

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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February 12, 2010  
Start: 10:15 am  
Recess: 12:32 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
LEWIS A. FIDLER  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Council Member Fernando Cabrera  
Council Member Sara M. Gonzalez  
Council Member Peter A. Koo  
Council Member Melissa Mark-  
Viverito  
Council Member Darlene Mealy  
Council Member Annabel Palma  
Council Member Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Council Member Jumaane D. Williams

## A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Lewis A. Fidler  
Opening Statement  
Chairperson  
Committee on Youth Services

Jennifer Wilcox  
Counsel  
Committee on Youth Services

Mike Benjamin  
Policy Analyst  
Committee on Youth Services

Rocco D'Angelo  
Finance Analyst  
Committee on Youth Services

Suzanne M. Lynn  
Deputy Commissioner  
Community Development  
Department of Youth and Community Development

John V. Cirolia  
Assistant Commissioner  
Agency Contract Finance  
Department of Youth and Community Development

Alan Change  
Director  
Summer Youth Employment Program  
Department of Youth and Community Development

Acknowledgement:  
International Visitor Leadership Program

Rae Linefsky  
Vice Chair  
Workforce Investment Board Youth Council

## A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Ms. Linefsky acknowledges:

Mark J. Leff

Vice President of Human Resources

Maimonides Medical Center

and

Ed Goldberg

Vice President of External Affairs

Macy's

and

Richard Mast

General Manager

Bloomingtondale's

Richard McKeon

Chair

Youth Board

Department of Youth and Community Development

Gigi Lee

Co-Director

Neighborhood Family Services Coalition

Co-Chair

The Campaign for Summer Jobs

Ms. Lee acknowledgements:

Anthony Ng

Co-Chair

Campaign for Summer Jobs

And

Harlem RBI

And

New Settlement Apartments

And

East Side House

And

Mott Haven Prep High School

Cathy Fitzgibbons

Senior Policy Analyst

Youth Services

Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies

## A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Nancy Downing  
Director of Advocacy  
Covenant House New York

Sara Bowman  
Queens Community House

Marlene Estrachi  
Former Participant  
Staff Person  
Beacon Program  
Queens Community House

Lewis Fidler acknowledgement:  
Andrew Miller  
Department of Youth and Community Development

Matt Singer  
Director of Youth Employment Program  
Center for Family Life

Amy Letores  
Beacon Director  
PS 190 Junior High  
Center for Family Life

Daniel Garcia  
Youth Coordinators  
PS 1 Sunset Park  
Center for Family Life

Alex Pereira  
SYEP Participant  
Center for Family Life

Lordis Vasquez  
Site Monitor  
SYEP Participant  
Center for Family Life

## A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Lewis Fidler acknowledgement:  
Dove Os Doctor  
Summer Beacon Provider

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[START 1001.MP3]

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MR. EDDIE RENTO CORIASO: Today's  
Committee is going to be on Youth Services.

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Today's date is February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and it's being  
recorded by Eddie Rento Coriaso.

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[END 1001.MP3]

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[START 1002.MP3]

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CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Good morning  
everybody and I apologize for starting a few  
minutes late. We had to clear up some technical  
matters regarding whether or not we were voting on  
resolutions today and we did want to tell the  
committee that we will be voting on Resolutions 2  
and 3 at some point. So we need to hold a quorum  
together for that.

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My name is Lew Fidler. I am the  
Chairman of the Youth Services Committee of the  
City Council. I'm joined by my colleagues on the  
Committee Annabel Palma, Melissa Mark-Viverito,  
Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Members Cabrera and  
Gonzalez to my right, Counsel Jennifer Wilcox and  
Mike Benjamin our Policy Analyst and Rocco  
D'Angelo who is somewhere around here our Finance  
Analyst.

1  
2 I know it is kind of an unusual  
3 topic for a cold, snowy, wintry day to be talking  
4 about the summer job program but quite frankly it  
5 is a hot issue around here. We were all  
6 apoplectic to see the proposal from the Governor  
7 that zeroed out funding for the summer jobs  
8 program from the State. Last year we stood with  
9 the Governor, with the Mayor with Commissioner  
10 Mullgrav, Speaker Quinn and a number of our  
11 colleagues in government to announce proudly that  
12 we were going to have the largest summer job  
13 program in the history of the City of New York.  
14 We had 52,255 job slots.

15 This year as we sit here this  
16 morning the summer job program is going to set a  
17 new record, a record low, 17,000 job slots. That  
18 is incredible to me. It is a crisis level number.  
19 It is something that I don't believe this Council  
20 can stand for. And we're joined by Council Member  
21 Koo. Frankly I don't know what Governor Paterson  
22 is thinking.

23 I can't even imagine what Governor  
24 Paterson is even thinking having stood next to him  
25 as he proudly proclaimed the largest summer job

1  
2 program in the history of the City with us and  
3 explained all the virtues of the program and I  
4 have a feeling that I need not preach to everyone  
5 here about the virtues of the summer job program.  
6 How he could then turn around in any fiscal  
7 circumstance and balance the budget on the back  
8 and the necks of kids in communities is beyond me.

9 I know and, you know, try not to  
10 bring politics into this chamber but when George  
11 Pataki was the Governor of the State of New York  
12 and threatened to delay summer job money, I stood  
13 on the steps of this building and said that he had  
14 his boot on the neck of children. What am I  
15 supposed to say about Governor Paterson who  
16 proposes not only to delay the money but to  
17 eliminate it? I just, I am clearly, as you can  
18 see, beside myself on that subject.

19 The summer job program has morphed  
20 over the eight years that we have been in  
21 government from a program that was poorly run by  
22 the Department of Employment, so poorly run that  
23 the Bloomberg Administration saw fit to eliminate  
24 the Department of Employment. Since then it's  
25 been transferred over to DYCD where quite frankly



1  
2 it has become much more than it ever was. It is  
3 not just a job. It's an education. It's an  
4 experience.

5 We all understand that the summer  
6 job program has value beyond that to which just of  
7 giving young people a better choice than hanging  
8 out on the street and finding a way to get into  
9 trouble. You know, they get financial literacy  
10 training. The kids in the programs frequently are  
11 working in our not-for-profits and our community-  
12 based organizations throughout the City providing  
13 services to other people and other young people  
14 and other activities that benefit our communities.

15 But--and I think this is the most  
16 salient point and this is the one I think just  
17 astonishes me that the Governor has missed is that  
18 it is the very dictionary definition of an  
19 economic stimulus program. Almost every penny and  
20 we've had testimony here from DYCD in the past  
21 about this but almost every penny that is spent on  
22 this program is spent and respect in our  
23 communities almost immediately for household  
24 expenses, school supplies, groceries, clothing, as  
25 soon as it's received.

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2 This is not money that goes and  
3 sits in an investment account someplace. It is  
4 spent in our neighborhoods almost immediately.  
5 That's why stimulus money was used for it and that  
6 money is also gone. Frankly last year we had  
7 \$67.6 million for the summer job program. This  
8 year the total's about \$25 million. Almost all  
9 the City tax levy money is there.

10 The Mayor has only cut \$800,000.  
11 And I say only \$800,000, it's not a cut that I  
12 want to see stand at all but in the overall scheme  
13 of things just so you know on whose doorstep this  
14 lies, \$19.3 million is missing from the State of  
15 New York. \$19.3 million, think of how many kids  
16 are employed with that. And about \$20 million is  
17 missing from block grant and stimulus money.

18 And of course we still have some  
19 hopes that there'll be some stimulus money. So in  
20 addition to having an oversight hearing this  
21 morning to hear from DYCD about last year's summer  
22 job program and their view of the prospects for  
23 the year coming up, we will also be voting on two  
24 resolutions.

25 Resolution number 2 calls upon the

1  
2 New York State legislature to fully fund the  
3 Summer youth Employment Program. And Resolution 3  
4 calls upon the United States Congress to include  
5 \$500 million for the 2010 Jobs bill for a Summer  
6 Youth Employment Program, and to pass the bill as  
7 soon as possible.

8           If those things happen we can once  
9 again have a robust summer job program here. I  
10 don't think any one of us would believe that as  
11 high a priority as this is, given the economic  
12 realities in the City of New York, that we would  
13 be able to fill both the holes left by the Federal  
14 government and the State government with the City  
15 tax levy money. We have to be realistic about  
16 that. So yes, one of the things that I hope to  
17 hear from the Administration today and from the  
18 advocates is how we are going to work together to  
19 make sure that somebody in Albany is reconnected  
20 with their senses.

21           So having said that I would like  
22 Commissioner Lynn to--and introduce your  
23 colleagues and I turn the floor over to you.

24           MS. SUZANNE M. LYNN: Good morning  
25 Chair Fidler and members of the Youth Services

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2 Committee. I'm Suzanne Lynn; I'm Deputy  
3 Commissioner for Community Development at DYCD.  
4 And on behalf of Jeannie Mullgrav I want to thank  
5 you for the opportunity to discuss the impact that  
6 the proposed State Executive Budget would have on  
7 the Summer Youth Employment Program.

8 DYCD understand the economic  
9 challenges that all levels of government are  
10 facing and the need to exercise fiscal diligence  
11 during these tough times. For the past eight  
12 years the City has met economic challenges in a  
13 responsible way. And as a result we are in a  
14 stronger position to address our current budget  
15 difficulties while still providing essential  
16 services to New York City children and families.

17 As Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker  
18 Quinn have said the State Executive Budget  
19 disproportionately impacts the City. It inflicts  
20 \$1.3 billion in cuts to New York City and imposes  
21 cost shifts and new unfunded mandates in the human  
22 services area. It completely eliminates State  
23 revenue sharing for the City and funding to SYEP  
24 totaling \$35 million statewide and \$19.5 million  
25 citywide. Restoration of these State funds is the

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2 City's number one priority.

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Before I detail the impact that this drastic cut will have on the coming summer's program, for the benefit of new Council Members, I'd like to take a few moments to provide some highlights of the summer 2009 program. We also have copies of a presentation DYCD provided to the Council in the fall that has additional details.

Through a combination of City, State and Federal funds totaling \$67.5 million, we had the largest summer program in over 10 years with 52,255 youth enrolled last summer. This included \$19.5 million State TANF funding which enabled DYCD to enroll 16,911 young people. And the infusion of \$28.2 million in Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act or ARRA stimulus fund that supported 20,413 additional participants. This demonstrates what we already know, that the City cannot do it alone and that a program supported by all three levels of government works best.

A record number of 139,597 young people applied for SYEP last year during a 5 week application period. This was double the number of

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2 applications that had been received in 2004 and  
3 significantly higher than the 103,189 applications  
4 received in 2008. 41% of the SYEP participants  
5 were from Brooklyn, 25% from the Bronx, 18% from  
6 Queens, 12% from Manhattan and 4% from Staten  
7 Island, 56% were female, 44% male.

8 With stimulus funding the age limit  
9 was increased from 21 to 24 years old. 29% were  
10 14 to 15 years old, 38% were 16 to 17, 22% were 18  
11 to 19 and 11% were 20 to 24. The average age of a  
12 participant was 17. 45% of participants were  
13 African American and 26% were Latino. 1,000  
14 vulnerable youth were enrolled through 5 contracts  
15 awarded under the new RFP to provide SYEP to youth  
16 in foster care and those who are runaway, homeless  
17 or court involved.

18 3,812 participants who self-  
19 identified as having a disability were enrolled.  
20 This represents an increase of nearly fourfold  
21 since the program began providing specialized  
22 services to youth with disabilities in 2004.  
23 8,688 different work sites participated in the  
24 2009 program representing a nearly threefold  
25 increase since 2004.

1  
2 30% of worksites were from the  
3 private sector. Since 2004 this number has grown  
4 from 10% as more employers such as CVS,  
5 Walgreen's, Barnes and Noble, MS Communications,  
6 Ikea and many small businesses learned about the  
7 untapped potential and skills of our youth. And  
8 I'd like to acknowledge that we have two  
9 representatives who will speak about the value of  
10 the program to the private sector in the audience  
11 today. Rae Linefski and Rich McKeon. And they  
12 will talk about what value the private sector  
13 finds in this program.

14 34% of the worksites were in  
15 Brooklyn, 26% were in Manhattan, 21% were in  
16 Queens, 12% were in the Bronx, and 4% were in  
17 Staten Island with 3% located outside the City in  
18 summer camps. Youth were paid \$7.25 per hour for  
19 the entire program even though the Federal minimum  
20 wage did not increase until halfway through the  
21 program.

22 In total, SYEP participants earned  
23 \$48.5 million for their hard work. We know that  
24 SYEP had a stimulative effect on local communities  
25 as young people spent their money at local stores

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2 purchasing food, clothing, school supplies and  
3 helping their families to pay bills.

4           Moving onto summer of 2010, the  
5 State cut of \$19.5 million means that  
6 approximately 17,000 fewer young people will work.  
7 Combined with DYCD's success in expending its WIA,  
8 ARRA allocation and reductions in City tax levy  
9 funding, SYEP will look far different this summer.  
10 New York City will be able to serve approximately  
11 18,000 young people. This will be supported  
12 primarily through \$13.1 million in City tax levy  
13 which will support 9,149 youth and \$12.4 million  
14 in Federal funding which will support 9,028 youth.

15           This is unfortunate given the  
16 progress we have made to invest in our future. If  
17 this State budget cut is adopted it will have a  
18 detrimental impact on the lives of young people  
19 and their families. We know teens who work are  
20 more likely to remain in and graduate from high  
21 school. For many youth a summer job is their  
22 first exposure to the real work of work. Research  
23 by Northeastern University economist Andrew Sum  
24 shows that early work experience during the  
25 teenage years is associated with positive labor



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2 market outcomes including easier transition into  
3 the labor market, more job opportunities, and  
4 higher earning potential.

5           Regrettably when facing tough  
6 economic times, job prospects for our young people  
7 decline. The national teen unemployment rate in  
8 October reached 27.6%, the highest in 61 years.  
9 And the teen work participation rate fell to  
10 36.2%. For Black male teens the unemployment rate  
11 is an alarming 50.4%.

12           This will also have a detrimental  
13 impact on nonprofit organizations such as summer  
14 camps and day childcare centers that depend on  
15 SYEP participants to provide services. And it  
16 will also impact adversely on local businesses  
17 since fewer young people will have money to spend  
18 in their communities.

19           In conclusion DYCD appreciates the  
20 Council's strong support and advocacy of summer  
21 jobs funding. It was a proud day for all of us  
22 when Chair Fidler stood with the Mayor, the  
23 Governor and many other elected officials last  
24 spring announcing the much needed infusion of  
25 Federal ARRA funding to support SYEP 2009.

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2 Earlier this week Commissioner  
3 Mullgrav traveled to Albany to urge the State  
4 legislature to demonstrate its commitment to our  
5 young people by restoring funding for summer jobs  
6 and other programs. The Commissioner is headed  
7 there again today.

8 We are hopeful that these efforts  
9 will be successful and that additional resources  
10 will be allocated by the Federal government to  
11 ensure that SYEP in 2010 and beyond remains  
12 robust.

13 Thank you once again for this  
14 opportunity to discuss SYEP. I am joined by John  
15 Cirolia, Assistant Commissioner for Agency  
16 Contract Finance and Alan Chang, Director of SYEP.  
17 And we would be pleased to answer any questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you.  
19 And as soon as the Clerk's Office joins us, we're  
20 going to be voting on the Reso's and I'll  
21 interrupt the questioning if we start.

22 And I do want to acknowledge that  
23 we have in the audience the International Visitor  
24 Leadership Program. I understand they were due to  
25 go down to Washington but they kind of got snowed

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2 out of that so you're in a much better place  
3 folks. And welcome.

4 This is, as has been explained to  
5 you, this is the Youth Services Committee of the  
6 City Council. While this is not a budget hearing  
7 it kind of is. But we oversee the Department of  
8 Youth and Community Development and advocate on  
9 behalf of the needs of young people throughout the  
10 City of New York. And so we are here trying to  
11 make sure that there's not a very long, bad summer  
12 in New York. So thank you for joining us.

13 Before I go to my colleagues for  
14 questions I just have one or two that I--actually  
15 I really have one technical question and I'm going  
16 to go to Council Member Mark-Viverito, I know has  
17 some questions.

18 In the absence of further stimulus  
19 funding will the age for next summer's program  
20 remain 24 or will it return to 21?

21 MS. LYNN: We will actually have  
22 some stimulus funding available for this coming  
23 summer's program. We have not only WIA stimulus  
24 funding but we have community services block grant  
25 funding which we can spend through the end of this

1  
2 coming September. So we will have a little over  
3 \$7 million in CSBG stimulus to apply to the summer  
4 program. And that will enable us to serve up to  
5 24-year olds again.

6 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: And I guess  
7 one other question before I go to Councilwoman  
8 Mark-Viverito so you mentioned in your testimony  
9 that Commissioner Mullgrav went to Albany and is  
10 in Albany again today to advocate on behalf of the  
11 summer job program which I think is a terrific  
12 thing. Do you have any feedback from her as to  
13 what the response was? I know that the State  
14 legislators that I've spoken to and we had hoped  
15 to have both the Assembly and Senate corresponding  
16 chairs here today, unfortunately one is in the  
17 hospital and the other was in Albany. And the  
18 feedback I've gotten is that they are equally  
19 aghast at the Governor's proposal. But do you  
20 have any feedback for us?

21 MS. LYNN: I know that Commissioner  
22 Mullgrav in many of her conversations with  
23 individual lawmakers said that a lot of support  
24 was expressed for the summer jobs program. I know  
25 there are a lot of individual State legislature

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2 members who are very supportive of this program.

3 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Well that's at  
4 least a little bit of good news. Councilwoman?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:  
6 Thank you. Mr. Chair first of all I just want to  
7 say that, you know, it's a pleasure to serve for  
8 another term in this Committee under your  
9 leadership. And I want to welcome all of the new  
10 colleagues that are joining the Youth Committee.  
11 You've obviously been an incredibly strong  
12 advocate on behalf of Youth Services in the City  
13 of New York and it's been a pleasure to work with  
14 you on this Committee.

15 You know, we all know and I think  
16 it's very under--it's well understood among many  
17 in this room and obviously us on the panel and  
18 having been in these hearings many times we all  
19 know and it's been proven that when we talk about  
20 youth programs and youth services, after school  
21 programs, any type of programs to engage our young  
22 people, it's the best way to really help minimize  
23 violence amongst our young people.

24 And we had a very spirited debate  
25 on the floor yesterday with regards to legislation

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2 that we were voting on regarding gang violence and  
3 the prosecution of those crimes. And I know that  
4 we fell on opposite sides on that vote, I voted  
5 against it. But we all understand very much so  
6 that having programs like these are vitally,  
7 vitally important for our communities and vitally  
8 important for our young people.

9           And so it really, when I read that  
10 the Governor was proposing eliminating completely  
11 the State contribution to SYEP I just really could  
12 not understand that considering again the proof  
13 that has been out there, the studies that have  
14 been done that really support the argument about  
15 the need for these programs. It's just really  
16 beyond words.

17           Having said that I guess two quick  
18 questions. I can't imagine I already know the  
19 answer to this but I would imagine that in the  
20 history of SYEP this is probably the worst budget  
21 you've seen. When it comes to the State  
22 contribution or State allocations.

23           MS. LYNN: Well let's see.

24 Certainly last summer was the largest summer  
25 program that we had had since I think 1999, the

1  
2 summer of 1999. The various contributions of the  
3 State, the Federal and the City have fluctuated  
4 over the last 10 years.

5 But it is true that the State has  
6 consistently since 2001 at least, FY 2001,  
7 contributed to the Summer Youth Employment Program  
8 in varying degrees. So yes, if this cut is  
9 allowed to stand it appears that this would be the  
10 first time that the State did not have--fund at  
11 least part of the program since at least the year  
12 2000.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: And  
14 then with regards to the Federal stimulus. And I  
15 know that there's been some discussions in the  
16 Congress right now and I think they just voted on  
17 it yesterday in terms of some sort of job  
18 opportunities bill. Don't know the details as of  
19 yet but I would hope that there is some discussion  
20 or maybe additional allocation of funds for  
21 programs such as this, you know, to engage our  
22 young people.

23 But what was the total amount that  
24 you had indicated that you're expecting to have  
25 from the stimulus money this year? And is that

1  
2 rolled into the total number of 17,000 that you  
3 were laying out? Is that what it is included  
4 there?

5 MS. LYNN: The--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:

7 [Interposing] I knew you mentioned it, uh-huh.

8 MS. LYNN: Yes. The budget that we  
9 have talked about that we have on hand now which  
10 is around \$25 million includes \$7.4 million  
11 approximately in CSBG stimulus funds. That's from  
12 last year's stimulus bill.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Now

14 do you have any sense as to whether there's any  
15 additional money this year from stimulus that  
16 might be?

17 MS. LYNN: We are--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:

19 [Interposing] Added on.

20 MS. LYNN: We are of course very  
21 closely monitoring what's happening in Washington.  
22 You know as well as we do that there's been a lot  
23 of talk about a second jobs bill. And there have  
24 been versions of a bill introduced into both the  
25 House and the Senate.



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2           The one that we've heard the most  
3 about would allocate about \$500 million nationwide  
4 for summer jobs programs. We of course would  
5 welcome that kind of help. It's been up and down  
6 as you probably know. I know that there was an  
7 article in today's Times saying that Senators have  
8 struck some sort of tentative bipartisan--

9           COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:

10 [Interposing] Right.

11           MS. LYNN: --on a jobs bill--

12           COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:

13 [Interposing] But that's not--

14           MS. LYNN: --so we are obviously  
15 very hopeful, you know, we really would welcome  
16 some additional stimulus funding from Washington.

17           COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Well  
18 thank you for being here today. I mean you know  
19 every well DYCD and the Commissioner about our  
20 commitment as a Council to summer programs and  
21 also to just youth services in general. And again  
22 the Chair has been an incredible advocate.

23           So this is definitely a priority  
24 for us in this Council, in this budget. And we  
25 will be strong advocates standing side by side

1  
2 with you to ensure that our communities and our  
3 young people are not shortchanged. So thank you  
4 very much for your advocacy as well.

5 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you  
6 Council Member and know that we've been joined by  
7 the Clerk. And we are going to take a vote on  
8 Resolutions 2 and 3 at this moment. Frankly your  
9 comments kind of preempted the ones that I was  
10 going to make which was that yesterday we passed a  
11 bill and we did have a difference of opinion on as  
12 to whether or not it was necessary or not but the  
13 point was, and I really think more important than  
14 the bill which was an attempt to change the  
15 penalties and structure for punishing those who  
16 engage in gang initiation, is that it is our  
17 obligation as government and as adults to market  
18 and promote good choices for young people.

19 And I think far more important than  
20 the actions we took yesterday will be what we do  
21 in this budget and what the State and Federal  
22 government do in this budget to do just that and  
23 to provide a positive model and role for young  
24 people to play during the summer when they get a  
25 summer job. It was unfortunate that as many as

1  
2 90,000 young people applied and were left  
3 unemployed last summer in our best year. And to  
4 have that number drop off by as much as 2/3's this  
5 summer would be criminal.

6 Resolution 2, again, calls upon the  
7 New York State legislature to fully fund the  
8 Summer Youth Employment Programs. Resolution  
9 number 3, and, you know, I think it's really  
10 important that we pass this on and send this on to  
11 Senators Schumer and Gillibrand today, calls upon  
12 congress to include \$500 million in the 2010 jobs  
13 bill for summer youth employment programs and to  
14 pass the bill as soon as possible. And since  
15 they're working on that I think voting today is  
16 extremely timely. I'm going to couple the vote on  
17 that and recommend obviously a yes vote on both  
18 and ask the Clerk to call the roll.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Fidler.

20 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK: Gonzalez.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Palma.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Aye.

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Mealy.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [No audible

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response]

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Rodriguez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

8

COMMITTEE CLERK: Cabrera.

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COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Williams.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: [No

12

audible response]

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Koo.

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COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Resolutions 2 and

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3 are hereby adopted by a vote of 7 in the

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affirmative, 0 in the negative and 9 abstentions.

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All Council Members please remember to sign the

19

Committee Report.

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CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: And we'll hold

21

the roll open on those until Council Members

22

Williams and Mealy get here. I know they're both

23

on the way, Council Member Williams told me he was

24

at a doctor's appointment. So.

25

Okay. We have Council Member Palma

1

2 followed--I'm sorry? [Off mic] And here he is.

3 You want to vote right away? [Chuckling]

4 Resolutions 2 and 3 on the summer jobs program.

5 All right. Well in all seriousness Resolution 2

6 calls upon the State to fully fund the summer jobs

7 program. Resolution 3 calls upon Congress to put

8 summer job money, \$500 million in the jobs bill.

9 And would you like to vote?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Go ahead.

12 Council Member Williams.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Aye.

14 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Okay. All

15 right. So we're at 8 in the affirmative, none in

16 the negative at this point. And we'll hold it

17 open for Council Member Mealy.

18 [Pause]

19 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: All right. So

20 Council Member Palma followed by Council Members

21 Cabrera and Rodriguez and Williams.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Thank you

23 Mr. Chair. And while I have been now part of the

24 Council for the last six years this is the first

25 time I am serving in this Committee and I look

1  
2 forward to working more closely with DYCD and the  
3 Chair of this Committee whom I've partnered with  
4 in the past and I admire his work and his  
5 commitment that he has given to the youth of New  
6 York City.

7 As a single mom I raised a child  
8 and I know that summer youth program was a very  
9 important component in my household because during  
10 those summer weeks that he worked it alleviated my  
11 budget to concentrate on other things because it,  
12 you know, I didn't have to worry about giving him  
13 spending money and making sure that he was okay,  
14 you know, earning his own dollars.

15 Deputy Commissioner in your  
16 testimony when you reported the worksites in terms  
17 of Boroughs, I know that the Bronx has 12%  
18 worksites and the Bronx are like 12%, I just want  
19 to know why then--I thought that number would be  
20 more. I thought there would be more participants  
21 in the Bronx.

22 [Pause]

23 MS. LYNN: Sorry about that. 25%  
24 of SYEP participants are from the Bronx.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Not the

1

2 participants, the worksites--

3 MS. LYNN: [Interposing] The  
4 worksites.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: --the  
6 actual--

7 MS. LYNN: [Interposing] I  
8 understand.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: --locations.  
10 I'm just trying to understand why there aren't  
11 more employers participating in the program.

12 MS. LYNN: Well first understand  
13 that the providers, the nonprofit organizations  
14 that we contract with are responsible for  
15 identifying worksites for the youth. They are not  
16 bound by their Borough. And a lot of our  
17 nonprofit providers find worksites in other  
18 Boroughs, often Manhattan, you know, that would be  
19 something that you would instinctively think to be  
20 true.

21 So the fact that the proportion of  
22 the worksites is not going to necessarily track  
23 the proportion of the participants in the program.  
24 Just because we have many very entrepreneurial  
25 nonprofits that are very energetic about finding

1

2 jobs in other Boroughs.

2

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4 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Also I think  
5 the--my concern would be with the cuts that we're  
6 facing from the State would those worksites in the  
7 Bronx be reduced because obviously we're going to  
8 have--we may have less dollars so I'm anticipating  
9 we'll have less employers participating in the  
10 Bronx.

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23 MS. LYNN: Well what we can say is  
24 that if we do have a reduced budget this summer we  
25 will have to accordingly proportionately reduce  
the contracts of all of our providers. That's the  
only way we'll, you know, everybody will continue  
to have a contract but we'll just have a smaller  
contract. That means that they will have fewer  
youth to serve and fewer worksites to develop.  
Each summer they develop a new set of worksites.  
I mean many of them may overlap and be the same  
from year to year but not necessarily. So clearly  
if you have fewer youth to serve you're going to  
have fewer worksites to develop.

23

24

25

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: And I think  
Council Member Mark-Viverito wanted me to ask if  
you can--she forgot to ask, so, I'm going to take



1  
2 my time to ask it [chuckling] if you can supply  
3 the Committee with the total number of breakdowns  
4 by zip code in terms of applications who, you  
5 know, the participants who are applying which zip  
6 codes they're coming from.

7 MS. LYNN: We should be able to do  
8 that for you.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: I thank you.  
10 Thank you Mr. Chair.

11 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you and  
12 before we got to Council Members Cabrera,  
13 Rodriguez and Williams in that order, the last  
14 time we had a hearing I had asked whether or not  
15 it was possible for you to track where money was  
16 being spent based upon your use of the, I forget  
17 what you call it, were they debit cards that you  
18 were--that you paid kids with? Whether or not  
19 that was possible? Was that possible and if so do  
20 you have that information?

21 MS. LYNN: Hold on a second. What  
22 we cannot do because of bank privacy laws, we  
23 can't look at the individual accounts and see  
24 where, exactly where the money was spent for each  
25 youth but what we have been able to do is break

1  
2 down the proportion of the kinds of withdrawals  
3 from the debit cards or sort of the types of  
4 transactions that occurred with the debit cards.  
5 And Alan Chang can give you that information if  
6 you'd like to know that.

7 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Please.

8 MR. ALAN CHANG: Yeah,  
9 unfortunately it's not by zip code or area but  
10 it's an aggregate amount. We could tell you that  
11 about \$26.8 million or \$26.7 million was taken out  
12 via bank ATMs. We had another \$13.3 million that  
13 was taken out through purchases at stores using  
14 the debit card. And we also had about \$1.5  
15 million that were transferred over to personal  
16 bank accounts of the young people or their  
17 parents. And pretty much in total, we had as of  
18 the end of December, tracked that, \$42.1 million  
19 had been taken out of the cards already out of the  
20 total payroll that we mentioned of \$48.5 million.

21 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: I think the  
22 interesting number is that of the three categories  
23 that you broke out originally \$40 million of the  
24 \$42 million reflect immediate spending. And  
25 that's the point that someone needs to express to

1  
2 the Governor and to Congress as they pass a jobs  
3 bill. That this is--that is exactly what a  
4 stimulus program is supposed to do. All right.

5 We're paying these kids. They're  
6 going out, spending this money. I dare say if  
7 they live in Brooklyn and worked in Brooklyn they  
8 spent their money in Brooklyn, probably in the  
9 neighborhood they live in. I'm sure if we could  
10 track it that way that's what the numbers would  
11 show.

12 I'm sorry that we're not able to  
13 analyze it further, find out exactly what types of  
14 goods and services were being purchased because I  
15 think that would just absolutely seal the case.  
16 But this number is pretty telling. \$40 million of  
17 the \$42 million taken out immediately for use. So  
18 that's an important point. Council Member  
19 Cabrera.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: First I  
21 want to thank Mr. Chair for being a champion for  
22 youth. It's something that is very dear to my  
23 heart. And also the summer youth program. In my  
24 other life I'm a Pastor and many of my young  
25 people have participated in the summer youth

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program.

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I want to piggyback on what was said earlier and what was asked earlier regarding the Bronx and the worksites. I find that a bit strange. And the fact that we have so many large institutions such as The Botanical Garden, the Bronx Zoo, so many colleges. The Bronx is like a Mecca of hospital institutions. So is it--and also the private sector. Is it the lack; is there a lack of interest or what's at the root of really this 50% drop-off of matching students to suitable sites?

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MS. LYNN: I'm glad you made that, you asked that question because I want to clarify it. I can clarify something that I said earlier. What we measured, what we give you the proportion for were for worksites not jobs. So a worksite that employs 1 person is counted as a worksite and a worksite that employs 100 kids is also counted as 1 worksite.

22

23

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25

So the point that you're making which is that there are many large employers in the Bronx actually may furnish part of the explanation as to why the proportion of worksites

1  
2 in the Bronx looks smaller. It doesn't mean that  
3 the number of youth proportionately served in the  
4 Bronx worksites is that much lower than the  
5 proportion of SYEP participants.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: So let me  
7 ask you is the data available to show how many  
8 students are participating outside of the Bronx.  
9 How many are forced to go out of the Borough due  
10 to the lack of suitable sites in the Bronx?

11 [Pause]

12 MR. CHANG: We're just discussing  
13 if we can get you that information. Unfortunately  
14 we have to get back to you on if we can get you  
15 that information but I can also--I just wanted to  
16 add that none of the students or participants are  
17 really ever forced to leave a Borough. If you  
18 speak to any of the community based providers that  
19 work with us on SYEP, they do a very rigorous job  
20 of trying to match a young person to not only  
21 their interests but also to their schedule, to  
22 where they live, where they're coming from. And  
23 they try to place them accordingly.

24 So, you know, being that a lot of  
25 even our high school students are traveling

1  
2 throughout the City just to go to school, a lot of  
3 them may be comfortable to work outside of their  
4 Borough and they choose to do that. So we can't  
5 really say that they're being forced to, you know,  
6 leave their Borough or whatever. Obviously there  
7 are young people who want to work closer to home  
8 and they, by all means, you know, choose something  
9 in their Borough.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I should  
11 ask--maybe I should have used the word asked to go  
12 to another Borough.

13 Second question and really quick  
14 here; are there students who are allowed to  
15 participate in the program because of special  
16 circumstances to bypass the lottery system?

17 MR. CHANG: Yes. We mentioned in  
18 the testimony that we had 5 contracts to serve  
19 vulnerable youth. And those youth were in foster  
20 care, who are court involved, and who are runaway  
21 homeless. Those contracts don't require a  
22 lottery. They actually do direct service with  
23 those young people. They usually get the  
24 referrals from City agencies such as DJJ which is  
25 now ACS. And, you know, the Department of

1  
2 Corrections and ACS, you know, to get the  
3 referrals for those young people to come in to the  
4 program. So they don't have to go through a  
5 lottery selection.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you  
7 so much.

8 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you.  
9 Council Member Cabrera. Council Member Rodriguez,  
10 followed by Council Member Williams.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: When we  
12 look at the number it is clear that 79% of the  
13 young people who participate in a summer youth  
14 program, Black, Latino, Asian or Indigenous, and  
15 first, when we look at the summer youth program  
16 for most of those 79%, summer youth program is  
17 known as an opportunity for them to explore or for  
18 them to get used to work.

19 For most of them it's another  
20 source to bring income to their house, to their  
21 family. Most of them belong to families whose  
22 income is less than \$30,000 a year. Most of them  
23 in summer youth program represent the opportunity  
24 for them to get the money that they need for their  
25 senior trips, for their graduation expense.

1  
2           And when we look at the number we  
3 are saying that less than 50%, based on the number  
4 that we have here, say that 139,597 young people  
5 applied. And for that number only 52,000 was into  
6 the program. We're saying that less, it was like  
7 43%, worst than that, most likely less than 50% of  
8 young people was able to join the program.

9           And we're talking about that the  
10 expense it was, 70-how much was it? That we  
11 spent? 67. We're talking about \$75 more million  
12 dollars all young people who applied for the  
13 summer youth program will be placed in the summer  
14 youth program. And I think it is a shame.

15           And I think it is a shame and it's  
16 a double standard that I see that we have as a  
17 City, as a nation. I don't want to see anyone  
18 sending money to Haiti or Dominican Republic when  
19 we go through any particular emergency situation  
20 that we've been going through right now and not  
21 supporting our young people.

22           I mean we talk about with \$75  
23 million, we could have everyone, all young people  
24 there participating in the program. And we've  
25 been sending the message in the Inauguration, in



1  
2 the State of the City that we care about young  
3 people. And we say right now that we don't have  
4 the money. And here we have a group of private  
5 sector where we've been placing young people. And  
6 my question is how does those private sector  
7 contribute to the summer youth program? That's  
8 one of the questions that I have.

9 MS. LYNN: I will, in answer to  
10 your last question, we are very proud of the fact  
11 that we have really increased the proportion of  
12 private sector employers from 10% of the worksites  
13 to 30% of the worksites. These are relationships  
14 that we value very much. We think that part of  
15 our job is to really make the case to the world at  
16 large and to the private sector in particular that  
17 investing in these young people is smart from a  
18 business perspective in terms of preparing our  
19 future workforce.

20 We actually know that anecdotally  
21 that many of the youth who are employed by the  
22 private sector, let's say at CVS Pharmacy or  
23 Walgreen's, places like that, are offered part-  
24 time jobs when the summer is over, paid part-time  
25 jobs. So we see that as a real--as a victory in

1  
2 the sense that we're really getting the message  
3 across that this is a talent pool that the  
4 employers should be looking at seriously.

5 And they are finding that there are  
6 many good workers that they want to offer part-  
7 time jobs to after the summer is over. So we will  
8 continue to try to increase the number of private  
9 sector partners that we have.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: And my  
11 second question is I hope that the Administration  
12 and we as the City Council in the future we  
13 explore the possibility of how can we contribute  
14 to the summer youth program. I don't think that  
15 we should be going every year depending on the  
16 State to guarantee a job for our young people. If  
17 the State and we know the State have a crisis,  
18 it's a crisis that was not created from Governor  
19 Paterson, it's an economic crisis that we've been  
20 going, having for years.

21 If the State doesn't have the money  
22 right now, what plan does the Administration have  
23 to be sure that our young people will get a job in  
24 the summer youth program?

25 MS. LYNN: Well as you know the

1  
2 City is facing a tough economic climate as well.  
3 The amount of City tax levy money in there is not  
4 what we might like in an ideal situation but it's  
5 what we--we have to make tough choices. DYCD runs  
6 a wide range of youth services all of which have  
7 had to face the effect of the tough fiscal climate  
8 we're in. It's appropriate for SYEP to share some  
9 of that burden.

10 Having said that we are very  
11 committed to SYEP and we try very hard to make  
12 sure that the monies that we do spend are spent  
13 wisely and that a minimum of it is spent in  
14 administration and most of it goes out, the vast  
15 majority of it goes to the youth, to pay the  
16 youth.

17 There was something else.. I've  
18 lost my track of thought sorry--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA:

20 [Interposing] And then my last comment is that  
21 still with the City going through economic crisis,  
22 the budget in New York City is going to be \$63  
23 billion. And I believe that we should not put our  
24 young people at risk that they would not have a  
25 program even if the State doesn't have the money.

1  
2 I believe that we have to keep the  
3 pressure on and I believe that we did the right  
4 thing today by voting on those resolutions calling  
5 on the State, calling on the Federal to get  
6 funding. But I believe that we have to be  
7 responsible in stating that from those \$63 billion  
8 that we have in the budget for this coming year,  
9 we need to get the money so our young people will  
10 get a job. Because as I say, for a small  
11 percentage, getting a summer job is the  
12 opportunity to explore, to be creative for the 79%  
13 of the Black, Latino, Asian and Indigenous it's an  
14 opportunity to bring an extra \$2,000 to the income  
15 of the family.

16 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: I guess I'll  
17 comment before we go to Council Members Williams  
18 and Koo and say this to you Council Member  
19 Rodriguez. Unfortunately for us the State is  
20 supposed to pass their budget before we do. And  
21 heaven forbid we're in the situation where the  
22 State defaults on its obligation to our children  
23 in the way that the Governor has proposed.

24 In the event that it does, we'll  
25 have to cross that bridge. And I would just

1  
2 repeat the comments I made on the floor of the  
3 Council yesterday while we were discussing the  
4 gang bill which is it would be far more important  
5 what we all do in budget negotiating and finance  
6 and in negotiating a budget with the Mayor of the  
7 City of New York for our young people to make sure  
8 that there are no cuts to SYEP; that there are no  
9 cuts to Beacon programs; that there are no cuts to  
10 OST after school programs; that there are no cuts  
11 to runaway and homeless youth programs.

12 That will speak better than  
13 anything else that we can do here. So I hope that  
14 the State and Federal governments do not abdicate  
15 their responsibility to our children. But if they  
16 do, God forbid, if they do, then we will be faced  
17 with the obligation of standing up for our  
18 children.

19 And so I say to each and every one  
20 of you because you all will be part of that  
21 process to remember the words that we all agreed  
22 with and spoke yesterday and are reiterating here  
23 today when we go back into budget negotiating,  
24 into finance, and we have to make those tough  
25 choices.

1  
2           And we are the people who have to  
3 step up for the children. So I agree with the  
4 sentiment. I don't know how it's going to play  
5 out but just, you know, you're going to find that  
6 even in a good budget year sometimes we have to  
7 make tough choices between ten wonderful things  
8 that we want to do when we can only do three of  
9 them. So it's our job as members of this  
10 Committee to advocate for this one. And you can  
11 be sure that I will. Council Member Williams and  
12 then followed by Council Member Koo.

13           COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you  
14 and sorry for my tardiness. First I just want to  
15 say I'm also looking forward to working with the  
16 Chair who has done wonderful things with the Youth  
17 Committee and also appointed me to the Community  
18 Board about eight, nine years ago. So it's an  
19 honor to be here and begin working with the Chair.

20           Also, you know, yesterday as was  
21 mentioned and I know it was mentioned before, I  
22 think there was a pretty bad bill that was voted  
23 out. And I voted no. That had to do with gangs  
24 and gang initiation that I don't think is going to  
25 prevent even one instance of gang initiation or

1  
2 gang activity. What would prevent that is  
3 initiatives like summer youth and SYEP.

4           When I started working and sorry,  
5 this is more of a statement, this is not going to  
6 end in much of a question, when I first started  
7 working in nonprofits probably 10, 11 years ago,  
8 that was my first introduction into the SYEP  
9 program. And I saw the young people that we were  
10 able to hire and what we were able to do with  
11 their lives. And every nonprofit since that I've  
12 worked with except for one has been involved in  
13 SYEP, 10, 20, sometimes 30 kids, depending on  
14 where I was. We were able to hire.

15           There is a cost to not doing this.  
16 Sometimes it's always not talked about. There is  
17 a cost to communities having 50, 100 kids on the  
18 street in the summertime. There is a cost to this  
19 City that's going to be huge when you have idle  
20 hands looking for something to do. And I think we  
21 have to--we should take into effect what that cost  
22 is going to be if kids are idle, if kids are  
23 getting into trouble, if they can't bring that  
24 extra income into their homes.

25           People are going to do something to

1  
2 get income. People are going to do something to  
3 get away from boredom. And this is going to cost  
4 the City much more in money and much more in non-  
5 monetary things.

6 And I can't understand why when we  
7 cut; these are the things that we cut. I  
8 understand it's \$75 million but in the budget of  
9 \$63 billion, higher for the City, higher for the  
10 Federal government, I know we're going to have to  
11 fight for it but it's an accounting error as it's  
12 sometime explained.

13 If one of us lost \$1.00 or  
14 something like that, it wouldn't be so bad. If we  
15 lost \$500 or \$1,000 nobody would move in this  
16 room. With \$75 million is almost like the \$1.00  
17 depending on the budget that you have. It's an  
18 accounting error, I think we can really fight hard  
19 to make sure that we get this because the cost of  
20 not getting it is completely ignored and I've seen  
21 what it does when people are idle, when they need  
22 money and they can't get it.

23 And I hope we really, really take  
24 that into account because the gang bill that we  
25 passed yesterday, I think it's going to have a



1  
2 backwards effect and really affect our community  
3 and the more people out there idle is a problem.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you  
6 Council Member and I know that I have preached  
7 that same analysis when we talk about children  
8 being left to sleep on our streets without a  
9 shelter bed as being fiscally irresponsible in  
10 addition to being socially irresponsible. I think  
11 the same argument applies here. And I think you  
12 made it well. Council Member Koo.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Mr. Chair, my  
14 name is Peter Koo; I'm the Councilman from Queens,  
15 just to introduce myself. We thank you for being  
16 a strong advocate for youth services. We were all  
17 once youth before. So taking care of the youth is  
18 really important for our society because if you  
19 don't take care of them now, we will pay later.

20 I always strongly believe youth  
21 services are very important among all the services  
22 that the government can provide. So we cannot cut  
23 their services. Being immigrant myself, I came to  
24 America like many years ago, huh, well. I worked  
25 a lot of minimum wage jobs, Dunkin' Donuts,

1  
2 Kentucky Fried Chicken, to support myself through  
3 college. So I understand jobs are very important  
4 for youths. For the ones who have worked as a  
5 youth they treasure money, they have a lot of real  
6 life experience and when they grow up they will be  
7 much more useful, helpful to our community and our  
8 society.

9 So I strongly advocate we have to  
10 take care of the youths while they are young. Not  
11 when they are in trouble. Having said all of  
12 that, so I want to ask the Commissioner a  
13 question. Yeah.

14 You have statistics among African  
15 Americans and Latino, so what is the percentage of  
16 Asian Americans participating in this program?  
17 Because the other 2 add up to be like 70-something  
18 percent.

19 [Pause]

20 MS. LYNN: Yeah. We have  
21 statistics from last summer that show that 7% of  
22 SYEP participants--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [Interposing]  
24 7%?

25 MS. LYNN: --were Asians. 7.

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2

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Oh.

3

4

MS. LYNN: 7% were Asian or Pacific Islander.

5

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COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: So you see Asian Americans they are not--either not aware of the program because they are... this is, percentage-wise they are very low. Huh.

9

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MS. LYNN: We have actually a very diverse base of nonprofit providers in the SYEP programs including several providers who are in largely Asian American communities. So in fact we do, we, such as Flushing [off mic] downtown Flushing, Sunset Park, Chinatown [off mic] yeah.

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COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: All right. I have a second question too. In order for employer to participate, what are the criteria? I mean a lot of small business people might want to participate in this program so how do they join the program?

21

22

23

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25

MR. CHANG: Very easy. In fact probably by the end of this month they can go on our website and we have an application that's online for any kind of worksite that's interested in getting summer youth to work for them.

1  
2 Our requirements are basic. We  
3 just want to make sure that there's proper  
4 supervision and that the young people are going to  
5 be engaged during those seven weeks in productive  
6 work. And they just define what kind of work, you  
7 know, let the young people do obviously has to  
8 abide by State labor laws and also what kind of  
9 work schedule they're going to give them. And  
10 that's it.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: And who's  
12 paying their wages?

13 MR. CHANG: The City does.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Does the  
15 employer pay nothing?

16 MR. CHANG: Nope.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Huh. That's a  
18 good program. I have to encourage--

19 [Laughter]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I have five  
21 businesses myself, I never know about this  
22 program. Huh. [Chuckling]

23 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: I think you  
24 just found another jobsite.

25 [Laughter]

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Yeah. Huh,  
3 thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you.  
5 And before we got to Councilwoman Gonzalez,  
6 Council Member Mealy, may I ask, call your vote on  
7 Resolution 2 and Resolution 3?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye  
9 on both.

10 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you.  
11 That--the Resolutions are now adopted 9 to  
12 nothing, that's the full vote of the Committee and  
13 I think we need to sign Committee Reports.  
14 Councilwoman--oh Council Member Koo, you had  
15 something else or? Oh, Councilwoman Gonzalez.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Is it  
17 afternoon already? No. Okay. How are you?  
18 Thank you Chair. I just want to thank you Chair  
19 for all the work that you do, Councilman Fidler.  
20 I mean it's incredible. I've been on the Council  
21 seven years now and your commitment to everything  
22 but especially to young people is incredible so I  
23 want to thank you for that.

24 I have a question and it has to do  
25 with follow-up in respect to participants. But I

1  
2 just want to make a little statement before. I  
3 came from the youth employment program. And I  
4 started as a very young person and the person that  
5 inspired me to go to college was the Director of  
6 the Youth Employment Program in Sunset Park, way  
7 back when it was with the Department of  
8 Employment, I believe, DOE. And it is so  
9 inspiring to have someone that believes in you.

10 Sometimes you think you know it all  
11 and I always remember thinking oh I don't have to  
12 go to college I'm smart. And I started working  
13 with the Youth Employment Program that summer and  
14 the Director there said you need to go to college.  
15 Let me get you the application, whatever, and I  
16 did. So it is important.

17 And I just want to know about  
18 follow-up because I went on to stay with the youth  
19 employment year-round for ten years. I became  
20 Assistant Director of the Youth Employment Program  
21 in our District. So I know that you guys are  
22 doing an incredible job and I want to thank you.  
23 And I know that it's a difficult time and as the  
24 other Council Members here said, you have the  
25 support of the Council because we believe in our

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children.

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And also as Chair of the Juvenile Justice Committee I know that those children especially where the area of vulnerable, we need to ensure that those young people can get some kind of satisfying experience so that they will be productive.

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But I wanted to ask you about the follow-up here. It says, for example, what kind of follow-up do you have and do you connect with the children that have worked somehow, through some kind of database? Is it in the database?

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Can we look at it and know the outcomes and know how many young people that were part of, for example, the Youth Employment Programs have gone on either to college or have gotten degrees and so on and so forth. I think that's really significant.

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MS. LYNN: In an ideal world we would follow up on every SYEP participant so that we could get you that kind of longitudinal data but we do not have the capability of doing that right now. Those are--that would require funding of a separate research project. There's been a

1  
2 lot of talk in the field actually about doing an  
3 extended long-term study of participants in summer  
4 jobs programs. But somebody would have to come up  
5 with the funding to support that.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: I'm just  
7 wondering, maybe the jobsite itself can somehow--  
8 because I know Lutheran Medical Center, for  
9 example, in my District, they, early on, I mean  
10 I'm talking about 70s and 80s when I was already  
11 working as a staff person, we would refer a lot of  
12 young people there. And a lot of them are working  
13 there as administrators there today. So I think  
14 that it is important.

15 And maybe we could look at it  
16 somehow. I understand everything is money and  
17 time but I think that's also a proven fact that  
18 you know the outcomes of something and that's  
19 something that you could also market every more  
20 so, not just knowing that these young people need  
21 these jobs and that economics is a factor.  
22 Because we, as having this program, we have also  
23 fed the economic wheel.

24 You know, that's exactly what was  
25 said earlier. And I think that everything



1  
2 trickles back. So I think that maybe at the sites  
3 would be something that maybe could be looked at  
4 in the future. I'd love to be able to explore  
5 that somehow if I could be instrumental in my  
6 District.

7 MS. LYNN: Well we do have  
8 anecdotal information. We have a lot of stories  
9 from employers--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ:

11 [Interposing] Like mine? [chuckling]

12 [Laughter]

13 MS. LYNN: I'm not sure  
14 specifically but we do have a number of employers  
15 who are, who as I said, do offer part-times jobs  
16 to the youth after the summer. And so we have  
17 those kinds of stories. To do--and I think there  
18 is some independent value in collecting anecdotes  
19 about individual success stories. But in terms of  
20 a systematic, comprehensive effort at follow-up  
21 that would be something that would have to be  
22 separately funded. It's very expensive to do that  
23 kind of follow up--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ:

25 [Interposing] No I do understand but 'cause even

1  
2 in Juvenile Justice and I'll try not to take too  
3 long Chair, even in Juvenile Justice we realized  
4 that we needed a lot more data. And sometimes you  
5 reach out either to universities or whatever that  
6 help you to work. Like John Jay College helped  
7 the Department of Juvenile Justice as well.

8 But I just want to say that it is  
9 significant because when the Chair said, and you  
10 gave the data in respect to the money that was  
11 being spent that came out of the debit cards, it's  
12 so significant that out of \$40--whatever, out of  
13 \$42 million or whatever, \$40 million went back.  
14 And so our economy is being boosted. I think it  
15 is very significant. So. It's something to think  
16 about, okay? Thank you. Thank you Chair.

17 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Perhaps, you  
18 know, we can't do that with the entire program but  
19 maybe we can take a small cross section slice and  
20 maybe and just use them as a study group and track  
21 them. Maybe 1,000, you know, broken out across  
22 the Boroughs, you know, I, you know, I know it's  
23 ambitious but I think, you know, there's a  
24 validity to that that just, you know, what we all  
25 know in this room and what we know anecdotally and

1  
2 what we believe with our heart and soul is always  
3 better proven than assumed.

4           And it makes the case that much  
5 better and I think we all know that what you're  
6 discussing is absolutely a fact but maybe a small,  
7 you know, a small study, a small sample, maybe  
8 through an institution like John Jay or some--one  
9 of the other CUNY institutions might actually make  
10 some sense.

11           Commissioner before we thank you  
12 and let you go, I just want to do two things.  
13 First just I want to poll the Committee, just by a  
14 show of hands, how many members of this Committee  
15 had a summer youth employment job through  
16 government at some point in their life? I'm just  
17 curious. One, two, three, four. All right. If  
18 Melissa had been raised here we'd have a majority.  
19 And so, all right, I was just curious about that.

20           The other thing is this. And this  
21 is both to you Commissioner and to the members of  
22 the Committee. We have a long fight on our hands  
23 in Albany. The fight in Washington may be over  
24 before this resolution on the Federal jobs matter  
25 can get to the floor of the Council.

1  
2           So what I am urging the  
3 Administration to do and then I want each member  
4 of this Committee to do, I mean, is to call,  
5 today, both the United States Senators to make  
6 sure that they know that we're on this and that we  
7 want them to be on this. And each of us has a  
8 member of Congress that we ought to call just that  
9 they all of a sudden feel the kick in the side  
10 from all the young people who would be getting a  
11 job if they passed, if they put \$500 million in  
12 the Federal jobs bill that they are negotiating  
13 right now. Probably while we are sitting in this  
14 room.

15           So I know that, you know, this is  
16 not your direct responsibility, so I'm asking you,  
17 Commissioner to carry this message back to the  
18 Administration, that today is the day. That they  
19 shouldn't sleep through it. And I promise you  
20 that I know I will and I'm sure that many of our  
21 colleagues on this Committee will do the same,  
22 reach out to our Senators and Congress people  
23 today to make sure that this resolution doesn't  
24 need to be voted on the floor on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. So  
25 please, thank you again, thank you Commissioner

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2 Mullgrav.

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I do want to repeat what I said before which is that the job that DYCD does with the limited resources that they have particularly the area of summer jobs is terrific. And for those who were not here eight years ago to see the mess that was made of this program by your predecessors at the Department of Employment, to see that program--if you looked at that program and look at what you do today, you wouldn't think that the same human beings on this planet were involved in them. And, you know, you do a lot of really good stuff and we hope to be able to give you the resources to continue to do it.

MS. LYNN: Thank you so much. I would like to clarify something I said earlier that--

CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: [Interposing]  
Don't make me take all that back.

[Laughter]

MS. LYNN: No, no. But I have been told that I promised something that I cannot deliver so I want to clarify that. We do not have data on applicants or participants by zip code

1  
2 that we can give to you. What we can do is sort  
3 if by Borough and we'll be happy to furnish you  
4 with that information but we do not have zip code  
5 specific information. So I'm not sure who asked  
6 for that but--

7 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: [Interposing]

8 I think that was Council Member Viverito via  
9 Council Member Palma's voice.

10 MS. LYNN: Oh.

11 [Laughter]

12 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Okay. So--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA:

14 [Interposing] Just, Mr. Chair?

15 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Yes. Council  
16 Member Palma.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: I'm just  
18 curious; wouldn't DYCD have the addresses of each  
19 enrollee?

20 [Pause]

21 MS. LYNN: We have a database that  
22 we, of course, we do collect addresses but our  
23 data--we have some capabilities to sort--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA:

25 [Interposing] Okay.

1  
2 MS. LYNN: --applicants by certain  
3 categories. That is not one of the categories  
4 that we have the ability to do that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Okay thank  
6 you.

7 MS. LYNN: On.

8 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Council Member  
9 Mealy is saying what about Excel. All right.  
10 Well, you know, on that, unfortunate note, all  
11 right, thank you very much again for your  
12 testimony. We have a number of panels that we're  
13 going to call up to testify. Our first panel is  
14 Rae Linefsky from the New York City Youth Council  
15 and Richard McKeon from the New York City Youth  
16 Board. We are going to ask the following since we  
17 have a number of people and I have a feeling we're  
18 going to be thrown out of the room at some point  
19 'cause all of the Wednesday hearings got put over  
20 to Friday.

21 If you have written testimony,  
22 submit it, please don't read it, and hit the  
23 highlights. I promise you, I know all of my  
24 colleagues, we can all read. Please try and be  
25 respectful of the fact that we have a lot of

1  
2 people who want to testify. So try and keep your  
3 remarks to the most salient points and try not to  
4 overly repeat. So thank you.

5 [Pause]

6 MS. RAE LINEFSKY: Good morning  
7 everyone. My name is Rae Linefsky. I'm Vice  
8 Chair of the Workforce Investment Board Youth  
9 Council. And I'm here with my colleague Rich  
10 McKeon and we're going to try to in regards to  
11 keeping it short try to do it in a short way. We  
12 are also going to hand you something which is not  
13 our testimony but rather we released today a press  
14 release.

15 And the press release comes from  
16 both the Youth Board and the Youth Council in  
17 support of summer youth employment. So we each  
18 may say something in addition to what the press  
19 release will have. This press release has been  
20 sent out to a variety of media outlets. We have  
21 encouraged both the Youth Council and the Youth  
22 Board members to connect with their legislators as  
23 quickly as possible to encourage them to be in  
24 support of summer youth employment.

25 I just want to start and join all



1  
2 of you to congratulate the Chair. Chair Fidler  
3 has taken a leadership role which is really quite  
4 breathtaking in terms of the needs of youth. And  
5 I want to congratulate also all of you for voting  
6 in terms of the two resolutions.

7 Rich and I represent about 35  
8 individuals who are volunteers. They are  
9 volunteers who come from the business community  
10 and come from the Greater New York City community.  
11 And in light of some of the things said, what I  
12 would like to do is I'd like to read a quote from  
13 one of the individuals who has been particularly  
14 impressed by summer youth employment.

15 And I'm reading a quote from Mark  
16 J. Leff [phonetic] who's Vice President of Human  
17 Resources from Maimonides Medical Center. And he  
18 says in quote "last summer Maimonides Medical  
19 Center employed 141 summer youth employment  
20 participants, contributing 22,667 hours of service  
21 to our patients, their families and our staff.  
22 Their tireless efforts, enthusiasm, willingness to  
23 learn and eagerness to help made a real difference  
24 in the lives of our patients. If this program is  
25 not continued it will not only hurt the future

1  
2 participants who have been able to get real life  
3 work experience, career counseling and exposure to  
4 the health care industry, it will hurt the  
5 patients we serve".

6 I also want to bring a hello and a  
7 sense of support from two other members of the  
8 business community who feel strongly about the  
9 importance of summer youth employment. And those  
10 two people are Richard Mast who is General Manager  
11 of Macy's and Ed Goldberg, Vice President of--  
12 pardon me, Ed Goldberg Vice President of External  
13 Affairs for Macy's and Richard Mast who's General  
14 Manager of Bloomingdale's.

15 You've all indicated the kinds of  
16 things that both Rich and I will support. We do  
17 know that youth learn to work by working. And one  
18 of the things I'm so pleased, I'm sorry the  
19 Council Member Gonzalez is not here, because I'm  
20 so pleased that she indicated her own involvement  
21 in terms of summer youth employment. And as I  
22 look around in terms of ages, if summer youth  
23 employment was taken for granted but it didn't  
24 happen yesterday. Summer youth employment in some  
25 fashion has been part of New York City and the

1  
2 United States for probably around 40 years. And  
3 it was over a period of time that people forgot  
4 about how important summer youth employment is.

5 And I would ask all of you,  
6 although you've in somewhat said this already, is  
7 to ask your relatives, ask the people in your  
8 neighborhoods, ask the folks who work here, and  
9 the same should be asked of the legislators, how  
10 many of you got your first job in summer youth  
11 employment. How many of your parents? How many  
12 of your neighbors? And how many of your  
13 relatives? It's something that we do take for  
14 granted for a period of time.

15 We know, as you've all indicated,  
16 that summer youth employment is important for many  
17 reasons. And we know that there are real studies.  
18 It is not just anecdotally that people recognize  
19 that when young people work they're not only off  
20 the street and I don't want to underestimate that  
21 but what they learn is they build their confidence  
22 and they build their skills and they learn how to  
23 work. They do better in school and they then  
24 become as a better chance to become part of the  
25 adult labor workforce.

1  
2           You've been told before and in the  
3 past and I think the number is up at this  
4 particular point, we had estimated, we in the  
5 field in a sense estimated several years ago that  
6 we believe that there were over between somewhere  
7 between 170,000 and 200,000 out of school and out  
8 of work youth in New York City. And that's  
9 separate from the issue of summer youth  
10 employment.

11           If we look at some of the issues is  
12 to say that in 1999 as an example the Federal  
13 government gave New York City \$43.9 million for  
14 summer youth employment. In 2000 it was \$3  
15 million. We went from \$49 million to \$3 million  
16 and I don't know the numbers off the top of my  
17 head but if we go back decades the numbers were  
18 much larger than that. And it is then not a  
19 surprise that New York City has the distinction,  
20 we have wonderful things we can talk about our  
21 City, but New York City has the distinction of  
22 having the lowest youth labor participation rate  
23 in the country. In the country.

24           And that's all youth. That's not  
25 youth who were just poor, all youth. Youth in New

1  
2 York City have not been known to be able to have  
3 opportunities in the labor market and it is worse  
4 now.

5 I'm so glad that the issue of  
6 economic stimulus came up. I want to thank you  
7 for that. People forget this. People think about  
8 summer youth employment for good reasons: off the  
9 street; it's being on the right side of the  
10 angels; they're going to learn how to work; and  
11 all the rest of that. But I'd like to talk about  
12 and really emphasize some of the things that some  
13 of you have said.

14 Thousands of youth in all of our  
15 neighborhoods will not only be earning money this  
16 summer but that money goes back into, as you've  
17 said, into the communities, primarily to our small  
18 businesses. There will be hundreds, in hundreds  
19 of organizations, who will not be hired as  
20 counselors. It's a domino effect. There are  
21 counselors who are working with the youth who will  
22 not be hired.

23 And many of those counselors are  
24 only a step or two or three steps above where our  
25 participants are. And where do we think their

1  
2 money is going and the chance is it's not going  
3 into a 401(k). Those are going back into the  
4 community. And they're going back into our  
5 businesses.

6           You've got another issue too. The  
7 issue is that those summer youth employment who  
8 are working in our not-for-profits, those summer  
9 youth folks who are not there this summer, we have  
10 to ask ourselves what's going to happen to our  
11 daycare centers and what's going to happen to our  
12 summer camps. And then what happens to those  
13 children whose parents would normally send them  
14 there if those not-for-profits don't have enough  
15 staff because they don't have enough money to be  
16 able to hire people without summer youth  
17 employment.

18           I also want to congratulate DYCD,  
19 been around for a long time in this, I've watched  
20 them streamline all of their processes including  
21 the debit cards and including the online  
22 applications. And just as a final statement is  
23 that summer youth employment as you all know is a  
24 win/win. For every \$1.00 that we put out in  
25 summer youth employment, from tax dollars, tax

1  
2 dollars, whether it's City tax, whether it's State  
3 tax, whether it's Federal tax, comes back more  
4 than 2 and 3-fold for what that dollar winds up  
5 doing. So congratulations again for your support.  
6 Please do let us know in terms of the Workforce  
7 Investment Youth Council what else we can do to be  
8 able to support our youth.

9 MR. RICHARD McKEON: Go ahead.

10 First I want to thank you all for your time today  
11 and my name is Rich McKeon. I chair the Youth  
12 Board of the Department of Youth and Community  
13 Development. We're a group of 27, 28 members of  
14 the community, business leaders, academics,  
15 nonprofit organization leaders and youth  
16 representatives who advise DYCD on their programs.  
17 And I think this is a pretty unique situation for  
18 all of us here because we are not ones that  
19 normally get too involved in advocacy.

20 But the Governor's budget is so  
21 dramatic, it is so concerning to us, that we as a  
22 Youth Board and Youth Council felt it was really  
23 important to speak out at this point. As Rae  
24 mentioned, we have developed a press release which  
25 I'll hand out to you after our testimony. And we

1  
2 really think it's important to note the changes  
3 that are happening on the State level for this  
4 program that could dramatically affect our youth  
5 here in New York City.

6           During a 5-week period last year,  
7 the summer youth employment program received  
8 139,597 applications from New York City youth but  
9 only have 52,225 spots as you've all noted.  
10 That's about 38% of the total number of  
11 applicants. To put that in City Council terms,  
12 divided alphabetically, 38% would allow space for  
13 Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo through  
14 Council Member Daniel Halloran and unfortunately  
15 Council Members Sara M. Gonzalez through Thomas  
16 White, Jr. would have no spot in the summer youth  
17 employment program. Each of those disappointed  
18 Council Members would represent 2,730 youth who  
19 applied but did not receive a job last summer,  
20 2,730.

21           However last year was by all  
22 accounts a banner year for Summer Youth Employment  
23 Program. The program had substantial funding from  
24 the City, the State and Federal sources. And  
25 that's what makes government--Governor Paterson's



1  
2 proposed cut in this program such a big concern.  
3 As you all noted cutting the budget for New York  
4 City from \$19.5 million to 0 represents about  
5 17,000 jobs for our youth here in the City and we  
6 think that's something that we all need to do a  
7 better job of addressing.

8 As Rae has mentioned, many of the  
9 youth come from low income families. This money  
10 is often used to help their families pay rent, buy  
11 food, buy clothing, all sorts of needs that they  
12 have. And Rae has, I think, aptly mentioned the  
13 multiplier effect of this program.

14 I think one of the best parts from  
15 my perspective of this program is that you don't  
16 have to wonder whether it's effective or not.  
17 More money equals more jobs. It's as simple as  
18 that. You don't have to wonder whether this  
19 program will result in more employment, it  
20 automatically does, and that's the beauty of it.

21 Finally I would just like to say I  
22 was in Albany this week on behalf of the Youth  
23 Board and the Youth Council with Commissioner  
24 Mullgrav, a fellow board member, and youth  
25 representatives. We are keeping the pressure on

1  
2 State legislators. With the release of this press  
3 release that I mentioned earlier, through media  
4 throughout the State, and we hope that that will  
5 be picked up widely.

6 The commitment on behalf of the  
7 Youth Board and Youth Council is very strong. We  
8 appreciate your steadfast commitment as the City  
9 Council to support these programs for youth. And  
10 we really appreciate your leadership Chair Fidler.

11 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you  
12 both. I just, before I call on Council Member  
13 Mark-Viverito, I appreciate the press release and  
14 I appreciate the work. I mean I guess the sad  
15 news is that we sent out a media advisory for this  
16 hearing and I don't see a TV camera here. I don't  
17 see reporters here. And it is kind of sad because  
18 I think this topic will impact on the lives of  
19 more New Yorkers than, you know, Brittany Spears  
20 going out without her underwear on which, you  
21 know, will get two pages of full coverage in the  
22 tabloids.

23 And it really is unfortunate. So  
24 that just makes it all the more incumbent upon all  
25 of us and all the advocates in the room to raise

1  
2 the volume here. I think the audience in the  
3 State legislature is going to be receptive but,  
4 you know, I, as bad as the situation is here  
5 economically, the situation they find themselves  
6 in Albany is triple-worse. So we need to be the  
7 squeakiest wheel and we need to be louder. So  
8 thank you. Council Member?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:

10 Thank you Mr. Chair and when you talk about the  
11 local press, I think the local press is too intent  
12 on chasing ghosts and not really focusing on  
13 issues that are of importance to our communities.  
14 I mean that's unfortunate.

15 But, you know, I want to really  
16 thank you for at least delineating like the  
17 snowball effect in terms of a young person who is  
18 not engaged. And, you know, I was talking a  
19 little bit earlier about the discussion we were  
20 having yesterday but when we think about the costs  
21 of a young person having to be involved with the  
22 criminal justice system or of a family that does  
23 not have a roof over their head and, you know, in  
24 terms of the costs--additional costs if we don't  
25 make that commitment to provide shelter, in an

1  
2 adequate way, what the costs are to society is  
3 much greater.

4           So there is a cost effectiveness to  
5 providing these types of programs, providing the  
6 summer jobs, providing the after school programs.  
7 Again, programs that engage. And I think that  
8 that's kind of the way. I mean to me it just  
9 makes logical sense, you know, but I really don't  
10 understand why our public policy is not catching  
11 up with that. Not only at the City level, at the  
12 State level, at the Federal level, about the real  
13 value of doing things responsibly and logically  
14 when you talk about, again, the long term cost  
15 effectiveness of these types of programs.

16           So that's an issue that I think,  
17 you know, with our continued beating it over the  
18 head and maybe having to lay it out that way  
19 'cause money ends up being the way everything  
20 rotates, gravitates these days, so really putting  
21 it from that perspective of the cost effectiveness  
22 of having these jobs versus what the outcome would  
23 be or the costs to us as a City if we did not I  
24 think is one critical aspect. But with regards to  
25 you as advocates and the advocacy community and

1

2 understanding, we've all said this, we understand  
3 the reality that it is a tough budget and these  
4 are tough choices.

5

6 So we know that that has to happen.  
7 But considering that this is really dire,  
8 particularly with SYEP that we haven't seen this  
9 level of cut, you know, in a really long time if  
10 not ever, so how have the advocates been--other  
11 than individually you go to Albany and advocating,  
12 I would assume that there has to be a larger  
13 conversation within the advocacy community about  
14 how you're really going to tackle this.

15

16 How are you going to confront it?  
17 How are you going to mobilize? You know, what is  
18 your mode of attack so to speak? So if you could  
19 just maybe talk a little bit about what is the  
20 larger conversation happening within the advocacy  
21 community.

22

23 MR. McKEON: Yeah I can say we've  
24 been in close contact with a lot of the nonprofit  
25 organizations that have been advocating on behalf  
of summer jobs for years: The Campaign for  
Tomorrow's Workforce; The Campaign for Summer Jobs  
have been very active. About a week and a half

1  
2 ago there were several hundred youth who went up  
3 on behalf of these organizations advocating for  
4 summer jobs. Again there was another big youth  
5 statewide initiative earlier this week where we  
6 had youth from all over the State coming and  
7 talking to legislators about the importance of the  
8 program.

9           So I think we are all on the same  
10 page with this. I think we did hear positive  
11 things from legislators despite the tough economic  
12 environment. But we're hopeful.

13           CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: And just so  
14 you know our next panel includes The Campaign for  
15 Summer Jobs so. Yeah.

16           MS. LINEFSKY: I also just wanted  
17 to say that both the role that Rich and I have in  
18 terms of the Youth Council and the Youth Board, if  
19 you asked our members do you consider yourself to  
20 be an advocate, and an advocate in the classic  
21 sense. I'm not sure that everyone would say yes.  
22 They'd say we're passionate about youth.

23           We're passionate about these  
24 issues. But this particular thing raised the  
25 passion of all the individuals whom we are

1  
2 representing. And I think probably for the first  
3 time in the way that they have operated unless  
4 they themselves come from an advocacy organization  
5 in itself. I don't think that the gentleman from,  
6 for example, Maimonides would necessarily consider  
7 himself to be an advocate in the traditional terms  
8 but rather was just shocked at the thought that  
9 this would not happen again. This is about our  
10 youth.

11 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Well he needs  
12 to be. I think that's the point is he needs to  
13 be. This is a fight on a different level.  
14 Council Member Rodriguez?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.  
16 Thank you Mr. Chair. I wonder if you have  
17 information on what percentage of our young people  
18 who are placed in Macy's or the private sector  
19 stay working in those private sector after they  
20 finish doing their summer youth program?

21 MS. LINEFSKY: I don't have that  
22 information but I know that it is something  
23 following on what Commissioner Lynn was talking  
24 about, that they're--anecdotally we know  
25 information. We know information from some of the

1  
2 private employers, particularly if they  
3 participated in a separate program called Ladders  
4 for Leaders. We know that information. But we  
5 don't know it in whole but it's something that  
6 we'll ask back to DYCD to see how much they can  
7 find out.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Because  
9 my advice as a member of the Youth Board that you  
10 are and you should be looking on to explore the  
11 possibility that getting more commitment from the  
12 private sector to contribute to a--I don't know if  
13 the number is 5%, can they be committed to retain  
14 let's say double the number of young people after  
15 they finish the summer youth program.

16 Because I am thinking on we are  
17 just providing the labor forces. So those  
18 institutions they are not paying. And they're  
19 doing the job as a regular employee that they  
20 have. An employee that they have in those  
21 companies. And I am for getting the private  
22 sector involved or contributing but I think that  
23 we should get the number, the percentage, the  
24 breakdown, what is the percentage of the young  
25 people that stay in Macy's and Barnes and Noble



1  
2 and those institutions so that we can also  
3 approach them.

4 And I believe also that we should  
5 definitely have like a 5-year plan on the summer  
6 youth program. As we have a 5-year plan for  
7 capital funding for the DOE, 2010, 2015, we should  
8 know--I mean I was not born in this country but  
9 since I've been here, I've been having the  
10 experience of getting to work with young people,  
11 advocating every year, every year, every year.

12 So we do not secure a job for the  
13 young people. And I think that we should have a  
14 plan. Where we can say let's work with the  
15 private sector. Let's work with the City, the  
16 Federal and the State so that we can secure the  
17 jobs, that we can say any young person who is  
18 interested in getting a job, have that position  
19 secured for us.

20 MR. McKEON: Yeah I just wanted to  
21 comment on that. I think that's really important.  
22 Several years, about seven years ago, we reached  
23 out to the business community to start a new  
24 program called Ladders for Leaders. It was called  
25 something different at the time. But the point of

1  
2 that program was to have the private sector pay  
3 completely for those jobs in the private sector.  
4 And that's a program that is up and running for  
5 the last several years.

6 One of the things that we found  
7 when we met with a group of corporations here in  
8 the City was that there wasn't a lot of buy-in at  
9 that time, partly because of the history of the  
10 Summer Youth Employment Program, to securing jobs  
11 for youth. They didn't think the kid at that  
12 time, frankly, could offer a lot of value to their  
13 companies and thought of it as more of a burden.

14 I think we've come a long way due  
15 to the Commissioner's and DYCD's hard work on this  
16 issue where the companies are now understanding  
17 that it is a value to them. And it's definitely a  
18 value to our youth. And I know that I think the  
19 employers when they first accept the Summer Youth  
20 Employment Program youth they initially think  
21 they're doing a favor to the program. And they  
22 learn pretty quickly that that's the reverse. So  
23 I appreciate your comments and definitely will let  
24 the Commissioner know of them.

25 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Council Member

1

2

Mealy.

3

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Good

4

morning. I just would like to say I'm a product

5

of a summer youth job. And after that I went back

6

to school and then did co-op. Work one week and

7

went to school one week. So it was a great

8

opportunity for me to know about how to make my

9

own money.

10

But what I was thinking of, we have

11

a lot of programs like Explorers, Auxiliary and

12

the Police Department have anyone ever though

13

about at least like we do with the Fire

14

Department. They give them five points on their

15

test exam that they could be ahead of the game,

16

have anyone thought about getting those young

17

people 'cause I know I have a lot of them in my

18

District. I have five police precincts.

19

And we have some nice young men,

20

who want to get off the street, and women, young

21

ladies, want to get off the streets and they go to

22

the Auxiliary. They get their uniform. They go

23

to churches; they do everything in the community

24

that is needed. And to keep themselves occupied.

25

Have anyone thought about making a separate

1

2

program for them to get into summer jobs 'cause they're doing this all volunteer. Have anyone ever though of that Chair?

4

5

MS. LINEFSKY: I can't answer for DYCD but definitely we will bring that information back and have someone get back in touch with you.

7

8

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yes. And Chair I would love to see if we could do something about that 'cause that's an easy way to keep young people off the streets, to get summer job, and then they can move forward with their life. The same way we obliging the Fire Department with five or--now we're doing a little bit more to give them an opportunity, minorities, let's see if our youth can get a step up, especially if they're doing the right thing. And that's how we can really keep some of our youth from incarceration also. And thank you.

9

10

11

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14

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20

CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you Council Member and thank you both for your testimony and for your advocacy and your increased advocacy.

21

22

23

24

MR. McKEON: Thank you.

25

CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Anticipated.

1  
2 We have three more panels. I'm going to--the next  
3 panel is Gigi Lee from The Campaign for Summer  
4 Jobs and Cathy Fitzgibbons from the Federation of  
5 Protestant Welfare Agencies.

6 They're going to be followed, the  
7 next panel thereafter, by Nancy Downing from  
8 Covenant House and Sara Boom and Marlene Estrachi  
9 from Queens Community House, then the Center for  
10 Family Life panel after that. So and I certainly  
11 want to begin by thanking Gigi and The Campaign  
12 for Summer Jobs is always a great help to this  
13 Committee, particularly on this hearing topic.  
14 And I know we're going to be doing a lot of work  
15 together in the next couple of months.

16 [Pause]

17 MS. GIGI LEE: Hello? Okay. Good  
18 morning. My name is Gigi Lee and I'm the Co-  
19 Director of Neighborhood Family Services Coalition  
20 and also Co-Chair of The Campaign for Summer Jobs.  
21 First off I want to welcome the new members of the  
22 Youth Services Committee. As Chair Fidler said,  
23 we'll be working very closely over the next  
24 several months to work on restoring money for  
25 SYEP.

1  
2 Just a little bit of background,  
3 following a change in Federal legislation in  
4 December of 1999 when dedicated Federal funding  
5 for summer jobs was eliminated, that's when  
6 Neighborhood Family Services Coalition and United  
7 Neighborhood Houses together founded The Campaign  
8 for Summer Jobs. And since then we've been  
9 working to really secure as much money as possible  
10 on the State and City level and now also on the  
11 Federal level to make sure that youth have as many  
12 summer jobs as possible.

13 My fellow Co-Chair Anthony Ng  
14 couldn't be here today but he sends his greetings.  
15 He became a first-time dad last week so he's  
16 taking some time off to be at home.

17 So you have my testimony so I'm  
18 just going to--

19 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: [Interposing]  
20 Well tell him that it's almost a good enough  
21 excuse.

22 MS. LEE: Okay, [chuckling]. So  
23 you guys have my testimony so I'm just going to  
24 reach some of the highlights because there are  
25 some youth and some SYEP contractors here who

1  
2 would really like the opportunity to speak to you.  
3 You know, you guys.

4           So, you know, the numbers that DYCD  
5 gave and the numbers that the Mayor, you know, has  
6 in the blue book differ a little bit depending on  
7 which funding sources you sort of lump together.  
8 But the, you know, the bottom line is that if  
9 you're looking at SYEP this summer only having  
10 about around 15,000 slots compared to 52,000,  
11 you're looking at a reduction of about 37,000  
12 slots.

13           And if you do the math that's about  
14 a 70% reduction in a program which is, I mean  
15 it's--you're essentially decimating, you know,  
16 SYEP and the ten years that we've really worked on  
17 getting it up to this point. So I think when you  
18 look at 70% that really drives home the severity  
19 of the situation.

20           So we look at, you know, the  
21 struggle to restore this funding we also want to  
22 look at, in this economy, that the unemployment  
23 rate of 16 to 19-year olds in the past year fell  
24 by 8% which right now nationwide it's up to about  
25 29.2%. so it's the largest decline of any age

1  
2 group. And because of that, you know, The  
3 Campaign for Summer Jobs is in full support of  
4 both of the resolutions that you guys just passed  
5 calling for the New York State legislature and  
6 also the United States Congress to really do  
7 something to fill the gap.

8           As to the question before as to  
9 what advocates are currently doing right now, last  
10 Monday, The Campaign for Summer Jobs had its 11<sup>th</sup>  
11 Annual Youth Action Day lobbying trip to Albany.  
12 In the morning we had a rally that was attended by  
13 Speaker Silver, Senate Majority Leader Espada and  
14 also Assembly Member Susan John who is the Chair  
15 of the Assembly Committee on Labor, to really let  
16 us know that they're doing all that they can to  
17 try to get some of that \$35 million back into the  
18 State budget.

19           We also had a press conference this  
20 past Wednesday in Albany to rally the troops  
21 especially around in the Upstate area, to bring  
22 more media attention to this issue. In the  
23 afternoon of our lobby day we had 300 youth from  
24 New York City attend about 152 legislative  
25 meetings in small groups.



1  
2           So we met with a large majority,  
3 152 out of 209 State legislators right now to  
4 really let them know that the youth are also  
5 really involved in this fight. And some of the  
6 groups that came with us that are constituents of  
7 some of your communities include Harlem RBI which  
8 is in Council Member Viverito's office and then,  
9 you know, I notice there are also a lot of Bronx  
10 Council Members on this Committee so we brought  
11 two Bronx groups up with us, New Settlement  
12 Apartments and also East Side House Mott Haven  
13 Prep High School.

14           So, you know, we urge that the City  
15 do all that it can to support 52,000 jobs again  
16 through SYEP and like in the years past, The  
17 Campaign for Summer Jobs is, you know, we stand  
18 ready to work with the Mayor, DYCD and City  
19 Council to really secure as much funds as we can  
20 for SYEP.

21           We've also reached out on the  
22 Federal level to the Congressional delegation New  
23 York State, to try to advocate for a dedicated  
24 Federal funding source in the process of  
25 reauthorization of WIA as well as to support the

1  
2 \$500 million in the summer jobs bill. So I had a  
3 paragraph here about how SYEP, what, you know, the  
4 positive effects of SYEP but the youth and the  
5 contractors are really going to speak to that.

6 And then just to mention really  
7 quickly on the contractor side that, you know,  
8 applications are due out in early April. So a lot  
9 of contractors now are already working on securing  
10 those worksites where the youth will actually be  
11 working over the summer. And, you know, if you  
12 think about the 50-some odd contractors that are  
13 out there and really not knowing, you know, the  
14 level that they're going to be funded, how many  
15 job slots are going to be available, it's a really  
16 stressful, you know, time for them. And I know a  
17 lot of them are still starting that process now  
18 and really just trying to remain optimistic about  
19 how many youth they'll be able to serve despite  
20 really not knowing at all.

21 So I thank you for the opportunity  
22 to testify and I will look forward to working with  
23 all of you in the upcoming months.

24 MS. CATHY FITZGIBBONS: Good  
25 morning. My name is Cathy Fitzgibbons and I'm the

1  
2 Senior Policy Analyst for Youth Services from the  
3 Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies. I'd  
4 like to thank the Youth Services Committee and  
5 Council Member Fidler for holding this hearing and  
6 for providing us with the opportunity to testify  
7 on the importance of funding restorations for  
8 SYEP.

9           FPWA is a membership organization  
10 with almost 300 community based social services  
11 agencies and church based human service programs  
12 in its network. We have in our membership 70  
13 agencies that provide services to youth throughout  
14 the City.

15           In my testimony I cite several  
16 studies demonstrating the value of SYEP and the  
17 importance of getting, you know, youth involved in  
18 the workforce as early on as possible. In some of  
19 these studies employers have been surveyed and  
20 have stated that, you know, young job entrants are  
21 ill-prepared for the workforce.

22           And they really need youth that  
23 have these real world experiences like involvement  
24 in SYEP to prepare them for the world of work.  
25 They need to get these real workplace scenarios,

1  
2 experiences. And this sort of program does  
3 prepare them for the future of the workforce.

4           Additionally the Center for Labor  
5 Market Studies found that the benefits of early  
6 employment are considerable, particularly for  
7 young men who don't plan to attend college  
8 immediately. And the benefits include a smoother  
9 transition to the labor market and higher weekly  
10 and yearly earnings for up to 15 years after  
11 graduating from high school. Some evidence that I  
12 read about even suggests that young people who  
13 work are less likely to drop out of high school  
14 than those that do not have jobs.

15           We're pleased that the Council has  
16 developed the resolutions and earned full support  
17 of both of those resolutions. In terms of our  
18 future advocacy efforts as a part of the Youth  
19 Alliance we are going to be, you know, having a  
20 lobby day on March 16<sup>th</sup> and an issue briefing at  
21 lunchtime for State legislators and SYEP, you  
22 know, the restoration for that is at the top of  
23 our agenda for that issue briefing.

24           We also have our lobby day on March  
25 1<sup>st</sup> for FPWA and this issue will be at the top of

1  
2 our agenda as well. So thank you for this  
3 opportunity to testify.

4 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Well thank you  
5 both and I'm glad to hear that it's at the top of  
6 your agenda for Albany. This is really our very  
7 different times and I am glad Gigi as well to hear  
8 of all the efforts that have already been  
9 undertaken. You know, sometimes it takes a  
10 government body like the City Council a little  
11 time to gear up.

12 I'm glad to see that you were able  
13 to get the advocacy going as quickly as possible.  
14 And I would again stress to both of you that it  
15 appears that the first pressure point is going to  
16 be Washington right now. So, you know, I think we  
17 need to quickly pivot and do something, you know,  
18 to reach out to our Congressional representatives  
19 and Senators. Anybody? Thank you both very, very  
20 much.

21 MS. FITZGIBBONS: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: And our next  
23 panel, Nancy Downing from Covenant House, Sara  
24 Bowman and Marlene Esterachi from Queens Community  
25 House. While they're coming up I want to

1  
2 particularly for the new members of the Committee,  
3 Nancy serves as a member of this Committee's  
4 unofficial runway and homeless youth task force  
5 and is always a terrific advocate on their behalf  
6 and very helpful to this Committee so. I only see  
7 two of you so I guess... [off mic] Marlene will be  
8 here shortly.

9 And now for video tape, for  
10 everyone who's watching on Channel 74 we know that  
11 Marlene is in the bathroom. So thank you.

12 [Laughter]

13 MS. NANCY DOWNING: Good morning.

14 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: It makes for  
15 good TV doesn't it, huh?

16 [Laughter]

17 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Wake up  
18 everybody.

19 MS. DOWNING: Good morning. My  
20 name is Nancy Downing. I'm the Director of  
21 Advocacy for Covenant House New York. Covenant  
22 House is the nation's largest privately funded  
23 nonprofit adolescent care agency serving homeless,  
24 runaway and at risk youth.

25 What I'd like to tell you today is

1  
2 that we've seen a nearly 40% increase in the  
3 number of youth trying to access our crisis  
4 shelter services. What we know about these youth  
5 is that many of them and most of them have dropped  
6 out of school and most have little or no job  
7 experience. What we also know is that the biggest  
8 barrier to their becoming self-sufficient,  
9 productive adults is a lack of employment and a  
10 lack of any job experience.

11 The Summer Youth Employment Program  
12 provides not only job experience but it provides  
13 many of these youth with an opportunity to develop  
14 their social skills, their problem solving skills,  
15 money management skills, and it develops their  
16 self-confidence, all of which they need to become  
17 self-sufficient, productive adults.

18 And so we fully support this  
19 Council's Resolution number 2 and number 3. And  
20 we will act with you with The Campaign for  
21 Tomorrow's Workforce and other advocacy groups and  
22 DYCD to try and get our government in the State to  
23 understand the real importance of programs like  
24 the Summer Youth Employment Program and the Out of  
25 School Youth Work Employment Program. These are

1  
2 two programs that we cannot lose or we're going to  
3 see much more than a 40% increase of homeless  
4 youth than what we've seen in the past year.

5 So I really urge all of us to work  
6 together to try and get money put back into the  
7 budget and to work on a Federal level to get money  
8 put into that budget as well. And we are  
9 extremely grateful and I want to express this, for  
10 the wisdom, leadership and support shown by  
11 Council Member Fidler and the Youth Services  
12 Committee. And we support you in your many  
13 efforts with our youth and we thank you for that.

14 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you.

15 And before we go to the Queens Community House, I  
16 do want to ask you one specific question about  
17 last year's program. I think it was the first  
18 time there was a dedicated stream for at risk  
19 youth, homeless youth. How did that work? Were  
20 you part of that program? And if so, how did it  
21 work and--?

22 MS. DOWNING: [Interposing] I know  
23 that a number of the youth that came to our  
24 shelter were a part of that program and it was a  
25 big help for them not only in terms of giving them



1  
2 self-confidence, it helped them to get into  
3 transitional living programs that they might not  
4 otherwise have been able to access and help them  
5 really to get into other jobs, longer-term jobs.

6 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Okay. Thank  
7 you.

8 MS. SARA BOWMAN: Good morning  
9 Chairman Fidler and members of the New York City  
10 Council. Thank you for taking the time to listen  
11 to our concerns about the importance of the Summer  
12 Youth Employment Program. My name is Sara Bowman  
13 and I'm representing the Queens Community House.

14 We strongly support your efforts to  
15 gain restoration of the funding for summer jobs  
16 for youth. Last summer Queens Community House  
17 placed 430 youth in summer jobs through SYEP. The  
18 need was tremendous. We had a total of 2,110  
19 applicants for these positions. Some of the  
20 expenses the youth were able to cover through  
21 their salaries included school clothes, family  
22 utility bills, and textbooks for college.

23 In addition to the urgent need of  
24 young people to earn a salary and gain work  
25 experience the SYEP program provides essential

1  
2 infrastructure for other youth programs. Many  
3 summer day camps for working parents utilize  
4 summer youth workers as core staff. At Queens  
5 Community House several of our youth have  
6 continued to work in the earl childhood center and  
7 youth programs afterwards.

8 Queens Community House also placed  
9 a large number of young people at the New York  
10 City Parks Department, enhancing even that City  
11 agency's ability to handle increased utilization  
12 in the summer months.

13 You have been staunch supporters of  
14 SYEP and we stand with you to urge restoration of  
15 the funding for this key program. Thank you.

16 MS. MARLENE ESTRACHI: Good  
17 morning. I want to apologize when my name was  
18 called and I was in the bathroom [chuckling].

19 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Yes, we know.

20 [Laughter]

21 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Everybody  
22 knows now.

23 [Laughter]

24 MS. ESTRACHI: Good morning  
25 Chairman Fidler and members of the New York City

1  
2 Council. My name is Marlene Estrachi [phonetic]  
3 and I'm a former participant turned staff person  
4 at the Queens Community House Beacon Program in  
5 Junior High School 190 [phonetic]. I began  
6 participating in the Beacon Program in the fall of  
7 1998 when it first opened. I was 13 years old.  
8 The summer of 2000 I applied for the Summer Youth  
9 Employment Program.

10 That summer was the most  
11 influential time of my life. That summer my peers  
12 and I had an opportunity to make recommendations  
13 for issues that were concerns within the  
14 community. I was fortunate to have an opportunity  
15 to gain valuable work experience in which I  
16 continue to use in my adulthood.

17 The fall of 2000 I was hired as a  
18 program aide within the Beacon. Over the course  
19 of the next ten years I continued to be employed  
20 with the Queens Community House. My summer job  
21 experience gave me an opportunity for  
22 contributions with all my community. It gave me a  
23 sense of learning. I learned how to improve on my  
24 public speaking skills, reading and writing as  
25 well as learning new skills.

1  
2 I was able to learn the value of  
3 money, how to be responsible with it. I was able  
4 to purchase school supplies and clothes for the  
5 upcoming school year even though my mother still  
6 had three other kids to support. Who knew at the  
7 age of 15 I would be able to have this experience?  
8 I felt independent and empowered.

9 These experiences changed my life  
10 and directed me on a path for success. If weren't  
11 for that summer job experience, I wouldn't be the  
12 person who I am today. As a youth worker I'm  
13 proud to have the opportunity to take youth up to  
14 Albany to participate in The Campaign for Summer  
15 Jobs Youth Action Day.

16 The success of this process has  
17 been based on strong, strong youth participation.  
18 Young people from neighborhoods throughout New  
19 York City who represent various backgrounds come  
20 together for the common goal of supporting the  
21 Summer Youth Employment Program. These are  
22 opportunities for youth to learn the importance of  
23 advocacy and how their voice does make an impact.

24 SYEP is important to develop the  
25 workforce of the future. The earlier that young

1  
2 people have opportunities and experience, the  
3 greater their chance for a successful future in  
4 the workplace. And I know that from my own  
5 experience. From what brings me here today,  
6 there's an absolute need for funding for the  
7 Summer Youth Employment Program. This program not  
8 only helps youth but their families and  
9 communities. Without this program how would youth  
10 prepare to enter the workforce?

11 There is a song by Whitney Houston  
12 called One Moment at a Time in which it's stated  
13 one moment in time where I thought I was more than  
14 I could be. And because of that summer job  
15 experience that moment was that moment that I knew  
16 I was more than I could be. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you all.  
18 Anybody have questions? Council Member Williams.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I just  
20 want to make a statement Ms. Estrachi. Thank you  
21 for coming down to the whole panel but I want to  
22 thank you for giving that personal testimony.  
23 It's wonderful to put a face to the name and you  
24 are a wonderful speaker. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Okay. Anybody

1  
2 else? Thank you all very, very much. And I'll  
3 call up our final panel and I apologize--I always  
4 apologize to the final panel 'cause somebody's got  
5 to be last. But there's a whole bunch of you.

6 Loris Vasquez, Alex Pereira, Daniel  
7 Garcia, Matt Singer, Amy Latores, all from the  
8 Center for Family Life. So come on up.

9 [Pause]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Chair.

11 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Um-hum. And  
12 before he leaves I want to thank Andrew Miller  
13 from DYCD for staying and helping us with this  
14 hearing. So thank you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: May I make a  
16 statement before they start?

17 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Sure. Council  
18 Member Mealy.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I just would  
20 like everyone to remember the month of February is  
21 Teenage Domestic Violence Awareness Month. So  
22 could you please, if you know of anyone, let them  
23 know that any domestic violence phone calls, if  
24 someone called them ten times in five minutes  
25 that's domestic violence. So I just hope everyone

1  
2 be aware of that. Thank you on this Youth  
3 Committee.

4 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you  
5 Council Member. And just decide who's going to go  
6 first and someone jump in.

7 MR. MATT SINGER: Good morning and  
8 thank you for inviting the Center for Family Life  
9 to speak today. And thank you, of course, for  
10 passing the resolutions that you did earlier. My  
11 name is Matt Singer. I'm Director of Youth  
12 Employment Program at Center for Family Life in  
13 Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

14 We've been a contractor for 19  
15 years serving summer jobs program anywhere between  
16 700 and 1,400 participants. And that, of course,  
17 has been due to support from the State, City and  
18 our Federal governments when it's come to summer  
19 jobs. Last year our contract provided for 1,356  
20 jobs which is in comparison to the number of  
21 applicants, 3,200-plus. Obviously the program is  
22 in high demand and will continue to be in high  
23 demand.

24 Fewer than 50% of those applicants  
25 got access to summer jobs, the same summer jobs

1  
2 where they enhanced their skills, got important  
3 experience, gave service to the community  
4 organizations and business there. Community  
5 organizations and businesses have been coming back  
6 year after year sometimes 12, 15 years because  
7 they know the great work that the youth do.

8           The number of applicants is not  
9 going to decrease this year. It's not going to  
10 stay the same. As long as I've been with Center  
11 for Family Life the number of applicants has gone  
12 up. And we can expect the same thing especially  
13 this year when times are toughest. We're talking  
14 about tough times and those are the reasonings for  
15 talking about budget cuts but those same tough  
16 times are, as we're reading the paper, the reasons  
17 that older adults are applying for jobs that  
18 require lesser skills.

19           That is completely pushing out  
20 youth and young adults out of the workforce. I  
21 can't remember if the quote was already said  
22 earlier by UNH but this year the 16 to 24-year old  
23 people had an unemployment rate of over 50%.  
24 That's the highest it's been since the 1940s. So  
25 we have to ask ourselves how on earth are we going



1  
2 to develop tomorrow's leaders when they're not  
3 being given the opportunity to develop the skills  
4 today. How on earth are they going to develop  
5 their earning power if they're not developing  
6 those skills, building that resume, making those  
7 experiences today?

8                   And that's talking about the future  
9 which obviously is no small thing but if we want  
10 to talk about the present we can look very short  
11 term to see the clear values of the Summer Youth  
12 Employment Program. The Chair has talked multiple  
13 times about pouring money back into the economy,  
14 the immediate benefits of the earnings that the  
15 youth make.

16                   And we're not just talking about  
17 iPods and cell phones and new sneakers although  
18 none of that is bad because just like we've talked  
19 about that does pour vital money into the economy.  
20 But we're also talking about basic needs. We're  
21 talking about families who rely on rent. As some  
22 of you have mentioned, some of you have also  
23 mentioned families relying on groceries that youth  
24 participants actually use some of their paycheck  
25 to provide--these are basic needs, essential

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needs.

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And we all thank and we really appreciate your support in working with the State and the Federal government to secure these funds. Thank you.

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MS. AMY LETORES: Hi. My name is Amy Letores [phonetic]. I am a Beacon Director at Center for Family Life in the Sunset Park community.

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As this room thins out and so does some of the seats, you know, it is difficult, our efforts are difficult--

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CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: [Interposing] Let me just say that I want to--as I said, someone always has to go last and I apologize for that but I do want to mention, again, that it's not a sign of disrespect. A number of our colleagues have multiple committee meetings going on now that they didn't anticipate because of the snowstorm on Wednesday, and, you know, obviously can't be in both rooms at the same time--

23

24

25

MS. LETORES: [Interposing] Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: --it's not, you know, I know Councilwoman Gonzalez is one of

1  
2 them. I know she's the Councilwoman for Sunset  
3 Park so, you know, she I think is co-chairing a  
4 hearing across the street so. I just want you to  
5 know that.

6 MS. LETORES: Oh I was just  
7 thinking that I could fill this room with the  
8 young people who have been involved in the summer  
9 youth program at Sunset--

10 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: [Interposing]  
11 I wish we did. I wish we did, you know--

12 MS. LETORES: --easily. Anyway so  
13 you have my statement. And in many respects I  
14 feel like we're preaching to the choir because  
15 everything that you guys have said has made me  
16 feel inspired as I sat there. I know that your  
17 Committee has done immense work and you are in  
18 support of what we're doing.

19 I'm going to speak to you from the  
20 angle of I am a summer day camp and after school  
21 director in the Beacon. And, you know, somebody  
22 touched on the topic but the Department of Health,  
23 you know, requires us to have a child to staff  
24 ratio.

25 And one of the ways that a person

1  
2 like myself meets those ratios is by employing  
3 many of these young people. And I know that when  
4 the summer day camp applications come out and I'm  
5 talking to parents about whether or not their  
6 child will be admitted, whether or not I'm able to  
7 hire people in the Summer Youth Employment Program  
8 will indicate directly the number of children and  
9 families that will be served.

10 I am a product of the Summer Youth  
11 Employment Program and I've been working at Center  
12 for Family Life since the first year that I was  
13 employed there as a SYEP. I did the co-cop  
14 program also at Fort Hamilton High School. So I  
15 do feel like I'm a product of this opportunity to  
16 enter the workforce at an early age and am happy  
17 to be a ladder in the community of leadership and  
18 continuing to grow new leaders, some of which I  
19 brought with me today.

20 You do have my statement. I would  
21 tell you that at this point I have 24 youth who  
22 are year-round staff that we employ. All of them  
23 came through the Summer Youth Employment Program.  
24 Many of them were children in the summer day camp.  
25 And I love to hear the stories of them saying I

1  
2 remember when somebody was my group leader and now  
3 I get to be a group leader.

4           Now these college students are  
5 still at the places that gave them their first  
6 shot at a job. And they're giving back. Hundreds  
7 of camps across the City would not have this child  
8 to staff ratio that we're required to have so we  
9 know that the SYEP is not only good for teens,  
10 it's great, it's needed by families and children  
11 in all of these communities.

12           And I would ask you because in our  
13 advocacy efforts we're saying who do we talk to.  
14 I know I don't need to convince you guys, you  
15 know, we are going to have 10,000 letters by  
16 parents and community members, whose ear do we  
17 need to get this to? Who do we need to fill the  
18 room for?

19           My colleague and I, Matt, are  
20 talking about let's have like the hugest event  
21 ever in the City. And we're wondering who needs  
22 to be invited to the table to hear this message?  
23 'Cause I know that I want to invite you guys but  
24 you are already our supporters. We've heard that  
25 in your words. I guess I'm asking for that bit of

1

2 advice--

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CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: [Interposing]

4

And I'm going to answer that question although

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usually we ask the questions and you give the

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answers--

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MS. LETORES: [Interposing] I know

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[chuckling]

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CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: --I'm going to

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do that. I mean I think for one, Governor David

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Paterson who's the person who is most responsible

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for this draconian cut. But I suspect that it's

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going to be difficult for you to get the hundred

14

or thousands of kids that are going to be

15

disadvantaged by this incredibly cruel cut in to

16

see David Paterson.

17

So I would suggest you talk to your

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State Senator, your Assembly Member, to make them

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understand how critically important it is to the

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youth in Sunset Park. I suspect they'll be

21

supportive but, you know, define your community as

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broadly as you can because if there are three

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State Senators you can talk to, talk to all three.

24

And I think there's a possibility

25

that one of them may actually be a Republican.

1  
2 So, you know, just having bipartisan support would  
3 be helpful and I think you also, you know, need to  
4 find ways to be visible and vocal so that the  
5 newspaper reports, the TV cameras that aren't  
6 here, hear you.

7           And that's a hard thing to do but,  
8 you know, especially in the dead of winter. It's  
9 really very hard to get the press to focus on a  
10 summer job crisis on a wintry day in February as  
11 we can see. And yet it's a crisis and we all  
12 understand it. And you understand it very  
13 clearly. We need to make them understand it that  
14 this is not the usual dog and pony show about  
15 whether or not the Council's going to come up with  
16 a couple of extra million dollars to augment the  
17 summer job program.

18           Somebody used the word decimate, I  
19 think Gigi Lee, decimated. This program is  
20 decimated for the first time in just about the  
21 lifetime of everyone in this room. Decimated.  
22 And that's far different than what we've had in  
23 the past. And that means we have to raise the  
24 volume level. Fair?

25           MS. LETORES: Thank you so much for

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2 answering that also.

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CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Someone jump  
in there.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Can I make a  
statement Chair? They having a caucus this  
weekend where you could go to the Black and Latino  
and Asian Caucus in Albany. If you feel like  
driving, that's where you could walk into your  
Assembly and your Senate office, unannounced, eat,  
drink, talk, and deal with them directly.

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And we bringing two busloads,  
myself and Congressman Towns, where you--that's  
where you come and advocate. That is the time you  
advocate for all issues. And we saying we  
bringing it to the steps of Albany. So think  
about that if you can make that journey up there.  
Thank you.

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MR. DANIEL GARCIA: Thank you. My  
name is Daniel Garcia. I also work for the Center  
for Family Life as one of the Youth Coordinators  
over at PS 1, Sunset Park. You have my statement  
but I really wanted to take an opportunity to talk  
from the heart and whatever comes to my mind.

Over the last ten years we had a



1  
2 lot of setbacks in our nation and in our  
3 communities through 9/11, Katrina, currently the  
4 Haiti situation and of course the economical  
5 crisis that we're in. It doesn't leave a lot of  
6 room for inspiring our teens to go out there and  
7 feel good about themselves.

8           And this is another setback in that  
9 it's hard when our young people, the last ten  
10 years, have not had much hope in looking forward.  
11 And we're trying to really inspire them to be our  
12 healers in our communities and this is not the  
13 step in doing that. And someone who started in an  
14 SYEP at 14 years old like my colleague here and  
15 I'm going to turn 30 in a few weeks, still has the  
16 same first job he has and is still there now,  
17 speaks to the volume of the impact the SYEP can  
18 have on individuals.

19           I really do feel that our young  
20 people are trying to not get charity but want to  
21 get up in the morning, complain to their parents  
22 that they don't want to go to work, go to work and  
23 get home, take their 2-hour naps and complain to  
24 their parents again that their work is hard. But  
25 they want to do that. And we should give them the

1

2 opportunity to do that.

3

4 And I know that we are preaching to  
5 the choir. But more on an emotional level, if we  
6 don't have that support for them, it's hard for  
7 them to really go back to their communities and be  
8 supporters when no one has really given them that  
9 hand. I've been fortunate to have that hand. One  
10 of the things that came up through the discussions  
11 was how many of these young people from SYEP go  
12 into our year-long program.

12

13 I know at my site, the PS 1 site,  
14 which I'm in charge, I hire, I do a lot of the  
15 things--I do the hiring and the tracking and the  
16 supporting of these young people during the  
17 summer. I had 125 this past summer. When we  
18 opened up our volunteer program in the winter, in  
19 September, I had 85 of them come back to sign up  
20 for our program which just speaks to the volume of  
21 the type of programs that SYEP could provide for  
22 people 'cause there's so many came I couldn't take  
23 all of them but 65 of them are, right now, on  
24 their own time, volunteering to be here.

24

25

25 And that speaks volumes. I usually  
will take 40 I had to open up the door more

1  
2 because the people who were impacted by our  
3 community and SYEP came to do that.

4           The other thing is that a lot of  
5 that--that's how we fund our program staff. A lot  
6 of them recently at least at my site, recently  
7 just got hired as part-timers. I was someone who  
8 grew up that way, part-timer, moving up the chain  
9 of command. And I feel like SYEP is a good  
10 stepping stone for our young people to do that and  
11 experience many different types of jobs.

12           So I would implore you to keep the  
13 good fight and I will be there. I also want to  
14 take the change to thank SYEP for introducing me  
15 to my wife. So SYEP, there's a chance to make  
16 connections and to build good community. So we  
17 could look--we could talk money but you cannot put  
18 a price on the relationships you build through  
19 SYEP. And I have life long friends that I've  
20 known for many years through that program that I  
21 feel we will rob from our teens if we continue  
22 this way. So thank you.

23           CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you.

24 And I'm sure your wife thanks you as well.

25           [Chuckling]

1  
2 MR. GARCIA: Well she's at home  
3 with the kids so I don't know--

4 [Chuckling]

5 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Well that's  
6 the first time I've heard that in a summer job  
7 testimony. So, you know, we always look for  
8 unique testimony so thank you. Again it makes for  
9 good TV. It's probably about 2:00 o'clock in the  
10 morning if you're watching this on Channel 74 in  
11 Brooklyn. Stay with us. You never know what's  
12 going to be said here.

13 MR. ALEX PEREIRA: My name is Alex  
14 Pereira [phonetic] and I think I speak on behalf  
15 of thousands of teens who every year have put  
16 their hopes and dreams into SYEP. I've worked  
17 with SYEP for two years. My first year I worked  
18 at Long Island College Hospital as a nurse  
19 assistant and then inventory worker.

20 I think for someone like me who  
21 actually looks to medical school as their dream,  
22 this was a perfect start for me. It was my first  
23 job experience. I learned many things through  
24 this.

25 My second year I worked with the

1  
2 New York City Parks Department as an assistant  
3 gardener. Just to say this job is not for the  
4 faint of heart. It was very physically demanding  
5 job and it taught me more on the personal level  
6 than on the literal level. It taught me to value  
7 every dollar that I've ever made. I know now what  
8 it feels like to put your blood, sweat and tears  
9 into every dollar you have earned.

10 Of that money that I made this past  
11 summer, about \$500 went to my dad to help pay for  
12 our rent and avoid eviction. The other \$350 went  
13 to pay for both my school supplies and my sister's  
14 school supplies, including my college textbooks  
15 which as many of you know aren't cheap.

16 I also speak from a person who  
17 actually never really had that much experience  
18 working and thanks to SYEP I'm able to work at  
19 Starbuck's making probably my favorite drinks. I  
20 know that the economy is in the rebuilding state  
21 but this is an investment that cannot and will not  
22 fail.

23 Everybody knows that most of these  
24 people who actually work for SYEP eventually put  
25 the money back into the system. But still the

1  
2 experience and the opportunities that they gained  
3 will not be given back. They will stay for a  
4 lifetime.

5 I also want to say that thanks to  
6 SYEP I've been able to actually make bonds with  
7 people I never thought I would. All the  
8 references that I've had with SYEP, all these  
9 people have given me nothing but advice, words of  
10 wisdom. They look out for me.

11 As much as I probably thought that  
12 they would just look at me as another teen working  
13 here, taking away from their work, they took the  
14 time out to help me with life lessons. I've had  
15 gardeners tell me things about go to college, how  
16 expensive college can be and things like that I  
17 never really expected from a gardener. But still  
18 they offered to help me with everything that I  
19 needed.

20 This past summer when I needed  
21 references for working out at Starbuck's  
22 eventually I put their names down. They vouched  
23 for me. They said all they could. And I really  
24 thank them for that. Things like that last a  
25 lifetime.

1

[Pause]

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MR. PEREIRA: I guess that's all I have to say. I'm just glad to be part of the SYEP family. Thank you.

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6

[Pause]

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MS. LORDIS VASQUEZ: Hi. My name is Lordis Vasquez. And I'm here on behalf of Center for Family Life. And I think Center for Family Life has really had a big impact on my life. And I just wanted to say I was a site monitor for SYEP 2009. So I basically was able to observe all SYEP participants, how they felt, what they thought about the program. And I realized that a program like this should always exist. And nobody should ever get rid of it and nobody should decimate it like... Mr. Fidler said.

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But I just wanted to say that a lot of these participants are really happy where they were working, whether they were eating lunch at a day care, walking with the elderly, painting murals on our community walls, planting fruits and vegetables, performing skits for the community or typing at an office. They all enjoyed what they were doing and SYEP is a great program because it

1  
2 allows people to network. It allows them to gain  
3 an income, especially for needy families.

4 And I remember one girl, she told  
5 me, oh, I'm going off to college this fall and  
6 this is why I really need this job and I'm so glad  
7 I have this job. And another girl told me I need  
8 to buy a laptop. And it's just experiences like  
9 that that really show that this program is really  
10 needed.

11 In addition not only do they  
12 benefit economically but they also benefit  
13 educationally because SYEP participants are paid  
14 to attend workshops about money management, sexual  
15 education, college exploration, and career  
16 exploration. Not only do the youth benefit but  
17 supervisors also benefit because they don't have  
18 to pay their employees to work, the SYEP  
19 participants. It's actually the City. So in  
20 reality it helps out a lot of people. So it  
21 really should not be cut. And that's all I have  
22 to say.

23 CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Well thank you  
24 all. You all testified very eloquently. And  
25 really spoke very well for the importance of the



1

2 program. Council Member Williams.

2

3

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: First, I  
4 remember you were saying something about you  
5 thought they'd be mad that you were taking their  
6 jobs. I think they were happy that you were there  
7 so they didn't have to do as much work  
8 [chuckling].

4

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And I know some one mentioned that  
10 some of the youth leaders were there. I just  
11 wanted to see if they can stand up, really quick.  
12 Thank you guys for coming. I really appreciate  
13 it.

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[Applause]

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And I also, you know, speaking  
about the Beacon, I remember my first job actually  
was assistant director for a Beacon program in  
Flatbush. And we would not have been able to  
conduct business in that day camp if we did not  
have the SYEP workers .And that's for sure. So I  
definitely appreciate and I learned to appreciate  
even more after that.

23

24

25

Also I want to suggest a lot of  
times just having been--mostly I came out of the  
housing world, affordable housing. Advocacy

1  
2 groups for some reason don't talk to each other.  
3 But I think this is a good time to reach out  
4 because whatever advocacy group I would bet  
5 they're people who have children who need these  
6 jobs.

7           And I would suggest that you reach  
8 out to them when you're doing all of these  
9 initiatives, whether it's letter writing what have  
10 you. So the advocacy groups from the housing,  
11 from education, from wherever, can come together  
12 and say this is a common issue and a common  
13 problem across advocacy fields. And that everyone  
14 is going to be affected. So please take the time  
15 out to reach out to those groups as well.

16           And I just want to make one thing,  
17 I know if you're going to do letter writing,  
18 that's great. Just I prefer letter writing and  
19 post cards, petitions are usually what people do  
20 and they're not as effective. So just one tip  
21 there. Thank you.

22           CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: You can see  
23 Council Member Williams was a community organizer.  
24 Council Member Rodriguez.

25           COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: That

1  
2 number, that number Matt shared with us like when  
3 he said that 2009, 3,200 young people applied for  
4 the summer youth and he only was able to get 1,356  
5 young people. They reflect also the reality that  
6 we shared at the beginning of the--when we said  
7 not even 40% of young people who apply for the  
8 summer youth program is able to get a spot.

9           And I think that one reason, what I  
10 see why it is so easy to go on cutting, especially  
11 the summer youth program is because some people  
12 take it for granted that young people don't vote.  
13 And I believe that it is time for us also to work  
14 with all the sites to reach the 3,200 young people  
15 that applied, that number is increased to 4,000,  
16 to be sure that not only those programs that you  
17 have in your site go out to register people but  
18 whoever go and apply for the summer youth program,  
19 he or she is available to vote.

20           So be sure that we register that  
21 number. And I believe that with the reality that  
22 only close to 40% is the number that have been  
23 able to get a spot at a summer youth program, I  
24 think it is also time to mobilize in the street.  
25 I think that as we know like as someone that is

1  
2 coming from the community organizing background,  
3 in 1989 we were able to persuade Mario Cuomo at  
4 that time not to increase tuition after we went to  
5 Washington, after we sent letters. We took 25,000  
6 young people marching from the Twin Towers to Wall  
7 Street to John Jay. And then two days after he  
8 heard the message loud and clear.

9           So I believe that we can get like  
10 150,000 young people applying for the summer youth  
11 program, I don't think it's so difficult if we  
12 work on it as a coalition to put a big rally in  
13 the street. No in 2000 [phonetic] but mobilize  
14 with a goal to mobilize 50,000 young people and they  
15 will hear the message with that number.

16           MR. SINGER: Thank you.

17           CHAIRPERSON FIDLER: Thank you  
18 Council Member and thank you all for your  
19 testimony. Before I conclude this hearing I want  
20 to acknowledge we have one of our summer job  
21 Beacons, Dove Os Doctor [phonetic] in the  
22 audience. He's been very, very helpful to us over  
23 the years in working on summer job programs.

24           And I do want to conclude by  
25 reminding everyone here that on the Federal level

1  
2 we need to call Senator Schumer, Senator  
3 Gillibrand and our local Congress Members today,  
4 while they're negotiating the jobs bill to make  
5 sure that that money is included.

6 But the real fight, the long term  
7 fight is going to be in Albany. I really,  
8 honestly believe that Governor Paterson has lost  
9 control of his senses. I do not understand how  
10 someone could miss such a painfully obvious  
11 benefit to young people, such a painfully obvious  
12 benefit to the economy. This is a budget cut that  
13 is so audaciously cruel in terms of balancing the  
14 budget on the backs of young people, so short  
15 sighted in so many different ways, so penny wise  
16 and pound fooling, that I just frankly can't  
17 believe it.

18 And I know that I am sure that this  
19 full Council will pass both of these resolutions  
20 on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. I'm sure that that vote, I'll be so  
21 bold as to say will be unanimous. And frankly  
22 that will not be enough. We all need to raise our  
23 voices, raise them loudly, raise them clearly and  
24 make sure that even if we don't leave this  
25 Borough, that they're heard all the way in Albany.

1  
2 Our children, our young people, our  
3 society as a whole, our economy all depend on it.  
4 It is perhaps the most important thing that we can  
5 do to stimulate our economy and to help our young  
6 people at the same time in one fell swoop. And we  
7 will not abdicate that responsibility even if  
8 Albany and Washington do. But for sure, for  
9 absolutely certain, we have to make sure that we  
10 do everything that is possible to make sure that  
11 both Washington and Albany understand their  
12 obligations to our children today and our children  
13 in the future.

14 And with that I adjourn this  
15 hearing.


16 [Gavel banging]

17 [END 1002.MP3]

18

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Laura L Springate certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura L. Springate". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_Laura L. Springate\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_February 23, 2010\_\_\_\_\_