

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

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HELD AT: Remote Hearing - Virtual Room 1

B E F O R E: Adrienne Adams  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Justin L. Brannan  
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Robert F. Holden  
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## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Jumaane Williams  
Public Advocate

Danielle Pemberton  
Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiative NYPD

Kristine Ryan  
Deputy Director OMB

Steven Hellman  
Deputy Inspector

Francis Giordano

Lola Olufunmilola  
Deputy Chief

Oleg Chernyavsky  
Deputy Commissioner of Legal Matters

Michael Clarke  
Director of Legislative Affairs

Marcos Soler  
Executive Director of MOCJ

Theresa Tobin  
NYPD

Ileana Mendez-Penate  
Communities For United For Police Reform

Quadira Coles  
Girls for Gender Equity

Andrew Case  
Latino Justice

Jared Trujillo  
New York Civil Liberties Union

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

Isabelle Leyva  
New York Civil Liberties Union

Mateo Guerrero  
Make the Road

Jennifer  
Make the Road

Veronica  
Make the Road

Cathy Garcia  
Make the Road

Jordan Otis  
Center for Court Innovation

Rohini Singh  
Advocates for Children

Shan Huang  
Womankind

Andy Bowen  
Sex Workers Project

Lynly Egyes  
Transgender Law Center

Elisa Crespo  
New Pride Agenda

Melissa Broudo  
Decriminalize Sex Work

Peggy Herrera  
CCIT-NYC

Nina Loshkajian  
Surveillance Technology Oversight Project

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

Maria Danzilo  
Democrat Candidate for City Council

Towaki Komatsu

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Good morning and welcome to today's New York City Council Remote Hearing on Public Safety. For verification purposes, would all panelists please turn on your videos. I repeat, all panelists please turn on your videos. Thank you. To minimize disruption, please place all electronic devices to vibrate or silent mode. Thank you. If you wish to submit testimony, you may do so at [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). I repeat [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). Thank you for your kind cooperation. Chair Adams, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you for joining our virtual hearing today, and thank you for hanging in with us as we were experiencing some technical difficulties by some of our panelists this morning. I am Council Member Adrienne Adams and I am the Chair of the Committee on Public Safety. I would also like to acknowledge that we've been joined by my colleague Council Members Powers, Holden, Brannan, Miller, Rosenthal, Riley, and Cabrera. I believe we have the Public Advocate as well. Public Advocate Jumaane Williams is with us as well. Today, we will discuss the very important topic of how the Council and the Administration should assess the scope of

responsibilities currently asked of the NYPD in order to collaboratively re-imagine how to best promote public safety for all New Yorkers. Following the 2020 death of George Floyd, one of the many tragic incidents of unarmed black men being killed by police responding to relatively low-level misconduct, unprecedented civil unrest emerged in cities and states across America calling for systemic reform of Police Departments nationwide, and a shift in how localities approach achieving public safety. Seeking significant shifts in both criminal justice and broader social policies, activists argue that prior attempts at police reform such as increased training and other oversight measures have proven unsuccessful at preventing ongoing incidents of public abuse and brutality. Advocates instead focused protest demands on the need to reduce police budget, decrease unnecessary police/civilian encounters, and reinvest funds into non-police health and safety solutions. Recognizing the historic significance of these unprecedented protests, the council embraced efforts to right-size the NYPD and reduce harmful cuts to social services as proposed by the Administration to meet budget shortfalls caused by the COVID-19

1 pandemic. Following weeks of this difficult  
2 negotiation, the Council and Administration agreed on  
3 a budget for Fiscal Year 2021 that aimed to  
4 responsibly shrink the NYPD budget and provide  
5 measures that begin to recognize a shift in how the  
6 City approaches policing. These efforts included an  
7 agreement for almost one billion dollars in proposed  
8 budget reductions for the NYPD, including 484 million  
9 dollars in cuts, 354 million dollars in shifts to  
10 other agencies that could better carry out the  
11 respective roles, and 162 million dollars in shifts  
12 of associated fringe costs such as healthcare and  
13 pension costs. Significant sources of agreed upon  
14 cuts and savings were as follows: Permanently reduce  
15 the Department's uniformed headcount by 1,171  
16 officers, removing NYPD from homeless outreach,  
17 reducing NYPD overtime spending by 352 million  
18 dollars, removing school crossing guards from NYPD,  
19 returning control of school safety to the Department  
20 of Education. Since the adoption of the Fiscal 2021  
21 budget, the Administration has implemented some of  
22 the agreed upon reduction while other aspects of the  
23 proposed fiscal plan have remained unfulfilled. At  
24 today's hearing the Committee is eager to hear from  
25

the Administration regarding ongoing efforts to re-evaluate the scope of responsibilities currently entrusted to the NYPD. The Committee seeks an update from the Administration on implementation of agreed upon reforms included as part of the 2020 budget agreement and the 2021 police reform and reinvention collaborative plan. The Committee is interested in learning more about the Administration's efforts to expand health-based crisis response program such are Cure Violence and the crisis management system to empower community driven solutions to safely address societal issues that historically have been handled by police. And finally, the committee seeks to examine areas of enforcement or outreach currently within the NYPD purview that could safely be entrusted to other agencies or community-based solutions. Ultimately, recognizing a need for meaningful reforms of policing, while remaining committed to ensuring a police force equipped to protect all New Yorkers. I hope this conversation can bring all parties closer to an understanding of a productive path forward, a path forward that acknowledges [sic] missteps [sic] of the past, the realities of the present, and a vision for a better



future. To achieve that vision, we must challenge ourselves to find common ground with those from different backgrounds or ideological beliefs and work collectively to understand where different viewpoints arise and strive to achieve policies that serve us all. With that, I call on Public Advocate Jumaane Williams for his statement.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Peace and blessings everyone. Can everyone hear me? Thank you so much. As was mentioned, my name is Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate of the City of New York. Thank you, Chair Adams, for not only leading this hearing, but for continuing to create the space where these kinds of discussions can happen. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I don't want to-- I cannot overstate the importance of this conversation, the importance of always having this conversation as a focal point with any discussion around policing and public safety. As was mentioned last year, we saw people putting their voices in the streets. The conversation I think often got too myopic. There is no conversation that is going to be meaningful about money [inaudible] the money. Any kind of reforms, which are needed but by themselves

will never get to where we want to get unless we have a conversation about what public safety is and how we archive public safety as law enforcement with a partner, but not the only partner. Too often NYPD is equalized as public safety, when that's not true. And so I want to begin with what I always say and sometimes gets left out. Many of us who have had this conversation, myself included, understand the critical role the NYPD plays be providing [inaudible] solutions to criminal situations. Just this morning we saw our police intervene in a mass shooting that prevented, perhaps, other people from getting shot, but what we want to do is make sure that the shootings don't occur in the first place. So we know that policing by itself cannot address all the components that make up personal and community wellbeing. For too long our city has simply traded [sic] public safety with police in not just the city but our state and our country. Whenever we are confronted with a problem of any sort, particularly if we're having trouble trying to figure out how to solve, our solution is very often to throw police in [sic]. It's unfair to the community. It's actually unfair to the police officers who are unequipped to

1 solve every problem. We see this dynamic [inaudible]  
2 budget, which then allocates almost 11 billion  
3 dollars to the NYPD, when included-- what included  
4 essential allocated costs despite other essential  
5 services consistently falling victim to [inaudible].  
6 This excessive emphasis on policing has consequences.  
7 Societal issues are often worsened as they're root  
8 causes in going [inaudible]. Communities of more  
9 color are also subjective to hyper surveillance that  
10 increases the likelihood of discriminatory policing,  
11 privacy violations and overuses of force. The more  
12 people are funneled into the parts [sic] of the  
13 system, which in turn creates problems like the  
14 current humanitarian crisis on Rikers Island. I'm  
15 grateful this committee has convened to reduce and to  
16 convene to discuss the reduction of responsibilities  
17 of the NYPD. With the aim of advancing this  
18 conversation, I'd like to identify areas in which  
19 targeted [inaudible] are focused [inaudible] while  
20 again, understanding that our law enforcement have  
21 important [inaudible]. The Mayor's Office of Gun  
22 Violence Prevention which includes but is not solely  
23 the Crisis Management System, is one of the City's  
24 most useful resources in preventing shootings before  
25

they happen. However, the impact is [inaudible].

The upcoming city budget should dramatically increase

the Mayor's Office of Gun Violence Prevention,

including other programs that are there, including

CMS this coming fall so that we can establish

programs in some new sites expanding existing

catchment [sic] areas, hiring more staff, minimizing

employee turnover, overlay new programs like the

Advance Peace [sic] model that is going to be

[inaudible]. We have also seen the importance, the

role of programs like youth-- summer youth jobs play

as a whole and when targeted with these programs in

place that identify the people who most need it. The

schools [sic] NYPD currently assigns over 5,000

School Safety Agents and almost 200 uniformed NYPD

officers [inaudible] the schools who are in power to

detain, arrest, to support [sic] summonses to

students who are often the first point of contact

when there's issues. The [inaudible] approach is to

discipline children, predominantly, those of more

color, even when you look at the same behaviors in

students that are not of more color has created an

atmosphere of fear for many students in school

hallways that is not conducive to learning and

creates a pipeline to the criminal justice system.

We have to work on a structure that begins to replace the over-reliance of the police presence and infrastructure with a healing center restorative justice experience would keep students physical safe by supporting them to build positive relationship to solve conflict and address many of the social and emotional stress that result in students acting out.

The next budget should very much consider and it must continue to increase the number of school counselors, social workers, [inaudible]. I don't want my words to be misconstrued. We cannot allow [inaudible] with school safety agents, including mostly women, women of more color, to be fired in this process.

Homelessness and housing-- being homeless is not a crime, but instead of providing targeted support that addresses the root of the problem, the City and State have increased the role of the NYPD and the MTA with strategies to address homelessness in recent years.

This expansion of policing for the social service sector is outside of this agency's mission to enforce the law. Law enforcement agencies should be removed from providing primary homeless services. This includes ending punitive sweeps in the harmful subway

diversion program. Moving forward, our focus must be providing permanent housing solutions and supportive services. Mental health each year, 911 receives nearly 200,000 emergency calls involving individuals with mental health crisis. The City must do more to prevent this crisis occurring by strengthening local community-based mental health infrastructure, especially in communities of more color and building our infrastructure to begin with. When crisis occurs we must implement it to citywide non-police response in order to improve services and minimize hospitalization and justice involvement. But currently, her [sic] program is severely insufficient in achieving the goal. It should be overhauled in favor of systematic [sic] [inaudible] with dedicated [inaudible] center of social workers, mental health careers, and EMS and first responders minimizes NYPD's initial involvement. In this names, I encourage the Council to pass off the office's bill Intro 2222 and to continue making progress in Intro 2210, Council Member Ayala's bill, including addressing issues in the bill language raised in Committee of Mental Health [inaudible] this year. In transportation, the tragic continuation of traffic

1 violence [sic] that demonstrates that the police-  
2 centered approach to street safety is not working how  
3 we want it. The City should build on the passage of  
4 Intro. 2224, Council Member Rodriguez, by fully  
5 transferring traffic enforcement responsibility from  
6 NYPD to DOT which [inaudible] responsible themselves  
7 [sic] [inaudible] to NYPD 1996. We must be mindful  
8 of those workers, their pay, and how they feel when  
9 doing the job. We think about their safety as well  
10 while we do this. Our office also supports ending  
11 the city punitive approach to public transit fare  
12 evasion. This approach does not make public  
13 transportation safer. It simply criminalizes  
14 predominantly low income New Yorkers of more color.  
15 It also keeps the resources of police that we have in  
16 the wrong spaces. Instead of walking around the  
17 train, train's platform of the train station, they  
18 are focused on people hopping the train. The City  
19 should instead double spending on fair fares so that  
20 it covers 100 percent of fare costs for the lowest  
21 income New Yorkers. This would significantly  
22 minimize fare evasion, [inaudible] and deliver  
23 positive economic impact, but also prevent incessant  
24 calls for more policing in the train station when we  
25

haven't really assessed where the police are right now. Sex work-- Lastly, the City must move towards a public centered approach to sex work. Our office supports ending the NYPD Vice Unit which lacks both accountability, leaving more importantly, effectiveness. We continue to decriminalize sex work. The District Attorney should begin to consider refusing many of the cases that come before. Our office additionally calls for the City to fund the resources that sex workers need to engage in their work safety including in access to rapid STD testing, individual incentive economic and employment services. Also, the NYPD's use of technology must be fully transparent, non-discriminatory, respectful of privacy rights, and limited to necessary use. The recent release of reports related to the Post Act demonstrate that the NYPD as amassed military grade [inaudible] technology that fails to meet this criteria. New York City should mimic cities like Seattle and Oakland by requiring the City Council to approve police technology purchases. Our office has engaged with Racial Justice Commission to allow the public to vote on these measures [inaudible] question. NYPD must also cease all collaborations



with ICE. The greater concern that NYPD has confirmed that ICE agent [inaudible] security police precincts during protest following the murder of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. The collaboration occurred in violation of New York City's own Sanctuary City status without any transparency to the public or City Council. The NYPD also supported ICE in deportation operations, including the attempt of deportation of Ravi Ragbir [sp?], which I was involved in. This action must be investigated fully by the Office of Inspector General and the responsibility must-- and those responsible be held accountable. Additional oversight measures must be put in place to ensure that NYPD does not repeat this collaboration of the sort again. Thank you so much for the consideration, for your time, and more importantly, for this very important conversation with everyone at the table trying to figure out how we can best provide public safety for all New Yorkers in a way that is respectful to all New Yorkers. And I'll just add, that in many of these services that we point out, even police officers themselves when we speak to them don't want to be responding to all of

1  
2 them, because they also note that they don't have the  
3 means to fix it. Thank you so much.

4 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you, Public  
5 Advocate Williams for your statement today. With  
6 that, I will now turn it over to our moderator,  
7 Community Counsel Josh

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair  
9 Adams. I'm Josh Kingsley, Counsel to the Public  
10 Safety Committee of the New York City Council.  
11 Before we begin testimony, I want to remind everyone  
12 that you will be on mute until you are called on to  
13 testify when you will be unmuted by the host. I will  
14 be calling on panelists to testify. Please listen to  
15 your name to be called. I will be periodically  
16 answering [sic] who is the next panelist. First  
17 panelists to give testimony will be representatives  
18 for the New York City Police Department and the  
19 Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. Testifying for  
20 the NYPD will be Danielle Pemberton, Deputy  
21 Commissioner of Strategic Initiative; Deputy  
22 Commissioner Kristine Ryan; Inspector Steven Hellman;  
23 Francis Giordano, Deputy Chief of Crime Strategies,  
24 Crime Control Strategies; Lola Obe, Deputy Chief of  
25 School Safety Division; Oleg; Chernyavsky, Assistant

Deputy Commissioner of Legal Matters; Michael Clarke, the Director of Legislative Affairs. Additionally, we have Executive Director Marcos Soler from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, as well. I will call on each of you when it's your turn to speak. During the hearing, if Council Members would like to ask any questions of the Administration or specific panelists, please use the Zoom raise hand function and will call on you in order. I will now call on the representatives in the Administration to testify. Before we begin, I will administer the oath. Members of the Administration, we'll call on each of you individually for a response. Please raise your right hand. Can we be sure that they are unmuted as well? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before these committees and to respond honestly to Council Member questions? We will begin with Deputy Commissioner Pemberton [sp?]?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PEMBERTON: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner Ryan?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great. Inspector Hellman?

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DEPUTY INSPECTOR HELLMAN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner

Giordano?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GIORDANO: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner

Obe?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OBE: I do. I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Chernyavsky?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CHERNYAVSKY: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Clarke?

MICHAEL CLARKE: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And Mr. Soler?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: I do as well.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, great. Thank  
you. You may begin everyone.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PEMBERTON: Good  
morning Chair Adams and members of the Council.  
Apologies for some of the technical difficulties we  
had earlier. I'm Danielle Pemberton, Deputy  
Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives for the New  
York City Police Department. I'm joined today by the  
Police Commissioner Shea, a late addition, Chief  
Tobin, Deputy Commissioner Ryan, Assistant Deputy  
Commissioner Oleg Chernyavsky, Deputy Chief Francis

Giordano, Deputy Chief Olufunmilola Obe, Inspector Steven, Director Michael Clarke, as [sic] my colleagues from the Office of Criminal Justice. On behalf of the Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to discuss the roles and responsibilities of the New York City Police Department. The city and the nation are currently grappling with the proper role of law enforcement in a modern society. In any discussions around this issue, public safety must be paramount. Part of the NYPD's mission is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all those who live in, work in, or visit our city. This is the guiding principle behind the Department's work. To protect and to serve are words associated with law enforcement, and these words apply to the men and women of the NYPD. Our dedicated professionals, [inaudible] to our school safety agents, from our traffic enforcement agents, to our 911 operators, and all manner [inaudible] and uniformed personnel in between embody these words to the fullest. The NYPD has always been prepared to take on any task to ensure the safety and improve the quality of life of people in this city. this department will continue to answer the call of those

who need us, whether it be working with community to help paint over graffiti, to find funding and using our resources to construct recreational areas in communities that need it most, dedicating staff to ensure safety in our city's homeless shelters when this council has asked us to do so, addressing street homeless and both legal and illegal vending issues in response to concerns raised by members of the community. Currently, [inaudible] we assist the Department of Correction in providing a safe environment [inaudible] to name a few. While the NYPD stands to assist whenever and wherever needed, we do recognize that there are areas of public service that have historically evolved in a way that has resulted in the NYPD taking the lead [inaudible] response for many social, emotional, and behavioral situations in our society. Such could be served by other public or private entities. For instance, while it may have made [inaudible] on the NYPD and FDNY to be the sole responders for crisis, numbers were much lower than today, it is clear that a new approach is warranted. That [inaudible] supports the Be Heard pilot, which launched in central and east Harlem in June 2020 and deploys a team of FDNY, EMTs,

and social workers to 911 calls for mental health crisis, not involving criminal activity, weapons or risk of violence. [inaudible] the deployment of [inaudible] the NYPD has continued to work with EMS to help persons in crisis when the situation warrants it. Likewise, it's time to reimagine the NYPD's role providing school safety by the Council and Administration in last year's budget. [inaudible] has been fully engaged in the transition planning and discussions this past year and is committed to a successful transition of responsibility. We are continuing to work towards completing the transition by first 2022. School safety agents are not only with the NYPD family, they are a part of each school's community and have come to know the children they work to protect on a first name basis and serve as role models. [inaudible] they will continue their excellence when they are with the Department of Education. As part of the [inaudible] reform and reinvention collaborative, the City Council passed legislation shifting the responsibility to issue press passes to the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment. We've been working with the Mayor's Office to ensure a seamless transition, and we expect

the transition to be complete by January.

Additionally, as the budget negotiations through

2020, the NYPD agreed to limit homeless outreach

[inaudible] The Department of Homeless Services

expanded the scope of its work with the NYPD taking

on a more supportive role unless a public safety

concern arises during one of those encounters.

Additionally, [inaudible] street vending laws moved

to the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection

under the Office of Street Vendor Enforcement. While

the Office of Street Vendor Enforcement now primary

responsibility for [inaudible] vendor violations, the

city sidewalks and street, the NYPD will continue to

assist when all [sic] interventions have failed to

address these issues. [inaudible] that are for police

functions. We recognize that our work is greatly

enhanced with the support of the community and our

partner agencies. In the past two years we have seen

troubling increases in gun violence, and we have

utilized precision policing [sic] significantly

increase the number of gun seizures and arrest. But

this is not enough. Critical to reducing gun

violence is our partnership with Cure Violence

provider. These providers intervene [sic] before a



1 person fires a gun, saving lives and preventing  
2 individuals from making choices that result in a life  
3 [inaudible] system. My colleagues from the Mayor's  
4 Office of Criminal Justice are available to answer  
5 any questions you may have on these interventions.  
6 The support of other agencies and community groups is  
7 critical to solving many problems in our  
8 neighborhood. The Department's innovative Community  
9 Solutions program seeks to address issues on a micro  
10 level. Working with the local precincts [inaudible]  
11 residents of the agencies and our community advocates  
12 to solve problems unique to each community.  
13 Everything from [inaudible] and graffiti, gun  
14 violence, and noise conditions have been addressed  
15 through these community partnerships. This program  
16 does not mean the NYPD is leaving these issues to be  
17 solved by others, rather an increased partnership  
18 [inaudible] of a safe state and the city. Thank you  
19 for this opportunity to be here, and we look forward  
20 to answering any questions you may have.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We're  
23 going to turn to Chair questions. Before we do so,  
24 I'm going to administer the oath to Commissioner Shea  
25 who I believe joined us just now if that's alright.

Do you affirm to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth before your-- these committees and to answer honestly to Council Member questions?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Yeah, yeah.

[inaudible] I already said, but I'll say it again. Yes, I'm glad to be here.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, thank you sir.

Chair Adams, go ahead.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you very much.

Welcome again to all of you. Thank you for being here this morning, and we apologize for the delay. Alright, let's talk about [inaudible]-- let's talk about overtime first. In the Fiscal Year 2020, NYPD added 130 million dollars for overtime expenses that went over the budget. This year as well. [inaudible] NYPD again went over the overtime budget by 160 [sic] million dollars and needed to add the money after the year was over. From these amounts and that the overtime amounts for this Fiscal Year is 175 million dollars, what assurance do we have that at the end of the year, more money won't have to be added because the Department [inaudible] its budgeted overtime once again?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR RYAN: So, the

[inaudible] in overtime budget cuts in Fiscal Year 21, we did end up at the end of the day spending 26 percent less [sic] than the original budget. The key drivers of the send over the significantly reduced budget were crime reduction initiatives related to addressing the increase in violence crime and it's in details, including enhanced transit platform coverage and election coverage, the protests and civil unrest, and investigations. In Fiscal Year 22, the city-funded budget is actually lower than what we spent last year. We don't have the benefit of some of the events that have resulted from the pandemic can't-- reduction in events related to the pandemic. It's still really early in the year with regard to projections, and we're going to continue to focus using our resources, modifying work schedules, and that oversight will continue while we address the resource need for strategic crime reduction deployment, investigations, interrupted provision of our services and the ability to address unforeseen [inaudible], but we do take monitoring and obtaining [sic] very seriously, but we have to budget that with public safety.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Are you limiting the amount of overtime [inaudible] could make?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR RYAN: Sorry, you cut out at that last part of your question.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, I asked are you actually limiting the amount of overtime that some employees can take?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR RYAN: We're focused on monitoring all of the overt-time and focused on when and where we can so that we can [inaudible] of the overtime [inaudible].

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: So right now you're just-- you're saying that you're modifying, but you haven't actually taken any [inaudible] to limit anything, limit the overtime?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR RYAN: Yes, yes, we are, [inaudible] the overtime, but looking at schedules, by looking how we deploy our resource. So yes, we are very much limiting the overtime.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, so, along those lines, has the Department considered [inaudible]

UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [inaudible] filling positions so that uniformed officers are [inaudible]

can return to performing duties of uniformed officers?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR RYAN: [inaudible] is something that we have looked at historically and are continuing to look at. We do, of course, deal with the fact that we are down right now more than a thousand full time civilian [sic] personnel for the last 16 months, as a result of the cuts and attrition that we've seen across the Department.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: So is limiting overtime spending considered by the Department when making decisions related to officers [inaudible] enforcement priorities?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR RYAN: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: If I may,--

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [interposing] Yeah.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Chair Adams, just to end on what Kristine said, we constantly look [sic] to civilianize and put uniformed people on the street. I stand by my record of we've moved more officers out in recent years any time in my memory. But as Kristine said, we're dealing with roughly right now a doubling of the shootings in New York City over the last two years at the same time that

1 we're dealing with count reduction put into place  
2 last year. As of this morning, we stand about 1,200  
3 officers down from the new headcount. I think it  
4 would be about 2,200 down if my math is right,  
5 headcount. And civilian side, we would love to put--  
6 free up use [sic] on a civilian attrition running  
7 almost as bad as the uniform that's hampering us in  
8 many ways. I think the deterrent [inaudible] that I  
9 have is 34,000 [inaudible] on the uniform side,  
10 17,000 on the civilian side [inaudible] of just over  
11 52,000.  
12

13 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, so-- I'm sorry,  
14 Commissioner, I didn't mean to cut you off. Okay.  
15 I'm getting a little bit of feedback. I apologize.  
16 [inaudible] shifting positions. Let's take a look at  
17 the 2020 budget. The 2020 budget, there was an  
18 agreement to shift school safety guards from NYPD to  
19 DOE and it wasn't reflected in any upcoming budgets.  
20 This is projected to shift over 42 million dollars  
21 out of the NYPD budget. So what is the status of  
22 this change, and when will the budget reflect these  
23 shifts?

24 DEPUTY DIRECTOR RYAN: [inaudible] that  
25 and that's the 42 million you referenced for school

safety, that is reflected in the budget for Fiscal Year three [sic]. That funding and 305 million dollars has [inaudible] from [inaudible] back to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: It looks like we may have lost Chair Adams. Could you bear with us for just a second?

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Yeah--

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: [interposing] Oh, she's--

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: I apologize. My connection is unstable this morning, so we're all having, you know, whatever the internet gremlins are at-- are in full force today. So, I'm going to repeat my question. I'm not sure whether or not you heard it. So, I'm going to repeat my question. It had to do with-- it had to do with school safety, alright. We wanted to know what-- where we're going along with school safety. It's been recognized to occur in the budget by Fiscal Year 2023. The agreement further included commitments by the Administration to engage stakeholders in developing transition plan and reoriented school safety activities to include restorative justice practices.

What's the status of planning for the shift of school safety?

DEPUTY CHIEF OBE: Okay, I can answer that. Good morning, Chair Adams.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Good morning.

DEPUTY CHIEF OBE: Good morning. So, the transition to the DOE is still on track with the transfer date of July 2022. Starting in August of this year, the Mayor's Office of Operations was tasked with the project management portion of the transition.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. How is this transition being received?

DEPUTY CHIEF OBE: By certain stakeholders--

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [interposing]  
[inaudible] Right. By the schools, by the SSA's themselves, how is it being received in your estimation?

DEPUTY CHIEF OBE: I think it just depends on what lens you're looking through and what bucket you fall in. I think there is, you know, overall some apprehension on the side of the SSAs, but in terms of community engagement portion, I think



that I'll defer that question to the Mayor's Office of Operations.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Can anyone answer that? At the school-- I'll ask you something else. Have the school safety officers received any additional training, or has the Department changed any in-school procedures for the upcoming school year?

DEPUTY CHIEF OBE: The initial training they received was early on this year, and I think we talked about that over at least two council hearings. The DOE did provide training to the agents, but early on this year. So, there is nothing new like I mentioned, and I'll defer to the Mayor's Office of Operations for any-- because they've been brought on as project managers, so that's the latest so far on our end.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. Are there plans to increase NYPD staffing of mental health response teams? However, early data indicates that the Behavioral Health Emergency Response Division, or Be Herd, which was mentioned in Danielle's opening statement, the initiative Be Herd where mental health practitioners and paramedics are dispatched to

certain acute mental health emergencies rather police resulted in improved patient results. How will these new officers and response teams be utilized?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Chair Adams?

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Good morning.

CHIEF TOBIN: Good morning. Thank you for unmuting me. Be Herd teams are made up of-- they're comprised of two EMTs as on Health + Hospitals clinician who go out and respond to 911 nonviolent with no weapons involved calls for people in mental health crisis. It is run by the FDNY by the EMS section.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: How is the Department assessing success thus far?

CHIEF TOBIN: So we participate in weekly meetings with Be Herd. Folks at both Health + Hospitals, the main office of Community Mental Health and with the FDNY EMS, and we review the calls that have been responded to, as well as evaluate what has been done to make sure that people are connected to services.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Does the [inaudible] expanding Be Herd citywide?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Terry, can I take that one?

CHIEF TOBIN: Yes, FDNY is [inaudible]. The date and-- sure.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Chair Adams, I'm on record for quite some time now saying that I support taking the NYPD wherever possible away from these calls where there's no weapon and no history of violence. I think the whole country is seeing this phenomenon. I just urge everyone to go slowly and carefully in measuring success and measuring what the follow-through is. what I mean specifically to that is, when the NY-- I think it's roughly, Terry, 25 percent of the time that the team is working, they are responding and we are not really a-- there is going to be a need down the road, I believe, for a full study of the term and what the real effects are. So, six months, three months out, a year out, [inaudible] what type of [inaudible] do they receive. I think, you know, I still stand behind my original assessment of I think there is clearly [inaudible] that the PD does not need to respond here. This is-- while it is scheduled for expansion, I think everyone should go into eyes wide open.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, that was my next question [inaudible] answered it, Commissioner, because I was going to ask what the justification is for increasing the [inaudible] of police when the data shows that [inaudible] approach without police involvement is more effective. So I think you just answered that.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Yeah, and I'm-- maybe Terry clear it up for me. I meet and talk to Terry on this [inaudible]. When you said that the-- this is my words, not yours, but it's like a better result. I'm not sure how that is being calculated [sic]. Terry, do you-- can you expand?

CHIEF TOBIN: So, the Mayor's Office of Community Health examines whether the patients that were connected to care remain in care once the Be Herd team has connected with them.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. So let me back up a little bit. Commissioner, you mentioned [inaudible] no weapon or history of violence, but what defines history of violence [inaudible] police responding instead of Be Herd?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: So, I'll turn to Terry in a moment. So I think the weapon piece is

1 the 911 operators-- I stopped at the 911 call center  
2 out in Queens just to thank them a couple [inaudible]  
3 ago, and there's a-- I actually met with them and  
4 spoke to some of the 911 operators. They do a great  
5 job, and their specialty to ask certain questions  
6 when calls come in. In terms of the specifics, I'll  
7 let terry speak to that, but what we know about the  
8 location from prior calls [inaudible] and then  
9 obviously on the weapons side [inaudible] Terry?

11 CHIEF TOBIN: Sure. The 911 call  
12 operators determine if the call is for an emotionally  
13 disturbed person and then it handed over to the FDNY  
14 communication folks who determine whether it is Be  
15 Herd eligible, and they are the people that determine  
16 whether the Be Herd team will respond to the call.

17 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. Alright. I'm  
18 going to ask you about-- youth coordination officers.  
19 The NYPD will be funding 300 youth coordination [sic]  
20 officers. Going to cost tax payers upwards of 35  
21 million dollars. What role with the youth  
22 coordination officers serve?

23 COMMISSIONER SHEA: [inaudible] I would  
24 love to.

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, go ahead.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: I threw everything off by showing up. I'm sorry, so we're going off script here. When you look at-- Chair Adams, when you look at from day one when I was sworn in, I spoke about 28 years in the Police Department and what I've seen over time and talked about investment in youth as being paramount to what I think needs done. I think you saw that last year when there were cuts to the summer youth programs. This is right before or during George Floyd. It might have been even before, and I stepped up and [inaudible] and taken money from the PD's budget to [inaudible]. I felt that strongly about it. We have put into place youth officers, youth coordination officers across the city in all of our PS [inaudible]. We're getting incredible feedback from across New York City in every precinct on the work we're doing to connect youth. I would liken it to the earlier discussion. When I walked in, I heard about the discussion about from Jumaane Williams speaking about funding [inaudible]. Everyone wants different programs. I would fight wholeheartedly on programs [inaudible] to this city. I think it is crime fighting. I think it's keeping kids out of that cycle of getting involved negatively

1 on the criminal justice system, and from sports to  
2 the arts, to the partnerships that we've done with  
3 private sector in trying to get kids internships and  
4 jobs. I think we've done a whole lot, and it's  
5 something that I feel should be kept [inaudible].  
6 That's the Police Department's view, but really for  
7 the whole city's view. So that's my short answer. I  
8 could certainly answer specific questions.

10 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: You mentioning Crisis  
11 Management System and that's something that is, you  
12 know, [inaudible] we're really happy about.

13 COMMISSIONER SHEA: Yeah.

14 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Are the crisis  
15 management groups invited to NYPD CompStat  
16 strategizing meetings?

17 COMMISSIONER SHEA: So, we currently  
18 have-- we've inviting them to one [inaudible]. We've  
19 invited them to the actual room and had a strategy  
20 session with them in the past, things that frankly  
21 have never been done before in the history of ties,  
22 and we currently partake in meetings and sharing of  
23 information. I mean, we base [sic] and that's done  
24 in conjunction with MOCJ. That's done in conjunction  
25 with the highest levels of the NYPD up to and

1 including, you know, Chief Harrison, the Chief of  
2 Department, as well as Chief [inaudible] Chairs the  
3 CompStat meetings. So, it's done on a [inaudible].  
4 No one knows better than NYPD Times [sic] what we  
5 across the City and how do we prevent it before it  
6 happens, whether it's calls or shots fired jobs or  
7 gangs that are involved, and we share [inaudible]  
8 with representatives from MOCJ as well as the crisis  
9 managers. I just noticed that Frank Giordano, Chief,  
10 is here. He can expand on that.

12 CHIEF GIORDANO: Good morning. So Cure  
13 Violence partners [inaudible] of suppressing gun  
14 violence throughout the City. Cure Violence  
15 coordinators live in the communities that [inaudible]  
16 and they have the opportunity to share their  
17 experience to prevent shooting violence across the  
18 City. They also have capability to convince people,  
19 especially young people, not to engage in violence  
20 before any incidents even start. We work  
21 collaboratively with the Mayor's Office of Criminal  
22 Justice to ensure that citywide resources are  
23 deployed to ensure maximum effectiveness. So each  
24 week, on days [sic] of every week, the late  
25 afternoon, have a meeting with the Mayor's Office of



1 Criminal [inaudible] Cure Violence deployment around  
2 the City and we [inaudible] Thursday afternoon is  
3 like the violence tends to increase a bit approach  
4 the weekends, especially in the warmer months. We  
5 discussed specifics related through some of violence  
6 across the city, make recommendations as to where  
7 Cure Violence personnel [sic] should be deployed,  
8 whether it be Mott Haven up in the Bronx or the Far  
9 Rockaways or Brownsville in Brooklyn to give specific  
10 information related to some of the conflicts  
11 occurring. The communication is very clear with the  
12 Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice related to  
13 [inaudible].

15 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: What are some of the  
16 biggest challenges facing the NYPD as it pertains to  
17 [inaudible] collaboratively with the Violence  
18 Interrupters? What I've noticed is that all of the  
19 groups [inaudible] very strong. They're out there.  
20 [inaudible] seem to be uniformity among precincts and  
21 the usage and how they're using the Cure Violence  
22 team. I guess every precinct has its own personality  
23 and its own culture. Perhaps maybe that's the  
24 reason. But what are you [inaudible] about that? Is  
25 there a way to provide a more uniformed structure

when it comes to the precincts and the Violence Interrupters under the crisis, the Cure Violence system?

CHIEF GIORDANO: So, as far as outcomes go related to deployment, I think it's too soon to tell, you know, related to what type of outcomes there are. I think there is really good communication from us, you know, at this level, and also at the command level, commanding [inaudible] within certain command [inaudible] and some of its providers that are operating within their jurisdiction [sic]. But we do-- we sort feedback from the weekly calls that we have. You know, Cure Violence coordinators in the Mayor's Office, you know, give us information related to some of information that they're receiving from the community, meaning the community will ask for, you know, specific police deployment in certain areas related to some of the violence that are occurring or ask us for certain equipment like light towers on a specific corner to light up the public space. That communication is there and it's productive.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: That's good. There's been a lot of great progress around this. I'm also

interested to hear about the [inaudible] program, the Brownsville Safety Line [sic]. Can you describe that and perhaps tell us whether there's going to be an expansion of that program?

MICHAEL CLARKE: Sure, the Brownsville Safety Alliance was a pilot program that was [inaudible] and it's really-- it's not [inaudible] necessarily. It's part of our community solutions program that was instituted by the NYPD under the Commissioner and Chief Holmes. It had been ended. Is there-- have 100 programs in over 50 states, and the idea is to get community residents, local stakeholders together to work on issues that are unique to each community, and it is-- I just want to be clear, in the 73<sup>rd</sup> precinct that the NYPD pulled out of the area. It was a collaboration with the NYPD and the other NGOs, community agencies, community residents on the ground, [inaudible] providers to perform [sic] services to an area that needed it. That's [inaudible] role in each [sic] program is in each precinct you work together to find the right avenues [inaudible]. So over 100 precincts out-- over 100 programs in over 50 precincts at this point.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Great. Yeah, I was wondering where that was. That's great, because we had gotten really good feedback on that. Can you speak to some of the issues the interrupters face within the course of their work and their interface with either the public and/or the NYPD?

CHIEF GIORDANO: They have a-- you know, the Violence Interrupters have a [inaudible], they're embedded, you know, within the communities that they serve, and you know, they have that certain ability level that they have to maintain while they're, you know, work out in the field. So the communication from the Violence Interrupters, specific, you know, goes through the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice and comes to the Police Department through those weekly meetings that we have.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. Do you see any-- I'll ask you one more and then I'm going to come back around for round two. I want to get my colleagues in here because I know we started late. Have you noticed any tension with partnership between the precinct and the Violence Interrupters, or are you seeing everything going smoothly? Are our crisis management team members being, you know, welcomed as

a part of the partnering process with NYPD, or have you noticed any friction?

CHIEF GIORDANO: So, [inaudible], you know, we brought up specific areas around the city where, you know, specific Cure Violence staff was not deployed within and that developed into conversations into, you know, developing those areas to have, you know, deployed. You know, so [inaudible] was-- you know, remains--

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [interposing] I'm not sure if it's me whose audio is going out or yours.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Can you hear us Chair Adams?

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: I can hear you now.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: I think Chief Giordano just answered that question. I don't know if you heard any of it.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. He was going in and out, but that's alright. I'm going to turn it over to my colleagues. We have Council Members Yeger and Levin who have joined us. I'll turn it over to our Committee Counsel at this time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you everyone. Council Members, please use the Zoom raise hand

function if you'd like to ask a question. Okay, we'll begin with Chair Holden. Sir, you'll have five minute timer. You can begin when you're unmuted.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Thank you, Chair. You hear me? Everybody hear me?

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Yes, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Okay. I wasn't sure if it was me either. You know, my internet-- we did lose a little bit, and part-- if I ask questions that the Chair covered, I was just coming from another hearing running at the same time, a Parks hearing. So, Commissioner I just have a few questions. I'm talking to the Commanding Officers of my precincts in my district, and to the person they're frustrated. They're frustrated that they're arresting the same people over and over again. For instance, we had one individual that was arrested six times for GLA, grand larceny auto. [inaudible] six times, and he's out the next day and he's-- they're arresting him again. And this is a tremendous waste of resources that not only that the public is being victimized, that police officers have to do the same old thing over and over again, and we're not learning our lesson. Like I predicted when all the people said

1 let's unfund the police or defund the police one  
2 billion dollars, I predicted-- I predicted that first  
3 officers that would be cut would be the community  
4 officers, the NCOs program. And Chief Holmes  
5 acknowledged that in the last hearing. My NCO  
6 program has been devastated in my district, because  
7 of the defund the police, and also the Academy  
8 classes, I'm-- I have a shortage in all of precincts  
9 in my district. We need more cops, not less. And  
10 then for the people that are saying about school  
11 safety officers that should not be in our schools,  
12 they shouldn't be under NYPD, I fail to see any kind  
13 of stats or numbers on this how it would affect the  
14 quality. Because I had school safety officers,  
15 Commissioner, tell me-- school safety officers under  
16 NYPD tell me that some of the principals in the  
17 schools or the staff were pressuring them not to  
18 report certain crimes that happened in school. Can  
19 you imagine if this is under the Department of  
20 Education the problems that would arise?

22 COMMISSIONER SHEA: I just lost you at  
23 the end, Councilman.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Okay, I don't  
25 know what you last heard, but--

COMMISSIONER SHEA: [interposing] Well, I heard the last point. I just didn't know if you were done.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yeah, I had-- I had-- I'm just concerned about the whole taking the cops out, NYPD out of our schools, and getting to a situation where we don't have trained individuals or we don't have accountability. If the school controls reporting crimes within the school, a lot of things could get covered up like they have been in the past. But I just want you-- if you could address the same people that are being arrested within the precincts over and over again, the frustration that we're seeing on the ground from the CO's.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Well, I would add to that, I think frustration is on the public as well, and that's my opinion, but that's what I hear every single day. Every single neighborhood from every single denomination across New York City that there is a growing realization that [inaudible] need to be made to [inaudible]

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Carefully, smartly.



COMMISSIONER SHEA: That doesn't go [inaudible] in any one direction, but there's clearly fixes that need to be made to some laws. We are literally lives on [inaudible]. Sometimes, you know, very young lives, and you know, just this week we saw a case of a teenager that is [inaudible] that will be facing a murder charge for another young man that's been taken from us. and when you look at the-- I honestly, at this [inaudible] I think that everyone on this call has heard me say it, there is no better way or more clear way for me to say what I have said many times. Unfortunately, the people of New York City and State is who is suffering at this point.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Right, and just in case I missed it, and again, sorry, but on the Violence Interrupters, are there-- can we measure their success or the lack thereof? Is it possible to measure it? Do we have the numbers to say it's working?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: I would push that to the Mayor's Office of [inaudible] who administers the program. I would say though, Councilman, in terms of policing and [inaudible] is really what we're talking here today. There's many difference to it, and I am

1 of the belief that we really reach out when we have  
2 as many people as possible in that process [sic] from  
3 store owners, from elected officials, business  
4 owners, people that live in the community, most state  
5 [inaudible] and including Violence Interrupters  
6 [sic]. Some people the better in the process, I  
7 think that's what truly [inaudible] good place. In  
8 terms of metrics, I would push that to MOCJ.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Alright, just--  
11 Chair, if I may, one other question. Did the  
12 elimination of two Academy classes as part of the  
13 billion dollar cut impact overtime? Did you hear me?

14 COMMISSIONER SHEA: Yes, the answer is  
15 yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: It did. Did it  
17 impact public safety in your opinion and the quality  
18 of life in New York City?

19 COMMISSIONER SHEA: Yes, it did.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Bingo. Thank  
21 you. Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you, Chair.

22 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Josh, are there any  
23 other hands up?

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Are there any other  
25 Council Members who'd like to ask questions? Please

1 use the Zoom raise hand function right now. Seeing  
2 none, I'll turn back to the Chair. Council Members,  
3 if you have any questions and want to chime in,  
4 please use the Zoom raise hand function. Chair  
5 Adams, you can continue.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. I know that my  
8 colleagues are between hearings, so that's probably  
9 why they're not chiming in right now. They're  
10 probably bouncing from one room to another. So, I'm  
11 just going to continue then with more questions.  
12 When it comes to assessing, we're [inaudible]  
13 effective. In 2019, the NYPD unveiled a new  
14 committee since [inaudible] New York that would run  
15 by NYPD personnel. [inaudible] initiatives  
16 significantly expands the role and scope of the NYPD  
17 and communities of color. The center is primarily  
18 targeted to youth with educational, recreational, and  
19 social programming. How does the NYPD, operating in  
20 a community center, achieve improved [sic] public  
21 safety outcome? And does the NYPD feel that they do-  
22 - that you do a better job instead of bringing in a  
23 CBL to run such a program?

24

25

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Thank you for that question Chair Adams. 127 Penn [sic] is that what you're [inaudible]?

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: I don't think it's a choice, and I'm not sure Danielle who was [inaudible] this one-- never shy with an opinion. I don't think it's where it's one or the other. I think we complement each other. Jeff Maddrey, our Chief of Community Affairs, and the whole team there I think do a really, really good job. I've been there many times. When you look at what we do in that facility, whether it's-- you know, we have working with kids [inaudible] and how to do it, do it just for jobs, and we have them certainly doing their traditional sports and things of that nature. We have outside people from the community coming in and teaching them how to cook, how to do karate, and just too many different things to mention. So it's not like the police can do it better than us. we'd like to get to a point where it's just the community space and we all do it together, and I'll-- you know, what we through in 2020, but we never want to get back to, coming after the murder of George Floyd, and

1  
2 certainly it paused [sic] us, and really going across  
3 the country to look in the mirror on changes that,  
4 you know, we [inaudible] and we still are, but  
5 changes that we had to-- and continued. How is it  
6 that we, you know, [inaudible] in one place but wound  
7 up in a very, very different place, and lost trust so  
8 quickly, and getting people to see the police as not  
9 somebody [inaudible] that wears a uniform, but see  
10 them as a human [inaudible]. So got community centers  
11 doing things. We get do a lot of different  
12 programming there, and I don't know [inaudible] it's  
13 you or somebody else that's talked about what the  
14 [inaudible] facility looks like.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PEMBERTON: So, as  
16 the Commissioner mentioned, we do do a lot of  
17 programming there where we bring in community-based  
18 organizations that run that programming. So it's not  
19 a [inaudible] center. We have a lot of external  
20 organizations coming in as well. We are also going  
21 through a process right now where we're re-  
22 envisioning [inaudible] in partnership with the  
23 community. So, it's about a six-month engagement.  
24 We're doing a lot of focus groups. We're having a  
25

lot of conversations about where the community  
[inaudible].

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Did we lose-- Chair  
Adams, did we lose your connection there?

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: For a second. I got  
most of it and then I froze. I did hear the  
response. So thank you. I see my colleagues are  
back on screen. Perhaps Council Members Levin and  
Rosenthal may have questions at this time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We're going to go to  
Council Member Rosenthal followed by Council Member  
Levin, yes. Go ahead Council Member Rosenthal once  
you're unmuted. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so  
much. Boy, do I appreciate this hearing. So, thank  
you, Chair Adams. Thank you, Commissioner Shea for  
coming on. I really appreciate it, and I really want  
to thank everyone else I see who's logged on this  
Zoom. I know you're going to have some important  
things you'd like to talk about, Commissioner, you  
were talking for a minute about the pilot project  
that occurred in Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuel's  
district. Could you-- I think I misheard you. Could

you talk again about the status of doing that program throughout the city? Is it me, or-- can you--

[cross-talk]

COMMISSIONER SHEA: It's us. Can you hear me now, Councilwoman?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you. Yes. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: That was my-- Mike explained that earlier. What I would just add, and he can jump is, you know, Chief Juanita Holmes she did it with this, putting this together with her team out there in Brooklyn last year. I think Mike said and it's accurate that what was reported in the news wasn't true in that like the police were pulled out of this area. The police were a part of it--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing] Yeah.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: and really what Juanita was trying to do was push commanding officers to identify locations in New York City that have been resisting to [inaudible] by police or any other organizations' agencies, and things that came up were sanitation, parks, noise, certainly quality of life and police issues. So to identify these areas and

work with the community and agents how to find more solutions. So, I think that's ongoing.

MICHAEL CLARKE: Yeah, and right now, we've started 100 unique programs in over 50 precincts. They-- again, all-- it's precinct led and community led. It's finding issues [inaudible] with the communities. It's, you know, prioritizing the issues most important then. Then we convene a team and we get the appropriate community members, Cure Violence, the right people for that issue, other agencies on the ground, NGOs, and we formulate a plan and take action, and try to hold each other to, you know, address the situation, whether it's, you know, chronic joblessness, graffiti, sanitation issues. It could be violence--

COMMISSIONER SHEA: [interposing]  
Nightclubs.

MICHAEL CLARKE: Youth issues, whatever it is. The goal is to do that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I am so relieved to hear that, because I definitely [inaudible]. So, that's great news and it really sounds robust. I appreciate how you're describing it and really makes sense. Do you-- would it be



possible to share with the Council the 100 precincts that you think are sort of next in line to do this sort of thing, and the status of implementation, and then to go back for a second, are you continuing to do this in Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuel's district?

MICHAEL CLARKE: So, I can provide you a list of initiatives that are ongoing at the moment or have--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]  
Yeah.

MICHAEL CLARKE: ongoing. I have to get back [inaudible] the status of the initial 73<sup>rd</sup> Street precinct pilot. I know a week to 10 days of sort of throwing a lot of resources at the community, but I don't-- I'll find out what the follow-up--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]  
Yeah, and so that week to 10 days, that happens, and then does it happen again like a month later or six months later?

MICHAEL CLARKE: So, it can, and that's part of the idea is to keep it ongoing and make sure there's, you know, there's [inaudible] on it, but for that specific program I'll have to find out exactly



1 Member Holden had asked about metrics for crisis  
2 management, and Commissioner, you had said that that  
3 might be a question best directed to MOCJ. So,  
4 could-- could Director Soler speak to that? Is that  
5 possible, of what type of metrics MOCJ uses and how  
6 integral those metrics are in determining the  
7 expansion of the program or the overall advocacy of  
8 the program? Unmute.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: Thank you,  
11 Council Member. Apologies, I was on mute and I could  
12 not address your question. So, MOCJ keeps internal  
13 statistics and information and qualitative and  
14 quantitative metrics about the program. We also do  
15 that in partnership with external evaluators, and so  
16 I will refer to both. So the first thing very  
17 quickly is we have seen for the period prior to the  
18 pandemic an overall-- reductions in gun [inaudible]  
19 and [inaudible] injuries related to shootings that  
20 exceeded all [inaudible] the city, those [inaudible].  
21 Right now [inaudible] we see [inaudible] are down  
22 over 20 percent in the catchment areas compared to  
23 all the parts of the city. and evaluations from  
24 independent evaluators, as I said, from John Jay and  
25 other centers, have studied this issue and they have

1 found both reductions in shootings, reduction in  
2 injuries, reductions in the stabbings, and a much  
3 smaller reductions in other crime indicators, but  
4 they also have seen two other [inaudible] indicators  
5 that we track regularly, which is-- the  
6 predisposition of people to incorporate with the  
7 police, to call 911, etcetera, and the willingness to  
8 carry less weapons. All those indicators-- in all  
9 those cases, the data that we have available suggests  
10 that ACMS [sic] is having an impact. For that reason  
11 we submitted a grant to the Feds and we are one of  
12 the eight national finalists in innovation [sic]  
13 grant under the [inaudible] program under the Justice  
14 Department and Department of Treasury program, and we  
15 presented a whole set-up of statistics showing the  
16 evidence of why the program we think is working, and  
17 they accepted it. They made us finalists. A group  
18 of external evaluators from the Feds review the data,  
19 and agree with us that the program is effective. I  
20 can definitely share with you more details, but I  
21 think that is the top bottom line-- the top lines  
22 that I wanted [inaudible] here.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay,--

COMMISSIONER SHEA: [interposing]  
Councilman, can I [inaudible]--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yeah, sure, sure.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: From the law enforcement perspective what it was that makes this very difficult is that there's like a layered approach here. So it's getting the community involved, getting the clergy involved, the Violence Interrupters involved. There's also the [inaudible] policing piece. So, you know, pretty significant [inaudible] gang takedowns in those areas. I think the true test will be when no longer a need for one of those gang takedowns to come [inaudible], because we certainly see like the violence drive down after the takedown. When we get to a point where we don't need the takedown to occur in the first place, I think that's where we'll be, what we all want.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: No, I appreciate that it's kind of, you know, success as a-- you know, whatever the cliché is. Success has a thousand fathers, you know. I think that there's a-- I think that you could probably look at-- I think-- I would think that the best thing to look at is the level of coordination between the Crisis Management System and

1 the precinct where they exist. One other question I  
2 have, and this is kind of a broader question and is  
3 one where I do think that law enforcement has its  
4 limitations--

5  
6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
7 expired.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: is how are we  
9 getting to young people before gang involvement?  
10 Because Commissioner you mentioned gang takedown.  
11 Gang takedowns are-- that's pretty late in the  
12 process of someone's gang affiliation. If they're  
13 involved in a gang takedown, they've been part of a  
14 gang for an extended period of time. I had a small  
15 incident at-- I visited Rikers the other day and had  
16 a small incident, you know, where I got splashed, but  
17 when I was talking to the DOC personnel and staff  
18 that were with me at the time, this was in the area  
19 that's been replacing solitary confinement. One of  
20 the issues that they mentioned to me was that  
21 everybody that was in that housing unit had a gang  
22 affiliation, and one of the challenges that they see  
23 is-- this is the staff that I was talking with-- was  
24 that in a lot of ways the gang affiliation takes  
25 their own personal agency-- it takes over their own

1 personal agency in ways. If they participated in a  
2 slashing at Rikers, it was at the direction of the  
3 gang, or if they're involved in a shooting it's at  
4 the direction of the gang. It's not-- they're not--  
5 in a lot of ways these are young people that are--  
6 have, whether they knew it or not-- forfeited a lot  
7 of their own personal agency over to a gang, and so  
8 how-- it's not just, you know, having police-- NYPD  
9 youth programs, because they have-- that's always  
10 going to have just a limited effect. That's going to  
11 have a limited effect. The question is from a much  
12 more foundational question. How are we working with  
13 young people from a young age, eight year olds, nine  
14 year olds, 10 year olds to guard them against that  
15 involvement that probably comes about, you know, in  
16 middle school or early high school? I mean,--

18 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [interposing] Council  
19 Member, I need you to ask your question.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I mean, just that--  
21 - what's the-- what's the overall strategy from  
22 preventing kids from ever getting involved in gangs  
23 in the first place? What's the overall strategy?  
24 And I don't think it's a question for NYPD. I think  
25 it's a question maybe for MOCJ, but it involves

Department of Education. It involves DYCD. How are we looking at this as a city?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: So--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing]  
Anyone can take that.

COMMISSIONER SHEA: So, to quote a brilliant person that I cannot put words in her mouth, but I think of Jennifer Jones Austin was here she would agree with that, that we are not the ultimate solution here. It's much broader, and I agree with her on that assessment. When you talk about-- and I think many of these speakers already today would agree with that too where it's putting money in [inaudible] and schools and lifting people up, and that's how you [inaudible] long-term. I think that what we are doing in the short-term is important and necessary as well in our slice of it, but we're not the end-all be-all here. As you were talking, Council Member, I mean, you know, when you're at Rikers, you're generally dealing with over 18 years of age. What we're targeting and the work that we do is usually younger. I would put it in the category of like 12 to 18, 10 to 18, but a lot of programs from the Options [sic] Program to the Rockaway



1 [inaudible] that we're hoping to expand this year  
2 working with the DOE into Harlem. I'm just writing  
3 down notes as I'm listening to you. The YCO's, the  
4 Blue Chips program that we did and we're running it  
5 again. Anything supposed [sic] to give the kids,  
6 youth, something positive to do I think is a win.  
7 Keeping them out of the grasp of the gangs. They  
8 are-- we are fighting for the same kids. The gangs  
9 are [inaudible] recruit these kids. There is no way  
10 around that, kids I don't believe even want to join  
11 gangs, want to get into trouble. They just need  
12 things to do, and I think that's what we all find  
13 common ground and agree. So, whether it's after  
14 school programs, whether it's cops being positive  
15 role models, whether it's sports, arts-- when we took  
16 over [inaudible] summer, every week in the summertime  
17 it was as much to show the people that cops are human  
18 and how to interact, but it was also to give them a  
19 safe environment. All of that we're doing and we  
20 look forward to partner in Council and the rest of  
21 the city agencies to continue to do that.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you, Chair.  
24 Just one follow-up. Mr. Soler, there's a program out  
25

of MOCJ that is specifically targeted to NYCHA developments, correct?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: It was-- if that was the basketball courts, if you're referring to that that was--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing] No, no, no, it's a comprehensive-- sorry, Commissioner, it's a comprehensive program.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: Thank you. I'm unmute again. Yes, it's our Action Plan for Neighborhood [inaudible].

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Neighborhood, right, the Map program.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: That's right.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: How many Map programs are there?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: There are-- the Map program is in 15 [inaudible] developments across the--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Fifteen?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Great. Are there more developments that could use a Map program? Because I could tell-- I have a development in my

1 district, Gowanus Houses, Wyckoff Gardens, two  
2 developments, and they've asked me for a Map program,  
3 because they have-- there's one at Red Hook which is  
4 nearby, but Gowanus and Wyckoff don't have a Map  
5 program, and these are-- this is the kind of the  
6 broader comprehensive array of services, mental  
7 health, counseling, and medical and all that stuff.  
8 They want a Map program, so why don't we have more  
9 Map programs?  
10

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: So what I can  
12 tell you is Map program with CMS is something that we  
13 track. We know their performance, and we will  
14 certainly-- we think it's been extraordinarily  
15 successful. This [inaudible] for instance, in all  
16 three indicators that we track, shootings, murders,  
17 any of those crimes. Crime is significantly  
18 [inaudible] and external partners done evaluation as  
19 well, and has documented impact. It's something that  
20 I will bring and discuss but only with the Mayor  
21 [sic] and his First Deputy Mayor to make sure that  
22 when we have an additional conversation about the  
23 fact that maybe this is a program that might have to  
24 expand. Obviously, that's not my decision alone. It  
25

involves conversations with my partners, as everything that we do in my office--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing] Is it a funding issue? Is it an OMB question?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: No, I don't think it's just a funding issues just to make sure that our programs, as you said, we want to have programs that holistically are implemented in the right way. My office, as you know, runs a lot of things, and I need to make sure that the programs that we run are run successfully. So, I just need to have that conversation.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, because I mean, I'm serious. I have developments that are begging for a Map program and don't have one.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: I hear you, and I will communicate, obviously, with my friends at City Hall in order to have that additional conversation, but it's something that we-- in order to implement something, the most important thing is that implementation is successful, and I am trying to make sure then that will happen. It's not just a funding issue.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, because last thing, I'm sorry, Chair. So I work with ACS a lot. I Chair the General Welfare Committee. They expanded their-- they have these primary prevention neighborhood-- primary prevention neighborhood centers. They just announced that they were to expand three to 30. So, they're expanding by 10-fold, and I think that maybe we should be looking at the map program in a kind of rapid expansion like that as well. So, I'll leave that--

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SOLER: [interposing] [inaudible] we can have that conversation offline, of course. Thank you so very much.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you, Chair.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council Member Levin. Any other Council Members who would like to ask questions, please use the Zoom raise hand function and we can call on you. Do a last call for CM questions. Please raise your hand if you would like to ask anything of the Administration. I see Council Member Rodriguez. We will unmute you in a second. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: As everyone know, we always like we working together to see a

1 reduction of police where we don't need it, but at  
2 the same time, we also have the reality, and I want  
3 to bring in all my reality in my local community  
4 where today we have a shooting that happened. The  
5 last four or five months, more than-- from August to  
6 today five people have been killed as a result of  
7 violence in northern Manhattan. So as we are looking  
8 to area where we don't need the presence of police  
9 officers, the Department, how can we at the same time  
10 look at area where we need like-- you know, my  
11 community at the beginning of last year had like 100,  
12 close to 200 police officers, and to date, that  
13 number have been reduced as a result. We have seen  
14 so many gun in the street and so much violence. So,  
15 you know, beside the question what is the expectation  
16 that we should have in underserved communities, you  
17 know, when it comes to the epidemic of violence?  
18 That is not happening you know, in the upper part of  
19 the City, in the upper [inaudible], but it's  
20 happening mainly in the community color. So, as  
21 everyone know from the members of these partners from  
22 the Administration and my colleague, you know, that  
23 my two years of Council I've been one of those that  
24 say if we don't need, you know, throughout the NYPD  
25

1  
2 doing the coalition [sic] investigation, then went  
3 through process with DOT. But what about communities  
4 such as Northern Manhattan that has been dealing with  
5 violence? How can we balance with you, the NYPD,  
6 role [sic] at some level at the same time that also  
7 we need to increase police presence in the area that  
8 been infected by crimes and violence?

9 COMMISSIONER SHEA: Are we unmuted? So,  
10 Councilman, you talk specifically maybe about the 3-  
11 4. I can do it off the top of my head. You know, we  
12 meet on a daily basis reviewing all acts of violence  
13 across the city. I could tell you that Manhattan has  
14 had a difficult year, year and a half now, in terms  
15 of the gun violence not just in the 3-4 precinct, but  
16 from [inaudible] Manhattan [inaudible] back to highs  
17 that we have not seen in quite some time. There's a  
18 number of different things. What we are seeing 3-4  
19 specific is gang-involved, and we see probably some  
20 unintended consequences of [inaudible] legislation  
21 where we're seeing some people, gangs in particular,  
22 from different blocks and different neighborhoods  
23 fighting over marijuana involved money, frankly.  
24 We're going to continue to work with the community up  
25 there. In terms of resources, what you mentioned, you

1 know, we will be equitably supplying neighborhoods  
2 across the city with resources to make sure that the  
3 resources that we get, and we appreciate them all,  
4 are distributed [inaudible] to keep New Yorkers safe.  
5 You know, to sound like a broken record here, this  
6 needs to be addressed because it's the elephant in  
7 the room. We need people to stand up and say enough  
8 is enough with [inaudible]. [inaudible] the people  
9 that are out there on the street carrying guns that  
10 are getting caught with guns over and over again, and  
11 the message that is being sent to them is there is no  
12 repercussions and until the elephant in the room is  
13 addressed, we are going to continue to see  
14 unnecessary high levels of violence that--  
15 Councilman, I don't need to tell you whether it's in  
16 a park, whether it's in a street fair, whether it's  
17 coming out of a nightclub last night. One hundred,  
18 200, 500 people having a great time enjoying  
19 themselves [inaudible]. It only takes one person to  
20 ruin that, and that's what we saw again last night, a  
21 knucklehead with a gun that not thinking, pulling it  
22 out, and now we have multiple people shot. I could--  
23 every day is another story like this. We lost a 16  
24 year old a couple-- maybe a month and a half ago, he



had been arrested once [sic] for a gun in the last 12 months.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Can we expect--

COMMISSIONER SHEA: [interposing]  
[inaudible] stabbed [inaudible] had recently been caught twice with a gun. So it defies any sense of, you know, civil [sic] normality, but we need more people to call it out and let's make the changes that need to be changed.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Commissioner, I just feel that-- again, a person was killing [inaudible] months ago, two months ago, two or three months ago, another [inaudible] another Sherman Avenue. I know that by August [sic] in the same location when the shooting happened, you know, too. I just feel that-- and as you know, in the last year of Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito I was one of those who called to increase the number of police officers to the NYPD. So even though I'm the person who say I think that we advocated to reduce the funding in every other-- that was not in our assessment, you know, that we could do it without putting at risk the safety of New Yorkers, but I feel that by the time

1 we're talking right now, 34, 33, in all precincts in  
2 underserved communities need to have increased men  
3 and men power in group in order to be-- see an  
4 increase of patrolling this street in those  
5 neighborhood. Is that something that we should expect  
6 seeing as the neighborhoods are dealing with this  
7 epidemic of violence and gangs in Northern Manhattan  
8 and other places in underserved community?

10 COMMISSIONER SHEA: Yeah, yeah. Can I  
11 give you-- I hear you, Councilman loud and clear. I  
12 can't quote your specific numbers, but I can tell  
13 you, the last couple groups coming out of the  
14 Academy, Manhattan was not underserved. Manhattan  
15 got what they should have. I will take a look at the  
16 3-4 and I will have Oleg get back to you today in  
17 terms of rank. I could tell you the next group of  
18 police officers that are coming out of the Academy is  
19 next month, the end of October. I think we have  
20 roughly, I want to say roughly 400 or take coming out  
21 of the Academy. That's for the whole city, and we  
22 will absolutely make sure that not just the 34  
23 precinct, every precinct in the City gets the  
24 resources that we have that they need. And then,  
25 again, I'll just fall back to your comment about some

1 of the gun violence. It just does not make sense in  
2 terms of arresting individuals over and over again,  
3 particularly for guns. We're not talking about fare  
4 beating here. We're not talking about minor, minor,  
5 minor crimes. We're talking about violent crimes.  
6 Tell me why somebody is carrying a gun on the streets  
7 of New York City, and then why we're allowing them to  
8 caught, get put back. We just arrested some more, I  
9 believe it was a murder last week. It was a  
10 shooting. I don't know if the person died.  
11 Tragically, there's too many [inaudible] and when we  
12 interviewed the person that was now under arrest, he  
13 laughed at the Detective and said, "No, problem, I'll  
14 be back out on the street anyway." That is the  
15 thinking of the criminal element, and until  
16 [inaudible] take common sense-- it's not going to  
17 take a lot, but common sense to fix that, this will  
18 turn around in a real short time.

19  
20 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council  
22 Member. Chair Adams, I believe, we're recognizing  
23 Council Member Menchaca. I don't believe there's any  
24 other Council Member questions. So, Chair Adams,  
25 you're free to continue on with any questions, or we

could close up this panel and move on to the public testimony at your discretion.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, I will. If there's no further questions from Council Member Menchaca. I saw him a little while ago, also. I'll just come circle with my questioning, because the topic today has to do with-- well, I'm calling it re-- we're talking a lot about the same thing, you know, from when we started this, and the focus is to do placement at NYPD where it should be and pull back in those areas [inaudible] should not be, and in my estimation that would [inaudible] completely to my colleagues question, mine also as far as deployment of NYPD, and where your footprint can be reduced in areas where other entities [inaudible] still in, where we can have more of the types of patrols that Council Member Rodriguez is talking about [inaudible] district. So, what do you see, Commissioner? How do you evaluate whether certain areas of enforcement and/or outreach can be safely served by other non-police entities?

COMMISSIONER SHEA: Well, I think-- and you're right, you are coming full circle and it's a real good discussion to have. I think that when we

1 talked about the Be Herd pilot, I was on record-- now  
2 I've seen it from the ground floor up over the course  
3 [inaudible] as many time that the police are called  
4 to scenarios like that where it's not needed and  
5 we're probably not the best to be responding. So I  
6 think that [inaudible] why I [inaudible] from the  
7 beginning. I do with eyes wide open, though. It's  
8 not always as easy as it sounds to do. There's no  
9 doubt that there's opportunities to gain there.  
10 Homeless Services is another one. I mean, those  
11 changes were made last year, Chair. You take police  
12 out of that, but I would ask everyone on this call  
13 right now and I would ask the public, are we happy  
14 with how it's gone, and I don't think the public is  
15 answering the affirmative to that. So whatever-- I  
16 would say this, whatever we decide to take the police  
17 out of, there needs to be real clear accountability  
18 to make sure public safety or quality of life is not  
19 negatively affected by that transfer. And then we  
20 will be whole heartedly [inaudible] partners to  
21 participate in a [inaudible]. You know, when you  
22 look at some of the things happening over the last  
23 year, whether it's the homeless plus taking police  
24 out of peddlers, but the problem, Chair, is the  
25

1 police were taken out of the peddlers, but the public  
2 was, you know, [inaudible] into our community council  
3 meetings, coming to our Zoom meetings, coming to me  
4 personally, and this is all over New York City and  
5 saying-- we remember what happened with [inaudible]  
6 Bronx last year who were complaining then, "Okay, why  
7 is the police not doing anything [inaudible]?" Well,  
8 the answer was, because the police were taken out of  
9 the peddlers, but then we had to step back in. So  
10 we've seen situations like that over and over play  
11 out. Midtown Manhattan was another example, the  
12 business districts across New York. So whatever  
13 decisions are made to identify opportunities for the  
14 police, we'll work hand in hand with the Council on  
15 that. Just have to make sure that-- then there's  
16 metrics to make sure that there's no loss in  
17 [inaudible].

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Yeah, I do not  
20 disagree with anything that you've said,  
21 Commissioner. So, with that, I just want to thank you  
22 and [inaudible] for being with us this morning.  
23 Thank you all for your testimony. I appreciate it.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEA: Thank you, Chair, as  
25 always.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair Adams, and thank you members of the Administration for testifying. We'll now be moving onto the public testimony section of this hearing. I'd like to remind everyone that unlike in a typical council hearing, we'll be calling up individuals one by one to testify. Council Members who have questions for a particular panelist use the Zoom raise hand function, and I will call on you after the panelist has completed their testimony. For panelists, once your name is called a member of staff with unmute you and you may begin delivering your testimony. We will be giving members of the public two minutes to speak, so and also as a reminder, everyone should submit written testimony. So, let's try to keep the spoken testimony concise and you can submit any other additional information via the testimony@council.nyc.gov website. To start we are going to begin with--

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [interposing] I'm going to interrupt because I don't know if Council Member Gibson was recognized, so I recognize Council Gibson being present in the hearing as well. Thank you, Josh.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, thank you, Chair. Bear with me. To begin we will start first with-- I believe she should be here, Ileana Mendez-Penate from the Communities United for Police Reform followed by Quadira Coles from Girls for Gender Equity. So, Ileana, are you on-- we can unmute you.

ILEANA MENDEZ-PENATE: Yes, I'm here. Can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can hear you, go ahead.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ILEANA MENDEZ-PENATE: Thank you, Chair Adams for organizing this hearing and for inviting us to testify and thank you to the Public Safety Committee and Council Members Gibson, Levine, Miller, Menchaca, Powers, Rosenthal, Rodriguez, Holden, and Yeger, and also thank you to the Public Advocate. My name is Ileana Mendez-Penate and I am testifying on behalf of Communities United for Police Reform. Communities United for Police Reform seeks to end abusive policing and runs coalitions of over 200 national, state, and city organizations in addition to community education and organizing. CPR working [inaudible] include winning key legislation,



1 including running campaigns that repealed 50A,  
2 created a special prosecutor for police [inaudible]  
3 and state law, and leading the campaigns for the  
4 Community Safety and Right to Know Act in the City  
5 Council. Reducing the NYPD's outside scope of  
6 responsibilities and bloated budget is crucial to  
7 public safety. Over the last six years the NYPD  
8 budget has actually grown over one billion dollars  
9 while key social service agencies like the Department  
10 of Mental Health, the Department of Homelessness, the  
11 Department of Youth and Community Development are  
12 continuing to struggle to meet the needs of New  
13 Yorkers. This past June in the Fiscal Year 22  
14 adopted budget, we actually included over 11 billion  
15 dollars in police funding, and this includes five  
16 billion that's solely for police fringe and pension  
17 cuts. It was unfortunate to hear today that Council  
18 Members are still under the false impression that the  
19 NYPD budget was cut by a billion dollars because it  
20 was not. Right now, one in six municipal workers are  
21 employed by the NYPD and the City spends more in  
22 fringe and benefit expenses for the NYPD personnel  
23 than it actually does in the NYPD expense budget.  
24 It's problematic that instead of making a diverse  
25

living wage employment pathways available, black and Latinx New Yorkers are essentially being told that the only ways to secure a job with critical benefits is to join the police force. We need to prioritize public safety by creating more jobs--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

ILEANA MENDEZ-PENATE: [inaudible] benefits in sectors like affordable housing, protections against climate crisis, few [sic] security, mental health services, and infrastructure that will increase the immediate and long-term safety of our community. In particular, today's discussions around mental health we wanted to address that we need a robust mental health services and we need to remove completely-- NYPD completely from mental health response. The NYPD has a documented history of responding to people in crisis with violence. This past Saturday marked nine years since Mohammad Bah [sp?] was killed by the NYPD while experiencing mental health crisis. Unfortunately, the Mayor's Be Herd program which claims to remove the NYPD from mental health actually continues to center the authority and the judgement of the NYPD instead of

leading with a public health approach in responding to crisis. Mental health is not a public safety issue and a response needs system needs to be led and designed by skilled mental health workers under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health and Mental Health. The current Be Herd program actually makes very little changes to our current system and gives us little confidence that it will decrease police violence towards people who are experiencing emotional distress. We need a mental health response system that is led by people who are experts in mental health crisis, and programs that are anchored by community-based organizations but are well-positioned to respond to people in crisis, but also to provide them necessary post-crisis and preventative care. Part of this means that we need to make massive investments in our mental healthcare structure in order to ensure that more and more people aren't going into mental health crises. We need to increase the services provided and available for folks especially in black and Latinx communities. Other opportunities that we think and we see to reduce the size and scope of the NYPD includes reducing the outside police presence at community

1 events, at rallies, and at protests. We saw during  
2 the protest of the spring of 2020, the unnecessary  
3 use of force by the NYPD during many peaceful events,  
4 especially by NYPD units that have a documented  
5 history of abuse such as the Strategic Response  
6 Group. We want to see units like the Strategic  
7 Response Group that was responsible for the death of  
8 [inaudible] and like the Vice Unit who have  
9 documented tracks of abuse, to be not only disbanded  
10 but for those funds to be redirected towards public  
11 services. I know I'm over time, so thank you so much  
12 for the Council for listening to this testimony and  
13 for having this hearing today.

14  
15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for  
16 your testimony. Next we'll be going to Quadira  
17 Coles, Girls-- Girls for Gender Equity followed by  
18 Andrew Case, Latino Justice.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

20 QUADIRA COLES: Good afternoon Chair  
21 Adams, members of staff of the Committee on Public  
22 Safety. My name is Quadira Cole, and I'm the Policy  
23 Manager at Girls for Gender Equity. We are offering  
24 testimony today to reiterate that police officers do  
25 not keep young people safe. Instead, they exacerbate

and escalate issues that lead to harmful and long-term collateral consequences for youth. This school year, New York City still has the opportunity to shape a new experience for students coming out of remote learning brought on by the pandemic. There is still time to block the growth of the NYPD's policing division and reject the recruitment of 250 new cops, new school cop. There is still time to curtail NYPD's budget and block the creation of the new policing division inside of the DOE, a misguided project that still maintains the premise of punishment and surveillance. There were two budget cycles that passed during the pandemic where the City Council did not act in favor of the young people in New York City who have said that policing causes them harm now and would negatively impact their futures. The prevention of harm and the goal of safety have rarely been successful with the use of police. It is in the police training and purpose to enforce unjust laws and protect the interest of those in power. None of these things cater to the needs of students. The City Council should be thinking about ways to prevent further harm by supporting transformative and holistic methods that have been proven to get to the

1  
2 underlying causes of conflict and violence in lieu of  
3 retributive punishment and intimidating day-to-day  
4 surveillance. GGE and advocates who work closely  
5 with young people have shown up to many of these  
6 hearings and put forward some solutions that will  
7 eliminate this perceived for our school's public  
8 spaces and used to [inaudible] police officers. We  
9 have proposed budget cuts that will allow for money  
10 to be sent on sustaining citywide restorative  
11 practices, hiring emotional support staff and  
12 building school infrastructure that prioritizes the  
13 social and emotional development in students. We and  
14 many young people have asked for universal SYEP  
15 programs to allow students to provide supplementary  
16 income for their families and build on their  
17 professional--

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
19 expired.

20 QUADIRA COLES: [inaudible] in preparation  
21 for their futures. In response to the youth  
22 demanding the total dismantling of the NYPD School  
23 Policing Division and protesting in the streets with  
24 calls to action to defund the police, we are seeing a  
25 new NPD-run youth programs like NYPD Kids First in

addition to expanding partnership with the DYCD to bolster youth surveillance and recruitment simultaneously. The NYPD's budget continues to go unscathed which allows for new higher positions and expansions. We have had enough of the total control given to the NYPD through bloated budgets and dangerously thought out delegation of city responsibilities. We demand that the City Council work to end all youth surveillance expansion efforts by the NYPD and remove school safety agents from schools permanently. There are community programs of care workers that deserve the responsibility and funding to serve the young people of New York City. There should be an investment in career readiness programs that do not involve working for the NYPD. There should be program that allow young people to explore their skills and talents instead of youth policing initiatives that reinforce obedience. Young people deserve space to channel their energy towards activities that bring whole wellness instead of forced affiliation with the same systems that perpetuate harm. There are members of our community that do not work in a law enforcement capacity who

are eager and deserve the opportunity to work with our youth with the right support. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your testimony. We will now move on to Andrew Case from Latino Justice followed by Jared Trujillo [sp?] from the New York Civil Liberties Union.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time

ANDREW CASE: Dear Chair Adams and members of the Committee on Public Safety. I'm Andrew Case, Senior Counsel at Latino Justice, and I want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify about reducing the responsibilities of the NYPD. In our written testimony, we endorse removing the NYPD from responding to those in mental crisis, those suffering addiction, from traffic and transit enforcement, from First Amendment demonstrations, and from aggressive enforcement of quality of life offenses, a continuation of the discredited Broken Windows theory of policing. But this morning, I would like to expand the definition of what responsibilities means and urge you to support efforts to eliminate one such responsibility, so-called Criminal Group Database, or the Gang Database. The NYPD should not be responsible for conducting



surveillance on thousands of black and Latinx youth based on sketchy investigative evidence. The gang data base expanded rapidly under Mayor de Blasio, and the criteria used to identify someone as a gang member are comically vague. Use of social media, playing videogames, staying out late, or wearing clothes that are "black, gold, yellow, red, purple, green, blue, white, brown, khaki, gray, orange, or lime green. Even associating with someone on the database can get you placed in the database yourself, and the process for removing people from the database is shrouded in secrecy, and despite well-publicized incidents involving white supremacist games in New York, over 99 percent of those listed in the database are black or Latinx. Being placed in the gang database can be devastating. A person arrested for a minor offense can find himself under extra scrutiny when he's in police custody. If he is identified as being in the database, for immigrants a gang label can result in denial of an asylum claim or revocation of special immigrant status. You could even find yourself in Rikers and have a Corrections Officer tell a visiting City Council Member you are a gang

member to get him to think the NYPD should start intervening in the lives of every young children.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

ANDREW CASE: As most of you know, Council Member Reynoso is introducing a bill to bar the NYPD from using the gang database. Latino Justice whole heartedly supports this effort. We ask you to consider eliminating the gang database as a key plank in reducing the NYPD's responsibilities. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Mr. Case, I want to thank you personally for your testimony. I share a lot of your concerns. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. Next we'll go to New York Legal-- or the New York Civil Liberties Union with Jared [inaudible] followed by I believe one of your colleagues also signed up. Jared, you could go ahead [inaudible].

JARED TRUJILLO: Thank you, Chair Adams, and thank you for holding this meeting and for allowing to testify. My name is Jared Trujillo. I'm Policy Counsel at the New York Civil Liberties Union and while we've submitted extensive testimony about all the different areas of the NYPD that need to be

eliminated and defunded, I want to specifically speak out the NYPD's Vice Enforcement Division. For decades we've known that Vice is just perpetrated an immense amount of harm on so many communities, particularly black communities, brown communities, and Asian communities. This is no real surprise to this City Council or to the public. Back in 1972, under the Mullen [sic] Commission, we really-- we knew that Vice officers were weaponizing their badges to terrorize, to exploit, to sexually assault black women, Asian women, and brown women. We knew this same information when the City Council held a hearing on Resolution 1444 calling on the state to pass a walking while Trans ban. We knew what Vice officers were doing to communities. We know that even in 2017 when Vice allegedly started focusing on trafficking that same year. There were multiple Vice officers that were caught running prostitution rings. There was a Vice officer that chased Yang Song to hear death two years later. There was yet another Vice officer who was caught weaponizing his badge to exploit sex workers only to arrest them anyway. This isn't a matter of rebranding. Vice needs to be eliminated, and not only must Vice be eliminated, but

1 we need to make sure those funds go to some of the  
2 same community groups that have been elevating the  
3 folks that have been long targeted and brutalized by  
4 Vice officers. that's ensuring that in the City's  
5 Sex Worker Center, that we take Vice's 18.2 million  
6 dollar budget and ensure that we have competent  
7 language services, legal services for people,  
8 economic empowerment services for people that are  
9 most likely to be sex workers, to be massage workers  
10 or to be--

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
13 expired.

14 JARED TRUJILLO: at our-- are at risk for  
15 exploitation. Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
17 testimony. Next we'll hear from Isabelle Leyva also  
18 from NYCLU, followed by Mateo Guerrero from Make the  
19 Road, I believe.

20 ISABELLE LEYVA: Thank you, and thank you  
21 for having this hearing--

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
23 started.

24 ISABELLE LEYVA: and allowing us to  
25 testify. I'm here to talk about the Strategic

Response Group. My name is Isabell Leyva. I'm an organizer with the New York Civil Liberties Union. In 2015, the NYPD's history of aggressive protest policing took on its newest form with the SRG or the Strategic Response Group. In 2020, this unit's brutality was in public view when it deployed militarized tactics against non-violent protestors. The SRG is a threat to the safety and First Amendment rights of New Yorkers. Combatting the strut means putting an end to the SRG itself. Formed in 2015 in the wake of the Ferguson uprisings, it was a 350-officer unit with a budget of 13 million. Designed to deal with terror threats and protests, the SRG's mission made a dangerous conflation between terrorism and First Amendment protected protest. After push-back, the NYPD announced the unit would not be deployed at protests. Instead, it would solely focus on terror work. Despite that promise, the unit was deployed to protests months later and its budget ballooned to 90 million in its first year. Currently, the NYPD's public description of the unit does not include counter-terrorism, but it does include protests. The SRG is trained to see racial justice protestors as enemy combatants. In the

unit's training manual, protest groups are divided into two categories, peaceful and violent. Examples of violent protestors are BLM, Occupy Wall Street, and anti-Trump demonstrators. The NYPD's actions last summer have been the subject of numerous lawsuits and investigations. Central to many of these is the SRG. Between June 2020 and January 2021, NYCLU protest monitors witnessed 39 instances of police arresting protestors, 25 instances of use of force, and 23 instances of kettling [sic] or trapping protestors for arrest. The SRG was present and participating at every instance of arrest, every instance of kettling, and all but one instance of use of force. In December of 2020, the Department of Investigation report called on the NYPD to re-evaluate the SRG's role in protest response. The NYPD then issued a new policy on First Amendment activities. In developing this policy the Department failed to address the SRG's role and skipped over a critical question. Is First Amendment activity an area in which police should have primary responsibility at all--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

1  
2 ISABELLE LEYVA: Instead of grappling  
3 with that question, New York City continues to  
4 entrench police as the default response to First  
5 Amendment activities, and the NYPD refuses to hold  
6 itself accountable. City leaders must step in to  
7 protect the safety and First Amendment rights of New  
8 Yorkers by disbanding the SRG and ensuring that the  
9 unit's militarized tactics are not recreated under  
10 another name. Instead, its funds should be  
11 reinvested in a way to support and uplift New  
12 Yorkers. Thank you.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
14 testimony. Council Member Rosenthal has her hand  
15 raised. Do you have a question, Council Member?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I do. Hang on  
17 one second. I just want to ask this panel-- I've  
18 been listening in. what they thought of the-- and  
19 perhaps the last panel as well, of the program that  
20 was implemented in Alicka Ampry-Samuel's district and  
21 whether or not they watched that and saw any  
22 successes there? I know there was somebody from  
23 Girls for Gender Equity on and NYCLU. I'm sorry, I'm  
24 on my telephone so it's hard to see exactly who's  
25

1 available, but they maybe could raise their hand,  
2 someone on the panels. Thank you.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure. Bear with us  
4 for a second. Does anyone who just spoke, Girls for  
5 Gender Equity, Quadira Coles still on or Ileana, or  
6 anyone who had just previously spoken wants to kind  
7 of chime in on answering Chair Rose-- Council Member  
8 Rosenthal's questions, feel free to make yourself  
9 known.  
10

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you, and  
12 I would broaden it even to say do you know about it.  
13 They talked about that program expanding into 100  
14 other-- I couldn't quite tell, precincts or  
15 districts, whether or not you've seen that in your--  
16 in any particular communities? And if you've not,  
17 that's an answer, too.

18 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, we need to move  
19 on to the next panelist.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Alright, then. We'll  
21 move on to Make the Road, I believe.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yeah, sorry about  
24 that everyone. Mateo Guerrero, I believe that you  
25 are next, and any other folks from Make the Road who



are testifying with you or after you, we'll proceed after you. Go ahead.

MATEO GUERRERO: Thank you, and I will [inaudible] for the members from Make the Road. Good afternoon, everyone. My name Mateo Guerrero [inaudible]. I am the TNTIQ [sic] lead organizer in the Make the Road New York, and I'm here to testify on the importance of defunding the NYPD. I think particularly, in particular to dismantle the Vice units. The Vice unit is a squad that is tasked with policing [inaudible] immoral [sic] such as consensual sex work, street level narcotics use, and gambling. However, over the past 40 years that I have been working at Make the Road with undocumented and immigrant, immigrant Transgender women in Jackson Heights and different areas of Brooklyn. We have been able to document a pattern of harassment, surveillance, [inaudible] violent [sic] rates against communities who are perceived as sex workers, who are sex workers particularly from the 110<sup>th</sup> and 115<sup>th</sup> precinct. Today, we're going to hear stories from Veronica from Cathy and from Jennifer. These are three testimonies that of the thousand community members who were told to perform sexual favors, and

1 by that I mean sexual assault, that they wouldn't be  
2 arrested, or those who were forced to tell on the  
3 names and locations of other sex workers in the  
4 neighborhood to prevent their arrest. These are not  
5 the only tactics of intimidation that police use  
6 against transgender women and sex workers and folks  
7 who are perceived as sex workers. The police also  
8 follow them around the neighborhood with flashing  
9 lights until they get to their homes, and they  
10 usually [inaudible] harassment around four in the  
11 morning when the clubs are closing in the area. This  
12 behavior from the Vice units and in general from the  
13 NYPD is terrorizing and only continues to instigate  
14 fears in our community. Nearly 93 percent of Vice  
15 targets for purchasing sex are black, brown, or  
16 Asian. About 90 percent of those targeting--  
17 targeted for selling sex are people of color. Almost  
18 all of the people Vice officers prey upon are from  
19 low income neighborhoods such as Jackson Heights and  
20 Sunset Park, areas in Fifth Avenue in Brooklyn. Under  
21 Mayor Bill de Blasio, New York City paid more than  
22 one million to settle--  
23

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
25 expired.

MATEO GUERRERO: false arrest claims by people targeted for patronizing. As Make the Road New York, we demand the dismantling and disbanding of the Vice Units to prevent further harassment, assault, violence, and criminalization of Trans, queer, and non-binary, gender expansive community members who are sex workers or who are perceived as sex workers. It is essential that the funding that has been used for the Vice units is moved into community programs, housing vouchers, and social work support for our communities. Thank you everyone for putting this hearing together.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: And I think that-- thank you very much, Mateo, thank you. It--

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: [interposing] Mateo, so if you could stay. We'll leave you unmuted and you can provide translation services for the folks on your end. Is that how you'd like to go about that?

MATEO GUERRERO: They can speak, and then I will read it in English.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, yeah, just we will-- we'll go about-- Veronica first, and then I believe Jennifer after that. So, the two of you can

1 deliver your testimony, and then afterwards we'll  
2 switch back to you. I believe there's also--

3 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [interposing] Josh?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, ma'am?

5 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Josh, I'm sorry to  
6 interrupt, but I think if Helen is still on, perhaps  
7 Ileana's hand is raised to address Helen's  
8 question.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, we could--  
10 yeah.

11 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [inaudible] question.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If you'd like that we  
13 could shift back. We'll shift back. Sorry about  
14 that to Veronica and Jennifer. I think we're going  
15 to try to switch back now to answer the Council  
16 Member's questions from before, and then we'll  
17 continue after that. So, if we could-- just bear  
18 with us for a second, please. We'll-- now, I  
19 believe--

20 ILEANA MENDEZ-PENATE: Great.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ileana, go ahead,  
22 sorry.

23 ILEANA MENDEZ-PENATE: Thank you about--  
24 thank you for that. I apologize. I was having  
25

1 trouble unmuting myself earlier. To address your  
2 question, Council Member Rosenthal, we believe that  
3 those programs are successful in large part because  
4 those community groups, including Cure Violence, that  
5 were really given the jurisdiction and allowed to  
6 respond and de-escalate incidents. And the NYPD  
7 really doesn't need to have a role in this. There's  
8 a strong-- there's a lot of data that documents how  
9 successful these programs have been, and that we have  
10 to put into that-- an expansion of these programs  
11 would be the right move in terms of increasing  
12 community safety in these neighborhoods, but part of  
13 that needs to be-- the role and authority of the NYPD  
14 needs to be decreased to allow those programs to be  
15 successful.  
16

17 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you, Ileana. I  
18 hope Council Member Rosenthal heard it. I'm texting  
19 her to make sure that she heard your response. Thank  
20 you so much for that.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member  
22 Rosenthal is giving a thumb of approval, so she  
23 heard. We will continue on with Jennifer and  
24 Veronica from make the road, and then Mateo, you're  
25 available afterwards to provide any translations

[inaudible]. We will unmute you and then you could begin.

JENNIFER: That's [sic] Jennifer. Okay.  
[speaking Spanish]

MATEO GUERRERO: Thank you, Jennifer for [speaking Spanish]. So I'm going to interpret Jennifer's testimony. Good afternoon, my name is Jennifer Reyena [sp?]. I'm a Puerto Rican transgender woman and a community leader in different groups and today I'm participating as a leader from Make the Road New York, the Trans Immigrant [sic] Project. In the 90's I managed to complete my nursing degree and began my career as a nurse in local hospitals. However, due to the discrimination based on my sexual orientation and my gender identity I had to leave nursing and I had to migrate to New York to start doing sex work, one of the oldest professions in the world. Being a sex worker gave me the freedom to be my own boss and to have financial stability not only for myself but also for my family members. However, the most difficult thing about my profession as sex worker and what causes me the most uneasiness and fear is the constant police harassment and the fear of being arrested. My last arrest in

2018 when I was with a man who ended up being an undercover cop. We had not yet entered my room when a police officer violently smashed the front door of my apartment and arrested me in a harsher way I could have ever expected, even much worse than what we see on TV. This arrest was very humiliating. The police scandal [sic] was so loud that even my neighborhood--my neighbors found out, and has led to many housing problems. The landlord tried to kick me out of my apartment for being a sex worker, and I had to fight for more than eight months in court to not be evicted. I have no doubt that the squad that broke the door messed up my apartment and created a scandal in my because was a Vice Unit. My story is not unique and many Trans women can testify to the violent and abusive way in which the NYPD, especially the Vice Units, behaved. The constant police surveillance creates insecurity for us as sex workers, reproduces false stereotypes about our work, puts us at risk in front of other civilians that start identifying us as sex workers, and ultimately puts us at risk of losing our homes. That is why I'm here to demand that we dismantle the Vice Units so that people who have survived sex trafficking or who

are sex workers, people who are perceived as sex workers are not victims of the violence and police abuse of that unit. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you both.

Veronica, you could go ahead and Mateo you're available to translate after that. [inaudible]

VERONICA: Good morning to all the City Council and Committee Members who are present in today's hearing. My name is Veronica and I am a member of the Trans Immigrant Project at the Make the Road New York. I am already [inaudible] from Pueblo [sic] Mexico, but I have been in the United States for over 25 years. Today's hearing on Removing Responsibility from the NYPD is particularly important to me because my experiences with the police-- I am a trafficking survivor, and I am here to attest that my experiencing with the Vice Units were outraging and traumatizing. The night that I was arrested, there were several male officers that put their hands on me for lack [sic] of my gender identity, and who didn't even see my humanity. Never through that arrest did anybody care to ask why I was trading sex in that moment or how I was feeling. The arrest was completely dehumanizing, and then the



judicial process that followed was even more terrorizing. The case lasted over a year and a half where I had to constantly interact with the police and the judge and had to provide very difficult memories over and over again. I also had to deal with the constant pressure from the police and the judge to admit guilty to being a sex worker, even though in that moment I was being trafficked. Because of the arrest and the court process, I had a criminal record and [inaudible] employment and security [sic] housing [sic]. During this time, because of finances, I had to move in with my family where I had to cut my hair, dress and act like I meant to be-- to be-- to have a place to stay. This whole experience was very traumatic. Even to this day I am terrified to see a police officer near me. I start shaking and I get very nervous. What I needed at the moment was community services and [inaudible] social worker who could support me. I needed someone to listen to me and a voucher to permanent housing, not police officers laughing at me. I know this is the case for many more transgender women who like myself have experienced abuse and violence from the Vice Unit, and in general, the NYPD. I am testifying

as someone who survived trafficking and also someone who was a sex worker, and I demand that we dismantle the Vice Unit so that people who survived sex trafficking like me, people who are sex workers, and people who are perceived as sex workers are not further victimized and traumatized by the police. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. Can we go ahead and unmute Mateo? Do you have anything further to add? I see your hand is raised.

MATEO GUERRERO: Yes, we have the testimony from one more member. She had to step out because she needed to do something within this window of time, and I want to be able to read it since it's really important for this hearing.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, go ahead.

MATEO GUERRERO: Okay. Good afternoon everyone, to all the City Council Members and people in the community who are in attendance. My name is Cathy Garcia and I am a member of Make the Road New York, Trans Immigrant Project, and I am here to share my experiences with the police and the importance of dismantling the Vice Units. I'm originally from

1 Mexico, but I immigrated to the United States for the  
2 first time in 2001. Initially, I started working in  
3 a restaurant which unfortunately closed after 9/11.  
4 Since then, as a transgender woman I was unable to  
5 find another job and I no longer had any money to pay  
6 for food or for rent. So I started working doing  
7 shows in bars and also doing sex work again. It  
8 didn't matter if I was working or not, the police  
9 were constantly harassing me, insulting me, kicking  
10 me out of cafeterias if I was sitting there for more  
11 than five minutes, putting their lights from their  
12 cars on me and telling me to leave. The police used  
13 very intimidating tactics against me. Different  
14 policemen asked me for my phone number and told me  
15 that I needed to cooperate with them so that they  
16 wouldn't arrest me. What that meant is that they  
17 showed up in my house for me to have sex with them.  
18 These same policemen who put their gun on the table  
19 and tell me that I needed to cooperate, and then the  
20 times that I didn't follow upon their request for  
21 their sexual favors, I was arrested. There were a  
22 total of three arrests for sex work between 2003 and  
23 2006. In the last arrest, a man who I later  
24 discovered was an undercover cop, offered me to drive  
25

me home and offer me money. I told him I don't do that, what are you doing? But in a matter of seconds, there were three police cars surrounding us. This resulted in four months in jail and then my deportation. Due to these arrests I was in solitary confinement for several months without access to hormones and almost dying of pneumonia that was not treated until I arrived in Mexico. I have no doubt that the cars that surrounded me were police officers from the Vice Unit. Vice does not protect the communities that are being trafficked, and much less any of us who identify as sex workers. What Vice does is to commit acts of violence and justify--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

MATEO GUERRERO: [inaudible] against many of us who are trying to survive. I demand that the City Council consider my testimony so the Vice Units are removed and more transgender women and members of the community don't have to take the violence and abuse from the police. Nowadays I am afraid of seeing the police, and I do not want more Trans sisters to go through this experience. Dismantle the Vice Units now. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. Council Member Rosenthal had her hand raised. Do you have a question-- no, okay. Thank you. We're next going to move on to Jordan Otis from the Center for Court Innovation followed by Rohini Singh from Advocates for Children. Jordan, you may begin.

JORDAN OTIS: Thank you. Good afternoon, Chair Adams and esteemed Council Members of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Jordan and I'm the Associate Director for Community Programs at Midtown Community Court, project of the Center for Court Innovation. I'm here today to discuss [inaudible] community-based programs are working to provide an alternative to police interaction [inaudible]. The first is Community First led by MCC, Time Square Alliance, Breaking Ground, and [inaudible] House, piloting in the Times Square area and the surrounding neighborhoods. We launched in January. Midtown Community Court has brought together previously mentioned organizations with city agencies such as DHS, DOHMH and HRA to connect individuals mostly whom are experiencing homelessness to the critical services that are needed-- excuse me,

critical services that will help them avoid the justice involvement. Led by a team of community navigators with lived and shared experiences, this project links individuals to services before their behavior leads to police interaction by building a trusting relationship and becoming their support system. Our efforts have led to folks on our caseloads being connected to housing, reunifying with family, connections to mental health, physical health, and general wellness service, benefits, enrollments, COVID vaccinations, and more. But when people do find themselves involved in the justice system, we hope to provide support at the precinct level as well as through a new initiative called Midtown Rapid Engagement Initiative. This initiative seeks do four things: the first, connect people to a defense attorney on the day of their arrest. Two, conduct an immediate eligibility check for pre-arraignment diversion options offered by the DA's office such a Project Reset and/or Hope. Three, provide support to people so they don't miss their arraignment date. Four, link people to social service sessions within the 21 day period between arrest and arraignment. We believe this program can

connect people to services and resources that effectively keep them from justice involvement. We have been piloting the Rapid Engagement Initiative since March in collaboration with the Midtown North precinct, but a Rapid Eng--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

JORDAN OTIS: [inaudible] or peer navigator based in the precinct to meet with folks who are arrested and released with a desk appearance ticket would increase our ability to effectively engage with community members and unit [sic] services. Further, it will take the responsibility of having to communicate social services and other offerings off the shoulders of the NYPD. Your help in making that happen would be tremendous. Recently, Midtown South precinct conveyed that they would like to have additional resources for those also released with DATs, and will now be a partner in this initiative as well. We look forward to having further discussions with you to make this initiative a successful one. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. Next, we will go to Advocates for

Children, Rohini Singh, and I will name the following panel after that. Thank you.

ROHINI SINGH: Good afternoon. Thank you--

SERGEANT AT ARMS:[interposing][inaudible]

ROHINI SINGH: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Rohini Singh, and I'm a Senior Staff Attorney on the School Justice Projects at Advocates for Children. For 50 years AFC has worked to ensure high-quality education for New York City's students that face barriers to academic success. We're members of Dignity in Schools in New York, a coalition of youth, parents, educators, and advocates dedicated to shifting the culture of New York City schools away from punishment-- from the punishment and criminalization of our youth and towards positive approaches to discipline and safety. We're testifying today to join the call from students, parents, and educators for police-free schools and urge the city to eliminate the reliance on the NYPD to address the needs of students in our schools. The City must provide students with safe, supportive, healing centered school environments that have



comprehensive mental health and social emotional supports, and promote wellbeing and equity for all students and school staff. Sending police into schools and continuing to hire new school safety agents undermines this goal. Police are not mental or behavioral health professionals and should not respond to students' needs. Not only are school safety agents and other NYPD officers ill-equipped for this role, but police interventions can in and of themselves have negative effects on adolescent health, heightening emotional and psychological distress and resulting in feelings of social stigma. In June, AFC released a report finding that NYPD officers, including precinct officers and SSAs responded to a total of 12,050 incidents in the last four years where a student in emotional distress was removed from school and transported to the hospital for a psychological evaluation. Marrying [sic] trends-- broader trends in police, a disproportionate number of these interventions and how black students, students with disabilities, and district 75 schools, students attending schools located in low income communities of color. These students are also more likely than their peers to be handcuffed when removed

1 from school. Safety does not exist when black  
2 students and students with disabilities are forced to  
3 interact with a system of policing, but use them as a  
4 threat and not as students and young people. Indeed,  
5 there is overwhelming evidence that these harsh  
6 responses harm children's futures--

7  
8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
9 expired.

10 ROHINI SINGH: and do nothing to ensure  
11 safety. When examining the role of the NYPD with the  
12 goal of reducing their responsibilities, we urge the  
13 City to remove all police from our city schools. The  
14 city must re-evaluate its definition of safety in  
15 schools, and listen to student, parent, and educator  
16 voices calling for the divestment of funds from the  
17 NYPD and investment in restorative practices,  
18 healing-centered schools, and mental and  
19 social/emotional supports and services. Thank you  
20 for the opportunity to testify.

21 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Rohini, thank you.  
22 I'm going to ask the question, because this is such a  
23 hot topic, you know, for us. It has been for such a  
24 long time, and I'm just going to throw it out there.  
25 You know, I appreciate you and organizations and the

1 children for the testimony over the, you know, few  
2 months. Help me to get to this place. How do you--  
3 how do you balance this with the dominant numbers of  
4 SSAs who are women of color, a lot of whom are single  
5 mothers, and a lot of whom view these children in  
6 these schools as their own children who provide them  
7 breakfast in the morning, who would give the coat off  
8 their back to clothe them? You know, and other  
9 variables as well. So, just help me-- help me here.

11 ROHINI SINGH: Well, I mean, our  
12 position, and we're very much informed by the way  
13 that youth and students perceive the school safety  
14 agents in their schools. I can tell you that while  
15 that might be the situation for certain school safety  
16 agents in schools, but that, in our experience, has  
17 not been the primary function of school safety  
18 agents. As long as they are under the NYPD and NYPD  
19 officers, they're there as police in schools. I mean,  
20 they're there-- their presence in and of itself is  
21 harmful to students as NYPD officers. I mean, often,  
22 you know, the data that we examine, you know, they're  
23 getting involved in situations that really need to be  
24 addressed by turning to mental health professionals,  
25 you know, essentially school staff that are

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: And just one more, and I don't know if my colleagues want to-- how do you gather your data and get the assessment and the-- I guess the percentage of, you know, favorable versus unfavorable and you know, how do you get that info?

ROHINI SINGH: I mean, so we don't have the information about it, and I think maybe that's part of the problem. It's so much of what's out there is anecdotal, and there isn't sort of a widespread, you know, survey of how whole communities view school safety agents. By we do know the historical, you know, the historic roots of policing, of school policing. We do know from our work on Dignity in Schools, the perspective of students that have interacted with school safety agents, and the negative impact that it has had on them. And so, you

1 know, that's where we're drawing our policy advocacy  
2 and what we're trying to push for.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay. Thank you very  
5 much for your testimony today. I appreciate it.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I thank you much for  
7 your testimony. We have Council Member questions  
8 from Council Member Rosenthal. After Council Member  
9 Rosenthal asks a question, we will be moving on to  
10 the following panel which will begin with Chan Wang  
11 [sp?], followed by Andy Bowen [sp?]. So, Chair  
12 Rosenthal, you may begin with your question, and then  
13 we will follow up with whoever your question is  
14 addressed to and then we can move on to the following  
15 testimony. Go ahead Chair, or Council Member.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so  
17 much, and in many ways my question is for the folks  
18 from Make the Road who gave such compelling testimony  
19 and, you know, disheartening and heartrending, you  
20 know, very difficult but honest testimony. I really  
21 appreciate them. I'm not sure if they're still on or  
22 if anyone knows the folks from Make the Road. I know  
23 Mateo is always wonderful. If someone could text him  
24 and see if he could get back on. While I'm waiting,  
25 Mr. Otis from Center for Court Innovation, actually,

1 I'm going to ask you kind of a similar question which  
2 is-- First, the Center for Court Innovation does such  
3 amazing work. I think if the city turned over its  
4 entire budget to, you would stop the problems in the  
5 city. So, I have full faith in your organization,  
6 what you've done. I know I've worked closely with  
7 your domestic violence group-- really do wonderful  
8 work. I'm wondering, in situations that you're aware  
9 of that the representatives from Make the Road were  
10 talking about, do you know if these individuals who  
11 are treated this way are ever given an opportunity to  
12 see, meet with folks at the Anti-Violence Project, or  
13 you know, other trauma-informed counseling services,  
14 you know, Crime Victim Treatment Center. I'm not  
15 sure. I think you all might do some of that work.  
16 You know, the sexual violence that we're hearing  
17 about as ludicrous as this might sound, but you know,  
18 how do we get the Sex Crimes Unit, the NYPD that step  
19 in here, and somehow play a role in stopping this  
20 from happening. I don't know. What do you think?

22 JORDAN OTIS: Yeah, [inaudible] thank you  
23 for the kind words you led with. I do want to be  
24 careful and not speak for the entirety of the center  
25 being that I'm just located at the Midtown Community

1 Court Project. But yes, you're right, we do have a  
2 hand in that work, and through our work at Midtown  
3 because we have come across folks like I mentioned  
4 through our work in Times Square and whatnot, Rapid  
5 Engagement initiatives, and other outreach that yes,  
6 have been involved in sex works in different  
7 capacities and whatnot. And so what we do is really  
8 try our best just as other folk [inaudible] system to  
9 connect them to very individualized services--  
10

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]

12 Yeah.

13 JORDAN OTIS: And so, yeah, we have  
14 worked with a number of different community-based  
15 organizations as well throughout the borough to kind  
16 of act as a liaison and make those connections. When  
17 we can, we do try to bring in whether it's different  
18 defense [sic] agencies and whatnot into that process  
19 [inaudible] yeah, like I said, kind of act as that  
20 liaison at Midtown to make sure that all the right  
21 organizations that can help folks kind of take that  
22 off-ramp the justice system to do, and most of all  
23 make sure it's sustainable as opposed to kind of a  
24 one-time connection, but something that they can  
25

1 actually invest in and something that they believe  
2 that they can also trust so that we can--

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]  
4 Exactly.

5 JORDAN OTIS: stop that kind of cyclical--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]  
7 Exactly.

8 JORDAN OTIS: especially in our area.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: You know what  
10 I'm hearing is how do we-- someone who's been  
11 traumatized in this way, right, you never get  
12 justice. You're never going to get justice, but what  
13 I'm wondering is how well this city does in providing  
14 some sort of trauma-informed services, counseling  
15 services, and whether or not those services are made  
16 available to people, and I think I'm hearing you say  
17 that for the people in your orbit that you do try to  
18 do that. Is there-- go ahead.

19 JORDAN OTIS: Sorry, I-- but you're spot  
20 on, and I think one thing that we've come to realize,  
21 and I think I'm preaching to the choir here with the  
22 other folks on the call is though that that trauma  
23 often leads to a distrust in systems as a whole, and  
24 often the folks that we're working with have a lot of  
25



1 difficulty separating these social services embedded  
2 in the city from these city agencies that may have  
3 led to that trauma in the first place.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Got it.

5 JORDAN OTIS: What we've done at Midtown  
6 is really kind of gra-- kind of create this team of  
7 folks with lived experience, with shared experience  
8 that are acting essentially as credible [inaudible],  
9 and relating with these folks that are coming across  
10 our paths in a way that is building an actual  
11 trusting relationship. So then once that service is  
12 referred, they're like okay, this is coming from  
13 someone that I know I can trust, that is in my  
14 support system and my support circle, and now as a  
15 result I'm more likely to engage with this in its  
16 entirety to a point where I can actually benefit from  
17 some of these services that are offered from city  
18 agencies so on and so forth as opposed to just taking  
19 that referral without addressing first the trauma  
20 that came that from that justice system involvement,  
21 [inaudible] arrest, whether that is an actual  
22 involvement throughout the court processing's, so on  
23 and so forth. So we're doing a lot of work on the  
24 front and of that outreach making sure that that rust  
25

1 and that relationship is there and we're not  
2 strangers so when ultimately that referral is made  
3 everyone feels as if everyone's best interest is in  
4 mind as opposed to being just another referral, just  
5 another [inaudible], or just another kind of  
6 deliverable, so to speak.

7  
8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yeah, and are  
9 there any nonprofits you work with in particular for  
10 the trans-- for transgender folks who are arrested as  
11 sex workers?

12 JORDAN OTIS: We do have a couple of  
13 folks. I like to lean on the experts in our clinic  
14 and our social working for those referrals, but I can  
15 certainly get your office that list of --

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]  
17 Yeah, no I was just curious. That's alright. You  
18 don't have to. I mean, I know ABP dos wonderful work  
19 and-- yeah. Alright and thank you so much Mr. Otis,  
20 I appreciate you as always. And did anyone from Make  
21 the Road jump on? No? Okay. Alright, thank you  
22 very much, Chair. Thank you for the time.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council  
24 Member. If anyone from Make the Road signs on we'll  
25 be sure to flag that for you as well, okay? Next

we'll go to our next panelist. We'll begin with Shan Huang followed by Andy Bowen.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SHAN HUANG: Thank you so much everyone. My name is Shan Huang. Thank you for offering this space to hear us out. Today I will present Womankind, an organization whose mission is to use multiple dimensions of its Asian heritage to work alongside survivors from gender-based violence. We want to create a future where we rise above violence and where our communities [inaudible] towards collective wellbeing, restoration, and social justice. I'm here today to speak about our client's experience with Vice Human Trafficking Division, especially unlicensed massage workers' experience. So first of all, although we acknowledge the efforts Vice has made to hear and support survivors of human trafficking, our clients, especially unlicensed massage workers, have voiced out overwhelmingly negative impact, especially on how they were treated during and after the arrest and the amount of trauma they have to navigate through. Today, I would like to express three main things. So, first, Vice did not make proactive efforts in ensuring language

1 access [inaudible] let along cultural competency  
2 [sic]. Many clients we work with do not speak  
3 English as their primary language, and they have  
4 expressed they were very confused about entire  
5 process during the raids, specifically there were no  
6 interpreters available on site. Nobody was making  
7 active efforts to communicate about what's going on,  
8 not explaining to them about their rights, and many  
9 of the clients did not know by law they could get  
10 court-assigned free lawyers. They end up hiring  
11 private lawyers who later took advantage of those  
12 clients. Second, we have been informed by our  
13 clients that some officers engaging in improper  
14 behaviors when interacting with them after the  
15 arrests. We have cases where clients were exposed to  
16 sexual jokes, insulting gestures, and they purposely-  
17 - purposefully crossed their personal physical  
18 boundaries. I will leave some specific examples in  
19 my written testimony, but I--

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
22 expired.

23 SHAN HUANG: what I want to address here  
24 is that every human being deserves respect, dignity,  
25 and quality. And third, in the case of civil

1 forfeiture, [inaudible] clients assets, especially  
2 their own cash were seized by Vice often become  
3 entangled in the process that rights were violated,  
4 and because of their fear of getting into more  
5 trouble, clients will often let it go and not want to  
6 proceed or engage further. So, in summary, I wanted  
7 to address that because of the vulnerability of this  
8 population, many unlicensed massage workers,  
9 including survivors of trafficking, are so afraid of  
10 speaking up, as they don't want to get into trouble.  
11 And our collective goal should be protecting the  
12 rights of each individual survivor, and that's the  
13 only path to restoring their dignity and giving them  
14 the opportunity they deserve to pursue a better life.  
15 So, thank you so much for hearing us out today.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for  
18 your testimony. We'll move on to Andy Bowen followed  
19 by-- bear with me for a second-- Lynly-- Andy, you  
20 may begin.

21 ANDY BOWEN: Thank you. My name is Andy  
22 Bowen. I am Associate Director of Government Affairs  
23 for the Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice  
24 Center. Thank you, Chair Adams, Council Member  
25 Rosenthal, and others [inaudible] for making this

haring possible. The Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center, or SWP, offers legal advocacy to survivors of human trafficking and people who engage in sex work regardless of whether they do that by choice, circumstance, or coercion. SWP argues today that one, the Anti-trafficking Vice Unit, or ATV, as I'm told Vice has been rebranded, should be disbanded, even as ATV has reduced its prostitution-related arrests and is claiming to refocus on trafficking and maintains officers who are violent and coercive toward trafficking survivors. Two, ATV and the 18.2 million dollars in funding exclusive to overtime, should be redistributed to organizations that truly serve and are guided by the sex work and trafficking survivor [inaudible]. The stories that were referenced involving trafficking are offered in fuller detail in my written testimony [inaudible]. As recent events and in an example that happened the last four years, which is [inaudible] of pattern of behavior toward trafficking survivors, a trafficking survivor client brought to service agency by ATV ultimately told the provider that they didn't want to collaborate with ATV. The provider explained this to ATV. Nevertheless, ATV officers found the client in

1 several locations they knew she was likely to go. If  
2 you've been continuously hounded by your trafficker,  
3 being hounded again by ATV when you've explicitly  
4 said you do not want their offers of help could be  
5 re-traumatizing. As another example of terrible  
6 treatment of trafficking survivors, this last summer  
7 a provider told me the story of a certified  
8 trafficking survivor who completed the process of  
9 [inaudible] her prior prostitution conviction that  
10 occurred while she was being trafficked. She was  
11 sleeping outside when she was woken up by ATV. They  
12 held her for several hours, took her medications  
13 away, called her a whore, and she was understandably  
14 quite shaken by [inaudible]. These are just some of  
15 the reasons for eliminating ATV, and I support my  
16 colleagues--

17  
18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
19 expired.

20 ANDY BOWEN: speaking on calling for  
21 elimination of ATV and reinvesting the 18.2 million  
22 and overtime money [sic] on community-focused needs.  
23 Thank you so much for your attention to these issues  
24 and holding these hearings, and constantly being in  
25 conversation with our communities.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your testimony. Council Member Rosenthal, I believe she has another question. We also have Mateo back from Make the Road. So if you want to kind of direct that question as well. Go ahead, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you. I do. So if you could unmute Mateo. Mateo, I just want to thank you as always for being so present on behalf of the people that Make the Road is trying to help. You know, you're relaying and trying to help people with real trauma, and you do it with grace, and I really want you to know how much I appreciate you. I was wondering, and frankly Andy Bowen from the-- Andy may also know answers to these questions. but I'm wondering for the people who you brought on today, were they ever given-- have they ever been given an opportunity to work with trauma-informed, good trauma-informed, counselors and is there-- are there-- I mean, you and I should follow up afterwards because I'm seeing you shake your head no. So, but are there trusted providers that Make the Road can refer people to? Do you know about the Anti-Violence Project or VIP [sic]? Go ahead.



1  
2 MATEO GUERRERO: Yeah, from the city  
3 directly we don't have connections, but we do work  
4 closely with AVP. So whenever we had either a case  
5 of hate violence like from civilians we refer them to  
6 AVP, but also when we have cases of police violence  
7 we make sure that they receive immediate social work  
8 support between six to eight weeks, and then we  
9 transition them into permanent mental health support.  
10 So we create those connections, but what I would say,  
11 though, is that there are very limited resources, and  
12 this is why we need to dismantle the Vice Units so  
13 that we can move those fundings into community--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [interposing]  
15 Absolutely.

16 MATEO GUERRERO: services that are  
17 necessary.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yeah, if you  
19 could follow up with me, I'd really appreciate that,  
20 and thank you. Thanks for coming back on. I  
21 appreciate you.

22 MATEO GUERRERO: Thank you so much.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Andy, I don't  
24 know if you want to add to that.  
25

ANDY BOWEN: Yeah, I just wanted to sort of add on, like, what I'm understanding is happening is like when it comes to A-- I've been told that ATV will like have a trafficking survivor sometimes bring them to a provider. And you know, that's the story. It goes deeper in my written testimony, but what you see there-- I'll just tell you know-- is that trafficking brings in a person. The person goes, "I don't want to work with trafficking or ATV." And ATV like-- I have an MSW [sic], right? I was trained to have boundaries, and what I'm being told is these are people-- like, these officers do not practice boundary control. Like, it's sort of like really, really aggressive. Like, I mean, the story that I told in my testimony was like, this is somebody who ATV keeps on going back to places they know this person is at, because this person has said I don't want to work with them anymore. And so it's sort of like you have this group of people who think they know like what boundary control is or they know what they're doing and they think that they're doing something really great for survivors, but it turns out that it's not and it's actually really harmful. And I think what Shan's also speaking to is that

1 like, you know, then-- you know, let's add on  
2 unlicensed massage in situations in which people are  
3 not speaking the same language as anyone-- as the  
4 officers who come in. It's just-- ATV is a mess, and  
5 we should not be trusting this agency to be doing  
6 this trafficking work. It's not therapeutic by any  
7 stretch of the imagination.  
8

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Right. And  
10 I'll just remind everybody that Council Member Cumbo  
11 passed a law at the end of 2018 requiring the NYPD to  
12 get trained in trauma-informed care, and that  
13 training is supposed to happen on a regular basis.  
14 So I just want to put that out there. Thank you very  
15 much. Appreciate it. Thank you. Thank you both.  
16 Thank you for the time, Chair Adams.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council  
18 Member. Next we will turn to-- I don't know if--  
19 yes. Lynly Egyes followed by Alissa Crespo [sp?].  
20 After that-- apologies. After that will be Melissa  
21 Broudo who I just signed on as well. So I just wanted  
22 to-- that's the next [inaudible]. Go ahead.

23 LYNLY EGYES: Thank you so much. Thank  
24 you so much. Good morning members of the Committee  
25 of Public Safety. My name is Lynly Egyes and I'm the

1 Legal Director at Transgender Law Center where I've  
2 worked for the last four years. Prior to joining  
3 TLC, I worked at Sex Workers Project for almost eight  
4 years. Today, rather than talk about statistics and  
5 policies, I will share some of the experiences I've  
6 had over the last decade working with sex workers and  
7 survivors of trafficking who have interacted with the  
8 police. I will never forget my first interaction  
9 with Vice in New York City at the very beginning of  
10 my legal career. My client Carla, a transgender  
11 woman who was a victim of human trafficking was ready  
12 to file a police report. I know that police and the  
13 Vice had a history of transphobia, so I worked with  
14 the LGBT liaison who set up and attended the meeting  
15 with Vice. Unfortunately, the meeting didn't go well.  
16 Prior to the meeting, one Vice officers pulled me in  
17 the room and said, "You don't really know your  
18 client." He started pointing at her rap sheet.  
19 "Look, she has convictions for prostitution on her  
20 record," he shared proudly as if he solved some  
21 puzzle I didn't know existed, that I already knew  
22 about her arrest. More importantly, she had been  
23 forced into sex work, so it shouldn't be surprising  
24 to anyone that she had arrests on her record for  
25

1 prostitution. Needless to say, the interview did not  
2 go well. The Vice officers repeatedly used  
3 homophobic and transphobic language and made it clear  
4 they did not believe Carla. After the interview, I  
5 asked for a copy of the police report. Both officers  
6 laughed and said they weren't filing a police report.  
7 They didn't believe she was a victim despite the fact  
8 that she was held in a basement without freedom to  
9 leave, forced to have sex with men that were brought  
10 to her, and forced to do street-based sex work. When  
11 I re-emphasized these points, they said her  
12 experiences didn't fit within the definition of  
13 trafficking. Baffled, I pointed out that she was  
14 younger than 18 at the time, and even had convictions  
15 on her record prior to turning 18, and therefore, de  
16 facto, she was a victim of trafficking. The officers  
17 just looked at me and said, "That's federal law.  
18 You're in New York." I left feeling defeated, like I  
19 had let down my client.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

22 LYNLY EGYES: I went into the office  
23 where she was sitting and apologized. She looked at  
24 me and said, "I didn't expect anything better from  
25 the police." That day is seared in my mind. I would

love to tell you this was a one-time situation with Vice, but Carla's experiences are emblematic of decades of the treatment by the police of sex workers, especially those who are black, brown, and trans. To illustrate this point, allow me to share another example. Ten years ago I was with a friend and colleague, Allison, who was a former sex worker and survivor of trafficking. We were doing your Rights outreach in Queens. She grabbed my hand and pulled me behind a car. She whispered, "Lynly, that's one of the cops who used to make me give him blow jobs when I was working on the street. Sometimes if we had sex with the police they wouldn't arrest us, but other times they would, even if we gave them what they wanted." This has been happening for at least 25 years, and it's well-known that certain precincts find this behavior acceptable by the police. Unfortunately, stories of police abuse are endless. One day, Lorena Borhas [sp?] showed up in my office with Erica, a transgender woman who was looking for help. This woman's face was battered and she was missing two front teeth after Vice came into her apartment and slammed her onto the floor. Rebecca is a transgender woman who ws trafficked by

Vice-- excuse me, was attacked by Vice during a client John sting. Rebecca was on her way to get a sandwich when she walked by someone who turned out to be an undercover officer. For unknown reasons the undercover cop yelled transphobic slurs at her. As she was trying to get away, a group of cops violently tackled and arrested her. Rebecca was illegally held for over 48 hours while the police laughed at her and made comments about what they thought her anatomy looked like. These cases, along with so many other of horrific police abuse are swept under the rug by city officials paying off lawsuits and courts dismissing cases. It's terrifying that this violence and abuse of power is both common knowledge and considered acceptable by the police and others in city government. With everything I shared with you today, you might be thinking what's the answer? Well, the answer is to look at communities who have already created solutions for themselves because they could not rely on the police to keep them safe. Lorena Borhas was a friend, mentor, and colleague as well as so many other transgender women around the country who created systems of support, turn their homes into safe houses, and developed techniques and

tools to keep themselves and their community safe.

When I asked some of my clients how they left trafficking, many of them told me, "Lorena helped me escape." Lorena gave them a place to live, food to eat, and access to resources. Lorena's story is just one example of the many different communities coming together to provide support, food, and safety from marginalized communities that have been abused by-- and forgotten by the police. In closing, I urge you to do three things. Look at the solutions already out there, fund the organizations that have the answer, and stop funding the police, specifically Vice. Thank you for your time today. And also, Council Member Rosenthal, I'm happy to answer your question about access to counseling, because it's something I-- it's something I've had to work through for a number of years when my clients were survivors of trafficking, if you'd like some more answers.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Please, feel free to talk about it for a minute right now or feel free to reach out to my office.

LYNLY EGYES: Sure, I can try to be brief. I know my testimony was not as brief as it should have been, but I really cut it down. It is



1 very difficult to get people who've experienced any  
2 type of violence into culturally competent services  
3 to be very honest with you. Most of the time they're  
4 booked. I just had someone reach out to me recently  
5 asking if they knew of a place that would provide  
6 counseling to a survivor of trafficking, working with  
7 the government, and I actually had to say, I have  
8 every place I know is full, and she had told me that  
9 all the places she knew were full. And then you add  
10 on to that language issues. You add into that  
11 someone being transgender. Cultural competency is so  
12 important. It is so necessary to fund counseling and  
13 trauma-informed social work, because there aren't a  
14 lot of spaces out there to provide these types of  
15 services.  
16

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I'd love to  
18 follow up with you.

19 LYNLY EGYES: Sure.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: If you could  
21 reach out to my office, just go on to  
22 helenrosenthal.com. Thank you very much.

23 LYNLY EGYES: Thank you.  
24  
25

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. Next we'll go to Elisa Crespo followed by Melissa Broudo. Elisa, you may begin.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MELISSA BROUDO: Hi, I was just asked to unmute, but I believe I'm after Elisa. Or should I-- there we go.

ELISA CRESPO: Hi, can you hear me?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, go ahead. Sorry for that mix-up there everyone. Go ahead.

ELISA CRESPO: Sorry, I was having trouble unmuting. Thank you Chair Adams and members of the Committee. My name is Elisa Crespo. I am the Executive Director of the New Pride Agenda. We're an LGBTQ advocacy organization. The topic of the hearing today is reducing the NYPD's responsibility, and myself and others are here to reignite the call to dismantle and defund the NYPD Vice squad. I would like to make it clear that this is not only a criminal justice issue, but this is a gender justice issue and a racial justice issue for our city. as many of you know, ProPublica recently combed through the arrest records of people in New York City who were charged with soliciting sex work, and they

1 discovered that 89 percent of people accused of sex  
2 working in the last four years were non-white, as  
3 were 93 percent of those charged were trying to  
4 purchase sex. And so the Vice squad is deliberately  
5 targeting black and brown sex workers, terrorizing  
6 them. Then, as is reported in the report, becoming  
7 embroiled in scandal by sexually harassing sex  
8 workers and coercing them into sexual favors. It is  
9 a sick abuse of power, and I know all about it. I  
10 have personal experience with the Vice squad who have  
11 pointed guns to my head as a result of me engaged in  
12 sex work. In the ProPublica report, on retired  
13 Sergeant admitted, and I quote, "The undercover can  
14 have a nice cold beer and watch a girl take her  
15 clothes off, and he's getting paid for it." Former  
16 Vice squad members themselves also admitted to the  
17 ineffectiveness of this unit. They admit that the  
18 unit does not have any significant impact on reducing  
19 the rate of sex trafficking or sex work in this city,  
20 which are two different things, if I may add.  
21 Instead of funding this corrupt and reprehensible--

22  
23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
24 expired.  
25

ELISA CRESPO: unit that claims to be fighting against sex trafficking, which they are not. They're actively participating in sex trafficking. Instead there are a number of critical social service programs that can be funded with the 18 million dollars that the Vice Unit currently has, such as workforce development programs for sex workers, legal services for undocumented sex workers, and perhaps a universal basic income pilot program for sex workers, just to name a few. The Mayor has announced his plan to help sex workers. It is a joke. If you want to help sex workers, dismantle Vice, and redistribute the funds directly to sex workers. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. Melissa, you may go next. Afterwards, we're going to be followed by Evelyn Graham Nyasi [sp?], and Melissa may go ahead.

MELISSA BROUDO: Yes, thank you so much. Good afternoon. Thank you to the Public Safety Committee and Chairwoman Adams. I hopefully will be very brief. I'm echoing so many of my colleagues calls to dismantle the Vice Unit. I am Legal Director of Decriminalize Sex Work. I'm a longtime advocate for sex workers and survivors of trafficking

and a long time attorney for these populations.

Alongside Lynly, I was at the Sex Workers Project for many, many years, about eight years as well doing direct advocacy for sex worker and survivors, and I'm currently doing policy work. And I know that everybody, you know, has shared such powerful stories, and I want to point out that, you know, really there's a very fundamental, ideological problem with the Vice Unit, which is the conflation of [inaudible] of human trafficking and of consensual sex work. And so we really have to figure out who are we trying to help. Who are we trying to prosecute? What goals are we trying to accomplish, because most certainly everything that we've heard, everything that I've seen in my legal career, we are not actually supporting or assisting anyone. We are really targeting, harming physically with the use of criminal justice system, people of color, women of color-- Asian women are way over-represented in arrests for prostitution and for unlicensed massage, right, which as we've heard can lead to deportation, trauma, and death, right? As in the horrific story of Yang Sung that Jared had mentioned. And so I think we really have to ask what are our goals here,

what are we trying to do, and who are we trying to actually protect? Right? Because it is clearly not working out right now. Asian women accounted for 50 percent of citywide arrests in 2019--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

MELISSA BROUDO: and 65 percent of those arrests in 2018 in New York City [inaudible]. And as Elisa said, black and Latino men are over-represented in arrests for patronizing. So there is-- you know, this is in viewed [sic] with racism, gender discrimination, transphobia. So I also echo calling on the dismantling of Vice and a reimagining of how we can really help support sex workers and survivors of human trafficking. Thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your testimony. Evelyn graham Nayasi [sp?] followed by Peggy Herrera, and Mia Soto. Evelyn, you may begin.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

EVELYN: Thank you Chairman Adams and the Committee on public safety on inviting me the opportunity to testify. My name is Evelyn Graham, and I am a peer, and I'd like to tell my story as to

1 why we should have peers involved with the  
2 [inaudible] process. I was sitting on my sofa quietly  
3 when someone knocked on my door and it was the  
4 police. A family member had called 911 and told the  
5 operator that I had a knife. Eight to nine police  
6 officers showed up, and an officer told me that I had  
7 to go with him. No one asked me any questions or find  
8 the knife near me, but I had to go with him. I was  
9 afraid so I put on my coat and shoes and grabbed my  
10 medication because they told me to bring it with me.  
11 I was escorted downstairs, and when I got outside an  
12 officer asked me if I wanted to go in the police car  
13 or ambulance. I chose the ambulance. Another police  
14 also said he would ride with me. They dropped me off  
15 at Bellevue Hospital which was a continuation of my  
16 nightmare. I waited three hours before a doctor saw  
17 me, and when I told him I needed my high blood  
18 pressure medication he ignored and told me to go back  
19 to the waiting area. I could have had a stroke.  
20 Unfortunately for me, it was a three-day weekend and  
21 I was stuck in a place where I did not belong. We  
22 were locked up like animals. People were screaming,  
23 yelling, and banging on windows. I was scared to  
24 death. I was also angry that a family member lied on  
25

1 me, angry that I was forced to go to the hospital,  
2 and angry when I learned I was stuck until Tuesday.  
3 When Tuesday finally came around I was taken upstairs  
4 to the ward and wasn't released until two weeks  
5 later. I wish that police officers had asked me  
6 questions and listened to my responses before telling  
7 me that I had to go with him, because I wasn't acting  
8 violently. I also wished that there was some kind of  
9 support system like a peer who may have gone through,  
10 you know, a similar experience there to help me get  
11 through and that I would have to go to the hospital  
12 at all. As a result of my [inaudible], it is a  
13 trigger now when I see a group of police officers  
14 because it reminds me of my bad experience, and I no  
15 longer trust psychiatrists and that family member.  
16 As if we do not have fears that we will continue to  
17 have a problem with the situation as far as having a  
18 social worker instead of a peer to help the person  
19 whose experience the mental health. Thank you so  
20 much for allowing me to testify.

21  
22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much  
23 for your testimony. Next we will go to Peggy Herrera  
24 followed by Mia Soto [sp?]. Peggy, you may go ahead.  
25



PEGGY HERRERA: Hi, good afternoon to everyone. My name is Peggy Herrera, and I am a Steering Committee Member with CCITNYC and I am a mental health advocate. I am also a mother of a son who struggles with mental health issues. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Thank you, Chair Adams. It's always great to see you. As I mentioned, I am a mother of a son who struggles with mental health issues, and on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019 I was arrested when I called for help to my son during a crisis. The police showed up first instead of medical professionals. Instead of getting help, I was arrested, and my son never received the help he needed. It is ridiculous that a mother be criminalized for calling for help. That day I sit in the door way to prevent police from coming into my home to interact with my son, because I know how that has gone before for others. People with mental health issues are 18 times more likely to be killed during a police encounter. Police cannot help us because they are too busy criminalizing us. Police don't take the time to find out what happens before the crisis. Now, at times when my son has a crisis and he needs to stay in his room where he feels safe,

1 I go and sleep in my car. Where is the help for the  
2 family? We know that there are better ways to do  
3 this. The STAR program in Denver, and the  
4 [inaudible] program in Oregon seem to be working, but  
5 here in New York City, we still have people dying.  
6 Mental health is a medical issue, not a police issue.  
7 It's not just a crisis response system that has  
8 failed my son. It is the entire mental health system  
9 or really lack of mental health system. As an  
10 advocate for my son, my biggest challenge has always  
11 been a lack of resources. And when I reflect on it,  
12 I realize that it has always been the barrier to my  
13 son getting what he needs. Years ago, my son  
14 deserved a school system that offered him services  
15 for behaviors that stem from trauma. As a young man  
16 whose trauma has been compounded from being  
17 criminalized so often, beginning with schools safety  
18 at the age of 11--

19  
20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time  
21 expired.

22 PEGGY HERRERA: he needs access to  
23 unlimited resources. My son should never worry about  
24 the [inaudible] business, because no one can  
25 determine when he will have a crisis. We need a

1 mental health system that will address and treat  
2 individuals before their behaviors provoke a police  
3 response. We need a supportive and safe response.  
4 We need long-term mental health services that also  
5 social services, coping skills, education, trades,  
6 jobs, supportive housing. When you give people what  
7 they need, you tell them that they matter. We cannot  
8 continue to rely on emergency rooms or jails at  
9 mental health centers. We need people with lived  
10 experience to respond. Uniforms are a trigger. We  
11 are facing a mental health crisis. Mental health is  
12 real. I demand that we get what we need for our  
13 families. Thank you.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
15 testimony. Next we will hear testimony from Mia  
16 Soto, followed by Nina Loshkajian. Mia, you may  
17 begin.

18 MIA SOTO: Good afternoon Chair Adams and  
19 members of the Committee on Public Safety. My name  
20 is Mia Soto, and I'm the Community Organizer at  
21 Health Justice Program at New York Lawyers for the  
22 Public Interest. Thank you for the opportunity to  
23 present testimony today regarding the critical need  
24 to reduce the responsibility of New York City Police  
25

Department by completely eliminating the role of the police as responders in New York City's system who are responding to individuals who are experiencing a mental health crisis. New York must ensure that individuals with serious mental health crisis receive appropriate services which will de-escalate the crisis and ensure their wellbeing and the wellbeing of all other New Yorkers. Only those who are trained in de-escalation practices should respond to mental health crises, and the most appropriate individuals who respond are peers and those with lived mental health experiences and healthcare providers. Police who are trained to uphold the law and order are not suited to deal with individuals with serious mental health crises. So turning the scope of the issue surrounding law enforcement responses to people experiencing mental health crises, my organization, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest and our community partners develop [inaudible] not in the survey from September 2020 to June 2021. We anticipate releasing the report of our survey findings in the upcoming week and we'll be happy to discuss our findings of new data in greater extent at your convening. We analyze survey data from 154

respondents who provided information about their own experiences and/or recount situations that they had witnessed. The [inaudible] supports our demands for eliminating the police [inaudible], as respondents share alarming narratives of harmful and unacceptable experiences during mental health crisis response.

And according to our survey data, community members who sought help from 911, instead of being offered passionate, culturally competent care, indicated that they received inadequate care or experience re-traumatization [sic], injuries, unnecessary and inappropriate involvement in the criminal system, forced hospitalization, and unlimited trust and mistrust, elevate fear and mistrust during law enforcement. New York City must prioritize a non-police peer-led mental health crisis response system.

Our organization, and of course, with our-- in our coalition, the CCIT-NYC, a coalition of more than 80 community health advocacy and authorization made the following recommendation: Police need to be removed as responders; calls need to be rerouted to a number other than 911. Responsive teams must include trained peers and emergency medical clinicians.

Response teams must be employed and dispatched by

1 culturally competent community organizations, and  
2 advisory board of 51 percent or more peers for low  
3 income communities of color must be implemented to  
4 provide oversight. Response plans should be  
5 comparable to their emergencies. We urge the New  
6 York City Council, especially the Committee of Public  
7 Safety, to immediately review the responsibility of  
8 the NYPD by removing the [inaudible] police  
9 responders to mental health crisis, and move to  
10 institute a non-police response to mental health  
11 crisis with a long track of [inaudible]. We must not  
12 stand by while the killings continue, and now is the  
13 time for race [sic] preservation. Thank you.

14  
15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mia, thank you so  
16 much for your testimony. Well go on next to Nina  
17 Loshkajian followed by Maria Angelo [sp?]. Nina, you  
18 may go once unmuted.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: started time.

20 NINA LOSHKAJIAN: Good afternoon, Chair  
21 Adams and members of the Committee on Public Safety.  
22 My name is Nina Loshkajian and I'm a legal fellow at  
23 the Surveillance Technology Oversight Project, a New  
24 York-based privacy and civil rights group. I  
25 appreciate the opportunity to testify today,

specifically to speak about surveillance technology practices and policies. NYPD surveillance infrastructure must be dismantled. The first technology I'll discuss is body-worn cameras. These were meant to protect New Yorkers, but today they've become a threat. Predictably officers abuse their indefensible discretion over when and what to record. Currently, Civilian Complaint Review Board investigators must submit records request to receive footage, which must be approved by the NYPD Legal Bureau. To fully protect New Yorkers, we would hope to eliminate bodycams completely, but we realize that such a sweeping step may not be possible in the short term. As an intermediate step, at a minimum, bodycam footage must be stored by an external custodian, and not the Department itself. The CCRB would be best positioned to play this role, safeguarding all footage and independently deciding what recordings should be released. Additionally, we support New York State Attorney General Letitia James's proposal to remove NYPD traffic enforcement powers. Traffic stops can be deadly for BIPOC New Yorkers. We need to ensure that the technologies that promote safer, less congested roads do not become yet another

NINA LOSHKAJIAN: will protect our privacy and safety. The Department also cannot be trusted with access to data sources from other agencies for the Domain Awareness System, or DAS. DAS is a network of cameras, software, sensors, databases, and more that provides information and analytics to police officers, enabling persistent surveillance of everyday New Yorkers' activities. At a minimum,



1 local agencies must terminate information sharing  
2 agreements with the NYPD. We hope this council takes  
3 steps toward the long-term going of "ditching the  
4 DAS" and ending this Orwellian program completely.  
5 And finally, the Council must reassert authority over  
6 NYPD procurement. Every NYPD surveillance tool is  
7 either inherently biased or deployed  
8 discriminatorily. Many of these technologies have no  
9 place in New York and should be categorically banned,  
10 as they should never have been purchased to begin  
11 with. The NYPD's bloated budget and surveillance  
12 expansion undermines community-based infrastructure.  
13 The Council must re-assert authority over NYPD  
14 procurement, deciding which tools and technologies  
15 are appropriate for our city. It's time to hold the  
16 Department to the level of scrutiny their track  
17 record calls for. Above all, we must end their power  
18 to contract secretly spending the public's money on  
19 tools that watch all of us, but which we can never  
20 see. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
23 testimony. Next we will have Maria Danzilo followed  
24 by Towaki Komatsu. Maria, you may go ahead.

MARIA DANZILO: Yes, thank you. Thank you, Chair Adams for your enlightened and inclusive opening statement, members of the committee and the public for all of your moving statements and perspectives and for the opportunity to speak. I'm here today to testify as a lifelong resident of New York City, a mother of three who raised my children in New York, and a recent candidate for the Democratic nomination for City Council. The importance of public safety for people who live and work in New York City cannot be underestimated. Gotham shootings have more than doubled in the last two years to more than four people wounded and one killed per day. Safety is a central issue to people whatever their living circumstances. It is the principle responsibility of government to provide this public safety, and when they fail at that, lives are at stake, trust in government is eroded, and we cannot achieve a fair and inclusive environment for all residents. Legitimate issues around police reform need to be addressed in a targeted way through hiring, training, oversight, and accountability, and not by unsafe and unproven removal of responsibilities. Otherwise, there will be a vacuum

and public safety will be compromised to everyone's detriment. Our public safety officers, men and women who run towards the crisis, not away from it, should not be marginalized, demoralized, and compromised by failing to invest in their safety. We as a city will not be able to attract and retain the workforce that is needed to take the actions needed to make public safety a system that works for everyone. I grew up in Midwood Brooklyn whereas a teenager in the 1970's crime was a regular part of life and we just accepted it. Our house was robbed several times growing up, and my dad who owned a local pharmacy was awakened regularly by the phone alarm system he had set up when a break-in occurred. Eventually, he closed shop and after 16 years of a family business, at the risk of running the business was just too high. Pharmacy, like so many small businesses was a critical part of healthcare to a marginalized community. My closest friend was left without a father and breadwinner when she was 13 when he was shot dead in his jewelry store by two armed robbers who were never caught. This trauma lasted their whole lifetime. In 1982 after graduating law school I moved to a small studio on the upper west side. My cousin, an upper west side

social worker for decades helped me work out a safety plan. A few years later I was in a grocery store robbery where I watched helplessly as two thieves held a gun to the head of a terrified cashier. Several of my friends and colleagues had similar experiences. Nevertheless, I stayed committed to my neighborhood. The neighborhood did improve significantly during the 90s and ought [sic], and we have enjoyed a relatively safe and stable neighborhood. I raised my three children on the upper west side and have felt relatively safe until a few years ago. Our neighborhood has been on a downward spiral for years, and anyone who denies this reality is just engaging in gas lighting. Residents of NYCHA housing, our elderly shopping on Broadway, teenagers going to school, even people sitting in outdoor restaurants have all experienced this loss of safety. I want to focus on two very personal events, however, there are countless New Yorkers who have their own personal stories of how crime impacted them, and we heard some of those earlier today. It's really important that we hear these stories. On December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Tessa Majors [sp?], a Barnard freshman with her whole life ahead of her was stabbed to death

1 in Morningside Park. May she rest in peace, and may  
2 we never allow a murder like this to happen again. We  
3 can only assure this with adequate public safety, as  
4 Tessa would not have been killed had there been a  
5 police presence in the park that evening. As a 40-  
6 year resident of the upper west side, everyone I  
7 knew, everyone knew, we all knew that Morningside  
8 Park is not safe, and yet, was there any focus on  
9 this fact? Tessa's death [inaudible] and the death  
10 of every victim is on New York City. This was an  
11 unsafe park for years and years and New York did  
12 nothing about it. My daughter was living literally  
13 half a block away when Tessa Majors was killed. It  
14 could have been her. It could have been any one of  
15 our kids, nieces, friends, neighbors, anyone who  
16 walked into the park that evening could have been a  
17 victim of that violent crime. There are thousands of  
18 Tessa Majors all over the city, victims of gun and  
19 gang violence, the NYCHA housing, small children,  
20 tourists, people at barbeques in their backyards,  
21 social clubs, sitting in restaurants eating dinner.  
22 Where, elected leaders, is the action that is needed  
23 to help everyone keep safe in this city? Where is  
24 the outrage? Who is speaking for the victims today?

On December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, one year and two days after Tessa Majors was murdered, I almost went to a concert at St. John the Divine with the same daughter, but she was busy studying. This was a concert where a gunman opened fire on the steps of the church as people were entering the sanctuary. Police were nearby that day, perhaps because a number of public officials were present, and they were able to stop the gunman from killing anyone else. These two terrifying incidents are very personal to me, and that is why I bring them up today, but I don't want to diminish the stories of thousands of countless other New Yorkers. Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers have stories that are personal to them. The third perspective I bring to this discussion as someone who ran for City Council earlier this year. In my race for District Six, the most important issue to voters by far was public safety, and it was my focus on this issue and commitment to make sure we prioritize safety for all while prioritizing necessary police reforms propels me a second place finish after only a five-month campaign fully funded by small in-district donations. The neighborhood made it clear they wanted a candidate who prioritized

public safety and were tired of feeling their concerns were not being addressed. The upper west side has been besieged by a series of terrifying crimes in small businesses in the parks, on the subway, and in the streets, as well as rampant quality of life issues, shop lifting, public indecency, open-air drug use, etcetera. These are all well-documented, yet the response from elected was to deny the reality of a New York spiraling downward and to call publicly for seriously abolishing the NYPD.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: [interposing] Ms. Danzilo, I need you to wrap up your comments, please.

MARIA DANZILO: Of course you do. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you.

MARIA DANZILO: By the way, not one other speaker was asked to wrap up her comments.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: That's not true.

MARIA DANZILO: It is the-- okay. It is the first and foremost responsibility of government to provide public safety. All other obligations and duties mean nothing if government cannot keep every member of the community safe. We need to address

1 police reforms and accountabilities so everyone feels  
2 safe, but we must have public safety. We must find  
3 solutions that will keep the streets safe and will  
4 keep repeat offenders off the streets. Without it,  
5 the city will not recover and cannot survive. The  
6 last thing people want to feel is that there's no one  
7 they can turn to when their safety is in jeopardy,  
8 and that is what will happen if there is not a  
9 careful and conscious approach that centers the  
10 safety of the residents of New York City. If our  
11 public safety officers are prevented from policing  
12 conduct and actions, how can we expect anyone to  
13 honor and obey the law? When NYPD is not-- when NYPD  
14 does not respond, the question is, who will respond?  
15 Is it an effective and safe response, and is  
16 government taking the necessary steps to ensure that  
17 it will work to keep people safe. I ask the  
18 committee to keep this in mind as your deliberations  
19 go forward and you move forward with your important  
20 work. Thank you for your time.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
23 testimony. Next we will hear from Towaki Komatsu.  
24 If anyone else from the public wishes to speak,  
25 please raise your hand on Zoom and we can be sure to



add you. If not, Mr. Komatsu, you can go ahead, and afterwards we'll be returning to Chair Adams to close off. Thank you so much. Go ahead.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TOWAKI KOMATSU: This testimony is for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. This meeting itself was conducted in violation of New York State's opening meetings law. This committee established a two-minute time limit for testimony. The woman who just testified before me testified roughly more than 10 minutes, so there's no compliance with the "laws" of the "regulations." Also, due to technical difficulties, people that have been accessing this hearing haven't been able to hear the entirety of the testimony in violation of, I think, Open Meetings Law section 103. So Open Meetings Law section 107 allows a court to void the hearing. Also, with regards to the fact that this hearing is conducted remotely, there's no legal justification for that. Other hearings are being conducted in-person. So, again, this testimony is for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Ms. Adams violated New York City Charter 1116 [sic] by not complying with applicable laws and

1 regulations. So, section 1116 allows for a court to  
2 essentially fire here, and I'm going to pursue that  
3 [inaudible]. Also, I was illegally arrested by Union  
4 Square Subway Station on August 19<sup>th</sup>. I submitted a  
5 FOIA request for the video from the NYPD cameras.  
6 They're not complying with my legal rights to get  
7 that video prior to the case. I talked to a MTA  
8 worker who confirmed that I swiped my metro card  
9 through the reader. So basically that was a false  
10 arrest. They claimed that I didn't use my metro card  
11 when the MTA worker confirmed that I did. Also, the  
12 NYPD workers in Union Square Station, they didn't let  
13 me make a phone call while I was in handcuffs, so  
14 that violated my rights as well. So, Ms. Adams,  
15 you're the Chairwoman on this committee. You don't  
16 do jack. I've testified to you previously. You're  
17 totally useless. So, this testimony is for the  
18 public. I'm looking to have the public essentially  
19 fire all members of the City Council who currently  
20 are members of the City Council in accordance with  
21 the constitutional rights. And with regards to the  
22 public, if they want to join my federal lawsuit case  
23 is Komatsu versus City of New York, case number 20-

CV7046. It's assigned to fellow judge Edgard Ramos [sp?], as well-

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

TOWAKI KOMATSU: can I continue since the woman before me just testified for more than 10 minutes? So, again, there's something called the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. It's equal protection rights, prohibitions against discrimination, lack of enforcement, abuse of process. So you're having double standards, too, at your whole hearing. You're having some people who are allowed to testify about irrelevant matters. Mr. Perez, Sergeant Perez, of the New York City Council, he previously illegally prevented me from attending a public hearing. I think it was on November 19<sup>th</sup> after Ritchie Torres illegally kicked me out of a public hearing when I simply told him that I felt that he lied to my face, in fact he did. Also the City Council has restrictions about presenting pre-recorded video testimony during public hearings; however, there's been no due process for the public about exactly why that is. Like what rationale is for not allowing members of the public to show people like you, Ms.

1 Adams, if they're being punched in the face by a  
2 member of the NYPD. How in the heck can people like  
3 me, you know, show that to you during a public  
4 hearing if we're not allowed to present pre-recorded  
5 testimony from like a NYPD bodycam? I mean, what's  
6 the rationale for that? I mean, you're having this  
7 public hearing. You're supposedly the Chairwoman of  
8 this committee. So can we get a straight answer from  
9 someone like you? I mean, is that too much to ask?  
10 Anyway, that's the conclusion of this testimony. And  
11 again, I'm going to ask the Second Circuit  
12 [inaudible] through a legal filing to void today's  
13 hearing, because people like me at the end of the day  
14 can't rely on you, can't rely on people in the press,  
15 because the fact of the matter is there is no press  
16 in New York City. They're just a bunch of censors  
17 [sic] just like the New York City Council. That's  
18 it. Second Circuit, this is Towaki Komatsu. This is  
19 the end of my testimony.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your  
22 testimony. Chair Adams, passing it off to you to  
23 finish things off. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you very much,  
25 Josh. If there is no further testimony from the

public, I'd like to thank all of the panels that testified today, from members of the NYPD, our advocates, and our public. Thank you to my colleagues for this hearing today, very important hearing. Thank you especially to my colleagues that stuck it out for this entire hearing today. If all work has been sent, this hearing is hereby adjourned.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair Adams, and that concludes this hearing.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you.

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

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 October 27, 2021