

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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June 16, 2010
Start: 1:10 pm
Recess: 1:41 pm

HELD AT: 250 Broadway, 14th Floor
Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
GALE A. BREWER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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

Ann Northrop

Brendan Fay
Civil Marriage Trail Project

Jeannette Vargas
LGBT Rights Committee
Association of the Bar of the City of New York

Cathy Marino-Thomas
Board President
Marriage Equality New York

Michael McSweeney
City Clerk
City of New York

Patrick Synmoie
General Counsel
City Clerk's Office

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Ladies and
3 gentlemen, please make sure you set your cell
4 phones to vibrate, please take any conversations
5 outside, thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Good
7 afternoon, I'm Gale Brewer, Chair of the Committee
8 on Governmental Operations and we're here today to
9 talk about Intro 260-A. Members are mostly across
10 the street at the budget negotiations and it's
11 making me crazy that I'm not there now 'cause I
12 don't want my money to be given away, but I'm
13 delighted to be here.

14 Proposed Intro 260-A is sponsored
15 by the Speaker, Council Member Quinn, and it would
16 require the city clerk to post information online
17 relating to marriage for same-sex couples and,
18 obviously, such information would also be
19 available in hard copy at the Marriage Bureau.

20 Specifically, the bill would
21 require the city clerk, who is sending a
22 representative and should be here at any moment,
23 to post the following text: Lawfully married
24 individuals, including individuals in same-sex
25 marriages, are entitled to more New York State

1
2 rights and benefits than those registered as
3 domestic partners here in New York City.

4 If an individual lawfully enters
5 into same-sex marriage in a jurisdiction outside
6 New York, they are entitled to most of the New
7 York State rights and benefits available to people
8 lawfully married in New York.

9 If you are considering entering
10 into a marriage in one of the jurisdictions listed
11 above, it is recommended that you contact that
12 jurisdiction beforehand in order to learn about
13 any applicable marriage requirements or
14 restrictions.

15 The bill would also require a
16 listing of international and domestic
17 jurisdictions where individuals can enter into a
18 same-sex marriage that would be recognized in New
19 York.

20 And as I said, we will hear from
21 the city clerk and interested members of the
22 public. We also have a briefing document, which
23 is always put together well by Matt Gewolb and
24 others who are part of this Committee, Mr. Gewolb
25 is the attorney for the Committee.

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2 And one might wonder why are we
3 doing this in terms of legislation as opposed to
4 just a letter to the city clerk, and I think the
5 Speaker said it best when she was talking about
6 it, where she wants to make sure that no matter
7 who is Mayor, who is in the City Council, who's in
8 the clerk's office that this is always the law,
9 and, of course, we hope that, at least speaking
10 for myself, that we have full marriage equality
11 for everyone in the near future.

12 [Off mic]

13 Since the city clerk is delayed, we
14 are going to go ahead and call a panel and then we
15 will have the city clerk as soon as he or she
16 arrives. So we have Brendan Fay, we have Ann
17 Northrop who I saw earlier when I was on the wrong
18 floor and she was on the right floor, and we have
19 Cathy Marino-Thomas, and Jeannette Vargas. And
20 thank you all very much for being here.

21 ANN NORTHROP: Where do you want
22 us?

23 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Right there,
24 just sit and we'll pull up two--you need four
25 chairs so we'll pull up two more.

2 [Off mic]

3 BRENDAN FAY: Sure.

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you all,
5 whomever would like to start, go right ahead. I
6 know Ann Northrop likes to go first.

7 [Crosstalk]

8 ANN NORTHROP: I have the privilege
9 of age.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I hear you, I
11 can relate.

12 ANN NORTHROP: And I'll be quick
13 because I want you to get back to the budget--

14 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you

15 ANN NORTHROP: --negotiations too.
16 And I don't have written copies, I just come here
17 in support of this because I think it's high time
18 that the city served its citizens by providing
19 full information about these rights and how they
20 are available.

21 So I have advocated for this for a
22 long time, I think it's something that I hope will
23 be an example for the entire state, because I
24 think this information should be available
25 statewide. I hope this will be publicized as

1
2 widely as possible. I just think it's a great
3 move, I can't imagine why anyone would oppose it,
4 it's simply about providing people information and
5 serving the citizens of the city and the state.

6 I applaud the City Council for
7 doing it. And I can't imagine there's anything
8 more to say about it, but I see that there are
9 many more people here to say things so--

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

11 ANN NORTHROP: --I'll defer to
12 them.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
14 much.

15 ANN NORTHROP: Thank you for doing
16 it.

17 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.
18 Mr. Fay?

19 BRENDAN FAY: Thank you. Thank
20 you, Council Member Brewer, and it is with sort of
21 a mixed emotion that I actually testify here this
22 afternoon. My name is Brendan Fay and I am here
23 to speak on behalf of the Civil Marriage Trail
24 Project which has helped--I never thought I would
25 see the day when I would be here applauding

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2 legislation or this amendment to our city law
3 providing information for New Yorkers basically on
4 how they need to travel outside of the state, it's
5 basically saying that marriages from outside the
6 state of New York are recognized in the city and
7 the state.

8 And of course, why are we here,
9 really because our state does not allow New
10 Yorkers to marry in the state of New York. And
11 also we're also here, because, of course, the city
12 just recently announced that couples applying for
13 domestic partnerships can now actually have a
14 domestic partnership ceremony and pay for it. For
15 me, basically, that's like same-sex couples being
16 invited to ritualize our second-class citizenship
17 in the city of New York and to pay a fee to do it.

18 I really applaud and appreciate the
19 gesture of the Speaker and Council Members and all
20 involved in doing whatever is possible to alert
21 New Yorkers to the issue, the seriousness of the
22 consequences of both whether they are domestic
23 partners in this city or married couples in the
24 city of New York, for which there are many, many
25 more rights.

1
2 Poll after poll, of course as we
3 know, shows that most New Yorkers support and
4 believe it is high time that same-sex couples be
5 treated like heterosexual couples. And Peter
6 Tatchell actually recently wrote imagine an outcry
7 if the government reserved marriage for white
8 people and introduced a separate partnership
9 register for black couples. It would provoke
10 accusations of racism and apartheid and
11 international condemnation. Yet civil, or in our
12 case, domestic partnerships are in a way a form of
13 sexual apartheid. They enforce separate laws for
14 heterosexuals and homosexuals, perpetuating
15 discrimination on the grounds of sexual
16 orientation.

17 I am also a married man and myself
18 and my spouse, Tom, we were legally married in
19 Toronto in 2003 and on the way back after our
20 marriage I felt that I wanted to help other New
21 Yorkers experience the same treatment. What it is
22 like to go into a bureau and where it just simply
23 said marriage license and to see all couples being
24 treated equally. I want other New Yorkers to have
25 the same experience and not as they do today, have

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2 to go into our New York Marriage Bureau and make a
3 decision between marriage license or domestic
4 partnership. That is an incredibly--like it says
5 something about somebody's humanity, it really
6 does.

7 And so on the way back, I decided I
8 would form the Civil Marriage Trail Project. So
9 instead of just protesting discrimination, I
10 wanted to do something positive, I wanted other
11 couples to experience as I had. And with Jesus
12 Lebron who in 1998, by the way, organized the
13 first rally on the steps of City Hall, some of us
14 were there, and we formed the Civil Marriage Trail
15 Project and have since helped perhaps over 100
16 couples to cross the border to Toronto, to Boston,
17 and most recently to Stanford.

18 Among those couples that I helped
19 were Edie Windsor and Thea Spyer, I'll just give
20 you two stories of two couples because I want to
21 bring home this is not simply like just some
22 Administrative Code change, this is about New
23 Yorkers lives, real lives, the lives of real
24 families, and I know most of us here appreciate
25 that. I got a call from--as I did from 2003,

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2 couples would call me, can you help us, how can we
3 get married, and what's the recognition of
4 marriage. Edie Windsor and Thea Spyer were one
5 such couple and when Edie called, she said that
6 there was an issue, that Thea Spyer, her lover,
7 her partner of 40 years was quadriplegic and had
8 been informed by their physician that she only had
9 some months to live and they could not wait for
10 the state of New York to grant them the right to
11 marry, and could I help them. And I did and we
12 arranged a marriage, and I traveled with them to
13 Toronto.

14 The judge in the city of Toronto,
15 because of his status, was able to come to a hotel
16 room in the airport to welcome them and greet them
17 and give them this human experience of being
18 treated equally. And it was an extraordinary
19 moment for Edie Windsor and Thea Spyer to see
20 these New Yorkers having to go to Canada for this
21 simple right.

22 I'll just finish by saying Thea
23 died in February 2009. Prior to her death, at a
24 very personal moment, she thanked me for helping
25 them to have this experience and exchange vows and

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2 rings and are so proud of their marriage. I
3 contacted filmmaker friends of mine who have since
4 made a documentary called Edia and Thea, and
5 encourage anyone who has doubts about this issue
6 to even just Google YouTube Edie and Thea.

7 Another couple contacted me in 2009
8 and Chuck and Pedro from Woodhaven. Chuck called
9 me to say could I help them, they didn't know what
10 to do, but Pedro was just diagnosed with Stage IV
11 cancer, had full-blown AIDS, they're both disabled
12 men, and needed help. So it's not so easy just
13 get on even the Metro or a plane, do you know what
14 I mean? There are disabled couples, there are
15 elderly, there are frail people, so it's not
16 always easy, I want just to understand.

17 They called me and wonderful news
18 was that Connecticut had just extended marriage to
19 same-sex couples and, of course, so many New
20 Yorkers are now hopping on the metro and returning
21 with marriage certificates, Chuck and Pedro were
22 one such couple. A local Stanford paper was there
23 and just asked Pedro, what did he think, how did
24 he feel coming to Stanford as New Yorkers for
25 marriage. He just gave him one line, he said, I

1
2 know now I will die a happy man, this is all I
3 ever wanted. They were together 21 years, and
4 Pedro did, and Chuck has thanked me ever since.

5 And, of course, I'm here and I'm
6 really glad that and urge the amendment and I'm
7 glad that this information that we've provided,
8 and many of us have, will now be available to any
9 New Yorkers who will then be able to make a
10 decision about domestic partnership and marriage
11 and know that when they come back here, that the
12 city and state will recognize them as much as is
13 legally possible.

14 And I hope that all of us will do
15 everything we can to continue to work for the day
16 when in fact we'll be back here and being able to
17 say that there's no longer a two-tier system, but
18 equal respect for our relationships and rights and
19 recognition. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
21 much, I share your mixed emotions and I bet people
22 will still call you. Thank you.

23 JEANNETTE VARGAS: We'll refer them
24 to the Council.

25 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Go ahead.

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2 JEANNETTE VARGAS: Good afternoon,
3 my name is Jeannette--

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]
5 Pull it towards you, if you don't mind, if you
6 can.

7 JEANNETTE VARGAS: Let me see if I
8 can.

9 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you.

10 JEANNETTE VARGAS: That better?

11 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yeah, perfect,
12 thank you.

13 JEANNETTE VARGAS: My name is
14 Jeannette Vargas and I'm here today on behalf of
15 the LGBT Rights Committee of the Association of
16 the Bar of the City of New York. And on behalf of
17 the City Bar, the Committee voices its support for
18 the proposed enactment of Section 3-207.1 of the
19 Administrative Code which would require the city
20 clerk to provide the public with information
21 regarding New York State's recognition of
22 marriages between same-sex couples performed in
23 other domestic or international jurisdictions.

24 While the state of New York has
25 traditionally been a leader in the areas of

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2 equality and civil rights, we unfortunately trail
3 behind other jurisdictions in the important area
4 of marriage equality. There are, however, five
5 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, and
6 seven other countries that have full marriage
7 equality, and more jurisdictions are rapidly
8 proceeding toward it. Until such time as the New
9 York State legislature finally enacts marriage
10 equality legislation, it is vitally important that
11 same-sex couples residing within New York City be
12 informed as to the other options that are
13 available to them and, specifically, the fact that
14 they can potentially be married in other
15 jurisdictions, domestic and international, and
16 that pursuant to common law, executive order, and
17 judicial decisions, marriages between same-sex
18 couples performed in accordance with the laws of
19 such other jurisdictions will be accorded full
20 recognition by both the state and city of New
21 York.

22 In the area of recognition of
23 validly executed marriages between same-sex
24 couples, in particular, the state of the law is
25 constantly in flux and misinformation among the

1
2 public is rampant. Yet New York State's domestic
3 laws denied unmarried same-sex couples at least
4 1,324 legal rights and duties that married
5 different-sex couples currently receive.

6 Accordingly, it is essential that same-sex couples
7 in New York City be provided with accurate
8 information regarding their right to have their
9 validly performed marriages accorded the full
10 panoply of rights under state and local law.

11 New York's more than 50,000 same-
12 sex couples, like their opposite sex counterparts,
13 confront life's challenges. Many have modest
14 incomes, approximately 20% are raising children
15 under the age of 18, and more than 25% have one
16 disabled partner, as we just heard from the prior
17 testifier, 32% of individuals in these couples are
18 nonwhite, and the inability of this long-term
19 couples to marry in the state of New York has real
20 and devastating consequences for these couples.

21 For example, in death, without inheritance rights,
22 the surviving partner can be thrown out of the
23 family home; upon relationship dissolution,
24 without the right to maintenance, custody, or
25 visitation, the lives of a partner and the

1 couple's children may be turned upside down.

2
3 Marriage provides the legal
4 stability that many couples, lacking financial
5 resources, knowledge, or willingness to plan for
6 the future, fail to create on their own. Half or
7 more of the general public has failed to prepare
8 many crucial documents: Only 53% of New York
9 State residents, for example, have a health care
10 proxy; nationwide, only about 40 or 50% have
11 wills; 15 to 42% have living wills; and a mere 5%
12 have prenuptial agreements. So this presumption
13 that people will take care of these arrangements
14 through private contractual arrangements that
15 seems to inure the debate currently on marriage
16 equality is just false.

17 Despite entering into valid
18 marriages in other jurisdictions, same-sex married
19 couples in New York face selective recognition
20 within New York as well as a confusing array of
21 relationship recognition rules outside of New
22 York. The unfortunate reality is that same-sex
23 couples are not adequately or consistently
24 protected by New York's piecemeal recognition of
25 same-sex relationships over the last two decades

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2 by statutes, executive orders, regulations, and
3 court decisions.

4 Now despite the efforts of
5 governors, certain state officials, and local
6 executives of both parties, the lack of clear
7 legislative action has and will continue to
8 generate decades of litigation, complex private
9 domestic partnership agreements, and scattershot
10 legislation of regulations meant to establish
11 inheritance, divorce, child custody, pension and
12 tort rights under a range of relationship
13 recognition rules.

14 For these reasons, the Committee
15 supports the City Council's proposed amendment to
16 the Administrative Code of New York City requiring
17 the city clerk to provide the public with
18 information regarding the legal rights that will
19 be accorded to marriages between same-sex couples
20 performed in other domestic or international
21 jurisdictions.

22 This provision is no substitute for
23 the enactment of state legislation affording same-
24 sex couples residing in New York with full
25 marriage equality, but the proposed amendment does

1
2 represent an important step forward towards fully
3 protecting the rights of LGBT residents of New
4 York City and providing them with the information
5 they need to protect themselves.

6 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
7 much. Go right ahead.

8 CATHY MARINO-THOMAS: My name is
9 Cathy Marino-Thomas, and I'm the Board President
10 for Marriage Equality New York. We're a statewide
11 grassroots organization working for the right to
12 civil marriage for all families. Marriage
13 Equality New York has been working on this issue
14 for more than 12 years, making us the oldest LGBT
15 organization in the state working on this issue.
16 I thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

17 Marriage Equality New York strongly
18 advocates for the implementation of this
19 initiative. There are substantial amounts of
20 confusion regarding laws and rights related to the
21 various forms of relationship recognition
22 available for all same-sex families. This
23 initiative would be the first step towards
24 rectifying that confusion. We at Marriage
25 Equality New York feel it's extremely important

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2 that the City clarify the fact that only a handful
3 of rights are afforded to a couple seeking a New
4 York City domestic partnership. Among those would
5 bereavement leave and child care leave for city
6 employees only, this does not cover anyone that
7 does not work for the city; visitation in a city
8 correctional or juvenile detention facility;
9 visitation in facilities operated by New York City
10 Health and Hospital Corps, not privately run
11 hospitals or care centers; eligibility to qualify
12 as a family member to be added to the New York
13 City Housing Authority as an existing tenant;
14 health benefits provided by the City of New York
15 only, this does not cover health benefits provided
16 by private corporations, state or federal
17 agencies.

18 In addition to educating couples on
19 the limitations of domestic partnerships, we feel
20 it's important to educate couples on New York
21 State's recognition of out-of-state marriages.
22 With marriage come over 1,000 rights that are
23 somewhat portable between states and countries
24 with marriage recognition for all families. We
25 feel the public needs to be made aware of the

1
2 locations of such--that such marriages are legally
3 performed. In addition, we feel the general
4 public is not aware that New York State honors
5 these marriages.

6 Finally, we would advocate that
7 information be added referencing the inequities of
8 even these marriage licenses. Some of those
9 inequities are the inability of a legal name
10 change when a marriage was performed in another
11 state. Same-sex couples currently bear the
12 expense of hiring a lawyer and go through the
13 legal process of name change here in New York
14 since there is no New York State marriage license
15 to fill in the blank. Same-sex couples will have
16 to keep a copy of their out-of-state marriage
17 license with them at all times as proof of
18 marriage, since they cannot register with the
19 state.

20 Since there is no New York State
21 law to protect same-sex families, if any of the
22 over 1,300 rights are denied or contested, same-
23 sex families would have to sue to obtain these
24 rights.

25 In closing, I would like you to

1
2 imagine what it would be like to be a couple in
3 love wanting to validate their commitment through
4 a civil ceremony. You arrive at the city clerk's
5 office and pay your fees for a domestic
6 partnership because you think it's the same as
7 obtaining a marriage license, you say your I dos,
8 just like any other couple wanting to be committed
9 to each other, you leave the office, and you're
10 protect it, right? Well then you start to live in
11 the real world and you discover that you only have
12 a small fraction of the rights and obligations
13 that marriage licenses give you. You find that
14 when you leave New York City to visit your
15 relatives in Westchester, Long Island, Middletown,
16 Buffalo, you have absolutely no rights at all.
17 Wouldn't you have wanted somebody to tell you
18 that? Wouldn't you have wanted someone to tell
19 you that all you had to do was drive to
20 Connecticut or Massachusetts and you would be able
21 to obtain a marriage license to protect your loved
22 one?

23 With that simple ride, you would
24 have secured over 700 state-level rights bestowed
25 on a couple with a marriage license, you would've

1
2 gained the right to fight over--to fight for over
3 1,100 rights at a federal level, and not even have
4 to have another ceremony.

5 I would strongly express my
6 commitment to make marriage equality a reality in
7 New York State and I advocate that this Committee
8 pass this initiative and implement it immediately.
9 Thank you very much for your time.

10 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you both
11 for phenomenal testimony, all four. I really
12 appreciate it, a lot of work went into it, a lot
13 of thought, and it highlights every issue
14 possible. Thank you.

15 CATHY MARINO-THOMAS: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I believe the
17 city clerk has arrived, would you like to join us,
18 sir? Thank you. Thank you both very much, that
19 was great. [Long pause] Thank you very much for
20 joining us, whenever you'd like to begin.

21 MICHAEL MCSWEENEY: Good afternoon,
22 Chairperson Brewer and Members of the Committee on
23 Governmental Operations. I am Michael McSweeney,
24 City Clerk of the City of New York and Clerk of
25 the City Council, with me is Patrick Synmoie

1 [phonetic], our General Counsel. We are here to
2 testify in support of Intro number 260-A.
3

4 Let me first tell you for those of
5 you who are unaware of the invaluable function our
6 agency fulfills a bit of history. The Office of
7 the City Clerk is one of the oldest offices in New
8 York City government with beginnings traceable to
9 the inception of the town New Amsterdam.

10 Historically, the city clerk has played a dual
11 role as the Clerk of the City Council and as the
12 Clerk of the municipal corporation known as the
13 City of New York.

14 As the Clerk of the City Council,
15 the main function of the clerk is to attest to all
16 laws enacted by the City Council; the clerk also
17 attests to all legislation desired by and
18 affecting the city requiring concurrent action by
19 the state legislature; the clerk of the Council is
20 also responsible for keeping the transcripts of
21 the proceedings of the City Council.

22 As the City Clerk, the clerk
23 attests to leases and deeds of city property,
24 grants, agreements, bonds, tax notes, and other
25 forms of obligation of the city. The city clerk

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2 has charge of all papers and documents of the city
3 that include Executive Administrative Orders of
4 the Mayor, Certificates of Judicial Appointments
5 by the Mayor, Oaths of Office of city employees,
6 City Marshal bonds, and Referendum Petitions.

7 Other duties of the city clerk include the
8 qualification of Commissioners of Deeds and the
9 Certification to the Board of Elections of all
10 judicial vacancies.

11 In addition, the city clerk
12 administers the city's Lobbying Law. Under that
13 law, all lobbyists must register annually and
14 submit six periodic reports, clients must submit
15 an annual report. Part of our duties is
16 conducting random audits of these reports. The
17 Lobbying Bureau provides information to the public
18 regarding the content of lobbyists' filings, as
19 well as training for lobbyists and their
20 organizations on the law. Last year, 1,621
21 statements of registration were filed by
22 approximately 357 lobbyist entities.

23 The city clerk is authorized under
24 New York State Domestic Relations Law to issue
25 marriage licenses and to solemnize marriages. It

1
2 is probably for this reason we are best known. In
3 addition, our Marriage Bureau provides
4 registration of marriage officiates, copies and
5 amendments of marriage records issued by the city
6 clerk since 1930 and Certificates of Non-
7 impediment.

8 Another closely related
9 responsibility comes from Title III of the New
10 York City Administrative Code, Section 3-240
11 through 245, which mandates the city clerk's
12 maintenance of the Domestic Partnership Registry.
13 Originally intended for nontraditional couples, it
14 is heavily utilized by the city's homeless
15 population. Actually, you may have seen some of
16 the recent media coverage we received because
17 starting June 3rd, 2010, we started performing
18 domestic partner ceremonies to offer a measure of
19 dignity for couples wanting a ceremony.

20 Last year, we issued 65,042
21 marriage licenses and solemnized 39,524 marriages;
22 in 2008, we issued 66,669 marriage licenses and
23 solemnized 40,229 marriages. It's fair to say we
24 issue an average of 65,500 licenses annually.
25 Since the establishment of the registry, over

1
2 47,000 domestic partnerships have been registered.
3 While that works out to an average of roughly
4 2,800 domestic partnership registrations each
5 year, the number of registrations has risen
6 steadily each year with a total of close to 5,500
7 domestic partnerships registered in 2009, the
8 highest of any year.

9 The historic role of the city clerk
10 is to implement functions designated by the
11 Charter and the executive and legislative branches
12 of the city and state government. We will,
13 therefore, swiftly implement Intro number 260-A
14 when it is enacted into law.

15 We think it is very helpful
16 measure. Let me explain, though our purview
17 really only extends to the marriage licenses we
18 issue, we often receive phone calls regarding
19 validity of marriage licenses, same-sex marriages,
20 and so forth since most people presume that we are
21 the experts on marriage in New York City. In
22 fact, this information on the website might be
23 helpful in preempting the calls we receive about
24 same-sex marriages. We want well-informed
25 customers making educated decisions about life

1
2 changing events and providing this information
3 dovetails nicely with the customer-friendly
4 atmosphere we work very hard to promote.

5 We are actually used to handing out
6 information. Pursuant to Chapter 46, Section
7 1057-A of the Charter the City of New York, we
8 distribute voter registration forms and, pursuant
9 to Chapter 47, Section 1069 of the Charter of the
10 City of New York, we distribute Public Health
11 Insurance Program Option pamphlets, handing out
12 another pamphlet would not be burdensome to our
13 office.

14 In closing, we thank you for the
15 opportunity to provide testimony regarding this
16 legislation. We further applaud your efforts to
17 educate the public about marriage laws and we
18 thank you for working to improve the quality of
19 life for all New Yorkers. I assure you that my
20 staff and I look forward to doing our part.

21 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very
22 much for your testimony, thank you very much for
23 your service at the City Council meetings and all
24 the work in between.

25 And I think this is a good idea for

1
2 lots of reasons, I appreciate the fact that you
3 agree. One of the earlier testifier pointed out
4 that, without this information people, are lost
5 and call different sources in the community and it
6 would be much more preferable to have it someplace
7 that is central and obviously much more
8 transparent.

9 Are there any operational
10 difficulties you see in implementing the
11 provisions of this legislation or any way that you
12 would like to change it? Does it seem like it
13 would fit what you're able to do in terms of the
14 office?

15 MICHAEL MCSWEENEY: Patrick, I
16 don't know if you want to say anything about that.

17 PATRICK SYNMOIE: Well the ones--

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: [Interposing]
19 Please introduce yourself.

20 PATRICK SYNMOIE: This is Patrick
21 Synmoie, I'm the General Counsel for the City
22 Clerk's Office, thanks for inviting us to testify
23 today.

24 The one comment we had, we made
25 earlier and it was taken into account, so we

1
2 really don't foresee there will be a huge
3 logistical problem.

4 The practical fact is that every
5 time there's a change in one of the jurisdictions,
6 it's pretty national news, so I think it won't be
7 difficult to stay on top of that. I mean,
8 obviously, the only practical impact that it will
9 have on the website, we can simply change it.

10 In terms of pamphlets, we probably
11 will have to print new pamphlets and that's
12 probably the one expense that we probably foresee.

13 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right.
14 Thank you both very much, I appreciate that you
15 came out. And I think everyone appreciates that
16 this will make life more transparent, we still
17 want more in terms of what Albany is hopefully
18 going to pass, but this is a good step in the
19 right direction.

20 And just for the public to know,
21 we're not going to be voting on this bill today,
22 so many of my colleagues are in the budget
23 negotiations, but we will find a time in the very
24 near future to have a vote on it with the other
25 members of the committee and then bring it to the

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full Council. So thank you very much.

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MICHAEL MCSWEENEY: Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very

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much, this meeting is adjourned. [Off mic]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Tammy Wittman, 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.

Signature Tammy Wittman

Date July 6, 2010