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CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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March 15, 2017  
Start: 10:23 a.m.  
Recess: 10:25 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:  
JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
BARRY S. GRODENCHIK  
HELEN K. ROSENTHAL  
RAFAEL L. ESPINAL, JR.  
ROSIE MENDEZ  
ELIZABETH CROWLEY  
RITCHIE J. TORRES  
BRAD LANDER  
ROBERT E. CORNEGY, JR.  
YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ  
MARK LEVINE

2 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Morning everyone.

3 I am Council Member Jumaane Williams, Chair of the  
4 Committee on Housing and Buildings. I apologize for  
5 tardiness. Thank you everyone for your patience.

6 I know a lot of people have issues getting here.

7 Since I have the mic, I am going to vent to the

8 MTA. I know they did a decent job getting the

9 trains running but providing good information while

10 people are waiting for trains that are not coming

11 would be very, very helpful. Before we start the

12 preliminary budget hearing, we are going to conduct

13 a vote on Proposed Intro #247A. Proposed Intro

14 #247A sponsored by Council Member Crowley would

15 increase the penalties by performing electrical

16 work with a required license. We have been joined

17 by Council Member Mendez, Rosenthal, Grodenchik,

18 Espinal, Crowley and Torres. I think I saw Council

19 Member Lander as well. I am going to ask Council

20 Member Crowley if she would like to give an opening

21 statement.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you. I

23 thank Chair Williams for bringing Proposed Intro

24 247A to a vote. When electrical work is done by

25 unlicensed contractors both workers and civilians

1  
2 are put at grave risks of either fires or  
3 explosions. I believe that stiffer penalties are  
4 necessary to effectively deter unlicensed  
5 contractors from engaging in this work that could  
6 danger New Yorkers. This bill increases the  
7 penalties for the performance of unlicensed  
8 electrical work in New York City to bring them up  
9 to the level that has been established for other  
10 licensed construction trades performing work  
11 without a license. The maximum criminal penalty  
12 will now be a fine of \$25,000 and up to one year of  
13 imprisonment. The bill also codifies the civil  
14 penalty for the first time violation to \$4,800. In  
15 a city that never sleeps and one that needs to be  
16 well light and connected, it is imperative that  
17 electrical work is done by skilled, trained  
18 professionals. It is a matter of public safety and  
19 I urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of  
20 the bill. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you  
22 Council Member Crowley and thank you for your  
23 leadership on this issue. We have seen what  
24 happens when that many people do unlicensed work so  
25 we appreciate you putting this bill forward. I

1 would like to thank my staff for the work they did  
2 to assemble this hearing including Nick Smith, my  
3 Deputy Chief of Staff, and Legislative Director  
4 Megan Chan and Gamo Patino (SP), Counsel to the  
5 Committee Jose [inaudible], Policy Analyst to the  
6 Committee Sarah Gasalom (SP) and the committees  
7 finance analyst. With that being said, I would  
8 like to ask the clerk to please call the roll?  
9

10 CLERK: Committee Clerk Matthew  
11 DeStefano, Committee on Housing and Buildings roll  
12 call on Intro #247A. Chair Williams?

13 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: I vote aye.

14 CLERK: Rosenthal?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: With  
16 congratulations to Council Member who knocked it  
17 out of the ballpark, I vote aye.

18 CLERK: Mendez?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I vote aye.

20 CLERK: Torres?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Aye.

22 CLERK: Espinal?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: With  
24 congratulations to Council Member Crowley, I vote  
25 aye.

CLERK: Grodenchik?

COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I also want to thank my colleague Liz Crowley for this very important piece of legislation to make New Yorkers safer. Aye.

CLERK: By a vote of 6 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions, the item has been adopted.

CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you, all colleagues, with that we are going to leave the vote open for other members to come and have an opportunity to vote. Thank you. We will take a few minutes to switch the tapes to start the next hearing and in advance I am going to ask indulgence as additional council members come I am going to try to give them an opportunity to vote.

[pause]

CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you. We would like to get the Clerk to get the reset of the vote, please.

CLERK: Committee on Housing and Buildings continuation of roll call of Intro 247A. Council Member Cornegy?

1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS 6

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Permission to  
3 explain my vote? Nah, just kidding, just kidding.  
4 Thank you, Chair, for allowing us to have this  
5 opportunity to vote after it was already closed. I  
6 vote aye.

7 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Just for  
8 clarity, it wasn't closed. It was recessed.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Well thank you  
10 for working hard to get us to be able to  
11 participate in the vote. I vote aye.

12 CLERK: Council Member Rodriguez?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I vote aye  
14 and thank you, Chair.

15 CLERK: Council Member Levine?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Dito on the  
17 thanks and I vote aye.

18 CLERK: The vote now stands at 9 in the  
19 affirmation, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

20 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you very  
21 much. I am glad we can get this to work.

22 [audio ends]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date April 7, 2017