

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS

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September 9, 2021
Start: 12:01 p.m.
Recess: 12:05 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Eric Dinowitz
CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Paul Vallone
Mathieu Eugene
Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Alan N. Maisel

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

2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay. Good
3 morning. I am Eric Dinowitz, Chair of the Veterans
4 Committee here with Council member Maisel, Ampry-
5 Samuel, and Eugene. Today, we are having the City
6 Council's Committee on Veterans. The committee will
7 vote on proposed Introduction 0647-A sponsored by
8 Council member Eugene which would require the
9 Department of Veterans Services to coordinate with
10 the local veterans services organizations to
11 establish a hotline that would provide additional
12 peers support services to veterans in need of mental
13 health assistance. Peers support services are a
14 valuable tool to help both transitioning service
15 members and members who have been removed from
16 service lead fulfilling and productive post service
17 lives. It is my hope that the legislation we are
18 hearing today will help provide New York City
19 veterans with the critical support and information
20 they need. Thank you very much to the advocates and
21 impacted individuals who brought attention to these
22 issues and helped shape this legislation. At this
23 time, I would like to turn to my colleague, Council
24 member Eugene to make a statement on the bill.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: thank you very
3 much, Mr. Chair. And I want to also thank all my
4 colleagues and I Veterans Committee for their
5 support. My name is Mathieu Eugene and I'm very
6 proud to support Intro 647-A. This legislation
7 requires that the Department of Veterans Services to
8 coordinate with a veterans service organization to
9 establish a hotline to provide peer support services
10 and information to veterans. As the former Chair of
11 the Veterans Committee on Veterans and a longtime
12 supporter of local veterans organizations, I am well
13 aware of the horrible situation of the veterans when
14 they get back from war and also their welfare of many
15 of our service members also who return home with the
16 mental and emotional situation and baggage of being
17 in a war zone. These symptoms take their toll on the
18 mental health of our veterans and make their return
19 to civilian life difficult and even dangerous. It is
20 an unfair burden on both the individuals, the
21 families, and friends, all of whom want the best for
22 our returning soldiers. Also those that made the
23 utmost sacrifice to defend our liberty and our
24 freedom and to give us the opportunity to enjoy what
25 we are enjoying as civilians, selected officials, as

2 Americans, I believe that we know them a great deal
3 of gratitude. By creating this program we will make
4 a very important step towards our effort to make sure
5 that, and they come back home, they can receive the
6 services that they deserve. Thank you so very much,
7 Mr. Chair, and also thank you to all my colleagues.
8 And I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you, Council
10 member. And thank you for your work. I think a lot
11 of veterans will be helped by this bill. Would any
12 other Council member like to make a comment or speak
13 on the bill? Yes. Council member Ampry-Samuel.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I just
15 want to say, you know, thank you so much for the
16 bill. Everyone knows that I am a former military
17 spouse. Why has been served in both Iraq and
18 Afghanistan and news now a disabled vet and I know
19 how important it is in this city to make sure that we
20 have information and services readily available to
21 our veterans sometimes get overlooked. So, I really
22 do appreciate this bill and thank you so much just on
23 behalf of my family, as well. Thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Mr. Chair, with
25 your permission? I would be remiss if I didn't take

2 the opportunity to thank also my chair, Council
3 member Kalman Yeger and also all the staff from the
4 veterans committee who worked hard to make this vote
5 possible today. Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Will the clerk
7 called the roll?

8 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
9 committee clerk, roll call the Committee on Veterans.
10 Proposed Introduction 647-A. Chair Dinowitz?

11 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yes.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Eugene?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Yes.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Maisel?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Ampry-Samuel?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AMPRY-SAMUEL: I vote
18 aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of four in the
20 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
21 abstentions, the item has been adopted by the
22 committee.

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: This hearing is now
24 adjourned.

25 [gavel]

1 COMMITTEE ON VETERANS

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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 September 13, 2014