CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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

Mark Chambers
Director of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, MOS

Anthony Fiore
Deputy Commissioner for Energy Management with The Department of Citywide Administrative Services

Mike DeLoach
Deputy Commissioner of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, DEP

Robert Holub
Code Development Architect at the New York City Department of Buildings

Bob Ackley
Owner of Gas Safety Inc. of Massachusetts

Nathan Phillips
Professor in the Department of Earth and Environment at Boston University

Zeyneb Magavi
Director of HEET

Lindsey Cooper
Climate Justice Organizer with Mothers Out Front

Dominic Nicholas
Large Volume Leaks Program at HEET

Asha Brundage Moore
Student at New York City Law, Intern at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Bob Wyman
Supporter of Intro 1055 and 1399

Lisa DiCaprio
Professor of Social Sciences at NYU, Conservation Chair of the Sierra Club New York City Group

Molly Ornati
Co-Facilitator of Brooklyn 350

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

Ruth Hardinger
Damascus Citizens for Sustainability

Vincent Brancato
Co-Chair of the Environmental Stewardship Committee of the New York Society for Ethical Culture

Margaret Perkins
Representing 350 NYC

Marion Yuen
GRP, LEED Green Associate, the MYA Group

Wendy Brawer
Director of Green Map System, Sustainability and Climate Change Design Professional

Richenda Kramer
Representing Action Corps New York City

Kyle Jeremiah
Communications and Community Engagement Manager Energy Vision

Kim Fraczek
Director of Sane Energy Project

Karen Blondel
Resilient Red Hook

Amber Ruther
Representing the New York City Democratic Socialists of America Ecosocialist Working Group

Gustavo Gordillo
Member of the New York City Democratic Socialists of America Ecosocialist Working Group

Ashley Dawson
Professor of Environmental Studies at the City University of New York, Member of the New York City Democratic Socialists of America

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

Catherine Skopic
Board and Steering Committee of the Interfaith Moral Action on Climate

Jackie Weisberg
350 Brooklyn

Gregory Schwedock
Resident of New York City, DSA

Cait LaMorte
Development Director at Gowanus Canal Conservancy

Saheedah Majolagbe
High School Student, Global Kid's Youth Ambassador

Cristian Bonkova
Educator with Global Kids, College Professor for Global Development

Cecile
Concerned Parent, New York City Resident

David Morkal
Executive Officer to the Chief of Operations at The New York City Fire Department

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, good afternoon. I am… I am Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection and today this Committee is hearing three bills associated with the climate. Intro 1399 which creates the Department of Sustainability and Climate Change; Intro 1055 which address, addresses the pervasive leaks in natural gas infrastructure and Intro 272, which requires testing for methane leaks in city buildings and after the end of residential tenancy. Intro 1399 would create an independent Department of Sustainability and Climate Change and repeal section 20 of chapter one of New York City Charter. In 2006 as part of Plan NYC, Mayor Bloomberg created the Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability now known as the Mayor's Office of Sustainability. In that time, MOS and its sister office, the Office of Recovery and Resiliency has done critical work on raising awareness of the looming climate crisis and the actions that we as a civilization need to take to avert it. They have been amazing partners in creating a framework to get us to 80 by 50, helping to build the retrofit accelerator and most recently in passing

the climate mobilization act. The men and women of MOS and OOR have done an outstanding job and I want to thank them for that. We cannot expect however that the several dozen employees in this office have the capacity to manage the sustainability policies for over the 300,000 strong city workforce, we want to give them more help. The retrofit accelerator is a good example of this. While I certainly don't mean to suggest that the work of the retrofit accelerator is not up to par, it's… we have… you know to say that we're going to do 5,000 buildings a year when we have a target of 50,000 buildings alone covered by 1253 not to say any other buildings in that we need more resources, we need more help, that's why there's no other reason that I can think of that a full-fledged agency would somehow be less equipped to handle interagency initiatives or somehow by doing this bill we're creating silos that this department of sustainability would be the only ones thinking about sustainability issues. During the course of this own administration we've seen the creation and expansion of vision zero throughout city government, not only as part of… you know DOT who has the ultimate responsibility, but other city agencies as well are

in… implementing and working on vision zero. I look at this in a very similar vein where we create the Department of Sustainability and yet still sustainability issues could continue to permeate in every city agency but to be one agency, one full-fledged department accountable and able to use the full resources of any other of their department to work, work on issues relating to climate change and it, it also would create an additional level of oversight, you know we've had City Council hearings here relating to budget where I just… we don't have… the City Council does not have the authority to ask about implementation of MOS and that's also difficult for the public to ask tough questions about how we're spending the dollars that we need to spend, we're not going to spike the football on climate change anytime soon. If anything, we have to dedicate ourselves even further, we need to increase our, our, our… both financial and intellectual capital that we're investing and fighting climate change because it's only going to get worse. As I've said before our children, my son who is now ten when he's the age I am now… our… all of our sons and daughters will be faced with a climate calamity that we don't… can't

even fathom. It's time for us to make as a city a larger investment, a deeper investment and one that when this Mayor leaves or when this City Council leaves that we're leaving behind a stronger apparatus, an apparatus that will be in perpetuity in relation to climate change. So, I, I definitely want to make sure that as we think about all of the issues that climate change touches whether it's human health, welfare, infrastructure, resiliency that a dedicated sustainability department would be the way to go in my opinion. In addition, we're hearing Intro 1055 today, to create a map of methane leaks in the city of New York. Fugitive methane emissions from the leak prone natural gas distribution infrastructure are the largest source of greenhouse gas methane emissions in urban environments. In terms of it's warming potential, methane is at least 25 times more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. These emissions are wholly avoidable according to the International Energy Agency. The industry could reduce methane emissions by 75 percent and two thirds of those reductions would pay for themselves because the value of gas saved. According to recent… a recent study published by the Journal of Science, 2.3

percent of total production annually is wasted through fugitive methane emissions, the lost methane is worth an estimated two billion dollars a year. No one is cooking with these fugitive methane emissions, no one is heating or cleaning their… cooling their homes but we are all seeing heating and cooling… heating of our own when it comes to climate change. Intro 1055 would require an office or agency designated by the Mayor to examine, survey and produce a map of all methane leaks in the city of New York where methane leaks are identified. This proposed Local Law would require notice to the gas company to repair or replace any aging leak prone or leaking natural gas infrastructure located on or in any public way or any leaking natural gas infrastructure that's a source of large volumetric leak is not repaired within 90 days after the notice the designated agency must repair the leak and seek costly recovery on behalf of the city. I want to thank Council Member Richards as well for his introduction, Intro 12… I mean… oh, sorry, 272 and I'll give him the opportunity to speak on it when he arrives. So, at this time I'm looking forward to hearing testimony from all of the city agencies that

are here today so I will now have Samara swear you all in. Thank you.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Would you please raise your right hand? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth today?

[panel affirms]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, so I'm not sure who's beginning but Mark I guess you're up.

MARK CHAMBERS: Thank you. Good afternoon, my name is Mark Chambers, I'm the Director of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability. I want to thank Chairperson Constantinides and the members of the Committee for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the De Blasio administration on Introduction 1399 related to the creation of a department of sustainability and climate change and Introductions 272 and 1055 related to methane leaks. As you know this is the first time that I've had the opportunity to testify in front of this committee since the Council passed the landmark climate mobilization act. I really want to thank the Speaker, the Chair and all of the staff for their dedication,

leadership, partnership with the administration on creating a new and innovative legal regime to fight climate change. From mandating… excuse me, from mandating carbon emission reductions in existing buildings to requiring solar panels and green roofs on new buildings to enabling the financing to get this necessary work done, what we did together was nothing short of setting a new national standard for fighting climate change and creating jobs. What we did together proves the green new deal can be done. In October of 2012, the impacts of hurricane Sandy brought home the reality that climate risks were much more urgent than many had thought. In the aftermath of the storm… aftermath of the storm, the administration not only focused on the immediate task of rebuilding and getting New Yorkers back into their homes, but we also concentrated on putting the structures and systems in place to prepare the city and our residents for the new realities of climate change. In 2014, Mayor De Blasio created the Mayor's Office of Sustainability and the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency, which is now the Mayor's Office of Resiliency, out of what was previously known as the Office of Long Term Planning and

Sustainability or OLTPS, to ensure that the city had dedicated resources and expertise to both reduce our contribution to climate change by dramatically cutting carbon emissions and to strengthen our resiliency and reduce our vulnerability to the inevitable impacts of climate change. And in 2016, Mayor De Blasio created the Office of Climate Policy and programs to lead the city's global partnerships, to take the fight straight to the fossil fuel industry and to manage One NYC, the city's green new deal. While… with direct reporting to the First Deputy Mayor, these three offices are leading the administration's efforts to institutionalize our climate work across agencies and operations and to fill the void of leadership left by the current federal administration. Our offices work with all city agencies and in close collaboration with all Deputy Mayors. This structure is delivering results for New Yorkers. Here are just a few of the highlights. We have committed to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and taken bold steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from every sector. We're on a path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and 100 percent clean electricity by 2040. We're

rapidly expanding renewable energy. Since the beginning of 2014, have installed… the installed solar capacity has increased sevenfold, and we now have enough solar installed across the city to meet the needs of nearly 50,000 households. We're also pursuing a deal to power 100 percent of city operations with clean electricity sources. We are implementing a 20-billion-dollar resiliency strategy to protect our city and residents from the impacts of climate change that includes implementing complex coastal protection projects, mitigating extreme heat, hardening critical infrastructure, helping communities and small businesses prepare for climate change and much more. We are holding accountable the companies that caused this climate crisis in the first place by suing the five investor owned fossil fuel companies most responsible for climate change. We're divesting five billion dollars from city pensions and doubling our investments in climate change solutions to four billion. We just issued One NYC 2050, the city's green new deal, in April, setting forth additional bold actions to confront our climate crisis, achieve equity, and strengthen our democracy. All… and all of our climate actions will

create tens of thousands of good paying jobs for New Yorkers. We are also creating a culture of sustainability and resiliency in all agencies. While it's not our, our individual offices' role to build schools and parks and roads, we are embedding climate smart thinking across the city government. This means that when we plan and when we build, we're doing it with sustainability and resiliency considerations factored in from the very beginning. All of this work has been supported and augmented by our partnership with the City Council, advocates and stakeholders. At every step, from policy, programs and project design to implementation and construction, we prioritize public input to ensure that each climate action we're taking not only meaningfully addresses the climate crisis but also addresses inequity. This progress not only benefits New Yorkers, it also serves as a model to other cities around the nation and the world. In 2015, New York City became the first city in the world to release a comprehensive resiliency strategy and in 2017 we became the first city in the world to align our sustainability efforts with the Paris climate agreement and its goal to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Both of

these steps, along with, with many of New York City's other resiliency and sustainability initiatives were groundbreaking at the time. Now, they have been emulated all over the world. Through networks such as the C40 climate leadership group, carbon neutral cities alliance, 100 resilient cities, the ICLEI network, and others, we are working with other cities to scale up effective solutions. If there's anything like a silver lining to fighting climate change, it's that the administration and the City Council are in lock step when it comes to assessing the severity of the crisis for our city and the urgency with which we must act. That's precisely why the administration has vested responsibility with leading the city's climate action in mayoral offices. Climate change is a cross cutting issue, requiring the specialized expertise of almost every city agency. By giving MOS, MOR and CPP the power to coordinate agency efforts, we are able to act with urgency… with the urgency our residents demand. Having said that, while the administration believes that our current climate teams are structured appropriately to meet the challenge, New York City residents need every tool at our disposal in this fight. We share your goals to put… that are

put forward in Intro 1399, to prepare New York City for the impacts of climate change, build a more sustainable city and effectively respond to, and recover from climate emergencies. In the coming months, we look forward to discussing strategies for effectively meeting these goals together. I would now like to discuss two bills related to methane leaks being heard today. I want to emphasize at the outset that the administration strongly supports identifying and repairing methane leaks for environmental and safety reasons. We are pleased to have worked with the Council in 2016 on passing a series of laws to better protect our residents from gas leaks. Introduction 272 requires the Department of Environmental Protection to inspect, identify and report on all methane leaks in city buildings. Methane in and around buildings is most likely from natural gas that is used for heating or hot water production in the building. Natural gas is hazardous in buildings because it is flammable and because it could displace oxygen in a confined space. Natural gas utilities add an artificial scent to natural gas so that people can smell it indoors and that there is… and know that there is a health risk. In

instances where smell is detected, people should call the gas company or 9-1-1 immediately. As for the work in city buildings, individual agencies are in charge of managing and maintaining their own buildings and in centralized… a centralized process with one department in charge will not necessarily lead to the efficiencies or added safety. We understand that identifying and repairing natural gas leaks is critical both for safety and sustainability reasons and we look forward to working with the City Council on amendments that ensure the appropriate agencies are responsible for checking and preventing gas leaks. Although the Public Service Commission governs how the utilities respond to methane leaks, we continue to push strongly at the state for, for stronger procedures for the utilities to detect and promptly repair methane leaks. For instance through the Con Edison rate case currently underway, the administration has submitted public testimony to the PSC stating that the utility must take a more proactive and timely approach to repairing all types of methane leaks not just the large volumetric leaks identified in Introduction 1055 and here in New York City we're also actively supporting the utilities to

improve their methane leak detection capabilities. Both gas utilities serving New York City are piloting approaches to integrate advanced leak detection technologies as well as surveying and mapping leaks and making that information publicly available on their websites. I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to discuss our work and address the climate crisis. We look forward to your questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, it's, it's always good to see you Mark.

MARK CHAMBERS: Same here.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And you know I, I, I'm glad to… you know it's… to have you hear after the climate mobilization act passed, that was a big moment… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: Big deal…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you to the administration for your partnership on that and I think we have a lot more to do.

MARK CHAMBERS: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And I think that's where this comes from today is how we work together to build on the climate mobilization act and

the work that we've done thus far because as you said right now we're in lock step so the first question I'll ask is what happens when we're not in lock step, right, so there could be a time where we did not have a Mayor that is… believes in climate change or maybe possibly a City Council that does not, how… you know by having a full department of sustainability it would be out in the open, right, it wouldn't be part of a Mayoralty, it wouldn't be something that could be hidden away, right, so… what… by… and it would also be the first jurisdiction in the country to create a Department of Sustainability elevating climate change to the seriousness that we all know that it needs so what would your thoughts be on how a full department would elevate the, the conversation around climate change noticing already we've done a lot of really great stuff but we, we can't rest on our laurels we have to continue to do more, right?

MARK CHAMBERS: I, I completely agree that, you know doing more is, is not only advantageous it's absolutely necessary… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Right… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …to your original point about the, the benefits of making sure there is a legacy of this work and making sure that it has to continue, one of the hallmarks of our approach to our climate work is codifying it wherever possible so it's not just working with, with Council it's also with changing the energy codes, changing the building codes, changing the zoning codes to make sure that it, it is not subject to just prioritization but it's become a culture of how we do work internally in the city as well as how the, the city at large has to redefine our built environment. So, I, I do think there are multiple ways that we are doing now and need to continue to do to be able to again instill a culture that is not just part of how the city operates, operates but also how the… how the city at large has to work towards these initiatives.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, how do you work with other agencies in relation to sustainable policy, what is the current motive of operation there to make sure that they're implementing it in every single project?

MARK CHAMBERS: Certainly, so there are three basic kind of prongs of, of how we're doing

that; there's a staff level of course, staff through all the mayoral offices that we described here work directly with agency staff on a continual basis. There's also the direct engagement with Commissioners consistently myself, other… directors of the other offices are constantly meeting with Commissioners to make sure that there is a, a top down culture that's happening within those agencies and that's regular. In addition, one of the unique aspects of how our climate policy offices work is that we also meet regularly with all Deputy Mayors so it's not simply… we do report to the First Deputy Mayor but have consistent meetings with Deputy Mayor of Operations, Deputy Mayor… and so, so forth to make sure that at all levels of engagement with agencies we are creating the priorities, we're reflecting the Mayor's priorities but also making sure that there is no… there's no room, you know to move away from that.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, give me one second let me just recognize my colleagues, I was remiss in recognizing we have Council Member Kalman Yeger from Brooklyn who's here and also Council Members Eric Ulrich from Queens and also Council Member Donovan Richards who's the lead sponsor on

Intro 272 also from Queens and he's forgone his opening statement on his legislation so thank you for that but I know he has questions afterwards. So, just recognizing all three of my colleagues that are here today. So, let's say if there's a particular… for programs… for projects that are not funded by the Mayor's Office, right, for funding that is for City Council projects what are the programs to make sure that those projects have a sustainable, sustainability component to it that they don't get lost in the shuffle… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: Sure… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …because I have seen that a couple of times where it's like oh, if only we'd have brought it up earlier in design process and I feel like that's a missed opportunity like how do we make sure that those oh man moments don't happen?

MARK CHAMBERS: Yeah, understood so… again the, the, the most consistent and salient way to make sure that projects have… to have these embedded from the beginning is the changes we've made to, to the codes like those, those impact projects from the beginning, absolutely. The secondary part of

it though is that someone needs to be kind of tracking and pushing on these agencies. One of the, the hallmarks of the 1.5 degree process after the Mayor signed executive order 26 was to also instill more accountability where there's a tracking of all of these projects and, and a tracking of their contribution to our overall climate reduction efforts, those are done in house and those are also used as part of our reporting mechanisms back and forth with agencies to make sure that they are being held accountable to prioritize the parts of their work that will absolutely contribute to a reduction in emissions.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, because again I just want to make sure, I mean part of the rational for 1399 is having someone that we can hold accountable on a consistent basis, right, is that to… and, and I look at this as I said before in the same vein as vision zero… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: Right… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …where you'd have a department that is responsible but still having it permeate to all of the other agencies and making sure that it's part of the culture, that we're

not silo-ing which we can't do but, but having a larger budget so… I mean it's… the next question I have is what is the current budget for the… for the Mayor's Office of Sustainability?

MARK CHAMBERS: Sure, and the… before I answer the budget question just… again I, I do understand that there are… we share the out… we share the goals and we share the… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Right, uh-huh… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …need to be able to… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Absolutely… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …to move, move quickly. As far as the, the budget's concerned… as far as the Mayor's Office of Sustainability in particular the budget is about 17 million dollars a year and that is 14 million OTP and about three million for PS.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And are there other agencies who have titles that are involved with MOS or how does that work?

MARK CHAMBERS: Yes, so the… all mayoral offices and particularly the one… the three we're

discussing here have staff that may be in City Hall, they may be in other agencies that all are part of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability. Often… so, for example, in the Mayor's Office of Sustainability the majority of our staff is in the… is in DEP, some of the staff is… the staff lines are in DCAS, EDC or, or City Hall. The… often times when there are new laws or there's new programs that are established, they often come with budgeted lines and so when they sit in agencies the lines often sit in those agencies as well but they are all part of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I guess the question I have then is new Mayor, what happens if… you know because I know Vinny wouldn't do this but what happens, new Mayor, new DP Commissioner they come in and take those lines back from the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, what happens to the Mayor's Office of Sustainability then?

MARK CHAMBERS: Well like any new agency the, the, the discretion over staffing does lie with the, the Mayor but the… I'll just kind of call attention that the same kind of legal framework that established… in the charter that established OLTPS

exists presently and there must be an office of sustainability as a result… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Right… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …of that, the same… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: But if they pulled the titles… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …applies… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …if, if one of the other agencies decided that they needed more work around ways to water or… you know I'm, I'm using DEP as an example because, you know Michael is sitting next to you and I know Vinny wouldn't do this but I'm just saying if the next Mayor decides to pull those titles back to DEP for whatever reason then what happens… I mean there, there would still be a, a Mayor's Office of Sustainability but it wouldn't be as robust, right, that's, that's what I'm trying to… like kind of get at?

MARK CHAMBERS: Sure, yeah and I… again I would just say that the, the discretion still would stand with the Mayor whether it's agency or whether it's mayoral office.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, now when it comes to… you know we're talking about three billion was the number that we talked about for the retrofits?

MARK CHAMBERS: Yeah, for… the needed retrofits across the city… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yes, for the… for the retrofits to comply with 1253, what's the… I don't remember the… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: Four billion, I think it was… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Four billion now, okay, so who is going to be running… who's going to be ultimately accountable to make sure that the, the city reaches its goal of 40 by 25, 50 by 30; who, who's, who has that ball?

MARK CHAMBERS: Understood, so… and just kind of a correction there, I… when I mentioned the four billion, I thought you were referring to the citywide need to meet the, the retrofit… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yeah… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: The… as far as the city's goals the… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Right… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …city buildings and the operational system under city buildings is primarily directed by DCAS but in addition to… similar to the other descriptions I, I made our office, the Office of Sustainability has an integral role in that as well… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …as far as coordinating, assisting, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services as well as other agencies to work with them and comply.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And have we begun some of that work yet, are we… I mean I guess I can… I see Anthony looming over your right shoulder I don't know if he wants to answer… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: Absolutely… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …any of these questions, he's happy to, to join the party any time he decides to… oh, by the way we were joined by Council Member Rafael Espinal from Brooklyn as well.

Just make sure you state your name for the record, and she'll swear you in…

COMMITTEE CLERK: Please, please raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth today?

ANTHONY FIORE: I do. My name is Anthony Fiore, Deputy Commissioner for Energy Management with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, happy to answer questions. The, the, the direct question about has the work started, yes, the, the work has begun, we're in the process of actually implementing work as well as identifying a que of work not only for this new fiscal year, fiscal year 20 but for outer fiscal years as well.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And what's the criteria that we're using to identify buildings to retrofit or who are the good candidates, like how are we going through that process and who's responsibility is that in city government; is it DOB, is it DCAS, is it MOS like who has that ball?

ANTHONY FIORE: Yeah, so DCAS, DCAS evaluates what efficiency measures and what clean energy projects to implement at the agencies in

consultation with the agencies as well so we put out solicitations each year to all of the agencies on what projects they might want to submit and then we evaluate those on a number of factors that include both emissions and financial factors and then we also… the agencies also propose unsolicited projects to us which we evaluate and determine whether they should be funded as well.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And who, who has responsibility for resiliency relating to city building, I know ORR which I don't… I don't… it's not… no longer a part of my committee so I'm not going to go too deep into it…

MARK CHAMBERS: Yeah… yes, the Mayor's Office of Resiliency is who you're referring to.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: But they're also a mayoralty?

MARK CHAMBERS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Then they have titles within different city government… city agencies as well?

MARK CHAMBERS: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, how about biodiversity…

ANTHONY FIORE: Right… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I'll try… Anthony sure, uh-huh…

ANTHONY FIORE: Yes, just to… just to add to that the Mayor's Offices whether it's the Mayor's Office of Sustainability or, or Resiliency sets policy for city agencies. So, when we implement our work it's, it's not just about energy reduction and emission… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

ANTHONY FIORE: …reductions but it's also to take into consideration all of the city's policy objectives including cleaner air, improved public health, resiliency, reliability of, of the energy systems and the downstream attendant systems that rely upon energy and so forth so, we… you know we connect our projects to all of the city's policy objectives.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, what happens when we… if we were not to hit certain goals like who, who gets held accountable because it sounds like there are lot of different agencies that have the ball and I know that when I was a kid my parents

used to tell me when everybody has the ball nobody has the ball so like who, who gets held accountable if we miss, if we… or if we're ahead, right, and you know there's, there's also this opportunity of credit if we're ahead of schedule on particular climate goals which I'd rather be excited about that but who gets held accountable, how do we… what's the level of accountability that we can apply to agencies, to MOS, you know that's, that's a… that's another question I would have?

MARK CHAMBERS: Sure, so I think that one of the benefits of the Mayoral Office is, is that the Mayor has the accountability and, and I think being able to make sure that, to your kind of ball reference that our kind of star player is the one that has the, the accountability. With that being said there is still the ability to have more oversight and have… and we are… we welcome that, I mean when we met with the Committee last April it was for that reason to be able to provide a platform to be able to give additional information, additional responses to, to inquiries and we're happy to do that again.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Well let… the, the problem with that is that was a nonbudget budget hearing, right, it was a hearing that was outside the scope of the budget that we had to have that actually occurred after the budget response was written so it actually doesn't give this body or the public an opportunity to kind of delve into the budget issues around MOS and ORR in a way that is, is transparent and then allows us to make solid recommendations in the structure of the budget process, I mean that's a, a real challenge for this body and for… I mean when you said this is the first time you're testifying for the COUNCIL MEMBERA after the COUNCIL MEMBERA passed that sort of made my point that, you know we were unable to have you in front of us in the month of May in relation to budget… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …and it was very difficult for us to get some of the questions answered that we had so I, I don't want to have to have a non-budget budget hearing every year in order to get where we want to go.

MARK CHAMBERS: Understood.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, you know just really quickly I don't want to take up all of the time here because I see my, my… I know my colleagues… actually you know what I'll do I'll give Council Member Richards an opportunity to speak on his bill and ask some questions around his bill and then I'll come back on methane leaks as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you Chair. A few questions, so let me start… first off thank you Mark for being here. So, in your testimony you alluded to amendments to the bill, can you just speak to which agencies are you projecting should be a part of this bill, appropriate agencies I think you said in your testimony?

MARK CHAMBERS: I have to check again to see if… what the reference exactly is…

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: But I'm assuming DOB…

MARK CHAMBERS: Correct, just appropriate agencies, I don't think we've spelled out which exact ones we, we would… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: But you support… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …be referencing.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: …the bill or you don't support the bill?

MARK CHAMBERS: I think we support the effort of the bill and, and the… and the outcome.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay. Okay, awesome. Alright and Mike DeLoach you got a green tie on, alrighty. How often does DEP survey city owned buildings for methane leaks?

MIKE DELOACH: So, DEP currently isn't responsible for surveying city leaks, we have our own internal process to check our, our own facilities, we have alarms and triggers that are related to our 96 pump stations and our 14 wastewater resource recovery facilities but currently we don't… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Alright and who, who would implementing… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: I think per PSC there's requirements of the utilities to do a lot of that tracking and then we have a robust sort of plan and process when there is a discovery of a leak that my partners at DOB or FDNY could allude to.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So, in city owned buildings D… there's no agency we just leave it to utilities?

MIKE DELOACH: The individual agencies are responsible for their own… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So, DOB, it's like a hot potato today, let's just… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: I'll let… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: …keep passing it down… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …I'll let DOB speak to that.

ROBERT HOLUB: Good afternoon, Robert Holub from DOB. So, I think that the department's position would be that there's not necessarily a distinguishing… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Can you speak a little… [cross-talk]

ROBERT HOLUB: There's, there's not necessarily a distinction between a, a gas leak in a city owned building or in another building, the procedure would always be to first notify emergency response, 9-1-1 and then subsequent to that a, a repair… depending on where the leak is located would either be the responsibility of the serving utility or have to be conducted by a licensed master plumber

in accordance with all the, the related code requirements for that.

MIKE DELOACH: I would just add Council Member there's a lot… you know there's educational tools, there's a lot that's been done to educate the public about reporting leaks… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …there's obviously an odor a specific smell that's added to make sure that people are aware so there's a lot of work that's been done to, you know learn from best practices to make sure that… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: But I think we're talking about prevention, so the question is in the city's portfolio today who is responsible for overseeing methane leaks and I don't want to put this on… let's leave the utilities out for now…

MIKE DELOACH: You mean identifying… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Identifying, yes… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …potential leaks, again… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Yes… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …each individual agency is responsible for their own.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …you know… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: …alright, good. Alright, so which one of you are responsible for checking city owned buildings?

MIKE DELOACH: So, again the individual… there's no… there's no overseer of it, each individual agency is responsible for their own facilities.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So, this, this bill is really good.

MIKE DELOACH: I think we feel like this bill is a little bit redundant because a lot of this stuff that's happening… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Would you say this bill is a very good bill?

MIKE DELOACH: I would say it's very well-intentioned Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay. Fire department, how many reported leaks did you have last year, how many calls did you field?

DAVID MORKAL: So, there's two ways to define that, there's the calls and there's also the responses that have been identified as gas leaks, we responded to almost 23,000 identified gas leaks over the, the, the last fiscal year.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And the year before that, do you have numbers?

DAVID MORKAL: I don't have that number, no.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Are you seeing an increase?

DAVID MORKAL: I'm not really sure if we've had an increase, we certainly see a… an increase when there is an incident with gas that people tend to smell gas a lot more or smell something a lot more after an incident.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay and let me ask you… I guess going back to DEP, so perhaps a, a leak… or DOB whichever one wants to answer this, so, if there's a leak you would report to… you report it to the utility?

MIKE DELOACH: You would call 9-1-1.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: 9-1-1, right… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Right but if… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …and that triggers the process so yeah… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …the FDNY…

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And how often, can you just go through the timeline of if there's a repair that needs to be made how long does a repair take to be made on average?

MIKE DELOACH: It depends just number one just from the type… it definitely depends on the type of leak and you know whose infrastructure and sort of what it involves but… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And how many leaks did we see last fiscal year, do we track that number?

ROBERT HOLUB: The, the department doesn't necessarily track leaks specifically to my knowledge…

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: This is a great bill… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: But the utilities do map the leaks per PSC requirements.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Do residential building owners report to the city on methane leak surveys or no and are they required to report at any time?

MARK CHAMBERS: Sorry, say it again Council Member?

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Do residential building owners report to the city on methane leak surveys?

MARK CHAMBERS: I'm not sure.

MIKE DELOACH: Yeah…

MARK CHAMBERS: So… sorry… [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: There's a lot of dancing going on today.

ROBERT HOLUB: Local Law 152 placed a requirement on building owners to have their buildings inspected for the gas piping systems, those

inspections are done on a five year basis, there's a certification made by the licensed master plumber and that certification is… will be submitted to the department.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And that's self-certification?

ROBERT HOLUB: It is… it is a cert… yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay.

ROBERT HOLUB: Yes, and then so there would be… the department would have an audit procedure to ensure the accuracy.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: I mean I would have a lot more questions but clearly we just need to get information first, I think the city needs to be aware of what's happening in its own portfolio at the very least and I just want to remind folks that, you know if there were people who lost their lives on 116th Street in Harlem, right, eight people killed, we should really act much more aggressively when it comes to these leaks not even just from an environmental standpoint but this is about people's lives and you know it's sort of disappointing that we have not taken steps even after a disaster like that to really get serious about correcting this issue.

You got my point, I'm not going to beat you up today about it but we, we look forward to passing these bills so we could have certainly a solution or at least information on where and how to ensure we're decreasing methane leaks or ensuring they're not happening period so, thank you Chair. I rest my case.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Do any of my other colleagues have questions? Rafael, okay. So, I guess the questions I have in relating to Intro 1055, have the city ever examined the impact of fugitive natural gas emissions on 80 by 50 plan?

MARK CHAMBERS: Yes, the fugitive emissions from methane we believe account for slightly less than about a percent of the citywide GHG emissions so about .7 percent.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: .7 percent and are we working… because right now I know the utilities are doing a lot of this mapping right, what are we doing to make sure that they're accurate, like what is… what is our sort of checking… you know sort of checking the homework to make sure that it's correct, they're not giving us a false sense of what's going on?

MARK CHAMBERS: So, right now the utilities as kind of you pointed out are the ones responsible for, for doing the mapping and making those publicly available so I think that the, the, the point you're trying to get at is the notion of having a, a… an alternate mapping entity that would be for… that could provide some verification, I think there's, there's a lot of justification for that and particularly we do believe that there is a… probably a, a justification of a third party to be able to do that, that would be able to provide the level of redundancy I think you're, you're speaking to.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Well not redundancy, it's making sure that they're accurate, right?

MARK CHAMBERS: Well, accountability I think is also… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yeah, account… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …true, yeah… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …that's, that's, that's the word I would use too, I mean I think… you know it… sometimes there's… you know you walk into a forest and you might see the biggest tree

there and that's the, the utilities but we also… there are other, you know sources of, of methane leaks that we are… need to sort of take a look at, correct, so that's… I know as Council Member Richards was speaking to that in how we sort of make sure that we're looking at not just the one big tree in the forest but also the entire forest to make sure we're not missing something else.

MARK CHAMBERS: Absolutely and I'll add to both of your points I think that the, the need to be able to advocate for increased technology around this is also critical… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …one of the, the benefits of being in the middle of a rate case right now with the utilities is that we are advocating and negotiating to be able to increase the amount of, of leak detection systems that are being deployed alongside kind of the AMI technology for, for meter reading so that the utilities are going to be forced to pilot these technologies that can provide additional alerts around methane leaks that might be

faster or more accurate than some of the other traditional things.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yeah, sure…

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And I, I went… I actually was in Taiwan, actually it was a government trip but we actually went to, I think it was like a smart… a smart city event and they actually had these detectors and I was like the US… New York City is so far behind where technology needs to be in these areas but the city Taiwan, the Taiwanese government invests in this.

MARK CHAMBERS: Yeah, absolutely and…

[cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: They're so far ahead.

MARK CHAMBERS: And the… so, Con Edison is, is deploying about 9,000 of these in Westchester and, and that is a part of the, the beginning of deployment that will happen throughout the city and, and again I think using the rate case as the ability to kind of push for much larger deployment is, is… I think will move us much further very, very quickly in this effort.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright guys have we… has the… does the city have the authority, or have we ever considered finding the utilities for methane emissions from leaks?

MARK CHAMBERS: I'd have to check on the authority, that's an interesting question.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, alright, I mean this is something that… how do… what, what is our ability to hold them at having that level of accountability if we do find that they are not repairing infrastructure in a way that makes sense for our city, what are we able to do, are we able to hold them accountable and I think this… by having someone that the Mayor designates to sort of map these leaks we can then decide on accountability, right, if we… I think that would be a good play… first step to then the second step?

MARK CHAMBERS: I think… I think there's a possibility there, the… I mean the, the notion is what, what do we have the authority over, that may or may not change based on the, the structure of the city government, it may be related to the public service commission and, and what's allowable as well as interaction with the state but I do think that

again there is a… on the table present opportunity through the rate cases to be able to push very significantly to get the utilities to begin to embed a lot of these into, into our work.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yeah because I, I have some deep concerns about the rate case currently and some of the ways that the utilities are positing to spend monies and I think we need to better hold them accountable and… as a city, right and, and I think we need to kind of raise that awareness in the public and also as we're looking to decrease our dependency on these same utilities, as we're looking to move to renewable in New York City it's like how do we ensure that they are keeping this infrastructure… how do they sort of wind it down as we get to a better place, right and that we're not footing the bill for it.

MIKE DELOACH: I, I would just add too, you know I don't think it's in anybody's interest to have any of these leaks, I know the utilities are doing a lot to continue to map and identify where they are… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …as aggressively as possible with you know the PSC as sort of their, their regulator in essence. There have been a lot of changes or, or improvements that we've done as a result of some of the tragedies that we've had, we're in much better coordination with DOT, DEP and the utilities meet monthly to compare notes on locations that have been problematic where there's either a cave in or a depression, DOT when they issue a corrective action request at a cave in it used to only go to DEP now they go to the utilities as well so we're much more synchronized and making sure that we're quickly responding to reports of, you know cave ins or, or depressions which can sometimes be a signal for a leak so there have been improvements that have been made to make sure that we're all, you know collaboratively doing our best to, to catch this.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Right but we're dependent upon them in a large way, correct and relating on their data?

MIKE DELOACH: Yeah, I mean they're doing a lot of work to help identify… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: They're, they're doing a lot but they're, they're doing it in their interest, correct because it's… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: In addition to the work that the agencies are doing on… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Right, uh-huh… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: …our property as well, yes.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay. And then lastly since I, I have our friends from the Fire Department here I'll, I'll ask a question that's related to sustainability and I hope that you can answer that question as well but… I know we have legislation before the Council and this will tie into MOS so I'm bringing everything together but I know to do a variance on… for solar how is the work going to create an online portal to submit those variances because I know right now there has to be a hard copy delivered to Metrotech in order to do that and I was told a couple years back that we were moving towards an online portal so have we gotten there yet and again this is just another opportunity for us to talk

about how we within interagency have these conversations, right?

DAVID MORKAL: Yeah, I wish I could answer that question but that really resides in fire prevention and I'm in the operations end sort of… so response to emergencies and the fire prevention has that aspect of the… [cross-talk]

MIKE DELOACH: We can circle back and get you that information…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I would love to do that because I, I don't have a… the FDNY in front of me all that often so I, I just want to take the opportunity where I had it here.

DAVID MORKAL: I wish I could answer all of your questions and at home I do but I don't think I can do that here.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: No, I just still find… I mean as, as we sort of search for making things as easy to be green and this to be, you know regular, traditional this is just a huge thing that I hear from the… you know the public, right, like I want to get a variance on my roof, I want to be able to move forward, I have to spend a whole day going down to Metrotech and submit on… you know hit…

submit plans in person, I mean it's the 21st century, I mean I, I can pretty much do anything I want from this phone, I'd, I'd also like to be able to submit documents, right and, and I think that just makes a whole lot of sense.

DAVID MORKAL: Yes, I certainly understand that and we've, we've actually been working with DOB in trying to streamline that process.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And, and DOB is here, right?

ROBERT HOLUB: Unfortunately, I'm not in a better position to, to comment on the, the variances.

MIKE DELOACH: We'll circle back and get you… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, great and then just sort of the last thing I'll say is on, on budget, right because that's, that's really… I'll sort of circle back to 1399, I, I got the extra stuff here but in relation to OBEEP, that's going to be under DOB, the Office of… you know the new… the… as 1253 we just built… I mean how much budget… how much money was put into this year's budget to build up

OBEEP, to build out the retrofit… I mean I'll just put up all the questions together for OBEEP, for the retrofit accelerator, for all programs, you know relating to compliance with 1253 because I know building owners are either very concerned about what's going on or very excited to start moving forward and what are we doing in this year's budget to provide them as opportunities?

MARK CHAMBERS: Absolutely, so the, the work to, to define and create the OBEEP is, is underway now, now that the bill is passed and it's become a law, the… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …the work is beginning with DOB, with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, Deputy Mayors to be able to develop and, and, and budget for that. I will say towards the, the retrofit accelerator in, in preparation for the Climate Mobilization Act the retrofit accelerator was tripled in size so it… the… we budgeted about 38 million dollars that would be accounted for over a period of three years to be able to allow the retrofit accelerator to begin to meet some of these… the

massive needs that will be undertaken with a city that's moving under retrofit… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And that 30 million dollars how much is it in this year's budget?

MARK CHAMBERS: This year's budget I want to say it's probably about 12 million… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: About 12 million… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: I, I can come back and… the right answer on that.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And would that 12 million be re-upped for the next budget year, I mean we got some saying… are we… are we building on these dollars every year or are we just saying 12 million this year, 12 million this year and then 12 million the year after and that's… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: So, so it was… it was a three-year budget for this… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Right… [cross-talk]

MARK CHAMBERS: …next iteration so the next three years we'll have somewhere in… ten to 12 million dollars and, and then we'll budget beyond that.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Is that enough?

MARK CHAMBERS: I think for the, the, the work that we are undertaking and a part of there's always more to be done and, and I think that we are actively moving the needle on being able to provide services, in particular… and this way free technical services to, to New Yorkers and I think that as we begin to move on implementation of this bill we'll be able to identify exactly where there are places that need additional budget and where they need additional resources to be able to meet those needs.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay and then so I'm… at this point I mean I could go all day but I think I… my points been made, right, that I, I just feel that when we talk about a mayoralty that is dealing with the existential crisis of our time, dealing with something relating to the survival of, of this city and the way that we know it, I just really believe that we… a Department of Sustainability makes the most sense in a way that will have more intellectual account… capital that would give you more opportunities to have budgetary resources, intellectual capital resources and not be

dependent on other agency's lines to be able to do this work because it's so critical to what we do and I think you're great and I think that the, the work that you're doing is great and I can only imagine if we supercharged it what we could accomplish together so that's where I'm coming from today from a place of saying that we, we need to supercharge it, right, we have at least 11 years to get things done and we can't wait so I'm going to end there because I could probably ask you a whole lot more questions and you would answer me in the same way and we just would go back and forth and it sounds like a nice afternoon but let's not do that so I will, you know thank this panel for your time and I will look forward to hearing from the next panel and working in conjunction to kind of get some of these shared goals done.

MARK CHAMBERS: Excellent, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you. Alright, the next panel… I think I should have brought my glasses today. Bob Ackley from Gas Safety Inc.; Zeyneb Magavi from HEET; Nathan Phillips from Boston University; Lindsey Cooper from Mothers Out Front. Alright, so Sergeant at Arms is giving this

out, I'm going to put ten minutes on the clock for this PowerPoint presentation.

BOB ACKLEY: Sure, thanks a bunch I actually have two PowerPoints I'll try to go through the first one which deals with the fugitive methane emissions and then I have another one, short one, on the indoor air so… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay… [cross-talk]

BOB ACKLEY: I can do them both at the same time and try to get through them, I'll see what the time is…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: But we're going to put you on a ten-minute clock.

BOB ACKLEY: You're putting me on a ten-minute clock, so I'll whip through them.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, great, fantastic… [cross-talk]

BOB ACKLEY: Okay, thanks… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And after that every… for regular testimony we're going to do about five minutes a piece, okay. Alright, great.

BOB ACKLEY: Alright, appreciate that very much, thanks for having me in.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, fantastic, thank you.

BOB ACKLEY: Okay, Gas Safety Inc from Massachusetts, I'll go through it quick. My concerns… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

BOB ACKLEY: …are safety, climate, health and trees that's what I've been working on for the last 12 years. This is… and your 1055 which I just put in here. Traditional gas detecting equipment, I was in the gas business for… I've been there for 40 years and we use flame ionization detectors, infrared technology, optical methane detectors, combustible gas indicators, and the lowest but most important is soap to find leaks. I have a cavity ringdown spectrometer that detects methane in parts per billion, it records CH4 levels every second, puts a GPS tag with it and enables mapping of all readings like you've seen before maybe. This is the vehicle… one vehicle I use, let's see if the laser pointer works, laser… okay, on the roof is a GPS so I guess it doesn't come in across on that but we have a GPS, flame ionization collector and this little green

collector in the front which brings in the air sample. And then we have the traditional gas detecting equipment; flame ionization, combustible gas indicators, plunger bars along with the picaro cavity ringdown spectrometer and it allows us to do this which I did in 2014 with Professor Phillips over here and Rob Jackson from Duke where we mapped about two thirds of Manhattan. So, here's some data that comes from PHMSA that Con Ed reported on December 31st; they've got 822 miles of bare steel and this is across their whole distribution area, you can't segregate it out to New York without some more data, they've got 1,000 miles of cast iron which totals 40… 4,371 miles so 42 percent of the system is leak prone pipe compared with 1.8 percent nationally. So, then we go to the Con Ed service lines, they have almost 60,000 bare steel services out of 375,000… 376,000 so 16 percent of their services are leak prone compared to 2.1 percent nationally. We did some work in Boston, 785 miles of streets and what we used… that's 37 percent leak prone mains which is… which is less than the Con Ed system, we used a special threshold on the analyzer, two and a half parts per million to determine a leak. In subsequent studies I've done

any, any deviation from background indicates a leak so I think there were a lot more leaks but what we ended up with was around 3,400 leaks or 4.3 leaks per mile. Then we went down to Washington D.C., same team, myself, Nathan Phillips, Rob Jackson we went to Washington D.C. which is very similar to Manhattan 40… and Boston, 43 percent leak prone mains, two and a half parts per million threshold for leaks which came out to around 6,000 leaks or 3.93 leaks per mile. So, then we did a system that was replaced, Cincinnati was a mess I guess back in the 70s and 80s the system was pretty much junk, Duke Energy replaced the system, got rid of all the cast iron and bare steel leak prone pipe, which pretty much all plastic, they only had… I think they had… we, we have two percent still leak prone mains in the system, we came up with 351 leaks in the system or just under half a leak per mile, Durham, North Carolina we did, that's where Duke is. We did about 600 miles of streets, it was mostly plastic as well, zero percent leak prone mains. So, they had all coded steel and, and plastic mains not considered leak prone and we still got .2 leaks per mile. So, then we look at Con Ed leaks reported two days ago on their live gas leak map,

they have 4,371 miles across their system and 52 percent of it is still leak prone mains so across their system they have 846 leaks or .19 leaks per mile. So, we made this little chart, Con Ed leads the nation, Boston 37 percent leak prone, 4.3 leaks per mile, Washington D.C. 3.93 leaks per mile, Cincinnati which was been replaced with only, only… most, most of the system is plastic, we still got half a leak… say one leak every two miles, Durham, North Carolina one leak every five miles and New York City with… in 2019 with greater than 50 percent leak prone pipe, we're equal to Durham at .19 leaks per mile. When we did the city in 2014 it was 52 percent leak prone, so they've got rid of a little bit, we had 4.25 leaks per mile, that was the map you saw earlier. So, in our study we had to take out some of the data, we didn't do as much… we didn't include as much, we, we had 247 miles, we had 1,000 leaks or 4.25 leaks per mile. So, what they're showing now is, is one leak every two miles and we show almost nine leaks every two miles. So, Con Ed has the highest percentage of leak prone pipe in the studies, we've done high study level leak rate at four leaks per mile which is actually equal with, with District of Columbia and

they had the industry reported lowest rate of .19 leaks per mile. Now it's, it's hard to compare these because there aren't many companies that have an active live gas leak map, so I give Con Ed a lot of credit for that. Also looked at National Grid, 2,669 leaks in New York City on 6/10… you got it, thanks, less than one leak per mile. I… it's hard to tell how many miles of main they have in New York City but they're the old Brooklyn union gas company in Staten Island. So, this is upper Broadway and I did this on June 4th and I have this on google earth too but I don't know if we'll have time to go through it but the spikes that you see in yellow are from our study in 2014 and some of the same spots that I'm getting gas… or… in 2019 I got in 2014, same with down here on Manhattan Avenue you can see the spikes around… I just did a… did a couple of, of surveys last week with a couple of little areas, selected areas and we had leaks there so, some people would say well what else have you done, it's hard to do a comprehensive audit of any town but I've done some and I'm doing one right now, western Massachusetts which is a few miles west of Boston but 100 miles of main, I'm not 98 percent complete as of today. They had about 130

leaks on the system we've added… or they had about 150 leaks on the system, we added 130 so almost doubled the leak count. Acton, Massachusetts another town just west of Boston, 95 miles of main, we doubled the leak count from 115 to 230, now both of these towns are national grid. Another comprehensive study I did was with a small utility in North Central Massachusetts in the small city of Fitchburg, they had 40 leaks… well 40 to 50 leaks on their records and when I finished, we had 230 on about 100 miles of mains. So, it's quite remarkable the results, we're always finding more leaks but what I will say about the spectrometer is, the spectrometer only detects the leaks, it doesn't pinpoint them. We pinpoint all the leaks with traditional gas company equipment that all the gas guys have in their vans so there's no reason for them not to find these leaks. So, why do these leaks matter because the building explosion is a no brainer, whenever gas gets inside a building it can cause it to blow up but what's often overlooked is the manhole explosions and they're very complicit. If you look around New York you have… in the winter you have hundreds if not thousands of manhole explosions across the city where fires start and then

draw in this what we mechanical failure and corrosion gas that's sitting in… at lower levels, it's not like a hit main but there's leaking gas that's sitting in the ground that gets pulled in when the fire starts and I have a couple of quick videos, what do I have, a minute and eight left so I'm not going to get to them. You can look at these, there's links on here, the majority of manhole covers across New York City have been drilled with holes to allow leaking gas to escape and it's referenced here in this New York Times article just recently and it says when the fires start the leaked gas is drawn into the manhole by the fire and can reach explosive limit. We had 12 explosions in one manhole last month on Hammond Street in Brookline. So, what the… what's quoted in the article, to alleviate the threat the official said, this is, is Mr. McHugh from Con Ed said the utilities switched most of its manhole covers to vented ones that allow gases to escape so they cannot form a combustible amount. This is crazy because in another one of these articles that I have, I have two videos that you should watch, it actually says that with all the holes in the manholes ice… water comes in and, and, and salt to exacerbate the corrosion on

these lines. So, also… the climate, we've got super emitters, by eliminating the top seven percent emitting leaks in any given distribution system we can save 50 percent of the total emissions. Health, we've got breathing as well, trees they matter too. Is there anything else I can do for you?

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Here… so, here's my… here's my question, right, so I'm going to read right from National Grid's testimony for the record that they've submitted today. so, I'm, I'm going to cut right to the end there's a lot here, but I'll read the final paragraph to you and I'd like your response.

BOB ACKLEY: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, so it says in short, National Grid supports methane emission reduction efforts however assessing methane leaks should be left to the utilities, the owners responsible for the operating systems. Significant efforts to reduce methane emissions, detect and repair leaks are already in place by the utilities. Additional, duplicative inspection and mapping efforts may add significant costs to New York City citizens without apparent substantial benefits. We

look forward to working with you to collaborate. Now that's… I paraphrased that last sentence but what is your response there?

BOB ACKLEY: Well if you look at what I told you on the comprehensive audits, typically we double or triple the leak counts in any given area so I will say that there is a, a lax environment at all utilities that I've been dealing with to actually demand their workers find the leaks because these are what they call mechanical failure and corrosion and they don't feel that they're a problem and I'm going to say that the manhole explosions, the black swan event where, where gas can accumulate and blow up, the greenhouse gas effect, all of those add up to a situation where the gas utilities are not actively demanding their workers find these leaks, they're relying on the public to call in the, the… third party hits and the broken cast iron mains which you have hundreds of them every year that are very, very hazardous and these other leaks they tend to blow off and those two videos that I put up there show manhole explosions in quiet a dramatic fashion where… we had one over on Park Slope which injured a fire department personnel, we had one that damaged cars so

when these leaks get diminished by the utility industry take it at, at face value, there, there are way more leaks out there than they're reporting in my opinion… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Would you believe that there… [cross-talk]

BOB ACKLEY: …I think we… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Do you believe that they're sort of accounting this to, to the cost of doing business, right, like there's going to be a certain amount of leakage, you know we're going to lose… we're going have 99 percent of our product, we're going to lose this small amount and, you know we're just going to kind of… we're look to sort of try to do something but, you know it's the cost of doing business here.

BOB ACKLEY: The customers pay for leaked gas in Massachusetts and I assume it's the same here so there's no incentive and, and furthermore repairing a leak comes out of the utility's bottom line maintenance budget in Massachusetts, there is no incentive for them to fix a leak unless it's going to cause an explosion so I don't know what the case is here… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh…

[cross-talk]

BOB ACKLEY: …it seems like they're being a little bit more proactive, Con Ed, I don't know about National Grid, but I'd call it… I have an acronym that I call FANA, fix absolutely nothing anywhere unless it's going to blow up, it's amazing, I could show you data from Weston and Acton, Massachusetts that shows leaks going for hundreds of feet, thousands of square feet in migration area that they consider grade three nonhazardous and they're… have no intentions of repairing and we'll see about that.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: And you're aware of hold old New York City's infrastructure is, we're talking about older infrastructure, correct, as you've alluded to?

BOB ACKLEY: Well I just did the research on the data in the last few days and I looked at the annual reports, it's… you know it's, it's not… it's not rocket science, you look at the report it says they have 1,000 miles of cast iron, 800 miles of bare steel in a system that's got 4,600 miles so it, it's, it's leak prone and it should be monitored and the

leaks should be repaired, we should be repairing them by size to reduce the greenhouse gas.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Now did you… and so you did a lot of mapping around… relating to Manhattan, should we extrapolate that the same things are happening in other boroughs as well or… I know you had a very… sort of very focused on Manhattan and their study?

BOB ACKLEY: We've, we've kind of focused on Manhattan in the studies, I wanted to get over into Brooklyn and Staten Island, I think they're actually worse… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Come to Queens too, we wouldn't be… we wouldn't be okay… we'd be okay with that.

BOB ACKLEY: Queens, I, I've, I've been in Queens too… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: We're, we're a great borough, we're really big.

BOB ACKLEY: The point is Manhattan is very unique because of the, the continuous paving almost through the entire area where… when you get into Brooklyn, Staten Island and Queens you have dirt, areas that gas can vent and they're actually

more leaks because they, they're not considered as hazardous.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I totally agree with you on that. With that I'll, I'll turn it over to the next panelist and I'll come back with more question if I… if I can have any. Whoever, whoever… yeah, if we can put five minutes on the clock moving forward for every person who testifies that'd be great now it doesn't mean you have to go to five minutes, it just means you have five minutes.

NATHAN PHILLIPS: Okay, well thank you for the opportunity, there we go… to testify today. My name is Nathan Phillips, I'm a faculty member in the Department of Earth and Environment at Boston University, I'm a tree physiologist by training and I learned about the gas leaks by complete serendipity walking a couple blocks from my house where I met Bob who was measuring gas leaks that were killing a tree so that's how I got involved in this research and I want to summarize in a couple of minutes just the research that we've done that has given us some ideas about the scope of urban gas leaks as a problem and leading to some policy solutions and directions. So, Bob covered the first study of its kind, the 3,356

leaks that we mapped and found in Boston so I'll just move onto after that study where we find thou… found thousands of leaks, the question that was being begged at that time was what does it all amount to in terms of lost money, lost gas, greenhouse impact and there's two ways to go about addressing that. It's a difficult question, you can either go back to all of those thousands of leaks and measure how much is coming out, that's a laborious process or you can go up into the atmosphere and use the integrating power of the atmosphere itself and measure the buildup of all of these leaks into the urban atmosphere and that's what we did in a study that we published in 2015, Kathryn McKain and others and from that study we measured a little less than three percent of the gas that is delivered into eastern Massachusetts is just leaked into the atmosphere, 2.7 percent to be exact. That may not sound like a lot but because methane is a greenhouse gas on steroids dozens of times more powerful on a comparable basis than CO2 that 2.7 percent leak rate amounted to ten percent of the common wealth's entire greenhouse gas emissions inventory from all sectors and it really wasn't on any ledger for municipal climate action plans and

greenhouse gas emissions inventory so that research established that the problem in urban areas is large. As Bob mentioned we see that this is a problem across the eastern seaboard including in New York City. So, then we pivoted after that second study to a third study that was published in 2016 by PhD student Margaret Hendrick where we wanted to go back to these leaks and say, are there some that should be prioritized more than others and so what Margaret and, and Bob did was to look at 100 of the leaks of those 3,356 and asked the question is there like an average leak size, some are a little higher, some are a little lower like a bell shaped curve or are they distributed in a different manner and we found that indeed a handful of leaks account for a disproportionate amount of the lost gas and so that was the result where seven percent of the leaks account for 50 percent of the lost gas and in my career there's never been a scientific data result that was so clear in the policy implications. What it said was if you can find and fix those handful of large leaks which we call super emitters you have a cost effective policy to address the problem and that also unlocked another kind of solution that really

resolved a conflict I had had about policy solutions which was we can now triage this system, we don't have to rebuild this system that would last another 50, 60, 70 years, we can find and fix those biggest leaks and that affords us the opportunity to, to opportunistically look for areas in this leak prone network that we can start to move to electrification, a cleaner, safer, healthier and ultimately more cost effective way to deliver thermal energy. Thank you.

ZEYNEB MAGAVI: Hello… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Hi… [cross-talk]

ZEYNEB MAGAVI: Does that work, yes. My name is Zeyneb Magavi and I'm from HEET, a Director at HEET and I worked on the large volume leak study with Professor Phillips and I want to first thank you for being the kind of leaders we need right now, you're… really… we… as we face the rapid change and challenges of the next decade I really admire these proposed bills, I think they're practical and cost effective steps to reduce the harm from our gas system and I want to point out that until very recently a lot of us believed that the gas system was clean, green and a bridge to the future but that is

no longer true and science has really reestablished that. I'm going to… or ensure, ensure that I talk about the bills, I will come back to that part, but we proposed in Massachusetts an approach of triage and transition, accepting that gas is the past and that we need to move forward. We want to first ensure that the safety of the existing gas system is taken care of and that we move quickly to cut the most emissions for the least cost, that's the part I call triage, its stem the bleeding, keep the patient safe and number 1055 does just this for the pipes in the streets of New York, it essentially creates enhanced oversight and the authority to act swiftly to reduce emissions from gas leaks and I think this is common sense and as you saw in the testimony from Gas Safety Inc. it seems to be needed. It also uses the leak extent measure that Dr. Phillips referred to as a rapid low-cost proxy measure to find the largest leaks. I think this is a fantastic policy opportunity and the research that supported this policy was a joint effort in Massachusetts, a very unusual joint effort between us scientists, environmentalists and National Grid, Columbia Gas and Ever Source Gas and we jointly submitted the plan and it is currently

regulation in Massachusetts and we are on our way to cutting our gas leak emissions in half in Massachusetts estimated at four to five percent of our state's greenhouse gas footprint in just three years but gas pipes don't just leak in our streets they leak inside our buildings too and a very recent California study showed last year that 70 percent of homes with gas service tested had an elevated methane measure, that's an enormously high percentage. And Gas Safety Inc. has also gotten similar results in current testing in Mass not yet published. An environmental science and technology publication this year showed really shockingly unexpectedly high methane emissions off of gas appliances which extrapolated added up to ten percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. So, your bill 272 triages this leaking gas system inside our buildings and that is not… the emerging story of gas leakage in buildings is not just about the safety and the emissions that we're concerned about in our streets but it's also about health and methane gas is not toxic but natural gas is 95 percent methane and the remaining five percent includes such chemicals as Benzyne which is for example a carcinogen, you can

see the low levels that are reported by industry pipeline quality data. So, this means that leaks building up in a home even if they're not enough to explode could potentially have long term health impacts and you know whose health, well always the most burdened are always hardest hit. We already know that gas stoves produce NO2 which is strongly associated with asthma and we know that asthma rates continue to rise especially in low wealth communities. So, so again gas leaks and all the leaks indoor and out are not safe for us or for our climate. I hope you will act swiftly with these bills to triage the system we have and transition to renewable thermal. I hope that it… 1399's new Office of Sustainability can help us move just as swiftly to transition to renewable thermal, we have the solutions we need now and investing our rate payer dollars wisely in infrastructure for this century not digging into infrastructure from last century would be a great way to build the future we want and for me personally that safer, cleaner, greener, healthier future is what I want for my children and for all our children. So, it's in our hands to protect the New York of tomorrow. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you.

LYNDSEY COOPER: Okay, can everyone hear me? Okay… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yes.

LYNDSEY COOPER: So, my name is Lyndsey Cooper, thank you so much for having me…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Make sure you push the red button.

LYNDSEY COOPER: Can you hear me now, any better?

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Hold on, Sergeant at Arms are coming over… we're good, okay.

LYNDSEY COOPER: Okay, so my name is Lyndsey Cooper, thank you so much for having me here. I represent Mothers Out Front, an organization that empowers mothers, grandmothers, caregivers to take action within their communities against climate issues. Will everyone from Mothers Out Front please stand and we do have a few other members outside who weren't able to come in because we're at capacity. So, I'd like to invite you to imagine yourself in the shoes of Michelle, a mother of two, Chris and Shawn, both children are energetic and talented and they run track but not without difficulty because they both

suffer from asthma due to poor air quality in their low income community. Michelle worries constantly that her children will suffer from a severe asthma attack and this past spring Chris in the middle of a track meet was rushed to the hospital. Michelle left work early to meet him causing her to lose wages and take on an expensive medical… expensive hospital bills and prescriptions. Michelle and her husband John each work multiple jobs to support their family but still they struggle to make ends meet and they live in a constant state of fear for their children's lives while feeling like the problem itself is in the very air that they breath. An energy system based on gas is not clean, safe or efficient and there are lakes… leaks at every single stage of the system from the fracking fields to compressor stations to transmission pipelines and then to our homes, places of work, schools and grocery stores. Methane leaks put communities at risk both indoors and outdoors and leaks can happen in any building in any community, they can even lead to lethal explosions like ones we've seen here in New York and in Merrimack Valley in Massachusetts. In New York a city that's so dense it's especially vulnerable to devastating losses of

life, property and culture. So, these leaks also accelerate climate change at an alarming degree as methane is 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide in the first 20 years in the atmosphere. Knowing where these leaks are and repairing the underlying infrastructure is an environmental justice issue and Michelle's story is not unique, there is… are countless mothers across New York who share similar stories and we at Mothers Out Front want to amplify these voices. So, the oil and gas industry has caused enough devastation in the U.S. and disproportionately so in African American and low-income communities. Environmental hazards are most often placed in African American communities and the impacts can have lethal consequences. Too many people are denied access to livable wages, health care, child care and other vital resources and some communities have the resources to recover from events like explosions but in communities like Michelle's which are already suffering from toxic environmental issues on top of different socioeconomic issues, they are the most vulnerable. Michelle and her family have no control over environmental issues that impact their family's health but the City Council does so I urge you to

support these bills to protect low income families by using appropriate sensitive equipment to find methane leaks and by fixing the crack prone pipes and I also thank you and hope that you will continue doing your part in making a just transition to clean and renewable energy that will ensure the safety of all communities. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you. So, I definitely share this panel's concern in relation to methane leaks and to the need for us to transition away from gas infrastructure, I know how… you know we fought the, you know Williams pipeline and were able to achieve a, a victory that we… to ensure remains a victory moving forward but, you know and the, the gas infrastructure that we do have we need to make sure that there aren't leaks and, and that we… someone is watching the utilities, I think that's the big takeaway that I have today is that the reporting that they're doing on the leaks have some holes in it and that we could probably do a whole lot better. I, I think you, you wanted to add something there.

BOB ACKLEY: Well I did want to show you something…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: How… [cross-talk]

BOB ACKLEY: Could, could I take one minute?

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: One minute, you've got it.

BOB ACKLEY: Okay, one minute I got. On the indoor air I've been working on this since 2006 doing testing for National Grid originally down in Rhode Island found leaks in every house, I have some data on that but I developed a test that we can do and the first building that we're going to do in New York is the City Hall chamber right here. I can take my tedlar bag and fill it with air from right in this building and then run it through my analyzer and tell exactly how much methane is in City Hall. So, we can do this with every building in New York, I would do every floor and the basement and get the readings throughout each building and you can determine if there's any gas leak.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I would definitely be interested in hearing when you… as you walk through City Hall…

BOB ACKLEY: I can show you the strata of data if you're interested but they go from naturally occurring methane is around two parts per million… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

BOB ACKLEY: …so, if there were no leaking gas in this building, I would get two parts per million in this bag, the highest reading I've got so far is 38 parts per million inside a dwelling unit…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay…

BOB ACKLEY: So, that is 19 times background so what happens with people with leaking gas in their homes they get inculcated to the smell and they can't smell it anymore and somebody else comes in and says geez I smell gas in your house and they say well I've had the gas company here, we… they didn't find anything, most of their instruments start at 500 parts per million, okay?

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh…

BOB ACKLEY: Most of their instruments detect 500 parts per million is the low range, my instrument detects in parts per billion and will give

the exact methane read in the chambers in any room, any locus in the country, you can mail it to me.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright…

BOB ACKLEY: Thanks a lot for that, I appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, I thank this panel for all of your advocacy and, and your work, thank you. I'm going to call the next panel up. So, Roland Lewis from the Waterfront Alliance; Bob Wyman who's representing himself; Cecil Robar… I, I… Cecil I know you well but Mothers Out Front, I'm having trouble seeing this I should have brought my glasses today; Asha Brundage Moore from New York Lawyers for Public Interest; I can't see what that is… Dominic, again I should have brought my glasses today, Dominic Nicholas from HEET and Lisa DiCaprio from Sierra Club.

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, I guess we'll start here on my left, you… yeah, so your right.

DOMINIC NICHOLAS: Honorable Council Members very much appreciate this option here to speak today. I joined HEET a few years… a year ago

and plunged into the world of gas leaks so I'm fairly new to this area. Today I ran the large volume leaks program at HEET and doing gas research at Boston University and I wanted to say some of the things I've learnt so far. To build off of Zeyneb's story earlier the gas has been sold to us as green, clean and cheap and a bridge fuel. I've learned actually none of those things are true, it's not green and clean. As was mentioned earlier gas is mostly methane which is 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide for the first 20 years in the… in the atmosphere. The Massachusetts gas system is very old and leak prone as you've heard today and each year there are approximately 40,000 leaks with 16,000 leaks unrepaired at the end of the year and about three percent of all of the gas coming into Massachusetts is leaking and that gives gas the climate impact equivalent to coal which was kind of eye opening for me. All parts of the gas system are leaking extraction, pipeline, compressor stations, gas mains and as we're hearing supplies into our homes as well, we're starting to find more out about the, the health risks of that inside our homes. It's not cheap, leaking infrastructure can neither replaced or

repaired and both are costly, replacing pipelines in Massachusetts over the next 40 years is estimated to cost nine billion dollars. As we move away from gas to reach our emissions goals by 2050 this new pipe will become stranded assets. If we decide to repair leaks, recent analysis has shown that on average leaks are costing about 4,000 dollars to fix per leak and obviously we estimated it would be a lot more in New York, multiplying that by the 40,000 leaks a year and you've got quiet a lot of money heading out there and all of that is paid by rate payers. Also, the cost of human health impacts, disaster recovery from explosions and climate change impacts makes gas not a cheap fuel. Also, it's not a bridge fuel, gas is a fossil fuel, we don't need a bridge. In fact I believe we can go directly to renewables today and… you know we, we can decide do we invest in this so called bridge or in safe, clean, renewable energy infrastructure that we want for our future generations that doesn't damage the climate. So, for these reasons I believe that we need to move beyond gas and, and do it urgently. I strongly support this bill, 1055. What I've learned as I said earlier, I'm fairly new to this but as… what I've learned in

Massachusetts is that the legislation can perpetuate a positive cycle of emission reductions and without the legislation this impact might not be possible. So, for example, Massachusetts the patent I've seen is research and community leading to new gas leak legislation and that legislation for example has required gas leaks to be fixed and to provide leak data transparency, that data has in turn led to more research and more community action and overall just reducing methane leak emissions. So, I strongly and urgently support 1055, I think a central office function focused on surveying and mapping all gas leaks can provide critical and independent and transparent oversight of gas utilities putting the public and the environment first. I think fixing leaks is urgent, let's fix it in months and not years and legislation that we've seen in, in Massachusetts recently has… you know it's, it's a… we can fix these over years but I think that's too, too long honestly and, and like 1055 proposing it in a much shorter time frame, three months. It's common sense if you got the road open for example to get in there and actually repair leaks, it's more cost effective and it's just common sense, I think.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, thank you very much… [cross-talk]

DOMINIC NICHOLAS: Thank you.

CECILE: Good afternoon… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: To you…

CECILE: I'm also here on behalf of Mothers Out Front, so a shout out to my team members in the back. So, my husband and I live on the upper west side with our son Sebastian who just graduated high school, our other sons Calvin and Jasper are now living on their own, one is in college and the other one is a farmer and about to become a parent himself. My name is Cecile and I'm here as a concerned mother, soon to be grandmother and a fellow New Yorker. So, last year I had the opportunity through Mothers Out Front to go on a gas leak safari with Bob whom you heard from on the last panel, someone who's both passionate about science and the environment it seems like an incredibly interesting and fun way to spend my day and it was but what I did not anticipate was how disturbed I was at the end of it. Bob picked us up… [clears throat] excuse me, I have a bit of a sore throat today, Bob picked us up in his van which was tricked out with gadgets for measuring gas leaks, you

saw it on his slides before. He explained how everything worked and then we set out from Riverside Drive at 80th Street. We drove up town and got out on Manhattan Avenue where his equipment was showing a significant leak, this is where I learned that those little blue caps that you see all over the pavement here are actually places that were where previous leaks have been fixed, I don't know if any of you've noticed these but there's a lot of them everywhere. Bob and I measured the leak and since it was not on their map he reported it to Con Ed. I was really surprised at how little smell there was in, in relation to how much gas was actually coming out. We ended the trip with a drive up along West End Avenue where we passed by my building, West End Avenue seemed to have the worst leaks which really opened my eyes and showed me just how much my neighborhood and family are susceptible to these, these hazards of gas leaks, none of these leaks were on the Con Ed map either. This is where my family and I walk around every day, it's an area of the city that's always very clean, very well kept, it has beautiful flower beds, it has trees, considering most of the buildings are pre-war it makes sense that there's issues with

aging infrastructure but I just assumed since everything was so well kept there would be no issue with leaks. My son Sabastian has asthma and as a mother this adds another layer of concern about the quality of air that we all breath. In a few cases the leak seemed so bad I actually wondered if it was safe to walk around there and this past November there was a big explosion on 91st and Broadway which is two blocks from my house and I, I sadly was not really surprised after having been on the safari with Bob and seeing how big of an issue this is. Now I pass… I walk past those blue caps where that explosion was every morning on my way to the train and I can't help but wonder when there's going to be another explosion and if someone is going to get really hurt this time. We've been releasing toxic things into our oceans and airs thinking that whatever it is will just dissolve be, because we can't see it, but I actually think we all know that that's not the case. If you need a visual just keep an eye out for those blue caps. To end, I want to say I was very, very excited to be here last April to watch you all pass the climate mobilization act and I'm really thankful today that you're acknowledging we need… that we need to go even

further and put, put measures in place to eliminate the gas leaks as part of our climate solutions. I urge all Council Members to pass Council Member Constantinides' Intro 1055 that relates to the examination, surveying and mapping of all the methane gas leaks in New York city. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Cecile thank you.

ASHLEY BRUNDAGE MOORE: Thank you Chair Constantinides and members of the Committee for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Asha Brundage Moore and I'm a student at NYU Law and a summer intern at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. I'm here today to speak in support of Introduction 1399. New York City and the members of the… Council Members here in particular is a leader in addressing climate change. To continue this progress the city must not only continue to pass groundbreaking legislation but also ensure there's accountability, enforcement and follow through by the city. As we all know, creating a greener, more sustainable city in the face of climate change is a complex, multidimensional problem that demands a coordinated response. At New York Lawyers for the

Public Interest we have worked for three decades to advocate for low income communities and communities of color in New York City that face disproportionate environmental hazards. The impact of climate change and unsustainable practices like fossil fuel dependence and poor solid waste management fall hardest on communities we partner with. We support Introduction 1399 because it would enable our big city to better address the complex problem of climate change and sustainability by coordinating the city's sustainability strategies, increasing oversight and bringing city organization in line with peer cities. 2019 has been a busy year in the fight against climate change with legislation on reducing building emissions, green roofs, and bag fees all passing in the first six months of the year. The implementation of these laws will be overseen by several different city departments, many different sectors like buildings, vehicles and power plants contribute to climate change and the consequences of climate change like rising sea levels impact many parts of the city's infrastructure. Introduction 1399 would help coordinate sustainability initiatives across sectors so that New York City residents could have a central

clearinghouse for information about energy efficiency, local composting and installing roof top solar. This would help the new department achieve its goals of educating the public on climate change and sustainability initiatives. A single department of sustainability and climate change would also help facilitate effective communication between other relevant agencies. Introduction 1399 advances, advances the city's climate change goals by ensuring continuity and oversight of the city's sustainability efforts. Transitioning to a more sustainable city is an important long-term goal and moving oversight of sustainability and climate change policy out of the Mayor's Office reduces fluctuations that can come from a changing administration. It also allows for real oversight from City Council who can call hearings and request testimonies from the new Commissioner to ensure the department is doing everything necessary to achieve its goals. Introduction 1399 is a sensible way to move forward addressing not just the climate… not just issues of climate change but also resiliency and civic engagement. We look forward to continuing, continuing

to work with the City Council to advance this issue. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you and welcome, welcome to the people's house, glad to have you here testifying today, thank you. How are you sir?

BOB WYMAN: Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to be here. My name is Bob Wyman and I would like to speak in support of 1055 as well as 1399. First on the subject of 1055 relating to leaks, I'd like to say up front I'm a little prejudiced on this subject, I've got a personal interest, my daughter lost a, a high school friend when the building blew up down, down in the village a couple years back and so we've seen… we've seen death in, in my family or at least close to it as a result of these leaks but given that I don't have a lot of time I want to focus on just one aspect of 1055 and that is the, the word replace. Many people have said that we should in fact identify, fix and replace these leaks. I want to suggest to you that there is an alternative, which was first proposed by Central Hudson gas and electric for their district and that is that when replacing leaky pipes is particularly

expensive the alternative is in fact to abandon the pipe, to shut it off, abandon the pipe and replace it with in their case geothermal heat pumps and to give you some, some sense of why this might make sense we can look at Con Ed's responses to discover request in their current rate case and they say that in 2018 they replaced, replaced 1,484 leaky services in their territories, services are the pipes that connect from the gas main to the buildings. The cost on average of replacing those services, just those pipes between the main and the house was 26,675 dollars, repeat 26,675 dollars to replace the pipe… a leaky pipe between the house and the… and the main and that was done 1,484 times in 2018. As you probably recognize, 26,000 or 27,000 here is pretty much the cost of say a new geothermal heat pump system which would permanently prevent leaks in the future. I would suggest that you modify the language to indicate that as far as the word replace is concerned that replace should include not only replacing pipe but also replacing the thermal system, the heating system, the service which is being provided. As Central Hudson has proposed be done in their district let's have New York City follow suit and begin the process of

abandoning the leaky pipes that we have rather than simply patching them up and trying to move them into the next decade. The other thing I'd like to do is talk about 1399, first of all I'd like to say it, it would be… we've seen from the minimal amount of service we got from the office of sustainability that having such a thing is useful, there were a lot of problems with that office, one of the big ones being that they were undermanned and under resourced. I think as you, you all know they were horrendously late on things like the geothermal potential study which I think was on the order of what, a… one and a half… one and a half, two years late, they have not been a major presence within the city, what they have done they've done well but they haven't done enough of it. It would be excellent given the importance of this issue to, to our future if in fact we had a real department that was funded appropriately. The other thing I'd like to do is suggest that as we move forward we should think about sustainability as being in, in a broader sense than we do today, sustainability should not just be a question of environmental sustainability but it also should be one of financial stability. And along those lines I'd

like to call to your attention Con Ed's current rate case in which they have proposed in order to make it easier to get through rate case and do what they call mitigate rate increases, they have proposed to use accounting techniques to ignore over two billion dollars, two billion dollars of deficiencies in their depreciation accounts. What they're doing is proposing that we ignore a depreciation study that was done for them by an independent third party operation and in fact to continue using depreciation attributes from earlier rate cases which they themselves in their testimony say are incorrect and that should… and will in fact cause us financial sustainability issues in the future. The fundamental problem here is that we have to recognize is that natural gas is already not a bridge fuel, we've gone well beyond that point. We know that today according to the New York City inventory of, of greenhouse gas emissions that natural gas already today accounts for 144 percent of the total citywide all sources budget for carbon emissions in 2000… in 2050. So, today natural gas alone which has been increasing is 144 percent of all of the carbon emissions that we would allow in this city in 2050. We need now to begin the

process of reducing our investment in natural gas and we need to do it in such a way that we are not, not only enhancing our environmental priorities but also doing it in a financially responsible way and primarily what that means is not allowing the company to bury it's depreciation deficiencies but rather for us to face them directly and for us to accelerate the process of depreciation and to begin now the process of managed decapitalization that is necessary in order… for us to get rid of this… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I think you need to… [cross-talk]

BOB WYMAN: …environmentally… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …I need you to wrap up, I'm sorry… [cross-talk]

BOB WYMAN: Sure. Alright. Alright, thank you, I want to thank this panel… oh Lisa you're, you're, you're there too, I just want to make sure I got you a chair at the table so, let's, let's swap out chairs and if everyone can move over a little bit that way we can make sure all five chairs are there for the next panel as well. Alright, there we go. Make sure it's on.

LISA DICAPRIO: Now can you hear me? My… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yes… [cross-talk]

LISA DICAPRIO: …name is Lisa DiCaprio, I'm a Professor of Social Sciences at NYU where I teach courses on sustainability. I am also the Conservation Chair of the Sierra Club New York City group and I'm speaking today on behalf of the Sierra Club to express our support for Intro 1055-2018, Intro 272-2018 and Intro 1399-2019. These bills are especially important given the fall 2018 UN IPCOMMITTEE CLERK special report on global warming of 1.5 degree Celsius and the U.S. National Climate Assessment, the 2019 New York City Panel on Climate Change Report and most recently, the May 2019 UN report on biodiversity and ecosystem services. I will begin with Intro 272 and 1055 which address the public health risks from dangerous gas leaks and compliment the measurement of methane emissions in New York City's annual mandated inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. New York City's methane footprint actually begins in the shale gas fields of states like Pennsylvania and includes the hundreds of

miles of pipelines such as the Spectra Pipeline, that transport fracked gas to New York City and I just want to note, note that many Council Members, staff and activists here opposed the Spectra Pipeline when it was being proposed. Within New York City we have a vast natural gas infrastructure that comprises the gas mains in the streets, the service lines that bring gas from streets to buildings and all the gas pipes within buildings for gas boilers, gas washers and dryers and gas stoves. An accurate measurement of methane emissions within New York City is crucial as has been pointed out, over a 20-year period, methane is 86 times more effective than carbon dioxide in trapping heat in our atmosphere. To facilitate the reduction of methane emissions we recommend new legislation in the near future mandating the installation in all new buildings of electric or electromagnetic stoves, electric washers and dryers and heating and cooling systems that do not require fossil fuels. The Sierra Club also supports Intro 1399-2019 introduced by Council Member Constantinides which would replace the existing Office of Sustainability with the new Department of Sustainability and Climate Change. The provisions of

this bill include a mandated identification and assessment of sustainability indicators that not only reduce our negative impact on the environment but also contribute to the vibrancy of ecosystem services in New York City. These positive indicators include prevention of biodiversity loss, increasing the number and quality of trees in the city urban forest, increases in renewable energy generation and air quality improvements. In an interview entitled "Redesigning Cities with Nature's Technology," Janine Benyus, a biologist and pioneer of biomimicry, innovations inspired by nature, explains the concept of ecological performance standards for cities, which are comparable to the positive sustainability indicators. Instead of degrading nature with greenhouse gas emissions, air and water pollution, impermeable surfaces, and increased temperatures, cities must produce ecological systems, such as filtering air and water, storing water and releasing it slowly, sequestering carbon, replenishing soil and supporting pollinators. With regard to the proposed sustainability advisory board, this board should include passive house certified architects as passive house is an international building efficiency

standard that saves up to 90 percent of the energy required for heating and cooling conventional buildings and 75 percent of all energy usage when electricity is included in the total. Finally, as the first report of the new Department of Sustainability and Climate Change is to be submitted by April 22nd, 2020, the Sierra Club recommends the introduction of a City Council resolution in commemoration of the fifty-year anniversary of the first earth day on April 22nd, 1970. This could be modeled on the Council's resolution and hearing in support of the September 21, 2014 People's Climate March in which over 400,000 people from throughout the world participated including Council Members and staff and environmental activists attending and participating in today's hearing and this hearing will provide an opportunity to assess our achievements and failures since Earth Day 1970 and to outline future initiatives for preventing catastrophic climate change, an environmental challenge that was unimaginable in 1970. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, thank you Lisa, thank you, thank you to all of these panelists to bringing your different perspectives

here today and we're going to continue to have this conversation to push forward so I appreciate all of you being here and, and lending us your expertise. Thank you. Alright, next coming forward Nancy Romer from Professional Staff Congress, CUNY, People's Climate Movement; Vincent Brancato from New York Safety for Ethical Culture… oh Society for Ethical Culture, sorry; Margaret Perkins from 350 dot org; Molly Ornati from 350 Brooklyn; Ruth Hardinger. Okay and it seems like we're… are we missing one person from that panel that I just called? So, let's… alright, so let me call on Marion Yuen, I'm sorry, Yuen, I'm, I'm sorry I can't read the handwriting, I apologize without my glasses, Marion, I'm sorry but again I can't read my glass… I left my glasses home today, so I apologize for that, sorry about that Mary. Alright, so I started on this side with the last panel, let's start on this side in this go around.

MOLLY ORNATI: Good afternoon esteemed members for the City Council. My name is Molly Ornati and I am a co-facilitator of 350 Brooklyn, one of more than 170 U.S. chapters of the international climate change organization 350 dot org with a

membership of 2,200 people. Thank you for listening to my testimony in support of Intro 1399. I also fully support the passage of Intro 1055 and 272 but will leave it to others with more expertise to provide that testimony. We know that climate change is a crisis whose dimension and proportion has never been previously encountered by human civilization. It will strike every aspect of our lives from shelter, energy and infrastructure to food supply and health. Massive dislocation and suffering are predictable, human survival is not. This international city of eight million people and great cultural, financial and historic importance has no centralized plan. While progress has been made under the Mayor's Office to improve sustainability and the transition to renewable energy, the gaps between the stated goals in implementation remains too large. The proposed Department of Sustainability and Climate Change, a full-fledged city agency with a budget, Commissioner, advisory board and oversight process is… [clears throat] excuse me, is, is crucial for the massive organization and integration of the citywide labor force and people of specialized expertise with new technology to create a plan and coordinate with all

city… other agencies. As, as the bill states, it's purview will include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, addressing sea level rise, protecting vulnerable populations, prevention of biodiversity loss, waste in landfills, etcetera. Given the real challenges we have seen in providing housing just housing for all city residents, the need to begin to create a city department to address these enormous and complex problems cannot be overstated. I commend the City Council for its recent passage of the Climate Mobilization Act. The bill calls for retrofitting 5,000 buildings a year but there are more than one million structures in New York City. We need to accelerate the retrofit accelerator; the process needs to move forward at a different pace. Without sufficient funding, capacity and oversight, any laws that are passed will be meaningless if they're aren't the resources both human and financial for implementation. As citizens we implore the government to find the moral vision and courage to prioritize the survival of our citizens and our city, take action and move forward. We are behind you, ready to mobilize, able to sacrifice and eager to get to work.

RUTH HARDINGER: Okay, hi, thank you for letting us talk. This is comments from Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, an organization that I've been working with and the comment is delivered by Ruth Hardinger, that's my name. Methane CH4 is a colorless, odorless gas in the wide description of nature, the CH4 name describes the atoms of the methane molecules with carbon… with, with one carbon and four hydrogen atoms. Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas. It degrades over the initial half time life of eight to 12 years in the atmosphere and then it converts into carbon dioxide. However, it has much higher global warming potential than carbon… than CO2, carbon dioxide. There are three different sources of methane gas including thermogenic, it's a deep geology; anthropogenic, it's human activities and biogenic from living organisms, methane. Natural gas is composed with 90 to 90 percent methane mostly thermogenic methane is delivered to end users which contains other chemical including radioactive radon. The global warming potential of the CH4 has been upgraded by the IPCOMMITTEE CLERK to at least 86 to 80 times stronger than carbon dioxide during a 20-year time frame over in the gas… in the… is the gas

in this atmosphere. Methane, grouped with other near-term climate forcers such as black carbon, hydrofluorocarbon and aerosols is the most likely greenhouse gas escalating the planetary heat now because it is… so much of it is released. We have a few minutes… measurements of the gas leakage from the wells and pipelines. The measurements that have been made found substantial concentrations… excuse my word here, concentrations of the methane in the atmosphere from the leaks. Further, the EPA comparisons of methane of carbon dioxide on the wonder… the wonder year time frame claims methane is only 34 times stronger than carbon dioxide, hiding the real impact of the CH4's near term presence. Simply, the 100-year frame does not acknowledge methane, the half-life impact. Characterization of methane plumes downwind on the natural gas compressor stations in Pennsylvania and in New York is a peer reviewed paper that uses an actual measurement of the methane, that's a proxy of natural gas is a mixture to look at the emissions from the natural gas compressors that, that push the gas through pipelines and negative air quality impacts those emissions. The extraction of the unconventional oil and gas… natural gas from the

shale energy reservoirs has raised concerns about the upstream and the midstream activities and the potential impacts of air quality. Here we present in measurements of the ambient… the ambient methane concentrations near multiple natural gas compressor stations in New York and Pennsylvania using the cavity ring down laser spectrometry coupled with global positioning system technology. These data reveal discernible, discernible, discernible, that's the word, methane plumes located proximally and the compressor stations which exhibit high variability for the methane emissions depending upon the weather conditions and on-site activities. During the atmospheric temperature inversions when the near ground mixing of the atmosphere is limited or does not occur, residents and properties located within one mile of the compressor station can be exposed to rogue methane from the point sources.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Excuse me, I'm sorry, Miss Hardinger can you… can you wrap up.

RUTH HARDINGER: That's it.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: That's it, okay, great, thank you.

RUTH HARDINGER: That's the ins of it and I have a… I brought some papers that are here, and they also say a little bit more about the scientists and the other things here from Damascus Citizens, it's at the bottom part of this thing and it's a good thing to hear.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you very much, thank you, next up.

VINCENT BRANCATO: Hi, thank you. Good afternoon, my name is Vincent Brancato and I am the Co-Chair of the Environmental Stewardship Committee of the New York Society for Ethical Culture here in New York. I'm retired from a career in the industrial sector, mostly the steel industry and I have been active in trying to protect our natural assets for many years. I am also an Al Gore trained climate reality leader in his climate reality project. Carbon dioxide is the big greenhouse gas, 82 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emitted, methane is only ten percent, however these gases have different life spans and different potencies. Methane is more than 25 times more potent than CO2 in the first 100 years after emission. Methane is the actual natural gas or shale gas in mined by hydrofracking, that is the fossil

fuel before we burn it. Methane is not like coal or oil or gasoline fossil fuel waiting to be burned, methane is constantly waiting to escape from tanks, pipelines or compression stations to become the hazardous greenhouse gas it can be. This is at all stages of its existence during mining, refining, transport and storage until it is burned, making CO2 or until it escapes becoming methane in the atmosphere. The first of the three bills I would like to address is 272, the proposal that the DEP inspects and surveys for leaks of methane within all city owned buildings. I applaud that proposal and I would suggest three modifications. First is that the surveys be completed for all buildings within the first 12 months after the law takes effect. The second is that the found leaks should have no… should have to be repaired within 30 days of discovery unless they are more urgent and the final one is that the gas connection… gas line connections to the buildings from the main gas lines be also inspected when the building is checked. As this law also indicates that every building in this city has to be surveyed for methane leaks, I would suggest that for privately owned buildings the initial surveys be

completed within six months from passage of the bill and that they review again is every five years. The additional requirement of each rental unit to be surveyed again upon vacancy for leaks should also be imposed on all units be they're publicly or privately owned. The second bill, number 1055, is a critical partner to 272. Requiring surveying and mapping of all methane leaks in the city is a way to close the biggest possible source of leakage and dangers of fires and explosions. I would suggest some changes to this bill. First if a leak is found it should have to be repaired within 45 days not 90 days. I think the involved utility should be… should have to compensate the city for the cost of finding such leaks. If one of the city's designated agencies should have to make repairs, they should seek cost recovery from the utility. The final bill I would address is number 1399, the proposal to replace the existing office of sustainability with a new, more empowered, Department of Sustainability and Climate Change. In this time of climate crisis threatening our sustainability I have to fully support this plan to make long term and empowered department to plan for and implement necessary steps to try to make our path through the

coming decades smoother and help protect and improve the quality of life for all our citizens. We ate the New York Society for Ethical Culture are really thankful for this opportunity to present our views. Since our founding in 1876 the Society has participated in working for the public good from our participation in the starting the settlement house movement, to helping start the visiting nurse service and supporting the ACLU and NAACP as they were founded. This opportunity to participate in this hearing is very, very much appreciated.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you very much for your time, thank you.

VINCENT BRANCATO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Stay… please stay at the panel for any questions at the end. Go ahead.

MARGARET PERKINS: Good afternoon, my name is Margaret Perkins and I'm here on behalf of 350 NYC and we're here to support Intro 1055, 272 and 1399 and I ask a question of everyone here, why are we here, why are we in this room debating this topic once again and the two reasons are; number one, New York City burns 600 trillion BTU of natural gas per

year, the largest of any city in North America, we are addicted to natural gas and the second reason is that there has a been a massive failure of utilities, regulatory agencies, state governments, and we know the national government to regulate leaks, production leaks, and transport leaks of natural gas, methane and if you research the incident you see that actually California is the only state that has any regulatory policies in place that regulate leaks, repair of leaks, reduction of leaks, New York State does not. So, this… these laws at least in part, 272 and 1055 would begin to look at that issue of, of the leaks and holding the utilities accountable. But the major problem is as Bob Wyman talked before is our addiction to natural gas and we have not… in the last five years the actual level has increased and these are the two beautiful graphs that the greenhouse gas inventory has produced in the last two years and in 2015 we, we… the emissions from natural gas was 16.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent and in… the last year it was up to 17.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent so it’s going up, our use of natural gas. This is through direct use in heating and also what is powering the, the power

plants to produce electricity. So, we're not going down. Also, just one correction, I know the city always says… point out methane leakage within the city gates, within the local distribution system is .7 percent of total greenhouse gases but in their own table here it's actually one percent so it's, it's significant. So, just to continue its… you know we have the issue of methane leaks which is the, the vent… the venting and the, the leaks further up field in the… in the wheels and the transport, you have venting which we have to account for and within the city… in the city gates as the fire department said they had 23,000 calls for leaks last year which is astronomical but the, the answer is, is… okay… we can survey them, we can repair them but the answer is not to use natural gas, that is the answer and we have to tackle that now, we've got 11 more years. I know that 1253 is going to go halfway… like 40 percent towards that hopefully. So, and then one last issue about natural gas is that we often overlook the fact that it contain… natural gas… 95 percent, 99 percent is methane but there are also other volatile organic compounds of the components of natural gas and some of those are building blocks for ground level ozone

which we know is a trigger for asthma and other respiratory conditions so it's not just methane which is odorless which by itself does not cause health problems but there are other gases in that… natural gas. So, to finish up… okay, to finish up two suggestions, one is on 1055, it could be strengthened. All buildings… it suggests all buildings be surveyed for leaks and the leaks repaired, I think it said originally one form said within 90 days, I think that the utilities have the capacity hopefully if it's a serious large leak to repair immediately, I don't know what… and then all buildings with cast iron piping should be a priority, they're the ones that seem to have the largest leaks and the more, more… frequent leaks and then in relation to Intro 272, the leak survey… the suggestion is that every… it be done every five years but we suggest once again that the older buildings be… their risks be identified first and we strongly support the creation of the new Department, it will add money and capacity to roll out these phenomenal bills that we passed April 18th. Thank you, due to Councilman Constantinides, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you very much, thank you. Miss Yuen, sorry about that, you're up next.

MARGARET PERKINS: You want me to move over here?

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: You can go on that side, either one.

MARION YUEN: Good afternoon Mr. Constantinides and everyone. My name is Marion Yuen. I want to speak in support of Intro 1399 to amend the city charter and administrative code. As you know the staff report of the charter review commission does not mention the biggest elephants in the room, massive environmental degradation and global crisis we live in. Last year, I submitted to the Commission a proposal to establish an agency that champions and grows a healthy, ongoing and dynamic relationship of our city with nature. That is why I'm so glad to see this Intro 1399 and I sincerely trust that you will secure adequate funding for its implementation. We need to help New Yorkers face our common reality that we humans are part of nature and that the natural elements are on loan to us on this planet that we co-habitat with many other species and other forms of

life. In support of Intro 1399, I want to offer the following to strengthen your intention. According to the text, the proposed department would be responsible for recovery, resilience and sustainability. Now even though these words are very commonly used I decided to look up the dictionary definitions. Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties and though… and being tough or if the ability of… to spring back into shape. Sustainability it's the… it's the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level or the avoidance of depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance. Now Mr. Chairman surely you must not mean returning to the status quo that we're in given the massive environmental degradation and changes already precipitated by the climate crisis. As we approach the irreversible thresholds that scientists tell us about, we will find that more and more aspects of our lives will be impacted by the rapid changes including public health, increasing inequity and conflict and, and it will be impossible to pre-define which and how our municipal services would be impacted. So, I strongly recommend that you include language on two things;

one is just transition. We must recognize that burden and benefits of the changes fall unequally on New Yorkers. Will our city's response take us to a healthier, more equitable and more meaningful democracy? The second thing I want to suggest you include is a direction for the long-term plan. I think that this plan must take us to a regenerative society where there is a partnership between nature and humanity, where 21st century technology helps us benefit from nature's gifts and renewable resources. We can and we must tap into nature's regenerative systems and her power. Humans cannot do it alone, but humans must get the implementation of this bill funded. Nature will, will be our friend and partner if we would let her. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you and I thank all of you for being here today and testifying and, and bringing your expertise to this panel and to this hearing, thank you very much. Next, I want to bring forward Philip Kahn from the Citizens' Climate Lobby; Kyle Jeremiah from Energy Vision; Wendy Brawer from Green Map; Richard Kramer from Action Corps New York State and Kim Fraczek from Sane Energy Project.

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, we're, we're trying… I'm, I'm… that's why I have some people on a clock, that's why we're trying to keep things moving, I'm doing the best I possibly can…

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I understand, I, I mean I'm going as fast as I can…

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, we've, we've been here for about two and a half hours, we're trying to get things moving… okay, well we're trying, we're doing our best.

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I guess we could begin here on this side, yep, uh-huh.

WENDY BRAWER: We certainly need a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change. I'm Wendy Brawer, Director of Green Map System and a sustainability and climate design professional with 30 years of experience. I'm a longtime Lower East Side resident who has volunteered on waterfront planning even prior to Sandy. I watched as the innovative plan for the Big U morphed from a

community engaged natural systems based design that made room for the water into an untested plan, drastic plan that… and processed that pits neighbors against one another, sows mistrust of all the agencies involved and destroys the 58 acre park for just a couple of decades of protection. Some years from now the restored 1930s East River Park will have abundant concrete and turf fields, but less room for nature, skinny trees that can't absorb much stormwater or pollutants and it will be ringed by the congestion pricing free zone on the uncapped FDR further burdening the most vulnerable residents who are already stressed out by the thought of another Sandy, Sandy during the unprotected years of construction. In a case in point for needing a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change that oversees the NYC Department of City Planning and Parks, this winter I wrote about the city's uncoordinated approach in a blog for the East River Alliance dot org website, it's attached. This… the lack of systems thinking and planned… and tested planning means we won't get much for the 1.5 billion dollars where there are a multitude of issues and conditions that could be addressed with a world class

plan. In February I requested and CB 3 resolved to support the Lower East Side Street Tree Canopy, which is an immediate commencement of planting and stewardship programming and while Parks promised 1,000 street trees, nothing has happened since and they never mention stewardship when they point to this problem… promise. They don't understand the role of social resiliency and how it was proven by Sandy and many other disruptions that communities that trust each other and already work together in gardens and parks, etcetera bounce back faster. So, disdainful of community participation, Parks doesn't even mention the Lower East Side Ecology Center on their signage despite it being in the park 20 years, turning food waste into healthy soil and managing stewardship throughout the park. This is one small example of why we need a high level, transparent Department to help us navigate the unchartered waters ahead. I'm, I'm also providing a statement from Kathleen Webster who's President of the Sara D. Roosevelt Park Coalition. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you very much, thank you for being here today. This is the panel…

RICHENDA KRAMER: My name is Richenda Kramer and I'm speaking for Action Corps New York City. Action Corps was started by Oxfam 12 years ago… Oxfam America 12 years ago and we had to separate when Oxfam became a confederation. We're an all-volunteer group and we work with climate change… primarily with climate change and vulnerable people who are affected by it and also who are affected by violent conflict and we would like to support all three bills but as a Staten Islander and an Action Corps member I was particularly interested in the 2014 study of methane leaks on Staten Island which was done by the EDF, the Environmental Defense Fund, Colorado University and three google cars which mapped the entire island. The study found that 1,000 tons of methane per year was being emitted through these leaks in my borough and which number I assume has probably increased. In 2014, the National Grid declared that these leaks did not constitute a health hazard and as most of the leaks were minor ones, so nothing had to be done about it. The effect on the environment and on climate change was not addressed. In late 2016, the National Grid started taking the issue more seriously and is now using new techniques

to find and map and hopefully repair methane leaks but it's important that the National Grid pays for the repairs and that they not be placed on the backs of tax payers. The National Grid is a private, for profit company will do the minimum required by law and public opinion. The current work is a start but it's an issue that must be addressed in all boroughs and dealt with more forcefully as the department… as, as your bill addresses but also have… to have a department of sustainability and climate change would be even better. Staten Island had the largest landfill in the world from 1948 until 2001, 2001 and it was built on wetlands and it was ironically called the Fresh Kills landfill, Kills means River. It received a massive amount of all waste, there was no division between toxic and nontoxic waste for many years and the, the solid waste ended in 1996. The smell was horrendous, and the health care problems were enormous in the area. It was permanently capped in 2008 and a 22,000-acre park should be completed by 2030 because it's going to take that long to sort out the problems that the landfill has created. The methane… the methane that it generated is presumably now moving through the underground water system,

since it's no longer coming up for air and it's still there to be released. So, we're very grateful that City Council passed the landmark Mobilization act which makes the development of a Department for Sustainability and Climate Change the long… next logical step. Climate change is already with us.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you. Thank you. Next.

KYLE JEREMIAH: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Kyle Jeremiah and I am the Communications and the Community Engagement Manager at Energy Vision, a New York City based national environmental 501(c)(3) organization. Since our founding in 2007, we have been promoting clean, renewable and low carbon energy and fuel solutions through research, education and partnerships. I'd like to thank the Chairman for this opportunity to testify on the proposed legislation. Given concerns about the city's ability to achieve its ambitious goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050, it is critical to have legislation that enhances institutional capacity to address this existential challenge. As such, Energy Vision fully supports the creation of a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change to replace the

existing Office of Sustainability to deal with matters relating to the resiliency of critical infrastructure, the built environment coastal protection, coastal communities and climate change. Energy Vision also supports empowering the proposed department to develop and coordinate policies and strategies to meet the long-term climate and environmental needs of the city. We believe an interagency green team would help to facilitate and advance the implementation of innovative technologies and strategies that have significant environmental and sustainability benefits. Having spent more than a decade looking at proven but under deployed clean energy solutions, we would encourage the proposed Department of Sustainability and Climate Change to explore the suite of all potential solutions toward achieving our critical climate goals. One such strategy addressing both waste disposal and clean energy is the co-digestion of commercial food scraps, a major climate and solid waste liability, in the existing anaerobic digesters at many of the city's 14 wastewater treatment plants. The biogases captured from these decomposing organic wastes, sewage and food waste, could then be upgraded to net carbon

neutral biomethane and used to power these same facilities, fuel vehicles or heat New York City buildings. This particular example would be a bold, important initiative for the proposed department as it both captures potent methane gases from organic waste that would otherwise escape into the atmosphere and create a flexible source of baseload renewable energy. The proposal calling for the creation of a sustainability advisory board with representatives from environmental and other groups is equally essential, given the various types and levels of expertise required for us to rise to the challenge of addressing our climate change and related public health obstacles. If our environmental goals are to be met, we need a well-informed, fully empowered agency to help guide the various approaches that can help decarbonize various sectors, while improving air, water and soil quality, public health and the economy. Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you very much, next up. How are you?

KIM FRACZEK: Hi everybody, my name is Kim Fraczek, I'm the Director of Sane Energy Project, we represent 7,500 New Yorkers working for the past

decade to halt fossil fuel infrastructure and move our economy to 100 percent renewable, community led and community owned. It's a pleasure to work with such a forward-thinking City Council and I thank you for your valiant efforts to address climate change as the crisis that it is in our beloved waterfront city. We support the intro bills proposed today and that will give additional solid infrastructure to a desperately needed clear plan to 100 percent renewable energy for New York City. We know that we cannot rely on the corporate utilities to be an honest voice in this renewable transition as we heard in the very room next door on April 15th, 2019 in the hearing to pass the resolution against the Williams NESE Pipeline by Con Ed representatives Ivan Kimball and Kyle Kimball claiming that methane gas supply constraints in New York City to justify building a heinous pipeline in order to bring profit to none other than Williams, Con Ed and National Grid shareholders and stick all of us footing the bill. Their testimony was counter to a report issued by Suzanne Mattei, former DEC Regional Director that we do not need more gas supply. Further, they continued to say that fracked gas was renewable gas several

times in their testimony and that they had no plan for renewables other than waiting for the market to work first when asked by Speaker Johnson. There are four proposed methane projects in the city of New York right now and I would like to highlight them to create a sense of urgency that we need to make this legislation happen as soon as possible in order to shut down any further expansion or repowering of gas. 200 million dollars is being asked by Con Edison rate payers to expand, not replace pipelines in their network in the current rate case; a proposed LNG storage expansion in Astoria, Queens and the repowering of the Astoria Generating Station in Sunset Park and now we have the reapplication of Williams NESE pipeline. The legislation proposed to reduce, reduce methane emissions and to survey and map emissions is one of the most important things that we can do today. additionally, changing our city charter to create a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change is something we should have done long ago and because we are not truly addressing climate change unless we are addressing the inequitable economic model for which fossil fuels thrive. I would recommend that we have strong environmental justice

standards for this proposed department's goals, by taking directions from communities and organizations already doing this work. To be honest, I see that our state and city administrations are making choices that are front facing but prevent genuine renewable and economic implementation. We heard from Jainey Bavishi, in the aforementioned hearing, Mayor De Blasio's Director of Recovery and Resiliency that natural slash methane gas is clean and needed. And now we see the Mayor announce a deal with a Canadian hydropower in lieu of fighting for offshore wind jobs right in our own back yard. This is the wrong direction for our renewable future. I attached an article about the hydro… Canadian hydro deal and why it's the wrong direction for New York City. Additionally, we heard from Governor Cuomo say on the Brian Lehrer show the climate and community protection act is a quote, "political placebo" and "that we can't" do it. So, what kind of climate leadership is that and what kind of… where is the democracy of both the State Senate Assembly want to enact this policy? We don't have time to wait anymore and what, what we do hear in New York this year can set off a domino effect for national climate action.

We look forward… we look forward to continue working with the New York City Council on helping develop any plans on halting the climate disaster methane and replacing it with clean heat solutions available now at NYSERDA if we stick together to get funding to make renewable heat now happen for every resident of New York City. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you so much, I appreciate all of your testimony here today and everything that you're all doing to make our city greener and a more sustainable place, so thank you.

KIM FRACZEK: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Next up I want to bring forward Karen Blondel, Our Resilient Red Hook; Gustavo Gordillo, New York Democratic Socialists of America; Amber Ruther, New York City Democratic Socialists of America Ecosocialist Working Group; Lee Ziesche from Sane Energy Project and Eileen Moran.

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, so I'll just… so, I'll call one more person forward then to replace her on the panel then, Ashley Dawson from 350 dot org. alright, we'll, we'll start right here.

KAREN BLONDEL: Thank you because I'm going to have to run right out. I actually took the time to come here today because this is really important to me… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I appreciate that… [cross-talk]

KAREN BLONDEL: …and sitting here and listening about methane and about a combined office of sustainability and resiliency and climate change, I didn't hear any mention about the fact that all winter long 70 percent of the buildings in New York City lose energy because they are overheating in the winter and we're… me, me… I'm putting on my air conditioner every day in the wintertime because I can't breathe in my apartment. These are public housing apartments… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

KAREN BLONDEL: It's… one in 14 New Yorkers live in public housing and none of this conversation was about public housing, it just wasn't, it wasn't so even if we solve all of these other problems you still got one in 15 New Yorkers

still with the same problem so that has to be addressed… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay… [cross-talk]

KAREN BLONDEL: …and that's addressed through… unfortunately not every building is going to be ready for passive house, public housing, New York City housing authority is definitely not ready for passive house, they will have to go to gas first through the energy performance contract so that they can buy the controls that they need inside the buildings and also train their heating plant technicians on how to read those gauges and to adjust the energy in the building, that it's going to save and, and reduce the energy and the greenhouse gases but each, each type of building is going to have to be done separately and you're going to have to take a look at the condition, the age of the building and… etcetera. So, now I'm going to go back to what I wrote. The resilient, Resilient Red Hook Committee is made up of concerned residents working together to steer the future of Red Hook and beyond. Empowered by the spirit of unity that helped the Red Hook community survive hurricane Sandy, our vision for a

resilient and thriving future is to work as a holistic community to strengthen Red Hook by minimizing differences and maximizing cooperation among all who live and work here. We are using social cohesion to bring in 350 Brooklyn, to bring in a resiliency education training and innovation center, we are looking from the ground at the people who have to live in these buildings who smell gas all the time and won't report it, do you know why, because in public housing when they report a gas problem usually they don't have gas for the next six to nine months… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

KAREN BLONDEL: …so why would they report it, like it's almost like they'd rather be dead than report it which is ridiculous… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: I agree… [cross-talk]

KAREN BLONDEL: mindful of the growing climate related risks to our beloved community and the immediate need for improved emergency preparedness measures around climate change and sea level rise, our actions will serve to help the

develop… to develop measures that will protect our neighborhood from flood inundation, increase the safety of our citizens and more towards a resilient community. That has to take place at the ground, each community is different, we're asking to be that pilot program in Red Hook and Gowanus because we deal with low lands, flooding, we have a lot of architects and a lot of 350 BK members living around us and we just feel that we're diverse enough and integrated enough to come together where we have public housing residents and undergraduates speaking about marine biology, speaking about resiliency and, and how they can reduce their need to put on a light in an apartment by just a, a flashing at the window. This is stuff we get from young people, I'm not young enough to come up with this stuff but we have to encourage our young people to come up with these answers and these solutions and they're not at the table. Also missing from this package to… where we want these agencies to work together is the… is the Department of Health and the Public Health officials, they always were a part of things during the sanitary condition, we're going back to that, we're now seeing more infectious diseases and different things

happening related to climate change. We have to bring the epidemiologists into the picture as well and I'll just leave the testimony, I'm sorry I'm going to have to leave without hearing the rest of you guys but I did try to stay as long as I could but I have some other business I have to attend to for a fifth avenue committee so… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you for coming… [cross-talk]

KAREN BLONDEL: …thank you… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …today, I appreciate your testimony, thank you.

KAREN BLONDEL: Alright.

AMBER RUTHER: Hi, my name is Amber Ruther, I'm here representing the NYC Democratic Socialists of America, I'm in the Ecosocialist Working Group. First off, I want to thank you especially Costa Constantinides for your leadership on climate justice and I want to say that I believe that a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change is greatly needed. Addressing the climate crisis at the scope and speed necessary while ensuring equity and a just transition will be no easy feat. It will require massive levels of coordination

among every agency from the Department of Buildings to DCAS. Methods of delivering services that have been in place for decades will need to be carefully re-thought, according to ecological and environmental justice principles and in many cases, completely overhauled. As an auditor for the city, I have found that the largest challenges that city agencies face in achieving their goals are often a lack of resources, oversight, coordination with other city agencies and enforcement mechanisms. This department would remedy many of those challenges. However, I'm concerned that there don't appear to be any enforcement mechanisms if agencies fail to meet their stated goals. I'm also concerned that the members of the sustainability advisory board are all appointed, not elected, and they are not required to seek input from the communities their decisions will impact the most. Despite best intentions, they may be unaware of the challenges and tradeoffs certain communities face and as a result, their decisions may have unintended consequences. Especially when it comes to disaster relief and resiliency, input from frontline communities is critical. Resiliency plans cannot be designed to serve only the rich and powerful but

should center and prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable New Yorkers. The advisory board could hold regular town halls publicized by the Civic Engagement Commission or provide an opportunity for online input, perhaps in conjunction with the participatory budgeting platform. This would not only allow the advisory board to receive input from the community, but to get buy in and address any concerns that arise. It would also reduce the amount of planning they will need to do from scratch, as many communities and grassroots organizations have been developing policy ideas, 197-a plans and resiliency plans for decades, which simply means… need to be implemented, funded and expanded. For instance, UPROSE's community owned solar co-operative in Sunset Park would provide the city with an excellent model of how to expand access to solar in a way that is affordable for all and centers frontline communities. They hope to turn the waterfront into a manufacturing hub for wind turbines to combat gentrification. Furthermore, advocates have requested that the city retrofit NYCHA by involving, training, and hiring NYCHA residents instead of relying on public/private partnerships. A just transition must be frontline and

grassroots-led. These communities already have solutions, what they need most is for their input to be listened to and prioritized. And since I have a minute I would also like to echo something that was stated earlier by Bob Wyman regarding the methane emissions bill, I applaud your effort to identify leaks and would like to emphasize that it is going to be often more expensive to replace pipelines than it is to just simply implement renewable energy instead so that should absolutely be taken into account but as we've seen many times Con Ed will fight renewables every step of the way and lobby against them and use scare tactics to make them seem unfeasible. So, in my opinion it would be a more efficient use of the city's resource to explore options to municipalize our energy system or to expand NYPA to allow them to purchase renewable energy instead of relying on these private corporations who at the end of the day will always be incentivized to prioritize profit over people and the planet. For instance, one of the hugest issues that is preventing people from owning solar and energy efficiency is the fixed charge that Con Ed charges, there's currently a bill on the table to remove this but unfortunately removing the fixed

charge would hurt Con Ed's profits so they would not be incentivized to promote energy efficiency and these are fundamental conflicts of interest that arise from privately owned utilities and I hope that the city will consider exploring opportunities for publicly owned utilities in the future.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you.

GUSTAVO GORDILLO: Thank you Costa… Council Member Constantinides… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Costa is fine.

GUSTAVO GORDILLO: I am Gustavo Gordillo and I'm a member of the New York City Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, the largest socialist organization in the United States. I'm speaking on behalf of our Ecosocialist Working Group and before I begin, I'd like to support Bob Wyman's proposal to amend Intro 1055 to encourage the abandonment of leaking gas infrastructure and not only as repair. I applaud your effort to reduce methane emissions which are 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide. However, I believe the city must do more to address the root cause behind the relentless expansion of fracked gas infrastructure and methane

leaks in our community. This legislation is an attempt to address grid neglect, and its needed because of the private utilities' coordinated resistance to abandon deadly gas infrastructure. Con Edison and National Grid are investor owned utilities whose primary goal is to maximize shareholder profits at the expense of workers, communities, and the environment. The city should not need to inform Con Ed and National Grid of where upgrade and repair efforts should be made, that should be their responsibility. It's going to be cost, cost intensive and this is just one more way that Con Ed and National Grid will externalize the costs of fossil fuels onto us, the public. The city's limited resources would be better spent addressing Con Ed and National Grid's consistent ability to act as a barrier to the transition to renewable energy. We should make Con Ed and National Grid public, publicly owned utilities and focus our efforts on replacing crumbling fossil fuel infrastructure with renewables instead of using public money to clean up their mess. The risks of private, private utilities are currently socialized, while their profits are privatized. As we have seen with PG and E in California, in our

existing system, when a private utility neglects the grid and causes loss of life, we, the public, pay the costs and utility investors are ultimately bailed out by rate payers and taxpayers. If we socialized the profits of Con Ed, we would have over one billion dollars more each year to spend on renewable energy infrastructure, not to mention we would be avoiding the nine and a half million dollar CEO salaries, the one and a half million strike contingency fund and money that the utilities spend on lobbyists. In, in 2018, Con Ed paid 889 million dollars in dividends to stockholders and National Grid USA paid 549 million dollars in dividends to stockholders. These dividends were paid on the backs of ratepayers and amount to massive wealth transfer from ordinary New Yorkers to the wealthiest members of the society who make up these investors. This is where money should be coming from to abandon gas and build renewables. A public distribution utility could be achieved by either municipalizing the grid as over 2,000 cities have already done, or by working with the state to expand the New York Power Authority's ability to purchase new energy generation and add new customers. Studies have shown that on average, publicly owned utilities

are more affordable, safer, and can have a greater share of renewable energy than investor owned utilities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, thank you Gustavo, next.

ASHLEY DAWSON: Hi, good afternoon, it's an honor to be here. My name is Ashley Dawson, I'm a Professor of Environmental Studies at the City University of New York, I'm here at the invitation of 350 dot org and I'm also a member of the Democratic Socialists of America so I second all of the points that my fellow panelists have made. We all know that the city and the world face a climate emergency. In their report on global warming of 1.5 degrees last October, the UN's IPCOMMITTEE CLERK warned that the world will hurtle past the 1.5-degree target by 2050 unless we engage in a sweeping transformation of energy, land, infrastructure and manufacturing. The authors of the report argued that saving the planet from climate breakdown will involve and this is their language, systems transition for which there's no documented historic precedent and of course according to the IPCOMMITTEE CLERK we only have about a decade to make these radical cuts so New York City must act

quickly and decisively. The city has taken some important and historic steps in recent years to cope with the unfolding climate emergency but all too often these successes have taken far too long to push through. For example, Mayor De Blasio initially announced a program to encourage landlords to voluntarily cut emissions from their building's way back in 2015, but it wasn't until this past April the climate mobilization act made such cuts mandatory. That's four precious years wasted. And from what I understand the measure contains a provision that will allow owners to buy renewable energy credits in order to offset their continuing use of fossil-based energy. Environmental justice organizations in the city and around the world have been strongly opposed to such offsetting programs since they allow wealthy landlords not just to continue polluting but to avoid upgrading their buildings, thereby stripping the promise of good green jobs out of the bill and so I think this suggests why the intro 1399 provision to include an oversight board that represents the city and various movements within the city is very important. We're still waiting for some other ambitious promises from the city to become reality.

During Mayor De Blasio's first electoral campaign for instance, he declared that he would sit… set the city on a path to zero waste ensuring that 90 percent of city refuse would be diverted from landfills by 2030. This initiative is way behind schedule. Organic waste accounts for one third of the city's waste stream, that's an estimated one million tons of compostable material being sent to landfills annually instead of turned into good soil. I personally compost, but to do so I have to put food scraps in my freezer for the week and then schlep them to the local farmer's market every Sunday morning which is not so bad but it's certainly not an arrangement conducive to dedicated waste recycling in the city with some of the lowest rates of recycling in the country. So, in sum, New York City desperately needs a powerful, centralized agency to coordinate efforts to improve sustainability and resilience. The city needs an agency and a commissioner to prioritize the fight against climate breakdown and to coordinate the overlapping and at times contradictory goals of multiple municipal offices charged with implementing the city's climate goals. In addition to creating such a centralized agency, Intro 1399 which I'm

firmly in support of, also establishes much needed public oversight of the city's bureaucracy through the creation of a board of experts, advocates, academics and industry experts that will hold the newly created agency and commissioner accountable and I already cited one instance for why that kind of oversight is so important in the current climate. The science has told us that there's no time to waste in addressing the climate emergency. Let's make New York City an example of how it is possible to move forward with unity and determination in the face of this existential threat. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you. Thank you everybody for your testimony today, I really appreciate it, thank you. Calling the next panel Catherine Skopic; Ari Lieberman, 350 Brooklyn; Jackie Weisberg, 350 Brooklyn; Gregory Schwedock, of the Climate Mobilization New York City. Alright, so let me see, you are? And you are? Okay, so I think a couple of the people had to leave so Cait LaMorte, are you still in the room?

CAIT LAMORTE: Yeah…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Okay, Cristian Cruz, are you still in the room?

CRISTIAN CRUZ: Yes…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Yes, okay, great and seeing there's only one other person here Saheedah, yes. So, bring everybody…

[off mic dialogue]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright. Alright, Catherine.

CATHERINE SKOPIC: Good afternoon, my name is Catherine Skopic, I'm Board and steering Committee of the Interfaith Moral Action on Climate and Chair and Vice Chair of two other environmental groups. We have sacred and secular imperatives to address the climate situation that we find ourselves in. So, I congratulate the New York City Council for responding to the urgency of the climate situation by this legislation to create a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change. I'm going to… we… I and we support all three of these bills and I'm first going to talk about 1399 and then 1055 and 272 together. So, first of all a few comments on 1399 and I'm sure once you get up and rolling, once this department is going some of the things that I am suggesting now you would probably come to yourself but I do just want to make sure that these are

included. First of all, on page two, I would very much like to see you including in that list permanent preservation of community gardens. They have been struggling for a long time in our city, they deserve a permanent place in this plan and also please include green spaces and green roofs where structurally feasible. On page three, the listing of sustainability indicators, I would like to see coordination with transportation and renewable energy from offshore wind included in those indicators. These may not be the correct places for these but going through it, it seems that this is where these things should go and then on 33-104 page four, I'd like two phrases added. Again, this is page 33-104 page four, add phrases. I'm going to read what it says there and then I'm going insert two phrases. The city will seek to implement or undertake to achieve each interim goal by no later than April 22, 2030 and I would like to insert in there and encourage achievement by the date of 2025. The long-term goals that the city will seek to implement undertake to achieve each goal by no later than April 22, 2050 and I would like to insert and encourage achievement by 2040. So, the first one, the interim goals encourage

to five minutes earlier… or five years earlier and the second one on the long-term goals I'd like to encourage ten years earlier because I think we all know that the urgency calls for that. Then 33-107 page six, include innovative technologies, I'd like you to please examine and I think it's been mentioned already here, passive house for all new building high rise construction. We have our first high rise passive house on Roosevelt Island and it's been very successful so that can be included in this bill, all new construction be passive house which is just about net zero so we would be nipping in the bud a lot of the carbon and gas emissions right there and I'd also like you to consider installing vertical access wind turbines, this is just one example, this is a table model and these can be put on buildings, they can be combined with other things. Okay, so now before my time runs out here, Intro 1055 methane leaking mapping and Intro 272. As these bills rely… relate to methane, methane emissions and methane leaks I would like to emphasize our need to eliminate methane usage altogether and not add any more methane infrastructure. When work is being done taking up streets for construction, repair of water, electric,

power or gas lines we could use these opportunities to install geothermal and or heat pumps to supply neighboring buildings with these sources of renewable energy as well as use these opportunities to install solar panels and or vertical access wind turbines to power street lights and electric vehicle charging stations. So, these are small steps but we're at the point where every little bit counts, we need the offshore wind for the big picture, we need that big time and such things as the vertical access turbines on our streetlights. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you Catherine, next up.

JACKIE WEISBERG: Good afternoon and thank you for allowing me to testify today. If my voice sounds hoarse it's because yesterday, I was in Albany with many people who are pushing the legislator up there, particularly Governor Cuomo to pass the COMMITTEE CLERKPA, screaming and yelling I lost my voice and hopefully we made an impression upon him… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: That's a very good reason, we're, we're okay with that.

JACKIE WEISBERG: So, we need to do what we need to do, all politics is local, and we need to take care of business here. I want to thank you all for all of your initiatives that, that the Council has put forward and you in particular Speaker Constantinides for all that you have done. So, in regard to the first initiative number 1055, I believe this amendment is necessary… oh, I meant to say I'm Jackie Weisberg from 350 Brooklyn… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-huh… [cross-talk]

JACKIE WEISBERG: I believe this amendment is necessary in order to locate and recognize where all methane leaks occur or are likely to occur. Half of gas distribution pipelines under New York City streets are 50 years old or more; 25 percent of them are made of cast iron or other corrosion or leak prone materials. As was said earlier, a 2014 study conservatively estimated that 1,000 tons of methane leaks per year occur from the natural gas distribution system on Staten Island alone and I left the link that you can see to get to that study. Regarding the second initiative, number 272 Councilman you're not here but yes, it's a great

bill. Cleaning one's own house and setting an example for all buildings in the city would be an important part of leading our state in the right… in the fight against climate change. I believe that buildings should be surveyed more than the initiative's call for, at least once every five years to perhaps annually. Where reports to relevant agencies and departments indicate that these leaks have not been repaired, the city must step in immediately to make the repairs. Perhaps a Department of Greenhouse Gas Leaks Repair that deals solely with methane and any other greenhouse gas leaks can be created so that these leaks can be dealt with within a reasonable time after they're detected, detected and at the same time create new jobs. The third initiative, number 1399. The Council has shown it has the will to address the climate crisis by putting forth such initiatives as we are… the ones that we are addressing today as well as enacting laws such as the so-called dirty buildings bill. Now the city has to budget for all of this including clean energy, the retrofit… the retrofit accelerator program, new technologies, training, expertise and so on. There must be a centralized agency to coordinate efforts

and prioritize sustainability and the mitigation of climate change rather than any individual agencies, short term budgetary priorities or constraints, these are things that you spoke with earlier from the Mayor's Office. This new department must have all the tools and authority needed to oversee this massive overhaul with complete oversight over all agencies, having a Commission and advisory board should ensure that the department is inclusive and represents all communities. In short, a clear plan is needed to put all of the pieces in place. Utilities have shown us that they cannot be trusted to oversee themselves. We need a renewable energy grid for New York City owned and operated by the city and state, now wouldn't that be nice? Environmental justice, new jobs, citizen involvement, budgeting, abandoning all fossil fuels and ensuring that no pipelines come into our city are all essential to making the kind of impact that our city can and must do now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you. Go ahead.

GREGORY SCHWEDOCK: Alright…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: You have to be up to be on the record.

GREGORY SCHWEDOCK: Thank you. My name is Gregory Schwedock and I'm sorry I don't have a transcript for you, but I figure it's easier to, to look at each other. I am a lifelong New Yorker and I want to thank you for the public education you gave me that I'm a… I'm a product of. I also want to thank you for passing the Climate Mobilization Act and you've shown leadership, all of you and Councilman… Member Constantinides in all the individual actions that it takes, and they are all individually important. Having a binding bill such as the, the buildings legislation and, and really treating and mitigating the causes of the climate crisis is indeed unprecedented in its binding nature. However, it is still not enough. As you can see my shirt says the climate mobilization and as a side note I'm also part of DSA and, and want to reiterate the, the points that Amber, Gustavo and Ashley mentioned, they're all, all very strong in, in pretty much all the points that people made today. So… and I'm also a member of DSA there so… but my shirt says the, the words climate mobilization on it and it is not because of the act that just passed but the organization I'm representing today, specifically

it's New York City chapter. Council Member Constantinides I'm glad you mentioned the unimaginable world that your children or… and our children will inherit when they are our age. By 2050 your children and my generation will inherit a horrific world. What is missing from this legislation is an emergency context, the public needs to understand and with your continued leadership the Council need to state that we are in a state of emergency. I won't belabor this point as there's a hearing on this on the 24th and thank you for that and I hope everyone here makes it back at least… and those who were here at the beginning of this hearing. We want into World War II with horses thinking that was a good idea because we had no military capacity at the time, and we realized we needed a mobilization. FDR didn't make a 30-year plan to, to make 80 percent of the munitions that we needed by the Vietnam War, no, we did… had the largest mobilization this country has ever seen, and we did it in a matter of years. We went from no military capacity to making all the tanks, planes, bombs, parachutes, etcetera to win the war. We tripled the number of women in the workforce, 40 percent of

vegetables came from victory gardens, ten percent of people moved over state lines for war jobs, every man, woman and child at home was collecting tin or rubber for the war effort. So, that, that is an example of the mobilization we need today and the level we need to do it at. We stopped… we had sacrificed, we stopped making luxury items, we didn't make cars and vacuum cleaners, we made all the goods we actually needed. So, with your continued leadership today Constantinides you mentioned the 11 years we have, that the IPCOMMITTEE CLERK says we have to get to zero emissions, in fact we don't even have that but it's important that we have… that we are recognizing that is the real time… or closer to the real time scale, really we have 30 years and a… should have done it 30 years ago to… if we really wanted to be safe but I know we're not changing timelines today on this legislation but I'd hope that… specifically that the… Nancy Romer's words that she couldn't testify today but her… are, are looked at for her plans on which… how this can strengthened, this is really… this department could really be powered much more than… similarly it seems to give reports and plans for others to implement and that's

not going to be enough, I… we really need to be empower… the department needs to be empowered to make real change to, to get to any… you know close to where we need so her points were… and, and very short paraphrasing that it needs to be well funded, it needs to engage the second, it needs to engage communities and not corporate… and not be corporate heavy, three, needs to have a clear plan of our oversight and enforcement and on that I'd say that you focus… even if the timetables don't change that we focus on the… what can implemented… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: If you could wrap… [cross-talk]

GREGORY SCHWEDOCK: …in short term… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …if you could wrap up that would be… [cross-talk]

GREGORY SCHWEDOCK: Okay, great, thank you… [cross-talk]

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: …great… [cross-talk]

GREGORY SCHWEDOCK: And the… yeah, basically the public… the development publicly,

prioritize development publicly owned as other members have, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you, next.

CAIT LAMORTE: Hi, I'm Cait LaMorte, Development Director at Gowanus Canal Conservancy. I'm here to voice our support for Intro 1399. Gowanus Canal Conservancy believes that it is critical to develop and coordinate the implementation of policies, programs and actions to meet the long-term needs of the city with respect to its infrastructure, environment, climate and overall sustainability citywide. GCOMMITTEE CLERK is dedicated to facilitating the development of a resilient, vibrant, open space network centered on the Gowanus Canal through activating and empowering community stewardship of the Gowanus watershed. Since 2006, we have served as the environmental steward for the neighborhood through leading volunteer projects, educating students on environmental issues and working with agencies, elected officials and the community to advocate for, build and maintain innovative green infrastructure. Over the past three years we have been developing the Gowanus Lowlands

master plan which builds on the confluence of the super fund cleanup, related clean ups at the city level and the Gowanus rezoning. Through close collaboration with community landowners, elected officials and agency representatives, the Gowanus Lowlands envisions a clean and thriving waterway of aquatic habitat, community activity and bustling industry. In Gowanus we see firsthand the effects of climate change on our city, we see close… coastal flooding, rising ground water, heat island impacts as well as increased precipitation causing more sewage overflow into the canal. We fully support the formation of a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change to govern over agencies and create a holistic approach to combat climate change in order to achieve coordinated efforts to promote environmental sustainability and adapt to our changing climate. At the same time a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change cannot reduce responsibility from other agencies including the Department of Environmental Protection, Buildings, City Planning, the Mayor’s Office of Environmental Remediation, Office of Recovery and Resiliency, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of

Sanitation, the Department of Transportation, the Water Board and, and NYC Municipal Water Finance Authority. A Department of Sustainability and Climate Change must be given the authority and the funding to govern at the work of other agencies and coordinate policies and programs of other agencies in order to turn our city into an example for the rest of the country of the world. We often experience the limitations of existing city agency silos and disinclination to innovate locally and address site specific climate issues. We in Gowanus struggle to get innovative street, street tree design, rain gardens and wet soils installed that are designed to Gowanus specific specifications and account for neighborhood flooding, our high-water table and industrial landscape. Our Gowanus urban forest is sparse and young leaving residents vulnerable to rising temperatures and inundating UV rays. The Gowanus Canal is continually polluted with sewage from our… from our combined sewer system, and increased rain, rainfall and rising groundwater coupled with growing population will exacerbate this issue. Due to our unique location at the bottom of a topographical bowl, vertical protection including

rising… raising the shoreline and installing a tide gate at the mouth of the canal will worsen in land flooding and make the canal even more stagnant and toxic… and toxic. A Department of Sustainability and Climate Change must be able to plan comprehensively and think beyond formulaic solutions in order to look carefully at site specific impacts and solutions throughout the five boroughs. Time and time again we see environmental injustices in our neighborhood affecting the most vulnerable populations. Their capital investment in resilient infrastructure is critical there is… there must also be investment in social resilience. A Department of Sustainability and Climate Change must have a focus on equity and invest in emergency preparedness, racial equity analysis and workforce training as essential elements of adapting our city to the changes ahead. GCOMMITTEE CLERK fully supports the formation of a Department of Sustainability and Climate Change is important to the future of Gowanus and of New York City. Thank you for supporting the future of our city.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you and, and I want to bring forward our two students

here from Global Kids. Alright, go ahead, good to see you again.

SAHEEDAH MAJOLAGBE: Good afternoon everyone, hello. My name is Saheedah Majolagbe, I'm a 15-year-old high school student, a Global Kid's Youth Ambassador and someone who cares about the environment.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Make sure you… make… speak into the microphone and make sure you… I hear you on the record.

SAHEEDAH MAJOLAGBE: Okay, that's… [cross-talk]

[off mic dialogue]

SAHEEDAH MAJOLAGBE: I have spent quite some time fighting for the… for the climate change and have… we need to act on, the scientists have been clearly given. I have rallied, talked to legislators to get on board with legislation that has recently passed, and I have educated people on the climate recently and what's going on and how they should be aware of what's going on around them. We need to act on the attacks of nature and the future for our planet. The planet has been crying and giving the signs that it needs help and we need to help it. It's

time for action and we need to fight against climate change. We need a department that will oversee all of the legislation that has recently been passed. We need a well-informed, experienced, educated people working together to get behind this Department of Sustainability and Climate Change. We need to make plans for the future that will promote positive change, my generation is begging for action and solutions to be able to live on this planet for, for more years to come. We need to act now; we need to be accountable by taking serious action as much damage is being done to the planet and will continue on if we do not. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Thank you.

CRISTIAN BONKOVA: Alright. Dear everyone, thank you for having us today. My name is Cristian Bonkova and I'm an educator and… with Global Kids and I'm also a College Professor for Global, Global Development. I'm here today in support on Intro Number 272, 1055 and 1399 but more than that I'm here to support Saheedah and the next oncoming generation. Global Kids works on climate justice giving young people space and support to exercise their young… their own young activism and today we

have some laws that tackle climate change and I'm, I'm faced with a reality that we all must understand now the realities that the effects of climate change will transcend every border and effect every aspect of life and when something is that big the solution and… is to scale up to the problem and face it from every angle and every community. New York has always had their spotlight of the world and now again it has a chance to lead the way with initiatives such as the ones presented here today which would make sure that we allocate the necessary resources with talent, money, political support and anything else that is required. We should also acknowledge that any timelines must be adjusted for survival and also for the sense of emergency that these issues require. I hope that these… the Department of Sustainability and Climate Change has a focus on also climate, climate justice which is something that we and… a lot of Global Kids and I hope that we can speed up our actions, organize, fight, do all these as soon as possible. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: How old are you again?

SAHEEDAH MAJOLAGBE: 15.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: 15, you've been doing an awful lot for 15, I'm really impressed, I am really very impressed.

[applause]

SAHEEDAH MAJOLAGBE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, I, I look… we, we keep running into each other.

SAHEEDAH MAJOLAGBE: Yes…

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: So, I, I keep… I look forward to our next encounter, I know you're going to be doing amazing things as always so thank you for being here today.

SAHEEDAH MAJOLABGE: Alright, thank you for having me.

CHAIRPERSON CONSTANTINIDES: Alright, so with that I want to thank everyone who testified today on all these legislations. I want to thank our, our Committee Counsel, the great Samara Swanston; I want to thank… yeah, you can give her a round of applause, that's… I'm okay with that, you can give as well as a round of applause to our Policy Analysts both Nadia Johnson and Ricky Chawla; our Financial Analyst Jonathan Seltzer and then my staff, my Counsel Nicholas Widzowski and my Communications

Director Terence Cullen. I look forward to being back here with you on June 24th for our next hearing of the Environmental Protection Committee but at this time I'll gavel this particular hearing closed, 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 June 28, 2019