CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

        Of the

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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                    October 29, 2019
                    Start: 10:20 a.m.
                    Recess: 10:30 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Room
                   16th Floor

B E F O R E: MARK LEVINE
                    Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
 Alicka Ampry-Samuel
 Inez Barron
 Andrew Cohen
 Mathieu Eugene
 Robert Holden
 Keith Powers

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

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sound check. Sound check. This is a sound check on the Committee on Health. Today's date is October 29th, 2019 located on the 16th floor Committee Room recorded by Pedro Lugo.

[Gavel]

CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: Good morning, everyone and welcome to this meeting of the city councils Health Committee. I am Mark Levine, Chair of the committee and pleased to be joined by fellow Health Committee members Council member Alicka Ampry-Samuel, Council member Andy Cohen, Council member Bob Cohen, and Council member Keith-- what did I call you? Sorry. Council member Holden, I apologize. And Council member Keith Powers. We are considering today a sweeping in his store package of legislation to advance animal welfare in New York City. Thank you for observing the protocol. And several of the sponsors are here with us today. And I couldn't be prouder of this package. It includes Intro 1378, sponsored by Council member Rivera, which would place a ban on the sale of foie gras that is made by force fed birds who suffer engorgement into diseasing of the liver and what is clearly an inhumane practice.

We will also be voting on Intro 1202, also sponsored by Council member Rivera, which increases penalties for the netting in trafficking of wild birds, including pensions, a practice which is more common than people might be aware, and transport those birds to be killed in shooting games in New Jersey and elsewhere. Clearly a practice we cannot allow to continue. We will also be voting on Intro 1570, of which I am pleased to be the lead sponsor which would ensure that animals are properly vaccinated with the Bordetella vaccine both for entering an animal shelter. You can do this for that, too. Because this prevents the very common occurrence of the canine version of whooping cough which can be fatal. So we want to prevent that from happening in our shelters system. We are also voting on Intro 1425, sponsored by Council member Powers, which and a heat index for horse carriages to make sure that these horses do not suffer when there is extreme heat and humidity. We are also considering Intro 1478, sponsored by Council member Brannan, which requires additional reporting on animal abuse in New York City. We will be considering Intro 870, sponsored by Council member Borelli, which ensures that animal

shelters are doing all they can to increase the
adoption of animals. We will also be considering
several resolutions, including Resolution 397,
sponsored by Council member Rosenthal, to recognize
meatless Mondays in New York City which would be a
win for the environment, for the health of our kids,
and, of course, for the humane treatment of animals.
We are also considering Resolution 798, sponsored by
Council member Brannan, calling on the state of New
York to prevent pet stores from offering dogs, cats,
or rabbits for sale. We are considering
Introduction-- excuse me. Resolution 921, sponsored
by Majority Leader Cumbo, calling on the state of New
York to provide a tax credit for the adoption of
household pets. And, finally, we will be considering
Resolution 977, sponsored by Council member Holden,
calling on the federal government to pass the so-
called Pact Act, making animal abuse the legal at the
federal level. Now, several of these bills, I want
to acknowledge, will have an impact on business, but
as society evolves, we have a right to expect to that
business practices evolve. That has happened again,
and again, and again. And I am incredibly proud that
this city Council blatantly and thankfully begun to

put empathy for the suffering of animals front and

center on our agenda. And, more importantly, that we

are translating that empathy into tangible policy,

smart policy, for the animals in the city and beyond.

And that does mean changing the food we consume and

changing the food production system. That means

caring for the wildlife in this city and, yes, there

is wildlife in this city. In that air. In the

waterways. In the parks. And making sure that we

protect the environment and protect against their

mistreatment. It means protecting domestic animals,

companions, in the shelter system to make sure that

they are healthy and treated fairly and with respect.

And, yes, it also means we need to respect the

treatment of animals, which to work in this city, and

make sure that they do not suffer unduly. In this

package of bills moves us forward on all of those

fronts and I am incredibly proud of my colleagues,

this committee, and of the city Council for taking

these historic measures. I would like to ask the

bill sponsors who are with us at the moment, if they

would like to speak and I will start with you. Okay.

No? Council member Holden, would you like to speak?

Okay. All right. Then we are going to proceed with

the calling of the role and I will our Committee

Clerk Billy Martin to please proceed.

COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,

Committee Clerk. Roll call vote Committee on Health.

All items are coupled. Chair Levine?

CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: I proudly vote aye

on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Cohen?

COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Ampry-Samuel?

COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL:

Permission to explain my vote? For me, this is

quite difficult. Everyone knows, first, I am a

vegetarian. And so, when it comes to animal cruelty,

I even consider how animals are slaughtered for the

consumption of food by just human beings period just

disgusting, but that is my own personal view. That

is not what we are talking about. I also feel that

when you mentioned in your opening remarks, Chair,

that this may have-- you know, some of these bills

may have implications on businesses. And, for me,

that's what makes this difficult because we talk

about animals in one sentence in the protection of

animals and animal cruelty, but then we don't have a

reasonable plan for making sure that people who are

in these fields are protected in some kind of way if

it has to do with them losing their jobs. And so,

for me, it's quite difficult to, in one sense,

protect animals and, in another sense, cause harm for

jazz everyday people who live in New York. It's

quite difficult. But at the same time, I would be a

hypocrite if I was to, in one sense, vote against,

you know, something that would protect animals and,

at the same time, defend, you know, just every day

workers. So, this is quite a challenge. It's quite

difficult, but I am about protecting everyone, all

creatures on this earth and this planet. And so,

with that, I have to vote aye on all, but I really

think that, as a body and is a Council, we should be

in the business of making sure that we don't destroy

folks who are working every day without having some

kind of plan to ensure that, three years from now,

they can still have some level of viable business.

And so, with that-- I just had to say about for the

record, but I do vote aye on all and it is with great

difficulty.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Holden?

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Powers?

COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Eugene?

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of six and the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no extensions, all items have been adopted by the committee.

CHAIRPERSON LEVINE: This concludes our hearing and our vote. Congratulations.

[background comments]

[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   November 1, 2019