings in New York City
22 were considered high-risk. Ten years following the
23 New York Times article in 2017, city limits reported
24 residents in Queens and Brooklyn experiencing
25 flooding in their basements of raw sewage. One

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2 resident said this occurs once a year and is a common
3 problem in her Queens neighborhood. The article also
4 sites to the 2016 Administrative Compliance Order
5 from the US EPI which I think was mentioned earlier
6 in this hearing. As you know, the New York City
7 Department of Health Regulations require suppliers of
8 New York City and as you know, in New York City that
9 is DEP, to classify all buildings in terms of the
10 degree of hazard they pose and assure appropriate
11 devices are installed and tested annually. In 2009,
12 the City Council adopted local law 76 to address the
13 ongoing issue with backflow but it only required DEP
14 to report the number of buildings with devices
15 installed, updated semi-annually. For purposes of
16 transparency and compliance, it is not of much use to
17 know the number of buildings with devices installed
18 when there is no set universe of buildings that are
19 required to have such devices. Therefore, no real
20 compliance rate can be determined. As stated, we
21 strongly support passage of INTRO 268 but we
22 recommend the Council consider a number of revisions.
23 First, the industry urges the Council to require DEP
24 to report the actual number of buildings requiring a
25 backflow prevention device. The actual number of

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2 installed devices and the actual number of buildings
3 that are not in compliance and this is rather than
4 whats in the legislation right now, which is an
5 estimate. In DEP's prior testimony dated October 30,
6 2017, they claim they have made extensive efforts in
7 the identification, inspection enforcement and
8 reporting of backflow prevention devices. They also
9 state they have an active database comprised of over
10 what they said today 104,000 records of properties
11 and that those properties tracked are dynamic as the
12 nature of a properties usage profile can change.
13 Even with that, the foundation and the industry
14 strongly believe that actual figures can still be
15 reported each year. For instance, by reporting as of
16 January 15, 2019, X-number of buildings requires
17 devices etc. I do believe that DEP you know
18 mentioned they have data mining and field inspection
19 and it sounded like they had some updated numbers
20 today, so we strongly believe they can be reporting
21 these numbers annually. In addition, in the hearing
22 transcript from October 30th. The Chairman asked DEP
23 about fines imposed on owners for not installing the
24 required backflow prevention devices. On pages 50 to
25 51 of the hearing transcript, DEP says fines are

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2 between \$500 to \$5,000. Yet devices can cost
3 anywhere from \$3,000 to \$20,000. This is why the
4 industry believes fines should be increased, so that
5 owners do not continue merely paying the lower fines
6 but rather comply with the law and actually install
7 the required devices. The installation of backflow
8 prevention devices should be a public health
9 priority. It is apparent that the understanding of
10 and compliance with backflow prevention is still an
11 issue at large in the city. There is limited
12 transparency in the part of DEP regarding
13 enforcement, installation of backflow devices, and
14 proper comprehensive reporting. All of which needs
15 to change. We thank the Chairman and the committee
16 for their time today and the sponsor for
17 consideration of our proposed amendments to INTRO
18 268. Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you.

20 ARTHUR CLARK: Hi, my name is Arthur
21 Clark. I am the Training Director for Plumbers local
22 union number one jointly administered labor and
23 management fund. We operate a 40,000 square foot
24 training center in Queens. In that facility, we
25 operate something we call the Cross-connection

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2 Control Bureau, which is a New York State Department
3 of Health regulated training program to certify
4 backflow prevention device testers. These are the
5 devices that we're talking about. They have to be
6 tested annually. In fact, it's the largest and most
7 active certifying program in this type in New York
8 State. Cross-connection Control Bureau training is
9 open to any individual who needs this training.
10 Students in the program study the causes and effects
11 of backflow and learn the skills necessary to keep
12 the equipment which prevents backflow in good working
13 order. Backflow is a very serious hazard. New York
14 City Department of Environment Protection operates
15 our public water supply controlling the water as it
16 travels from source to consumer. However, once the
17 water enters a building, they've lost control of it
18 right. It becomes exposed to a wider area of
19 opportunities for contamination while its being used
20 inside a building. In our public water supply
21 system, water is maintained at a significant pressure
22 in the street mains to enable it to flow into the
23 buildings from those mains. Water pressure in the
24 street system though occasionally fails and more
25 commonly is reduced when a water main breaks or if

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2 there is an unexpectedly high demand on the water
3 system. For example, when fire hydrants are open.
4 So, if there is a fire or if there are children
5 playing in the street and they open a fire hydrant,
6 you're going to get a drop-in pressure in the system.
7 Reduced pressure in the water main causes a reversal
8 of flow. Wherein the water flows out of the
9 buildings and back into the pipes in the street.
10 This can be extremely dangerous because after the
11 water has entered a building, its being used by
12 customers in ways which can cause it to become
13 contaminated. Think of water used in boilers,
14 cleaning facilities, medical facilities, commercial
15 and industrial facilities being drawn back into the
16 public water piping in the street and then traveling
17 on and into another building and coming out of
18 someone's faucet while they're cooking or taking a
19 drink. The best defense against illness or death
20 occurring from hazardous backflow events is a good
21 backflow prevention program. In fact, the rigorous
22 program prosecuted diligently and effectively is the
23 only defense that there is. Which is why it is
24 mandated by both our state and federal governments.
25 The need to install these safety devices, the New

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2 York State Department of Health requires suppliers of
3 water to classify all connected buildings in terms of
4 degree of hazard they pose and to make sure backflow
5 preventers are installed and tested annually.

6 However, a great many buildings in New York City
7 still lack the backflow preventers they are mandated
8 to have including many that are considered high-risk
9 buildings. It is the absolute responsibility under
10 the law for the purveyor of water, which is the DEP,
11 to operate an effective backflow prevention program.

12 Failure to do so opens the city to tremendous legal
13 exposure for if catastrophic backflow events should
14 occur, sickening or killing unsuspecting New Yorkers.

15 The need to test and maintain these devices is very
16 important. Approved backflow prevention assemblies
17 should be tested at least annually as outlined by the

18 American Waterworks Association and all the
19 manufactures literature. So, these devices clearly

20 say in their owner manufacturer literature that they
21 have to be tested. Annual failure rates have

22 approved assemblies vary, but they do become fouled
23 and fail over time. The AWWA and the manufacturers

24 require testing at least every year to be sure that
25 there functioning properly. If the device fails to

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2 operate when it is needed, its useless because it's
3 supposed to stop the water from coming out of the
4 building. If it doesn't work, it didn't do anything.
5 When you install devices and then you fail to enforce
6 the requirement for testing and maintaining them,
7 that does not protect the public. It only gives the
8 public a false sense of security and it subverts the
9 intention of the program. How to improve this bill?
10 We have a host of possible backflow hazards to worry
11 about in our interconnected grade of pipes which feed
12 fire hydrants, commercial, industrial, and
13 residential buildings. The ongoing danger is
14 elevated when we do not really know if we have
15 properly addressed the problem. In light of this, we
16 recommend the Council consider additionally requiring
17 the DEP to report the actual number of installed
18 devices and the actual number of buildings requiring
19 the device. It would seem that the DEP should be
20 able to come up with those numbers. So, we can all
21 understand where we really are. In conclusion,
22 plumbers' local union number one strongly supports
23 the Council Member Richards bill and feels that INTRO
24 268 if enacted into law with additional requirements
25 for the actual number of installed devices and the

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2 actual number of buildings that require a device will
3 help keep New York City a healthy city.

4 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: This time,
5 I'll pass it over to Council Member Yeger and then
6 I'll come back with my questions.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr.
8 Chairman. Mr. Clark, I couldn't agree with you more.
9 We want to make the bill as strong as possible. I
10 think actually we've done Council Member Richards has
11 at least half of what you asked for. Subsection 3 of
12 Subdivision 3 requires that the reporting include
13 "the number of all facilities in which backflow
14 prevention devices have been installed to date".
15 Does that not meet with what you're asking for?

16 ARTHUR CLARK: If their going to give us
17 a real number of how many backflow preventers there
18 are installed, and these are containment devices that
19 keep water from going back into their piping, that
20 would be what I'm talking about.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Well, they would
22 only give it if we pass the law and require it and
23 they comply with it, but yes, so that would meet half
24 of it.

25 ARTHUR CLARK: Okay.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And then the other
3 half is you've asked for the actual number of
4 buildings requiring a device and what we've asked in
5 the draft legislation Council Member Richards bill
6 INTRO 268, is the number of all facilities that the
7 department estimates requires the installation of one
8 or more backflow prevention devices. How can the
9 department necessarily know how many buildings
10 require it?

11 ARTHUR CLARK: This has been going on
12 since the 1980's. They have always taken the
13 position that they don't know and can't know how many
14 buildings require these devices. The building owners
15 are - their required to either install a device or
16 explain why they are exempt from installing a device
17 because they don't have a hazardous condition.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Only for the new
19 buildings, right?

20 ARTHUR CLARK: Right.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay.

22 ARTHUR CLARK: But all your existing
23 buildings I mean its as simple as asking them. I
24 mean it could be as simple as putting together a
25 piece of paper that they have to fill out and return

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2 and say, you know, have you got any of these
3 conditions in your building? And if you do not have
4 those conditions in your building, indicate that you
5 don't have those conditions, and somebody should be
6 able to whether they have a survey done by a master
7 plumber or they have an architect, or an engineer
8 certify that that's correct. The simple question is,
9 do you or do you not need a backflow preventer and if
10 its required, lets get one in there. If its not
11 required, tell us its not required but this is not
12 new, its been going on for 30 years. They still
13 haven't found any method of discerning what buildings
14 need these devices. It doesn't make any sense.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Alright, and now
16 my question very briefly for Ms. Mclver. Did I get
17 that right?

18 APRIL MCLVER: Mclver yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Mclver, Mclver,
20 okay well that's easy, I know that. Uhm, you
21 represent the plumbing contractors, the engineering
22 associations, the supply houses, and manufacturers.
23 How much would the plumbing contractors engineering
24 associations supply houses and manufactures like the
25

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2 fines to be if as you indicate \$50.00 to \$1,000.00 is
3 not sufficient.

4 APRIL MCLVER: Are you asking the actual
5 number we would recommend?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: What fine would
7 you like for somebody who didn't comply with the law.
8 How much would New York City's plumbers like them to
9 be fined?

10 APRIL MCLVER: Uhm, I don't think that it
11 has any direct impact on New York City's plumbers.
12 It doesn't give them -

13 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Well you represent
14 the plumbers, right?

15 APRIL MCLVER: Yes, but in terms of
16 building owners having to pay a fine, it doesn't make
17 a lot of sense if their saying fine, I'll just pay a
18 \$500.00 fine rather than installing some \$10,000.00
19 device.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: So, how much would
21 the plumbers of New York and the associated - and the
22 engineering associations, the supply houses, and the
23 manufacturers like New York City's real property
24 owners to be fined? What is the number you would
25 like?

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2 APRIL MCLVER: I would leave the actual
3 number up to the discretion of the City Council, but
4 it should coincide with what the property type is and
5 what smaller or large device would be. So, if it's a
6 smaller property and I believe DEP testified last
7 year it could range from \$3,000.00 to \$20,000.00
8 system depending on the property usage. It should
9 coincide with what that properties usage would be.
10 So, I imagine it would be on a sliding scale similar
11 to what the actual cost of the device would be.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: So -

13 ARTHUR CLARK: You can estimate the cost
14 of the device by the size of the water service. So,
15 it's a two-inch water service, that's one thing. If
16 it's a six-inch water service or a ten-inch water
17 service, that's a different thing. So, it could be
18 on a sliding scale based on the size of the water
19 service.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: So, the fine
21 should be equal to how much it would cost to install
22 the device?

23 ARTHUR CLARK: At least -

24 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I mean for the
25 recommendation of the plumbing foundation of New

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2 York. I'm interested in local one's input as well
3 but what I want is a number. How much do you think
4 the fine should be? I came here to not bill for
5 fines, how much do you think the fine should be?
6 Give me a number.

7 APRIL MCLVER: I agree with what I just
8 said. If its going to be a \$3,000.00 - if that's
9 what that property usage would be, that's what the
10 installation device -

11 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Equal to the price
12 of the device?

13 APRIL MCLVER: Yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Gotcha. Local
15 one, equal to the price of the device?

16 ARTHUR CLARK: The installation - the
17 device itself is part of the cost. The labor is the
18 other part of the cost.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Equal to the price
20 of the device plus the installation.

21 ARTHUR CLARK: Yeah, or at least cost
22 enough to make it a choice. Either I have to pay
23 this fine and get nothing, or I have to do the
24 installation and then I'm done.

25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Plumbing
3 foundation, same answer?

4 APRIL MCLVER: I completely agree.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, I don't but
6 I just wanted to get the number. Thank you very much
7 Mr. Chair.

8 APRIL MCLVER: Thank you.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you
11 Council Member Yeger. Uhm, I mean your quoting my
12 questions from last hearing. So, you sort of know
13 where I stand here but based on the testimony issued
14 given by DEP today, do you agree with their
15 statements on amending the bill for more transparency
16 or what are thoughts on DEP's testimony today?

17 APRIL MCLVER: Umh, yeah, so I was
18 actually happy to hear a lot of the numbers because I
19 believe you know, reviewing - I was at the hearing
20 last year and reviewing the testimony. It seemed
21 like they couldn't answer a lot of the questions
22 about the number of buildings that they issued
23 violations for and what the compliance was. It seems
24 like they were very unclear. So, this year it seems
25 they had more clear answers and more clear numbers

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2 from 2017 which is great. That only tells me that
3 they should be able to comply with what we're
4 requesting; the actual numbers and it sounds like
5 they're doing a great job with data mining and I
6 think that's actually great for transparency. So, I
7 would like to know what other means they could
8 provide information like they said, so.

9 ARTHUR CLARK: On that same comment, I
10 mean, when you have 30 years to determine how many
11 buildings in your city need to have a safety device
12 installed, and after 30 years, you can't answer that
13 question, somethings wrong and its time for them to
14 realize that 30 years is long enough and if they
15 don't have an answer they need to do something to
16 come up with an answer.

17 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I don't
18 disagree, so I mean I've been a supporter of the bill
19 for a long time. I look forward to working with both
20 your organizations to come up to a good resolution.
21 I think that we can. So, thank you for your
22 testimony, I appreciate it.

23 ARTHUR CLARK: Thank you Mr. Chair.

24 APRIL MCLVER: Thank you.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And at this
3 point, we'll move on to our next panel but first I
4 want to recognize Council Member Ulrich and I see
5 he's got two special guests with us today.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Yeap, Lily and
7 Tiny.

8 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, Lily and
9 Tiny welcome.

10 TINY: Ah oh.

11 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, so
12 we have Marcia O'Brien and we have Jacque Campbell.
13 If you can come forward and testify. And welcome
14 again, Lily and Tiny. Hi guys, good afternoon.
15 Thank you for your patience. We're not going to do a
16 clock. So, just give your testimony and we want to
17 make sure we can hear your complete thoughts.

18 MARCIA O'BRIEN: Please excuse my voice.
19 Uhm, good afternoon Chairman and Council Members. My
20 name is Marcia O'Brien and I'm the President of the
21 140th Drive and Community Block Association. Also, a
22 board member for committee board 13 and I'm also the
23 President and Board Chairperson of the Roseville
24 Civic Association. My Council Member was Donovan
25 Richards. Thank you for inviting my testimony at

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2 this public hearing to address the problem of sewage
3 backups that has this proportionately impact upon
4 southeastern Queens. Since 1946, the Roseville Civic
5 Association has continuously maintained its mission
6 to preserve and enhance the quality of life of the
7 southeastern Queens suburban enclave within New York
8 City boundaries. As a long time, resident and home
9 owner in Rosedale, I raised two amazing young adults.
10 One just graduated from college and the other one is
11 doing pre-law and as a long time resident and home
12 owner with first hand experience of the damage done
13 by flooding in southeast Queens. Both to our homes
14 and also to our businesses. I support with forever
15 the cities intention to enhancements relating to
16 backflow prevention device reporting and
17 certification. I also support the methodology of
18 reducing sewer system backups by requiring the city
19 to prepare a plan to prevent sewer system backups.
20 Such and effort is commendable and necessary. DEP
21 should be required to vigorously investigate and
22 inspect any locations that require backflow
23 prevention devices and strictly enforce their
24 installation and maintenance. Sewage and other
25 contaminants entering our drinking water is a health

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2 hazard and it is unacceptable. The cleaning of the
3 sewers on a regular basis is a necessity and a
4 requirement that the plan be presented by the end of
5 the year is a good way to push DEP to achieve that
6 goal. However, any plan that truly seeks to solve
7 this problem must acknowledge that the still,
8 unfinished sewer infrastructure in southeast Queens
9 will continue to cause backups, because we do not
10 have a complete system to take away debris in water.
11 The system is still overloaded, and backups will
12 continue until we have a full bill out. The \$1.9
13 billion sewer construction for southeast Queens one
14 by our Council Members must be completed. Also, a
15 solution to the high-water table issue that continues
16 in parts of southeast Queens must be implemented. As
17 long as the standing water level is so close to the
18 street surface, any strong rain or impediments in the
19 sewers will lead to backups because there is
20 absolutely no room beneath the street surface to
21 accept storm water or deal with impediments. What is
22 being purposed is commendable and will help and
23 should be supported but not until the above issues
24 are addressed. We will still risk sewer backups and
25 flood conditions in our community. So, I have left

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2 this document with most and I thank the cities
3 administration in advance for tackling these issues
4 head on with analysis, capital, and implementation
5 and/or organizations along with the thousands of
6 residents support these two bills that are intended
7 to address sewer backup that has this proportionately
8 impacted southern Queens. Thank you for the
9 opportunity to testify and excuse my voice again.

10 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: No worries.
11 Thank you for your testimony today and I guess I'll
12 ask, has DEP visited your civic association with the
13 Cease the Grease and all of those -

14 MARCIA O'BRIEN: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: They have.

16 MARCIA O'BRIEN: I invited DEP out to
17 present and they did give us a few handouts that we
18 shared with residents. It was not a lot. It was
19 just one sample degreaser container, uhm and that's
20 that. Uhm, I have not seen them at any of the four
21 community board meetings. I do sit on the board with
22 Jackie. You have? Okay, so she has. Maybe I missed
23 that one but probably about a year ago, uhm, they
24 came out to the Rosedale Civic Association.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, you
3 think that we can do a little bit more of a robust
4 job, right? We can do a better job on getting the
5 word out.

6 MARCIA O'BRIEN: Yes, absolutely,
7 absolutely. More outreach.

8 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay.

9 MARCIA O'BRIEN: Home visits, knock on
10 the doors, drop off things, you know, drop off I
11 don't know on the steps containers, just to be more
12 proactive in the community because although they
13 claim that you're not getting a lot of complaints, or
14 they're not seeing a lot of complaints, its coming in
15 from southeast Queens. Folks have given up, we have
16 a lot of seniors who just feel that their voices are
17 not being heard and they just find ways to seek help
18 themselves to deal with the situation.

19 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Well, that
20 should never be the answer.

21 MARCIA O'BRIEN: Absolutely.

22 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: That should
23 never be the answer. We should always be able to
24 help. So, let's continue our conversation. We
25 definitely will take your information and let's

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2 continue how we can work with DEP together and with
3 Council Member Richards and Miller and come up with –
4 Adrienne Adams and all of our representatives. In
5 partnership and Eric Ulrich as well and come up with
6 solutions on how we can get that outreach to sort of
7 be tailored community by community in a better way.

8 MARCIA O'BRIEN: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you.
10 Ms. Campbell. You just got to push the button and
11 make sure the lights on.

12 JACQUE CAMPBELL: Hi, can you hear me
13 now, yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yeah, I hear
15 you great, thank you.

16 JACQUE CAMPBELL: My name is Jacque
17 Campbell. I'm a Community Board Member – 13 member.
18 I'm also founder/President of the Rosedale Blocks
19 Committee Association, otherwise known as 147 Road
20 Block and Committee Association and I'm a member of
21 the JFK Airport Committee among other things. I'm
22 going to speak on a more very personal level because
23 I've been affected so much by this. I'm very
24 passionate about it. I've been trying over the years
25 to get some solution. I moved into my house in 1991

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2 and from the very first time I moved in, I've been
3 having sewer backup problems and I started paying a
4 contractor through a maintenance company to come and
5 clean my sewer once a year. I finally decided that
6 they're going to do - put the camera down into the
7 sewer line to find out what's going on. They found
8 it was tree roots. Okay, so they recommend that
9 every year I continue cleaning it because it was
10 going to cost me too much to do the pipes - to change
11 the pipes - the sewer pipe in the yard down the
12 street. So, I continue doing that and until the city
13 got they're contract, then I watched in that contract
14 and then they found out I have a bigger problem which
15 they had to eventually - because insurance knows I
16 was not able to change the pipes. One of them was
17 the sewer line leading to the street - connected to
18 the streets sewer line. So, that was done last year
19 actually. So, two times in five years, they did
20 change the pipes. One in my yard and one in the
21 street. So, I am thinking, and I want to thank you
22 for taking on this issue on our behalf because
23 Rosedale is an area that as you know, its basically
24 [inaudible 1:41:58] water and we have a lot of
25 flooding problems here. All my neighbors do, and

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2 they come to me asking what to do because they don't
3 and part of the reason why you're hearing on the
4 reporting is because of the contract that they have
5 with the city. So, people call this contractor to do
6 their work and of course DEP doesn't - I don't think
7 they get that in their records or they get the
8 numbers, but my neighbors call all the time and if
9 you look on our streets, we have the streets where
10 they're coming - they do the work to change the
11 pipes. So, in any event, uhm, I think DEP needs to
12 coordinate with the Parks Department - I guess Parks
13 and streets and they have not responded to this
14 because of tree roots. We have a lot of trees in
15 Rosedale and I think maybe City Council can help us
16 to help Parks to partner with DEP because I'm sure if
17 its effecting our homes, its effecting the sewer
18 lines on the streets as well and there is some
19 connection going on there. So, I think Parks
20 Department and DEP need to work together somehow and
21 coordinate to help us or to solve this root problem
22 with the trees because they're not cutting the trees
23 down because they said they're healthy but, in the
24 meantime, they're causing problems to the home owners
25 and to residents. So, I hope you hear my passion

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2 because its really, really a problem and I have had
3 28 years of this.

4 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And I'm sure
5 it cost you quite a bit of money to do all -

6 JACQUE CAMPBELL: Yes, it did, and it has
7 been.

8 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I hear ya.
9 Now look I mean I think we're always striving to
10 bring agencies together to come up with solutions to
11 real problem, right and I know that there's issues
12 with the sidewalks when it comes to tree root issues.
13 With the sewer with tree roots, you know, the home
14 owners are sort of stuck with a lot of the bill and I
15 think we want to coordinate better. I think we can
16 definitely do that. So, I'm happy again to - we have
17 some of the folks from DEP still in the room. I
18 think we can have some good discussions and sit down
19 again with my colleagues and I'm happy to work with
20 Eric and Donovan and Adrienne and Domingue and come
21 up with some good solutions for you. So, make sure
22 we get your information and we'll absolutely reach
23 out.

24 JACQUE CAMPBELL: And I thank you for
25 taking this on our behalf.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uhm, its our
3 pleasure. It's worth it that we do. So, thank you
4 for being here today. We definitely appreciate both
5 of you coming here and bringing your voices to the
6 Council. You know, we try to legislate and try to do
7 the right thing and its good to hear whats actually
8 happening in communities, so we can tailor our
9 legislation to the issues that are happening on the
10 ground and not just on data and numbers but whats
11 happening to real people because that's what this is
12 all about is making the lives of people better. So,
13 I really appreciate you being here today and your
14 testimony.

15 JACQUE CAMPBELL: Thank you so much.

16 CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you.
17 Alright, so I want to thank all my colleagues for
18 being here today. I want to thank Kalman Yeger, our
19 Council Member from Brooklyn for being here for the
20 entirety of the hearing, thank you sir. Thank our
21 staff attorney and committee attorney Samara
22 Swanston. Thank you Natia Johnson, our policy
23 analyst, our financial analyst Jonathan Sulzer. My
24 legislative Council Nick Wazowski[SP?] and all of our
25 sergeant at arms and everyone who is doing the work

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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

today. So, with that, we will end this Committee on
the Environmental Protection, thank you. [GAVEL].

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date April 1, 2018