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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

August 14, 2019
Start: 11:03 a.m.
Recess: 11:11 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: HELEN K. ROSENTHAL
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
DIANA AYALA
LAURIE A. CUMBO
BEN KALLOS
BRAD S. LANDER

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY
A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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2 [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Good afternoon. I
4 am Council Member Helen Rosenthal, my pronouns are
5 she, her, hers, Chair of the Committee on Women and
6 Gender Equity. Today the committee will vote on
7 Resolution 978 sponsored by my new colleague who is
8 already kicking it... hitting out of the ballpark,
9 Council Member Farah Louis, a Resolution calling upon
10 congress to pass and the President to sign the
11 violence against women reauthorization act of 2019. I
12 want to welcome my colleagues Majority Leader Cumbo,
13 Council Member Lander, Council Member Louis, Council
14 Member Ayala, Council Member Ben Kallos and at this
15 point turn it over to Council Member Louis for a
16 statement about her Resolution, Council Member.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Good morning
18 everyone. I'm here today, today to ask for all of
19 your support on Resolution 978 which calls upon
20 congress and the president to reauthorize the
21 violence against women act. I am a survivor of
22 domestic abuse, as a survivor I can tell you
23 firsthand that the resources tailored to survivors
24 such as the family justice center is not just a
25 public institution or a place for services but it is

1 a lifeline for people that feel hopeless and it is a
2 place of refuge so by passing this resolution we're
3 paving the way for survivor center justice and life
4 saving legislation. Every year the needs around
5 domestic and gender-based violence becomes more and
6 more apparent as we continue to give space to
7 survivors to speak and to heal and New York City
8 those needs are definitely urgent. When we review
9 crimes, crime stats... the stats that NYPD show us
10 every year shows us that crime rates in New York City
11 have declined however and in the past ten years we
12 see the number of domestic violence related homicides
13 have increased. The NYPD responded to over 250,000
14 domestic incident reports in 2018 alone so I'm
15 hopeful that the reauthorization of this bill will
16 only lead to further efforts to prevent gender based
17 violent crimes through justice reform, education for
18 the public, grants that will provide invaluable
19 resources to survivors through initiatives like the
20 family justice center. I definitely want to thank
21 today all committee members for being here and for
22 considering this essential resolution and I
23 definitely want to thank Brenda, Chloe and Monica for
24 your hard work on this resolution and it definitely
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2 is an honor to advocate for survivors of domestic and
3 gender based violence especially if it means that we
4 can equip them as well as the general public with the
5 tools to ensure that we see a reduction in domestic
6 abuse, sexual harassment and all gender based
7 violence in our lifetime. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you very
9 much Council Member, appreciate you. Appreciate you
10 Council Member Ayala, this is really important stuff
11 and as I've said before domestic and gender based
12 violence represents serious and complex issues that
13 can effect any New Yorker regardless of identity;
14 women, men, transgender, gender non-conforming
15 individuals of every race, religion, culture and
16 status are impacted. These acts of violence are
17 constituted of power dynamics that reflect greater
18 trends in our society which disproportionality harm
19 the most vulnerable and marginalized among us. At a
20 time when women's rights and gender-based violence
21 are becoming increasingly partisan issues, Resolution
22 Number 978 would reauthorize VAWA and also include
23 among other things protections for transgender
24 individuals and a provision that would prohibit those
25 convicted of certain misdemeanor chargers from

1 purchasing firearms. I commend Council Member Louis
2 on this very important resolution of which I am co...
3 prime sponsor and I congratulate her on her first
4 piece of legislation as a member of this body, it's a
5 great one. I'd also like to thank Marisa Maack my
6 Chief of Staff, my former Legislative Director Ned
7 Terrace as well as the Committee staff for their work
8 in preparing for this hearing and working on the
9 legislation Brenda, Brenda McKinney Counsel, Chloe
10 Rivera Legislative Policy Analyst and Monica Pepple,
11 Financial Analyst. Finally, I want to acknowledge but
12 we have already acknowledged all Committee Members
13 present. Billy Martin you can call the roll.

14
15 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
16 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Women
17 and Gender Equity, Resolution 978, Chair Rosenthal?

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I vote aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Cumbo?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Permission to
21 explain my vote? Thank you, I want to thank Council
22 Member Louis for utilizing a very personal and
23 private matter that impacted you to inspire the
24 legislation that we are voting on here today and I
25 really want to thank all of my colleagues because the

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2 climate in Washington D.C. would almost make one
3 think that the timing of a resolution such as this
4 would go on deaf ears but it's so important for us to
5 continue to raise these issues, to talk about these
6 issues, to champion these issues at a time when women
7 are the most vulnerable in this country that they
8 ever have been. In terms of many of the changes that
9 are happening in Washington D.C. and the energy that
10 continues to erode much of the progress that women
11 have made for centuries so we have to continue to
12 fight, this resolution does exactly that, I thank you
13 for taking your pain and turning it into a purpose
14 and I proudly support this resolution and I vote aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK: Kallos?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Permission to
17 explain my vote? Congratulations to Council Member
18 Louis for moving so quickly and putting in a
19 resolution even amidst your campaign is strong
20 leadership. This sad fact is that one in five
21 homicides in New York City is domestic violence
22 related and we as a city and a country knew... need to
23 do better. I'm proud to vote in favor of Resolution
24 Number 978 and I believe I should already be on the
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2 Resolution but will request that I be added, I vote
3 aye.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK: Lander?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Request
6 permission to explain? Every day in this country
7 there seems like some new atrocity from the White
8 House or the federal government, how it is that we
9 have to be pleading to renew the violence against
10 women act at this point in our nation's history, like
11 we should not let that be normal, it is appalling
12 that it should have to be renewed at all, that it
13 should be in doubt whether it is going to be renewed
14 and that women like our newest colleague have to bear
15 their pain in public as part of advocacy to get what
16 should just be a simple and basic human right. So, my
17 respect to you for your leadership, to the Chair, to
18 the Majority Leader, to all the women who have found
19 the courage to tell their stories and demand justice
20 and my sorrow and apology that here we are at this
21 moment in our country where it is still required. I
22 vote aye and asked to be added as a co-sponsor to the
23 resolution, thank you.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: Ayala?
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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I proudly vote
aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of five in
the affirmative, zero in the negative and no
abstentions the Resolution has been adopted by the
Committee.

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you very
much. I neglected to thank our, our soon to be
Interim and... our Interim and in training Counsel
Jayasri Ganapathy who will be stepping in when our
Counsel Brenda McKinney brings some joy into the
world. So, thank you for your help Jayasri, thank you
for taking the time to really engage with the
Committee, I'm really looking forward to continuing
to work with you. And at this time the hearing is
closed.

[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

August 17, 2019