

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

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MAY 12, 2021
Start: 12:03 P.M.
Recess: 12:18 P.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING VIRTUAL ROOM 1

B E F O R E: CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Adrienne Adams
Fernando Cabrera
Vanessa Gibson
I. Daneek Miller
Justin Brannan
Robert Holden
Keith Powers
Carlos Menchaca
Kevin Riley
Ydanis Rodriguez

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

2 SGT. POLITE: PC recording all set.

3 SGT. HOPE: Sound recording set.

4 SGT. PEREZ: Backup is rolling.

5 SGT. BIONDO: Good afternoon, and welcome
6 to today's remote New York City Council hearing for
7 the Committee on Public Safety. At this time, would
8 all members please turn on their video for
9 verification purposes, and to minimize disruptions,
10 please place all electronic devices to vibrate or
11 silent mode. Thank you for your cooperation. Chair
12 Adams, we are ready to begin.

13 CHAIR ADAMS: Good afternoon. I'm
14 Council Member Adrienne Adams from the 28th District
15 in Queens and I am the Chair of the Committee on
16 Public Safety. Today, we're voting on Introduction
17 2108A in relation to increasing penalties for
18 damaging houses of worship sponsored by Council
19 Member Cabrera. We're also voting on Resolution 1619
20 calling on Congress to pass and the President to sign
21 the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act which would facilitate
22 the expedited review of COVID-19 hate crimes. It's
23 truly disappointing that we actually need to vote on
24 these pieces of Legislation. It's incomprehensible
25 to me that in the midst of a generational struggle,

2 it has required such a degree of shared sacrifice and
3 unity from so many of us. There are people in our
4 city who would choose to perpetuate divisiveness and
5 hatred. The statistics we heard from the NYPD at our
6 budget hearing yesterday are staggering. For
7 example, 81 hate crimes against Asian Americans
8 compared to 17 over the same period last year.
9 That's over four times as many of these crimes and
10 who knows how many more incidents of hate speech,
11 intimidation, offensive language, and foolish
12 scapegoating of our Asian American brothers and
13 sisters. On top of all of that, the recent targeting
14 of synagogues and other houses of worship is just
15 sickening. No doubt fueled by the rhetoric of
16 National politicians who speak to divide us for their
17 own gain. I'm not going to say that by passing these
18 measures, we're going to end racial, ethnic, and
19 religious hatred tomorrow, I know the struggle will
20 continue, and that for a long time, there will still
21 be individuals who carry hate in their heart, but we
22 must do something. Of course, at a most basic level,
23 this vote is intended to send a message that anyone
24 who damages a house of worship will face a more
25 significant punishment, and we're sending a message

2 to Congress that because so much of this division has
3 been exacerbated by National political discourse,
4 that Congress needs to act, and Department of Justice
5 needs to help us find a path forward. But the most
6 important message we're sending today is that we
7 stand with those who have been targeted by these
8 attacked and with their communities, and with
9 everyone who feels a little safer on their way to
10 work or school, in their churches, synagogues,
11 mosques, or whatever and however they pray. We will
12 do everything in our power to show you that these
13 incidents do not represent who we are as a city. New
14 York City is and always will be at its core, a home
15 to every race, creed, and color. I hope anyone who
16 has heard anything out there as a result of these
17 attacks clearly hears the message of unity and feels
18 just a little more secure in the knowledge that we
19 see you and will keep working and fighting for you
20 for as long as it takes. With that, I will turn it
21 over to the sponsors of today's Legislation to make a
22 statement. Council Member Cabrera.

23 CM CABRERA: Thank you so much, Madame
24 Chair and thank for your support cause I know it
25 comes from your heart, and I want to thank the

2 Speaker as well for allowing this vote to come to the
3 floor of this wonderful Committee. As you heard,
4 recently we have seen a dramatic increase in the
5 number of attacks on New York City houses of worship.
6 These attacks directly against some of our most
7 cherished and sacred institutions are a front against
8 all New Yorkers and should be roundly condemned.
9 These attacks not only instill a sense of fear in our
10 city, but also it creates a sense of intimidation.
11 Our houses of worship represent the jewel in the
12 crown of New York City and deserve our protection.
13 Intro 2108A will increase the minimum fine for
14 damaging a house of worship from \$500 to \$1000. This
15 increase will serve as an added layer of protection
16 of our houses of worship, demonstrate our commitment
17 to supporting our city's religious institutions.
18 Every New Yorker deserves to feel secure in
19 practicing their faith conversely. We also, as a
20 Committee, have a duty to stand against religious
21 persecution or attacks or intimidation and this why
22 I'm so glad to put forth this bill as someone whose a
23 pastor, myself. My own church has been defaced as
24 recently as just two months ago. I talked with an
25 Iman the other day, not only once, but twice within a

2 week, his house of worship, his mosque was defaced.

3 There are Catholic churches as we saw here and

4 Riverdale as well. We have to send a loud message,

5 so I want to thank the staff who worked on this Bill,

6 and also I want to thank all my colleagues who signed

7 on and are voting I on this Bill. Thank you so much,

8 Madame Chair.

9 CHAIR ADAMS: Thank you very much Council

10 Member Cabrera. I don't see Council Member remarks,

11 so with that, we will go ahead over to the Committee

12 Clerk to begin our vote.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank

14 you. Good afternoon. William Martin, Committee

15 Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Public Safety

16 Introduction 2108A and Resolution 1619, both items

17 are coupled. Chair Adams.

18 CHAIR ADAMS: I proudly vote I on all.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Cabrera.

20 CM CABRERA: I on all, thank you.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank

22 you, Gibson.

23 CM GIBSON: Congratulations to my

24 colleagues, and I vote I on today's agenda. Thank

25 you.

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
3 you. Miller.

4 CM MILLER: Permission to explain?

5 CHAIR ADAMS: Council Member Miller to
6 explain his vote.

7 CM MILLER: Thank you, Madame Chair and
8 thank you to Council Members Cabrera for introducing
9 this Legislation. I just want to say to all of our
10 Ramadan Mubarak, which is soon to be in the next 24
11 hours. Eid Mubarak has been around 30, around 31
12 days, and the holiest day of the Muslim that I've had
13 the opportunity to travel throughout the city and
14 fortunately for me, have not had the experience of
15 desecration of any of the mosques that I've gone to
16 and I'm very sorry to hear, in fact, we had what
17 Council Member Cabrera said, we had a celebration
18 with Chief Harrison on Monday night and it was
19 severely, down severely from years past and that may
20 be because there was an under reporting. I hope that
21 that is not the case. I hope that man's humanity to
22 man and respect and values for other's faith and
23 culture has been elevated in the most trying time and
24 that's what we're learning to live with in the near
25 future, but sometimes, you cannot educate in what you

2 have to Legislate is I think, is that important to
3 demonstrate that we are so supportive of our faith-
4 based institutions, houses of worship that we would,
5 in this case, legislate. In terms of the resolution
6 on Asian hate, clearly there's no space for that, and
7 as co-chair of the Black, Latino and Asian Caucus, I
8 want to cast this vote in support of the Asian
9 community, so I vote I on both.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
11 you.

12 CM MILLER: Thank you.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brannan.

14 CM BRANNAN: I vote I on all.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Holden.

16 CM HOLDEN: Congratulations and thank you
17 to Council Members Cabrera and Koo and I vote I on
18 all.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Powers.

20 CM POWERS: I on all, thank you.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
22 you, one moment. By a vote of eight in the
23 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
24 abstentions, both items have been adopted by the

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2 Committee, and I'm sure we are waiting for a few more
3 members.

4 CHAIR ADAMS: Okay, we will leave the
5 vote open for a couple more minutes. Thank you very
6 much, thank you Committee Members, and thank you
7 Council Members Cabrera and Koo.

8 CM MENCHACA: Committee Clerk, can I do a
9 vote as well?

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Excuse
11 me, Council Member Menchaca, my apologies.

12 CM MENCHACA: It's okay.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Council
14 Member Menchaca.

15 CM MENCHACA: I vote on I on all, and I
16 have some remarks, but I'll deliver them on the
17 stated floor. Thank you, Chair and Council Members
18 Koo and Cabrera.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: My
20 apologies. Vote is eight in the affirmative, zero in
21 the negative, and no abstentions.

22 ADMINISTRATOR: Billy, can you call on
23 Council Member Riley, please?

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
25 afternoon, Council Member Riley. I don't see him on.

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2 ADMINISTRATOR: I just switched him over.
3 Hold on, he may be still in attendance. Council
4 Member Riley is having some technical difficulties.
5 He's going to vote from my screen. Just give me one
6 second. Council Member Riley, are you ready to vote?

7 CM RILEY: Yes, I am. I vote I on all.

8 ADMINISTRATOR: Just hold on for one
9 second. Billy?

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Sure.
11 Good afternoon, Council Member Riley, Committee on
12 Public Safety, Introductions 2108A and 1619.

13 CM RILEY: I.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
15 you, sir.

16 CM RILEY: Thank you.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: The vote
18 is currently at nine in the affirmative, zero in the
19 negative, and no abstentions. Chair Adams, we are
20 checking on one more Member.

21 CHAIR ADAMS: Okay, thank you very much.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
23 afternoon, Council Member Rodriguez, Committee on
24 Public Safety, roll call vote.

25 CM RODRIGUEZ: I.

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
3 you, sir.

4 CM RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: The
6 Committee on Public Safety, Introduction 2108A and
7 Resolution 1619 are both adopted by the Committee
8 with a final vote of 10 in the affirmative, zero in
9 the negative, and no abstentions, thank you. That's
10 full Committee, Madame Chair.

11 CHAIR ADAMS: Thank you very much, Mr.
12 Clerk. This meeting of the Public Safety Committee
13 is hereby adjourned.

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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 June 14, 2021