

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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January 28, 2021

Start: 9:35 AM

Recess: 9:47 AM

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 1)

B E F O R E: FERNANDO CABRERA
Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Keith Powers
Ben Kallos
Bill Perkins
Ydanis Rodriguez
Stephen T. Levin
Darma V. Diaz
Kalman Yeger
Alana N. Maisel

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

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SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Dude the recording is up.
Thank you. Our recording is up, Glen.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Back-up is rolling. Thank you and good morning, and welcome to today's remote New York City Council vote on the Committee on Governmental Operations. At this time would all Council Members and Council staff please turn on their video. To minimize disruption, please place electronic devices on vibrate or silent mode. Thank you, Chair. We are ready to begin. CHAIR

CABRERA: Well, good morning. My name is Fernando abrera. I' the Chair of the Committee on Governmental Operations. We have been joined by my colleagues and members of the Committee. We have Council Member Ampry Samuel, Council Member Yeger, Council Member, Perkins Council Member Darma Diaz, Council Member Maisel, Council Member Koslowitz, Majority Leader Cumbo, Council Member Levin, Council Member Powers, Council Member Grodenchik. I believe that's all we have right now. Today we'll be holding a vote on several pieces of legislation that represents a tremendous government transparency, and civic engagement. As I always said in the past, 311 is the average New York's own lines to city

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2 government. It is important that 311 is responsive,
3 the city agencies are efficient in resolving
4 complaints and that the public maintains this cross
5 and assistance. It is also critical that the city
6 resources wise, be used wisely especially in this
7 time of crisis. In the spirit of making 311 work
8 better...(coughs) excuse me... for New Yorkers, the
9 committee will be voting on Proposed Introduction
10 Number 1420-C sponsored by Minority Leader and
11 Council Member Matteo, which will require the city
12 to study their Preconsidered and anonymous 311
13 complaints, and determine what such complaints are
14 more likely to be substantiated, and Proposed
15 Introduction No. 1830-B sponsored by myself, which
16 will require 311 to notify each city agency when a
17 service request has not been closed within the time
18 frame stated in the city, in the agencies' service
19 level agreement. This bill will ensure that city
20 agencies, which have agreed to respond to complaints
21 within certain timeframes are holding up to their
22 end of the agreement. I am very grateful for the
23 Administration for working with us on this bill.
24 This ball also consumes the upcoming citywide
25 election. Right now the city first grand choice

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2 election is being held in Council District 24.
3 Early voting is underway and stakeholders across the
4 city have already conducted many ranked choice
5 voting trainings in town halls. Looking ahead to the
6 citywide primaries in June it is critical that all
7 city voters understand how ranked choice voting
8 works and that they are comfortable with it. That is
9 why I'm proud of the Committee on Governmental
10 Operations voting on Proposed Introduction 1994-A
11 sponsored by Council Member Ampry Samuel, which will
12 require the Campaign Finance Board to take
13 additional steps to ensure all New Yorkers
14 understand the new Rank Choice Voting system. Thank
15 you to my colleagues for going to this vote, to the
16 Committee staff and then the Dream Team, Committee
17 Counsel, CJ Murray, Senior Policy Analyst Emily
18 Forgione, Elizabeth Cronk, Senior Finance Analyst
19 Sadac Kanbacchi (sp?) and to my Communications
20 Legislator, Director Claire MvLeveighn. I will
21 let... at this moment I'm going to turn it over to
22 Council Member Ampry-Samuel to give a statement on
23 her bill.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thanks Chair for
25 the opportunity to speak on my bill Intro 1994, and

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2 first I want to also say that 30 of us in this City
3 Council have already signed onto to this bill, and
4 so I just want to thank everybody for their support,
5 and so we already know the necessity of it. Voters
6 voted in November of 2019 for rank choice voting in
7 New York City. That was November of 2019, and in
8 February of 2020, I stood in front of the Board of
9 Elections in a very small press conference, and
10 called on the City of New York to set aside funding
11 in the budget to make sure that we are reaching
12 every single voter, and in particular voters that
13 have been historically disenfranchised to make sure
14 that they knew what was happening that they knew
15 that Rank Choice Voting was passed and that we...
16 there was a strategic plan to educate voters on the
17 system itself, and that was again in February of
18 2020. I then introduced this bill in July of 2020,
19 and I understand the city was going through a global
20 pandemic, and this was not something that was
21 prioritized because we were trying to save lives
22 because of COVID as well as a federal election that
23 ended in November of 2020, and so this committee
24 heard the bill, and I'm very thankful for that
25 hearing, but I really wish that we were able to move

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2 forward earlier in making sure that voters were
3 educated on Rank Choice Voting prior to today when
4 we are clearly in the middle of a special election,
5 and so with that being said, I just wanted to
6 highlight just four key points of the legislation
7 that is a little different than what we see Campaign
8 Finance doing currently as well as the Board of
9 Elections. One, this bill will ensure that the
10 Campaign Finance Board distributes a post card to
11 each and every household in New York City with a
12 registered voter. So, that's every household would
13 receive a post card that is not part of the standard
14 Campaign Finance Voters' Guide that is sent out, and
15 you have to sit through a huge book looking for
16 information. So, this would be a clear postcard,
17 and this bill would require that ads being published
18 citywide in ethnic media outlets, and that's
19 something different as well because we know that
20 that the huge need is for people in certain
21 communities that don't necessarily get information
22 or there's no strategy around outreaching to the
23 most vulnerable, and so this would require a city
24 wide campaign within ethnic media outlets. A third
25 huge piece of it would include information material

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2 that is in large print working with the Department
3 of the Aging and now just for our seniors and our
4 elderly, but also those that are visually impaired.
5 So the materials that are sent out to the home have
6 to be in large print, and the last piece or it that
7 I want to highlight is that the Campaign Finance
8 Board shall collaborate with community based
9 organizations such as civil rights Organizations,
10 disability rights groups organizations serving
11 public housing residents and organizations that
12 serve the under-represented. And so, in closing,
13 you know clearly there's (audio cut out)

14 CHAIR FERNANDO CABRERA: I'm sorry Council
15 Member you're muted.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, in closing
17 (laughs) this bill is simply to codify the work that
18 is already being done in the Campaign Finance Board
19 as well as the Board of Elections for just to make
20 sure that there is a strategic plan in place to
21 reach every single voter in the city of New York,
22 and the bill does not expire until December 20,
23 December of 2025. So, again, thank you so much and
24 I also want to thank Common Cause for their hard
25 work, and every one else who worked on this bill,

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2 and like I said, we've been, it's been out there for
3 a very long time, and I'm glad to see it's finally,
4 you know, being voted on today. So, thank you so
5 much.

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CHAIR CABRERA: Thank you, and now I will turn
7 it over to the Clerk to call the roll.

8

9 Good morning. William Martin Committee Clerk,
10 roll call vote Committee on Governmental Operations.
11 Introductions 1423, 1832-B and 1994-A. All items
12 are coupled. Chair Cabrera.

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13 CHAIR CABRERA: I vote aye and encourage all my
14 colleagues to vote aye on all the bills presented
15 today.

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WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you. Rodriguez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I Vote aye.

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MALE SPEAKER: Do away with this okay

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19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I vote aye on all, and I
20 would like to request my name be added to the list
21 of sponsors for all the bills being voted on at this
22 time. Thank you.

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WILLIAM MARTIN: You got it. (distorted sound.)
Kallos.

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COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Not right now. I will
be there.

WILLIAM MARTIN: Maisel.

COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

WILLIAM MARTIN: Perkins.

COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: (inaudible)

WILLIAM MARTIN: You're muted Council Member Perkins. (pause)

COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: (inaudible)

WILLIAM MARTIN: Yes?

COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Yes, I vote aye.

WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Thank you.

WILLIAM MARTIN: Powers.

COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Aye.

WILLIAM MARTIN: Yeger.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

May I be briefly excused to explain my vote?

CHAIR CABRERA: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you so much.

Good morning. I am proud to sponsor, co-sponsor all three of these bills with you Mr. Chair, and Council Member Ampry-Samuel and Minority Leader. I really do get a chance to do wise things and I'm happy to be a part of that. Specifically with respect to Council Member Ampry-Samuel's bill

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2 I just want to speak on that for a moment. I am
3 proud to be Council Member Ampry-Samuel's second
4 co-sponsor on this and although I am known to have
5 not supported rank choice voting and in my district
6 the vote has overwhelmingly rejected rank choice
7 voting wisely in my view. I think that this is the
8 very least we can do to provide the resources
9 necessary to educate voters as this is really
10 coming up the pike and it's right around the
11 corner. It is it \$2 million anticipated to cost. I
12 am hopeful that the Campaign Finance Board God
13 willing can be trusted to spend the money wisely,
14 but I think it's very important that a road map be
15 written out as Council Member Ampry-Samuel did to
16 instruct the Board on what it is that we expect,
17 and I hope that this experiment and this I am not
18 very confident it will work in favor of democracy,
19 but I'm hopeful that the best we can do is provide
20 the resources to educate voters, and for that
21 reason I am co-sponsoring the bill that will cost
22 at this time \$2 million at a time that the city
23 grateful to you and the members of this committee.
24 Thank you for that. I vote aye on all. Thank you.

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2 CHAIR CABRERA: Thank you so much. Thank you
3 for your comments.

4 WILLIAM MARTIN: Darma Diaz.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Darma Diaz.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DARMA DIAZ: I vote aye and
7 thank you for all your efforts.

8 WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote of 9 in the
9 affirmative, zero in the negative and no
10 abstentions, all items have been adopted by the
11 Committee. Thank you.

12 CHAIR CABRERA: Thank you Do we have all of the
13 Committee Members? You did? Okay

14 FEMALE SPEAKER: Yes.

15 CHAIR CABRERA: That will conclude today's.
16 folks. Have a great day. (gavel)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date February 4, 2021