

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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September 27, 2023

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HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

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Chairperson

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Crystal Hudson
Julie Menin
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Sarah Putnam
Self

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2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: This is a microphone check for
3 the Committee on Health, located in Chambers,
4 recorded on September 27, 2023 by Nasley
5 Petuvie(SP?).

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon. If everyone
7 may please just have a seat. We are getting ready to
8 begin.

9 Good afternoon and welcome to today's New York
10 City Council Hearing for the Committee on Health. If
11 you wish to submit testimony, you may at
12 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Once again, that's
13 testimony@council.nyc.gov. At this time, please
14 silence all electronic devices. Just a reminder, no
15 one may approach the dais at any point during this
16 hearing. Chair, we are ready to begin.

17 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: [GAVEL] Good afternoon
18 everyone. I am Council Member Lynn Schulman, Chair
19 of the Committee on Health. I want to thank all of
20 you for joining us at today's oversight hearing and I
21 just want to make mention, I want to thank the Admin
22 for not only showing up on time but showing up early.
23 So, kudos to you.

24 The purpose of today's hearing is to examine and
25 discuss the health impacts of air quality and extreme

1
2 heat on New Yorkers. The pandemic and more recent
3 wildfire emergencies have placed renewed urgency on
4 monitoring and protecting the air we breathe both
5 outdoors and indoors.

6 This Committee has been laser focused on ensuring
7 that New York City employees effective public health
8 strategies to address future air quality emergencies
9 and our work continues today with a focus on
10 improving indoor air quality. Americans spend
11 approximately 90 percent of their time indoors where
12 the concentrations of some pollutants are often two
13 to five times higher than typical outdoor
14 concentrations.

15 Health effects associated with indoor air
16 pollutants include irritation of the eyes, nose and
17 throat, headaches and dizziness, fatigue, respiratory
18 issues and cancer. These pollutants can include
19 radon, carbon monoxide, bacteria such as Legionella,
20 dust mites, mold, lead paint particles, and tobacco
21 smoke. Research shows that low-income families in
22 communities of color bear the disproportionate impact
23 of poor indoor air quality.

24 According to the Rocky Mountain Institute,
25 commercial and residential buildings are responsible

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2 for approximately 18,300 early deaths and \$205
3 billion in health impacts. One third of the health
4 burden from stationary sources in the United States.
5 Studies suggest that indoor concentrations of air
6 pollutants are increasing driven by factors such as
7 the types of chemicals and home products, inadequate
8 ventilation, hotter temperatures, and higher
9 humidity.

10 Meanwhile, according to experts from the Johns
11 Hopkins Center for Health Security, many infectious
12 diseases including COVID-19, the flu, RSV and measles
13 are spread through airborne transmission, which
14 occurs far more easily in indoor environments and
15 yet, even though we spend so much of our lives
16 indoors, we invest very little in monitoring indoor
17 air quality. That's why we are considering four
18 important pieces of legislation today that seek to
19 protect our public-school children and staff, city
20 workers, residents and commercial tenants from the
21 many dangers of poor indoor air quality.

22 The data is clear, poor indoor air quality is
23 dangerous to our health and wellbeing and we must
24 stop collecting data and establishing standards to
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1
2 create healthier indoor environments for all New
3 Yorkers.

4 Today, we will also be discussing the impacts of
5 extreme heat on New York City. Heat waves are now a
6 leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United
7 States and New York City is expected to experience an
8 average of two heat waves per year with a jump to as
9 many as seven per year by 2050.

10 Additionally, the number of days with
11 temperatures exceeding 90 degrees Fahrenheit could
12 triple by 2050. Long term exposure to hotter
13 temperatures can have significant impacts on human
14 health. Studies have shown that sustained heat
15 exposure is associated with chronic health
16 conditions, such as diabetes, kidney stones, cardio
17 vascular disease, and obesity.

18 Extended periods of high day and night time
19 temperatures create cumulative stress on the human
20 body and heat waves can disrupt sleep, impair
21 cognitive performance and increase the risk of
22 suicide or hospital admission for mental illness.

23 At today's hearing, I look forward to discussing
24 the city's heat emergency plan, steps we can take to
25 improve response efforts and preparation the city can

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2 make that reflect the reality of a warming planet.
3 At the center of this discussion must now be how we
4 protect the most vulnerable New Yorkers from the
5 direct and indirect effects of extreme heat. We know
6 that extreme temperatures are contributing to a
7 worsening outdoor air quality with prolonged heat
8 leaving more of our planet vulnerable to wildfires.
9 The smoke from the Canadian wildfire spread to New
10 York City multiple times over the summer, bringing
11 with it the negative health impacts of PM 2.5
12 including respiratory issues. The summers wildfire
13 smoke was a wakeup call and the city must continue to
14 invest in better preparations for the next wildfire
15 smoke emergency and ensure that the public is
16 educated and ready for what comes next. I'm looking
17 forward to hearing from the Administration and the
18 public today on how we can best protect the health of
19 all New Yorkers inside and outside.

20 I want to conclude by thanking the Committee
21 Staff for their work on this hearing, Committee
22 Counsels Chris Pepe and Sara Sucher, Policy Analyst
23 Mahnoor Butt, Data Scientist Julia Fredenburg and
24 Anne Driscoll, Financial Analyst Danielle Glants, as

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2 well as my team, Jonathan Boucher, Seth Urbinder, and
3 Kevin McAleer.

4 I now want to turn it over to Majority Leader
5 Powers for a statement on his legislation being
6 considered today but before I do, I want to highlight
7 the importance of these bills. Intro.'s 1127 and
8 1130 would take critical steps to improve the air
9 quality in our public schools and city owned
10 buildings. We believe that Intro.'s 1128 and 1129
11 represent common sense, reasonable, smaller scale
12 initiatives our city can take to begin addressing
13 indoor air quality in commercial and residential
14 buildings.

15 I look forward to a productive discussion on this
16 legislation today. I will now turn it over to
17 Majority Leader Powers for his opening remarks.

18 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Thank you and thank you
19 to Chair Schulman the Committee Staff for holding
20 this hearing today and giving me an opportunity to
21 talk about my package of four bills to monitor and
22 improve indoor air quality here in New York City.
23 It's a topic I think is on the top of minds of New
24 Yorkers between the pandemic and the wildfire smoke a
25 few months ago that turned our skies red this summer.

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2 New Yorkers have learned all too well, the
3 quality of the air we breathe both the outdoors and
4 inside is of tremendous importance and of increasing
5 concern. We spend nearly 90 percent of our lives
6 indoors; a frightening number and research shows that
7 indoor air quality can have a tremendous impact on
8 our health.

9 The package introduced that we're hearing today
10 will position New York City as a national leader in
11 promoting safe, healthy air across educational,
12 municipal, commercial and residential buildings.

13 Intro. 1127 will require the Department of
14 Education to update rules, setting standards for
15 indoor air quality in New York City public schools
16 and provide real time reporting and an online
17 dashboard to keep families informed on air quality in
18 school buildings. I believe Boston has a similar
19 model for that right now. You can go online and
20 check out the air quality.

21 Intro. 1130 will require the creation and
22 updating of rules, setting standards for indoor
23 quality in city owned buildings annually including
24 the building I believe we're sitting in right now.
25 The city will be required to install real time air

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2 quality monitors in the common spaces, city buildings
3 and post that data online.

4 Introductions 1128 and 1129 will require the
5 Department of Health to set up a five-year pilot
6 program to monitor indoor air quality in monitoring
7 in the commercial residential buildings. Buildings
8 in New York City, commercial residential can
9 participate voluntarily in that but buildings that
10 will begin to receive any financial assistance during
11 the pilot timeframe and after the passage of
12 legislation will be required to participate.

13 While this pilot program is designed to be
14 smaller in scope and limited to five years. We
15 believe it's a strong start in the right direction.
16 The data collected and best practices learned through
17 this legislation will help the city understand the
18 issue in front of us and create standards in
19 enforcement in air quality. Engineers behind new
20 buildings like 222 70 Park Avenue might know the
21 importance of indoor air quality, that's why that
22 building was designed with double the minimum
23 ventilation rate, better filters, and a real time air
24 quality monitoring system. As the greatest city in
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2 the world, why would we except anything less than the
3 best for our homes, our schools and our workplaces?

4 Again, thank you to Chair Schulman for holding
5 this hearing. I want to thank Borough President Mark
6 Levine who played a very large role in helping to
7 draft these bills and to move them forward whom I
8 believe will be testifying here as well today and to
9 my fellow bill sponsors, Committee Staff and other
10 staff here who have spent months helping draft these
11 bills and all the advocates for their support. We
12 look forward to hearing testimony today and to moving
13 this legislation forward. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you Majority Leader.
15 I'll now turn it over to the Committee Counsel to
16 administer the oath to the Administration.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much Chair.
18 Good afternoon everyone. Before I administer the
19 oath I just want to let everyone know that you have
20 up to 72 hours after the conclusion of this hearing
21 to submit written testimony if you would like to
22 submit written testimony.

23 If you would like to testify in person today,
24 please ensure that you have filled out an appearance
25 card. You can go to the Sergeant at Arms to fill out

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2 an appearance card so that your name is called when
3 it is time for you to testify.

4 Okay, I will now turn it over here to the
5 Administration. Please raise your right hand and
6 please respond with I do after I administer the oath.
7 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and
8 to respond honestly to Council Member questions?
9 Thank you. You may proceed.

10 CORINNE SCHIFF: Good afternoon, Chair Shulman,
11 Majority Leader Powers, Council Member Menin. I am
12 Corinne Schiff, Deputy Commissioner for Environmental
13 Health at the New York City Department of Health and
14 Mental Hygiene, and I am here with Andrew Faciano,
15 Assistant Commissioner for Environmental Disease and
16 Injury Prevention at the Health Department; Heather
17 Roiter, Deputy Commissioner for Planning and
18 Resilience at New York City Emergency Management;
19 John Shea, Chief Executive Officer of the Department
20 of School Facilities at New York City Public Schools;
21 and Lana Kim, Deputy Commissioner at the Department
22 of Citywide Administrative Services.

23 On behalf of Commissioner Vasan, thank you for
24 the opportunity to testify today on four bills
25 addressing indoor air quality and a bill requiring an

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2 annual report on drowning deaths. The Health
3 Department's charge is to protect and promote the
4 health of all New Yorkers. As relevant to this
5 hearing, we respond to thousands of 311 calls from
6 New Yorkers' each year about their indoor air
7 quality, including by conducting inspections and
8 taking enforcement action against property owners;
9 work with other agencies on indoor air quality
10 issues, including New York City Public Schools, the
11 Departments of Housing Preservation and Development
12 and Environmental Protection, and the School
13 Construction Authority; and provide outreach and
14 education on ways to improve indoor air. We also
15 issue data on causes of death, including by drowning.
16 We appreciate the Council's interest in these issues.

17 Regarding the indoor air quality bills being
18 discussed today, we would like to work with the
19 Council to ensure efforts to address indoor air
20 quality will result in meaningful outcomes. Two of
21 the bills, Introductions 1128 and 1129, require the
22 Department to conduct studies of indoor air quality
23 by taking air quality measurements at multiple
24 locations within every residential and commercial
25 building that receives city funding. The Department

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2 has not yet been able to determine how many buildings
3 this is, but we anticipate this would be a very large
4 and expensive undertaking that would not yield
5 actionable information.

6 The bills require measurement of air quality
7 components that are either already understood and
8 have enforceable standards, so there is no need to
9 study them or have no health-based standards and so
10 we would gather information but not be able to use it
11 to address indoor air quality concerns.

12 The other two air quality bills, Introductions
13 1127 and 1130, require the Health Department to set
14 standards for indoor air quality in schools and other
15 buildings owned or leased by the City of New York and
16 requires the Health Department and New York City
17 Public Schools to install real time monitors in a
18 variety of locations and issue multiple reports
19 regarding the data collected. For some of the indoor
20 air quality measures, there are already established
21 standards and additional rulemaking is not needed;
22 for others there are no health-based standards, and
23 the Department has no basis on which to promulgate
24 rules.

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2 For still others, the conditions vary or are
3 controlled by the occupant of the space and are not
4 generalizable. And while promising, the consumer
5 grade air sensors that are currently available do not
6 meet the stringent requirements for air quality
7 instruments required for regulatory purposes. The
8 bills also mandate the Department and, for
9 Introduction 1127, New York City Public Schools to
10 conduct outreach and education on indoor air quality.
11 We agree that we can reevaluate potential outreach
12 efforts to maximize impact. We look forward to
13 working with Council to see what the most effective
14 potential outreach efforts are to maximize impact.

15 Regarding Introduction 1119, the Department
16 supports providing the public with data on drowning
17 deaths in New York City and already issues
18 information in our Annual Summary of Vital
19 Statistics. We would like to discuss adding the
20 additional information the Council seeks into this
21 report, rather than creating a duplicative document.
22 We appreciate the recognition in the bill of
23 protecting personally identifying information. We
24 would like to discuss the bill's mandate to report
25 individualized data. Some of the factors we would be

1
2 required to report raise privacy and confidentiality
3 concerns, but we can provide aggregate data.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We are
5 happy to take your questions.

6 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, so what I'm going to
7 do actually is a little bit of a reversal. I'm going
8 to talk about the legislation first and then go into
9 other sort of selective questions.

10 So, on legislation 1119, which is what about the
11 drowning. You answered the question about whether
12 you support it. Does DOHMH collect aggregate -
13 collect or aggregate any data currently on drownings
14 in New York City? I think you sort of alluded to
15 that.

16 CORINNE SCHIFF: We do. As I testified, we do
17 include information on deaths by drowning in our
18 annual summary of vital statistics.

19 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: What does DOHMH see as
20 potential obstacles to generating the report on
21 drowning citywide? It's basically what you had
22 testified to.

23 CORINNE SCHIFF: That's right, I mean we do
24 report on this, so you know in general there are no
25 obstacles. The Council and the bill is asking for

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2 some additional data that we are happy to include if
3 it's included in the OCME in the Medical Examiner
4 Report. Our concern really has to do with the
5 individualized data that the bill asks for and that
6 we do have a lot of concerns about. We'd like to
7 talk about aggregating that.

8 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: What measures does DOHMH
9 currently take to prevent drowning deaths in New York
10 City?

11 CORINNE SCHIFF: There are multiple programs
12 across the city. Some sponsored or organized by the
13 Health Department to promote swimming. It is a
14 critically important effort and I know the Council
15 has recently done some work, very important work on
16 promoting learning to swim. So, we support efforts
17 for children to learn to swim. It's important and we
18 investigate drownings to try to determine why those
19 happen if they happened in certain locations.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay does DOHMH have
21 recommendations on how DOHMH or other agencies could
22 more effectively address drowning deaths in the city?

23 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, as I think the Council will
24 see with the report or looking at the report of vital
25 statistics, there are very few drownings that happen

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2 at regulated sites. New York City has an extremely
3 strong safety program. That is something that the
4 department oversees in our recreational water
5 program. So, I'm happy to say that there are not a
6 lot of drownings in places that where we would really
7 consider that to be preventable.

8 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you. I'm now
9 going to ask some questions about Intro. Number 1127.
10 Is the Administration supportive of Intro. 1127,
11 which would establish standards in reporting
12 regarding indoor air quality in schools within the
13 city school district?

14 CORINNE SCHIFF: You know as we've testified,
15 uhm, and regarding really all of the bills, which
16 have quite a lot of overlap. We don't think that we
17 are really gaining actionable information with these
18 bills. We certainly appreciate and agree with
19 Council that indoor air quality is important to
20 health and we do a lot of work on indoor air quality
21 to make sure that New Yorkers know about the
22 importance to health. But what we don't think is
23 that we need - we don't need real time air monitors,
24 which can't tell us information really that we can
25 use. We don't need, as I testified, we don't need to

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2 study indoor air quality. The real time monitors
3 can't give us information that we can use for
4 regulatory purposes, as I've said.

5 So, we would really like to work with you to
6 focus on the outreach and education components of the
7 bills.

8 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you. The City of
9 Boston currently maintains a detailed online database
10 with a public monitor indoor air quality in each of
11 the city's public schools in real time. This is
12 called the Indoor Air Quality Center Dashboard. Each
13 sensor records current CO and Co2 levels, PM10, PM2.5
14 temperature and relative humidity. This data has
15 allowed Boston Public Schools to make decisions about
16 school closures during extreme heat or extreme cold
17 events, increase fresh air during school events with
18 high emissions, fix issues with mechanical
19 ventilation systems and empower teachers to report
20 air quality issues in their classrooms. Would
21 creating a similar system in New York City be
22 feasible?

23 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, we are aware of what they
24 have done in Boston and again, it has not led us to

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2 move to create a similar system. I'll turn it to my
3 colleague from New York City Public Schools.

4 JOHN SHEA: Sure, thank you and thank you for the
5 question Chair Schulman. First of all on behalf of
6 the Chancellor, we really appreciate the opportunity
7 to talk about these bills on these very important
8 issues. He was fully supportive of the same values
9 that we all share. I'm familiar with the Boston
10 program. I've actually spoken to my colleagues in
11 Boston about the program, how they put it in place.
12 We share Department of Health's concerns about the
13 way that the bills are currently worded with the
14 types of devices.

15 We have a slightly different plan and if you
16 allow me to tell you what we do in New York City
17 Schools?

18 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Sure.

19 JOHN SHEA: First of all, every New York City
20 school has a custodian engineer in their building and
21 one of the things that they're required to do every
22 morning is to walk through the building and ensure
23 that the buildings ventilation is working. If they
24 find any issues where it's not working, even in one
25 particular space, they escalate those to the Deputy

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2 Director of Facilities for a priority repair. They
3 also update an online tracker, which is available
4 publicly. People can go in and see the status of
5 ventilation in any of the classrooms, instructional
6 spaces in New York City schools and every week, they
7 sign an attestation survey that they are maintaining
8 their ventilation systems.

9 They've also been given tools to measure air flow
10 and the same parameters that the Boston system covers
11 right now. Only they do it with portable indoor air
12 quality monitors. I actually have one here that they
13 use. And we feel that that's important to have a
14 person who actually has the training and the skills
15 to take that meter and not diagnose problems but try
16 to figure out what the underlying issues are and
17 address them. It's a more active system than a
18 passive system where the sensors are giving you
19 information, which may or may not be accurate. They
20 need to be calibrated. They may or may not be
21 working. But with the person with a meter that's
22 measuring the same things, that's already happening
23 in our schools.

24 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Right, so with that, I
25 actually want to ask, were you notified by the

1
2 custodians when we had that big heat surge because I
3 got when it was like 96 or 98 degrees and I got
4 complaints from schools in my district that the air
5 conditioning wasn't working. That some of the
6 classrooms were overheated. That some of the
7 students got sick, so I just want to ask about that.

8 JOHN SHEA: Sure, we had a number of concerns and
9 complaints come in about air conditioning, which is a
10 very specific issue with the temperature and we
11 always work to address those as soon as possible and
12 custodian engineers did report those things up to us.
13 And the buildings that we were tracking over the
14 course of that weekend, after the first day of
15 school, everything that was reported to us was
16 repaired by that following Monday, but certainly that
17 was a difficult time with the heat that we had at the
18 beginning of school.

19 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you. I'll -
20 I'm going to circle with you offline about some of
21 the schools in my district.

22 JOHN SHEA: Absolutely. Any specific schools if
23 you have issues, we're happy to answer those.

24 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you. Uhm, does
25 let's see, what monitoring of indoor air quality

1
2 exists in city buildings as of today? Are there
3 plans for expansion in the near future?

4 CORINNE SCHIFF: Indoor air quality is a broad
5 umbrella term that covers really scores of
6 components. So, I would say for example, uhm there's
7 monitoring in residences of carbon monoxide.
8 Everyone should have a carbon monoxide detector.

9 But there is no broad surveillance system across
10 city buildings and really that wouldn't be
11 appropriate or necessary. Instead, we would like to
12 let New Yorkers know about ways to improve their
13 indoor air quality and keep it at high quality. So,
14 the idea of a broad surveillance for scores and
15 scores of parameters doesn't really make sense.

16 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you. I have
17 other questions to ask but I want to turn it over to
18 Majority Leader Powers to ask questions. Before I do
19 that, I want to acknowledge we've been joined by
20 Council Member Julie Menin.

21 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Thank you. I have a
22 series of questions but I wanted to start with the
23 first one. When you talk about the custodians every
24 morning have to go and check out whether the
25

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2 essentially the HVAC systems are working? Is that
3 what we're saying is their job every day?

4 JOHN SHEA: Yes, whatever the HVAC system is for
5 their particular building, whether that's a central
6 system or whether that's a hybrid system, yes.

7 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Okay, 2021 during the
8 COVID crisis it was reported under ventilating to
9 campus are more prone to code. This is in Gothamist.
10 Prone to COVID cases and there was a finding that
11 4,800 classrooms and 615 buildings where the only way
12 to circulate air is to open the windows.

13 So, that may be the system for the buildings that
14 are currently have mechanical systems but it seems
15 like many don't. And so, if the measure that we're
16 discussing here is the custodians responsibility
17 every day is to check on those systems and report
18 upwards, I'm a parent or a teacher or a student in
19 those school buildings. First, it feels like there's
20 a lot more buildings that are not covered by that
21 system where we're failing that. And second, is it
22 seems to me essentially the model that we're relying
23 on is believe us and believe that the custodian is
24 doing that, is reporting it. Then and I did a very
25 quick Google search to see if I could find the system

1
2 that you mentioned. It was - I have not yet but I'll
3 keep checking. So, it feels like that system is not
4 one where if I was a parent checking to know what my
5 school buildings air quality is like, where it would
6 be a successful system, relative to one like Boston
7 where I can find that in two seconds. Two seconds to
8 Google that and find it and in that system, I can
9 have a very clear reading. Do you want to respond to
10 that?

11 JOHN SHEA: Sure, so the first thing is you are
12 correct. We have a number of buildings that only
13 have windows for their ventilation but custodian
14 engineers in those buildings also know that that is
15 the integral part of their ventilation system, so
16 they make sure that the windows are operational. If
17 there is a central exhaust fan that draws air through
18 the building, that has to be working.

19 So, just because those buildings were built at a
20 time when the code required that as the ventilation
21 system, it doesn't mean that they don't check and
22 make sure that that is working. And they still have
23 to update their tracker and that information, I
24 apologize that you haven't been able to find it
25 online but that information is out there. I can

1 share that with you and you can take a look at it.
2 Which you are correct, there is a difference between
3 seeing parameters like the Boston system has as
4 opposed to the functionality of the ventilation
5 system but we also feel very strongly that operating
6 ventilation is the most important thing as opposed to
7 if you look at the Boston dashboard. There are
8 sensors that are out of calibration, there are
9 sensors that are not working. So, the value of the
10 data is only as good as what you are getting back.
11 We feel that having a custodian engineer in the
12 building with a device that can measure those same
13 parameters and respond to concerns in the building
14 and have conversations and then escalate issues that
15 are beyond their ability is the best way to handle
16 that.
17

18 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: What data right now – so
19 can you just tell us, what is the data that's being
20 collected inside of the school building right now in
21 terms of when it comes to air quality, the exact
22 measure? Like, what measurements are you taking to
23 measure for air quality?

24 JOHN SHEA: So, they will measure; when they walk
25 into a space, they'll use the monitor to measure what

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2 it shows which is PM2.5, PM10, particulates Co2,
3 temperature and relative humidity. They also have
4 anemometers to measure air flow, so whatever the
5 ventilation happens to be, they can check to see that
6 air is actually flowing to give them a status of the
7 operation of the ventilation system.

8 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Okay. Uhm, moving to
9 Department of Health, there was a quote that was said
10 in the last response of questions that we don't need
11 to study air quality was the sentence. That is - and
12 I don't want to take it out of context. I wanted to
13 give you an opportunity to explain that but is that
14 position of Department of Health that we don't need
15 to study air quality?

16 CORINNE SCHIFF: We're really speaking to what's
17 outlined in the bill, which is to place thousands
18 probably of real time air quality monitors to tell us
19 about parameters that we already - either we already
20 understand or where the health standards are being
21 developed or are unknown. And so, we can't take the
22 action that the bills would require us to take by
23 developing regulations or developing recommendations
24 for regulations.

1
2 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Okay, so what is when
3 you say – so I want to talk about the actionable side
4 about that in a second but before that, when you talk
5 about data we already understand, can you explain
6 that including what are you collecting? Like in this
7 building here that we're sitting in today, municipal
8 building, what data is Department of Health
9 collecting today about the air quality in this
10 building for instance that would say you understand
11 or are already collecting?

12 Well, let me ask this, what are you collecting
13 today right in this building right here today?

14 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, as I noted in response to
15 the Chair, we are not collecting, there is no program
16 to broadly collect data on indoor air quality.

17 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Correct, that's why
18 we're here today and but you're also taking the
19 position that we shouldn't and that even if we have
20 the data, there would be no action to take. I
21 disagree with that. I think if we had so – in
22 buildings particularly where we don't have a
23 mechanical ventilation system, which seems to be
24 many. During the COVID crisis when it was well
25 documented that there were ventilation issues all

1
2 throughout our city school buildings and I could read
3 you the articles about them and they were all 2020,
4 2021 documenting for the first time, parents and
5 teachers and leaders in the city, taking a look at
6 air quality and ventilation because of the concern
7 around an airborne pandemic. There was a lot of
8 discussion suddenly about and I think a lot of
9 reports about the inadequate buildings and
10 infrastructure here in the city especially school
11 buildings and I'm not putting this on anybody, we
12 have a lot of old buildings that need massive
13 upgrades. We also have a capital budget for school
14 capital budget. We as Council Members have capital
15 improvements we can make to our schools where they
16 make sense where they're possible. So, I don't
17 necessarily think they're not actionable but I guess
18 I'd go back to my question here today. Like, we're
19 sitting at a building, is there any data collected
20 here today on a daily basis or weekly basis about the
21 air quality inside this building?

22 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, we don't mean to downplay
23 the importance of indoor air quality. We agree with
24 the Council that indoor air quality is important.
25 It's important to health. Where we are concerned

1
2 about the bills is the directive to place real time
3 air quality monitors, which is these are emerging
4 technology and not going to give us information that
5 is something that we can take steps to improve indoor
6 air quality. So, that's really where I think that we
7 differ.

8 So, the bills direct us to place real time air
9 quality monitors which will provide you know reams of
10 decontextualized information, and then to take those
11 to promulgate regulations for indoor air quality
12 standards. We don't need the real time air monitors
13 to promulgate rules because they either already exist
14 or we won't be able to use those mounds of data to
15 develop new rules.

16 What we do know is a lot about how to improve
17 indoor air quality and we agree with you, that
18 there's more that can be done to make sure that New
19 Yorkers know about ways to improve indoor air
20 quality. To know that the Health Department is here
21 to take 311 calls and respond to concerns about
22 indoor air quality. There's many, many steps that
23 New Yorkers can take on their own and we want New
24 Yorkers to know about that.

1
2 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Okay but the answer is
3 no right? You're not collecting data inside the
4 building here that we're sitting in, as an example?

5 CORINNE SCHIFF: We are not and nor could we use
6 the real time air monitor data that the Council is
7 suggesting to take the steps that you are also
8 suggesting that we take.

9 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Okay, what do you
10 measure right now if any and how many buildings
11 across the city?

12 CORINNE SCHIFF: We do not have a broad citywide
13 indoor air quality surveillance program. And that
14 would not -

15 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: What about specifically?
16 Because I said broad, specific?

17 CORINNE SCHIFF: when we respond to a - there are
18 different things that we do and I'll start and then
19 I'll turn it over to my colleague who runs our Indoor
20 Air Quality Enforcement Program.

21 So, uhm for example, we will get a call from a
22 New Yorker about concerns about indoor air quality,
23 we will send an inspector and will do assessment of
24 the specific conditions in that apartment and where
25

1
2 appropriate we can take enforcement action against a
3 property owner to correct the condition.

4 We have a program implementing really
5 groundbreaking legislation out of the Council, to
6 conduct enforcement for children and adults who have
7 severe persistent asthma. Whose asthma is
8 exacerbated by indoor air quality conditions,
9 specifically around pests or mold. So we do a lot of
10 outreach to make sure that New Yorkers and their
11 doctors know about this program. We take referrals
12 and we will go and do enforcement actions there.

13 So, that's just a sample. Again, this is a very
14 broad umbrella term indoor air quality, so we have
15 lots of different programs and they are tailored to
16 the different concerns. Let me just see if my
17 colleague has anything to add. Okay.

18 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Okay but you talk about
19 a specific program that's a complaint driven
20 apartment for residential apartments if I got it
21 correct. What about municipal buildings? What about
22 schools? What about common areas inside of
23 buildings?

24 CORINNE SCHIFF: Sure, so we have multiple
25 programs. One of those is a complaint driven

1
2 response program that I just described. We'll take
3 complaints from New Yorkers. We will respond to
4 those including by conducting inspections. With
5 respect to municipal buildings, perhaps DCAS wants to
6 take that question.

7 LANA KIM: Yes, thank you. So, in our buildings,
8 we do have tenants who may have concerns about air
9 quality. They will go to COSH Citywide Occupational
10 Safety and Health and they will – COSH will go in and
11 do the measurements and give us a report back and
12 then if there's any actionable items we will execute
13 those accordingly.

14 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Okay, so it's a mostly
15 complaint driven process in the city right now.
16 There's no monitoring. There's no proactive
17 measurements to check on building air quality, is
18 that fair to say?

19 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, it varies. Again, it's, you
20 know this is a broad umbrella term. I do want to
21 just finish your earlier question; we also respond to
22 complaints regarding commercial spaces and I think
23 Mr. Shea has spoken about the work that he does at
24 New York City public schools on air quality. So,
25 there is a complaint driven program and I mentioned

1
2 our uhm our program to implement the Council's law
3 regarding pest conditions and asthma. That is a
4 referral driven program by providers. We also have a
5 program where we are doing work around construction
6 dust, which can also create indoor air quality
7 hazards. So, we have a wide variety of programs. We
8 approach the issue in many different ways and it's
9 very much tailored to the different kinds of
10 concerns.

11 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: For residential
12 programs, can you tell us how many complaints you
13 received in the last calendar year?

14 CORINNE SCHIFF: We'll have to get back to you
15 with actual numbers it's thousands but we'll get back
16 to you with the exact number for the last couple
17 years.

18 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: So, we're asking the
19 city to take a measure beyond the complaint driven
20 process. We believe it's important, necessary and I
21 think COVID made a lot of you know held in New York
22 to make a lot of observations about their breathing
23 and the ventilation systems that are in place. We
24 have hundreds of thousands of people, millions
25 walking into city owned buildings every single day.

1
2 They're people like us, all of us. They are teachers
3 students, parents and much more than that. And so,
4 hearing your comments on the legislation, there's not
5 a desire to collect data. I understand the concern
6 about cost; I'm always happy to work with folks on
7 cost and how to make sure the program is successful
8 and efficient when it comes to cost. There is not a
9 desire to collect data, to understand data or to then
10 take an extra action beyond that. To run a pilot
11 program, to do a voluntary program, which we're
12 proposing.

13 So, I guess my question is, putting aside all my
14 other questions here because they're all related to
15 the belief that you would want to do something, not
16 complaint driven but putting aside all my other
17 questions, I guess my question is, if you do desire
18 as you state to share our goals, what is the plan for
19 moving forward? I guess my only question at this
20 point and time because I hear a concern about the
21 collecting data. I hear concerns about the equipment
22 being used. I hear concerns about the mandate and
23 that we have a disagreement about what properties are
24 covered under the residential commercial piece of it,
25 which we're happy to clarify.

1
2 So, we can go through all the concerns. I'm
3 happy to walk through those and I'm always willing to
4 be collaborative and that's the way I try to approach
5 legislation but I guess my question is, so put aside
6 the piece of legislation. We're sitting here in the
7 year 2023. This Administration has five more years
8 or six more, whatever I have two. I don't know but
9 what is the plan moving forward? Because I don't
10 want to - you know we can go through all issues but
11 I'm not hearing a plan that meets what I think New
12 Yorkers are asking for at this particular moment. We
13 have noticeable need in our side of our school
14 buildings. We talked about the buildings that aren't
15 covered.

16 So, I'm going to throw this back to you guys.
17 Don't tell me that you share our goals. Share us a
18 plan and I want to know what the plan is moving
19 forward.

20 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, I do just want to first
21 comment on the characterization. It's not that we
22 don't want to collect data. You know the Health
23 Department loves data. The real time monitors that
24 would be mandated under these bills, those are
25

1
2 emerging technology. They're not certified by EPA.
3 There are no standards that they measure against.

4 So, when we want to collect data, we want to
5 collect data for a reason, for a purpose and what we
6 are trying to express is that the program under the
7 bills to place monitors that are not yet certified
8 tools, won't give us data that we can use. That's
9 what we're trying to say. It's not about a desire to
10 collect data, it is that the data that the Council
11 would be directing us to collect here is not
12 something we would be able to use to produce the
13 outcomes that the Council intends.

14 So, as for a plan, we do agree that there is more
15 that we can do. That New Yorkers can learn more and
16 we've not done enough to help New Yorkers understand
17 about the importance of indoor air quality. You
18 quoted how much time we all spend indoors and it's a
19 very, very important setting for health. And so, we
20 do think that we can do more and we would like to
21 talk with you. You are working with your
22 constituents. You hear from them. We'd like to talk
23 with you about what more the need to know. Some of
24 that outreach that we do as I described is
25 affirmative. We are reaching out to healthcare

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2 providers to have them refer patients to us who could
3 benefit from our enforcement action, if they have
4 indoor air quality issues that might be triggering
5 asthma. But some of the work that we do is more
6 passive and so maybe there is more that we can do.
7 We would love to work with you to help develop that
8 idea.

9 JOHN SHEA: May I also add a few things specific
10 to schools Council Member because you brought up a
11 few things that I didn't get a chance to respond to.
12 So, first of all I want to be clear on the record
13 that the health and safety of our students and staff
14 is our highest priority. The air in all of our
15 schools is safe. The School Construction Authority,
16 as mentioned in the beginning of the pandemic, did a
17 tremendous amount of work to check the status of our
18 ventilation systems and identified repairs that
19 needed to be made and those repairs were made and the
20 system we have in place now is to make sure that
21 those things still are maintained and operating.

22 We also, one thing I didn't mention have provided
23 two air purifiers at least for every constructional
24 space within New York City schools as an additional
25 level of protection. So, all of those things are

1
2 actively working to ensure quality air in all of our
3 schools.

4 The other thing is that we share your concern
5 about the buildings that have older systems, only
6 windows for ventilation. And the School Construction
7 Authority is not here but they have made a
8 significant commitment to electrify a number of their
9 buildings and a number of our buildings and one of
10 the things we're working with them on is identifying
11 and focusing on those buildings that have limited
12 ventilation because ventilation is a component of
13 that electrification process.

14 So, there is a plan for schools to be able to not
15 only continue to maintain but also upgrade the
16 buildings where it's appropriate.

17 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you. I just
18 want to acknowledge we've been joined by Council
19 Member's Feliz and Narcisse. So, my question is,
20 what monitors is Boston using?

21 JOHN SHEA: So, I will have to get back to you on
22 the specific brand. I know I've seen it; I just
23 don't recall off the top of my head.

24 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: The follow-up to that is,
25 are they delivering data that doesn't meet regulatory

1 standards based on what you guys have testified to
2 today?

3
4 JOHN SHEA: Yeah, as far as whether they meet
5 regulatory standards or not, I would have to get back
6 to you.

7 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Well, I guess my follow
8 up - sorry, my follow up question is are you saying
9 the Boston Program doesn't work and is inefficient
10 because they don't have the right technology? As
11 you're criticizing the potential that we may not
12 either?

13 JOHN SHEA: Uh, no sir what I'm saying is that
14 the Boston Program is one thing we feel that we have
15 a system that is just as good if not better and in
16 alignment with the CPC guidance, which is always
17 saying that you should be spending your resources on
18 maintaining and upgrading your ventilation systems as
19 opposed to providing passive solutions that don't
20 actually improve air quality?

21 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, uhm, so I have - so,
22 I have some other questions that I want to ask and
23 then I'm going to hand it over to my colleagues and
24 come back. How many heat emergency days were there
25 in 2023?

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2 HEATHER ROITER: Hello, uhm, there was seven
3 emergency days in 2023.

4 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Is there a forecast in
5 number of heat emergency days for '24 and '25?

6 HEATHER ROITER: There – so we consult with the
7 National Weather Service. There's not an exact
8 number that's provided that far out in forecasting
9 but we work with them closely and there's a seasonal
10 forecast that comes out and then we work to learn
11 that and then share that information with our agency
12 partners.

13 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: How often is the Heat
14 Vulnerable Index updated?

15 CORINNE SCHIFF: The Health Department creates
16 the Heat Vulnerability Index. We just updated it in
17 June. It relies on factors that don't change all
18 that often, having to do with the neighborhood so we
19 update it periodically.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: How has the Heat
21 Vulnerability Index helped the city prioritize
22 resources to communities at higher risk of adverse
23 health impacts due to extreme heat?

24 HEATHER ROITER: Hi, so the Vulnerability Index
25 has been really valuable to Emergency Management.

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We've been able to use that to inform our cooling centers. We, as we work with partners, we look at that and look at the distribution of cooling centers. So, when limited, making sure that we prioritize on days that the cooling centers can be in those heat vulnerability areas, as well as during emergencies and activations, making sure that we're taking that into account and it's part of our situational awareness.

CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: What neighborhoods have been identified as having high HBI? If you don't have it now, you can send it to us but we'd like to have that.

CORINNE SCHIFF: We'll send that to you. We don't have that off hand.

CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, so what agency is ultimately in charge of activating the heat emergency plan?

HEATHER ROITER: New York City Emergency Management is the one that activates the plan and then works with agency partners on executing the strategies.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Can you walk through the
3 steps NYCEM takes once the heat emergency plan is
4 activated?

5 HEATHER ROITER: Sure, so once we hit the
6 threshold, we'll notify our partners that we've
7 activated the plan and then strategies will include
8 interagency coordination. So, we'll have a call with
9 our partner agencies and then different strategies in
10 the plan are enacted. One major one would be opening
11 cooling centers. A large one is also communication.
12 That might be communication to our vulnerable
13 populations through the Advanced Warning System.
14 Also pushing that out through our community groups,
15 Strengthening Communities program, press releases,
16 Notify NYC, and then we'll also look at depending on
17 the thresholds, with what can be done with beaches
18 and pools and talking to the Parks Department and
19 then we're also monitoring also the electrical grid
20 and working with our utility partners.

21 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: When you're making
22 notifications, in how many languages is that?

23 HEATHER ROITER: Notifications, the Notify NYC
24 program is in 14 languages including ASL.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Does NYCEM activate the
3 cooling center finder and the National Weather
4 Service issues a heat advisory?

5 HEATHER ROITER: We activate the cooling center
6 finder. We turn it on when the heat – the day of the
7 heat. So, we try to put as much notice as possible
8 but we have to work with our cooling center partners
9 to make sure we know what the days and hours of
10 operation will be and how they align with the heat
11 emergency the day of the heat.

12 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: But then how does that
13 align with the National Weather Service when they
14 issue a heat advisory?

15 HEATHER ROITER: So, the weather service will
16 issue the heat advisory and so we make sure that the
17 cooling centers are open the day of the heat advisory
18 and that's also in the cooling center finder. We'll
19 show those –

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: So, it's automatically
21 activated when the Heat Emergency Plan is activated?

22 HEATHER ROITER: Right, so it's not automatic.
23 It's uhm the heat plan turns on and it sets off a
24 series of actions, right? And so, the series of
25 actions will be communication, talking to our

1
2 partners and then we start to work with our partners
3 for turning on the cooling centers. But the cooling
4 centers are open the day of the heat emergency but we
5 will activate our plan before the day of the heat.

6 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: As a quick follow up to
7 the air quality hearing that was held over the
8 summer, when do you anticipate being able to share
9 the after-action report on wildfire smoke?

10 HEATHER ROITER: Right, so we are aware of the
11 Council's request and we'll be following up on that
12 request as well.

13 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Have you started drafting
14 emergency protocols? Because that was mentioned
15 during the hearing.

16 HEATHER ROITER: Yeah, so we've been uhm took
17 that very seriously after uhm for the air quality
18 event and we've been working on expediting our plans
19 and working on them, taking emergency planning
20 efforts and working on that.

21 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: You want to give me a goal
22 of or you don't want to say it here?

23 HEATHER ROITER: I prefer not to commit to that
24 at this time. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: By the end of the year?

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2 HEATHER ROITER: We're working, it's accelerated.
3 It is an accelerated effort. We work very closely
4 our planning efforts take quite some time and this
5 one, I promise has been accelerated far above and
6 beyond all of our other planning efforts.

7 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you. Uhm, I'm going
8 to - I have a bunch of other questions but I'm going
9 to ask my colleagues who want to ask questions. So,
10 I know Council Member Menin had asked first. Oh she
11 left, okay Council Member Narcisse.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Good afternoon and
13 thank you for being here. Thank you Chair Schulman
14 for doing the hearing because that's how we find out.
15 We educate ourselves and see how the best we can make
16 New York City a better place that we all can live
17 together. Is there a specific benchmark for
18 acceptable indoors school air quality? Is there a
19 benchmark? You don't have one?

20 CORINNE SCHIFF: Indoor air quality is a very
21 broad umbrella term, so there are benchmarks as you
22 call them for certain parameters and not for others.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Hmm, how often the air
24 quality measurement taken and are they done
25

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2 throughout the school year including during major
3 temperature shifts?

4 JOHN SHEA: So, as described custodian engineers
5 in every building have the tools and respond to
6 concerns and complaints whether those are ventilation
7 related or temperature related and we always work
8 with principals and school communities to address
9 whatever the specific issue is because as we spoken
10 about, that could be a wide variety of different
11 things that concern a school.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: So, assuming that each
13 school works independently, the custodians and the
14 principal, everybody maintain on maintaining the
15 temperature shifts in their building?

16 JOHN SHEA: Sure, sure. If we're talking about
17 temperatures, every instructional space in New York
18 City school now has air conditioning. We spent over
19 \$400 million over the past couple years to ensure
20 that all of our classrooms had air conditioning and -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: And the air quality
22 measurement.

23 JOHN SHEA: And the -

24 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Air quality
25 measurement.

1
2 JOHN SHEA: Oh, well, we did invest as part of
3 our COVID re-occupancy plan in making sure that the
4 custodian engineers have those air quality measuring
5 tools, yes we did.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay. Are there
7 penalties that probably somebody else can – currently
8 in place for city buildings for consistently failed
9 to meet the required indoor air quality standards?

10 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, the Health Department does
11 have an enforcement program. We take thousands of
12 calls from New Yorkers every year and we respond to
13 those including by conducting inspections and
14 ordering a property owner to make repairs or address
15 the condition. If it doesn't meet the standard and
16 if the property owner fails to do that there can be
17 financial penalties, yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: So, the answer is yes.
19 Uhm, what populations are the most vulnerable to
20 adverse health impacts from periods of extreme heat?
21 How can we best support vulnerable individuals in our
22 city? What guidance does DOHMH offer to help New
23 Yorkers deal with extreme heat?

24 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, extreme heat is most
25 dangerous of all of our extreme weather events and it

1 is one of the big concerns at the Health Department.
2 People who are more vulnerable to extreme heat are
3 people who have underlying medical conditions, the
4 elderly, pregnant people. We do a lot of work to
5 make sure that the vulnerable populations know their
6 risk. The most important thing is for people to have
7 home cooling. We know that people without air
8 conditioning are at greatest risk.

9
10 We do a lot to promote New York States HEAP
11 program. We were very disappointed when again, this
12 year, this is a New York State program. They were
13 again unable to meet the demand for air conditioning
14 that they provide to vulnerable New Yorkers. And so
15 one suggestion for example is we would love to work
16 with you to make sure that your constituents know to
17 get their applications in early, so that they're sure
18 to be able to benefit from that program.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: By any chance, do you
20 have data on the seniors and people that are most at
21 risk in our city?

22 CORINNE SCHIFF: We do. You know what I'd love
23 to do is to send you annually, we issue a Heat
24 Mortality Report. In there we provide a lot of
25 detail about heat. This is obviously a growing area

1
2 of concern for New York City as our climate changes.
3 I will send you a link to that report. It has a lot
4 of very, very important data.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: How does extreme heat
6 strain our healthcare system?

7 HEATHER ROITER: Hello Council Member. So, we
8 work with our healthcare network and hospital system
9 during our emergency, our heat emergency activations.
10 It can put extra demand for anyone whose vulnerable
11 and has extra strain. It can have additional
12 emergency department emissions and so, we do work
13 with our partners in real time to monitor and then
14 there's also the Health Department has surveillance
15 as well. Information that we can monitor and learn
16 from during the event.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay, what public
18 health strategies are DOHMH employing to help New
19 Yorkers deal with the worsening impacts of extreme
20 heat and climate change?

21 CORINNE SCHIFF: So, you know of course this is
22 the issue of our time is the health impacts from
23 climate change and we have many programs across the
24 city to address climate change and all of the impacts
25 that it will have on New Yorkers. With respect to

1
2 heat and the Health Department's work, we do a lot of
3 surveillance and policy analysis, so that we can
4 support the Council and our other agencies including
5 NYCEM on steps to take to protect New Yorkers. We do
6 a lot of work to do outreach including about for the
7 HEAP programs so New Yorkers can have an opportunity
8 to get air conditioning. Again, that is the most -
9 our biggest concern is people who live without air
10 conditioning and I lost my train of thought. So, let
11 me think and get back to you.

12 There's just a lot of work that we do relating to
13 heat and climate change and we would be happy to talk
14 with you about that.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: How does this work look
16 like when it come to NYCHA houses and seniors like
17 really high-risk neighborhoods?

18 CORINNE SCHIFF: I remember the other thing I
19 wanted to say. One of the big areas of work that we
20 are interested in is building community resilience.
21 We know that community-based organizations are
22 trusted messengers and they are the ones who can
23 really build community and for people to support each
24 other. You will always hear us say during
25 emergencies, not just the Health Department, NYCEM as

1 well. This is the time to check on your neighbor to
2 make sure if you have air conditioning but you know
3 your neighborhood doesn't, your family member
4 doesn't, time to invite them over to share that air
5 conditioning with you.
6

7 So, that's a big part of our work is making sure
8 that community-based organizations also have those
9 messages and can work with their residents and they
10 are the trusted messengers. And that can include
11 NYCHA developments. We do work with NYCHA. We
12 provide technical assistance to them and also get
13 that message out to NYCHA residents.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you and I'm
15 assuming the outreach does in different languages
16 because language access is very important to us in
17 the Council.

18 CORINNE SCHIFF: Yes, the Health Department has a
19 strong language access program to meet not only the
20 citywide mandates for language access but to go
21 beyond that where it's appropriate depending on the
22 community.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay, how do warmer
24 temperatures in the fall and winter impact our
25 overall health?

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2 CORINNE SCHIFF: I think this is emerging for all
3 of us. Our summers are extending and so, the kinds
4 of extreme heat events that my NYCEM colleague has
5 described are ones that we may very well see earlier
6 and later in the season, and so it's something that
7 we are watching in the city and planning for.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: The last question I
9 have for you. Are New Yorkers more prone to
10 infectious diseases and insect borne diseases if the
11 fall and the winter seasons become increasingly
12 warmer?

13 CORINNE SCHIFF: Something that we are watching
14 at the Health Department. We also have you know
15 programs to do surveillance for vectors of disease
16 that are bugs and animals. I think we may very well
17 see animals that might have in our earlier climate
18 have died over the winter, surviving over the winter.
19 We may see new species arriving in New York City
20 because we have a different climate that is
21 hospitable to them. So, I think there is really an
22 enormous and varied changes that we are looking out
23 for and planning for and it's a very, very important
24 question.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Yeah and I was
3 wondering about the spring when we are having around
4 the city, how you decide because I live by waters.
5 Like uhm, you know my whole district is by water from
6 Canarsie to all the way to Ships at Bay. And a lot
7 of time I will see the schedule. I was wondering
8 because some schedule will be like around Mill Basin
9 but I don't see much going on in that area and I'm
10 close to borderline of East New York, which is by
11 [00:58:20], so I'm not seeing those zip codes
12 sometimes, so I'm wondering.

13 CORINNE SCHIFF: Alright, are you talking about
14 mosquito spraying?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Uh, huh.

16 CORINNE SCHIFF: Okay.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Do you know about them?
18 Can you answer some?

19 CORINNE SCHIFF: I can take a stab at it. So,
20 our vector control work, our mosquito control work is
21 all designed to reduce the risk of West Nile Virus.
22 It is a very, very data driven program that relies on
23 integrated pest management, so we in the Spring, we
24 are watching the mosquitos over wintering to see what
25 the season is likely to be like for mosquitos and

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2 then we are taking action in the spring to kill the
3 larva to reduce the population and then we have traps
4 throughout the city. We collect mosquitos, we test
5 them to see whether they – whether the mosquitos are
6 carrying West Nile Virus and as those rates of
7 infectivity rise, that's when we act to spray. Our
8 primary effort is to encourage New Yorkers to get rid
9 of standing water. That is where mosquitos breed, so
10 when we do those spray events, we have a lot of
11 outreach to New Yorkers so they know what's coming
12 and we define those boundaries very, very carefully
13 entirely based on the data.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you so much and
15 thank you for your gracious time. Chair, thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: You're welcome. So, I
17 have a question. Climate is changing. You know a
18 heat wave is defined right now as its three 90-degree
19 weather days. Am I correct?

20 HEATHER ROITER: It's two days in a row of 95-
21 degree heat index or one day of 100.

22 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay. Okay, so given the
23 fact I mean we didn't have a lot of – we had one
24 declared heat wave this summer but we had a lot of
25 days where the temperature was just below that but it

1
2 was consistent for days and days and days on end.
3 So, is there is any thought given to given what's
4 happening with the climate and it's changing and
5 everything else to maybe change how we define that
6 for our cooling centers and other programs?

7 HEATHER ROITER: Sure, so our plan - we do look
8 at it annually but we do consult with the Health
9 Department and National Weather Service to always
10 look at our threshold for the definition but for each
11 year and we can always as things look and change in
12 the future, you know we'll always be evaluating our
13 triggers but for cooling centers, just as a reminder,
14 there are senior centers and there are libraries.
15 So, they are open even when they're not activated as
16 a cooling center, they are open to the public and
17 have air conditioning.

18 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: And I wanted to ask a
19 follow-up on the heat. Was it that the state didn't
20 provide enough funds or?

21 CORINNE SCHIFF: They're not sufficiently
22 resourced to meet the demands so we would love for
23 New York City residents to get in there as soon as
24 the program opens.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: So, because one of the
3 things we can do is go is go to our state reps and
4 figure that piece out.

5 CORINNE SCHIFF: We'd love to talk to you about
6 that.

7 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Please because uhm we have
8 to put together the Speakers agenda for – at some
9 point as we get towards the end of the year, so –

10 CORINNE SCHIFF: We will follow up for sure.
11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Please, that would be
13 great. Uhm, so I want to ask about Be A Buddy
14 program. With resources and – what resources and
15 services does this program provide to the community?

16 CORINNE SCHIFF: Be a Buddy Program is that
17 program, one of our programs to build community
18 resilience and it is to fund community-based
19 organizations to help them develop networks among
20 their community members as they see fit as
21 appropriate for their community. I will say that the
22 program right now is on pause as we are looking at a
23 new, so it's not active right now.

24

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay. Uhm, is that
3 because of budget cuts or is that just, you're just
4 to be assessing it or?

5 CORINNE SCHIFF: Uhm, there was some delays in
6 funding so it creates an opportunity for us to take a
7 look at the program.

8 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay uhm, we'd love to
9 have a conversation with you about how we can be
10 helpful there. Uh, let's see. Uhm, I think that's,
11 that's all the questions for me. I want to thank you
12 for spending all the time with us and answering. Do
13 you want to ask anymore? Okay, thank you very much
14 and again, you know we want to work collaboratively
15 with the Administration in terms of I think we all
16 have the same goals and it's just the question of how
17 we get there. And with emerging technology and
18 everything else, you know I really appreciate all the
19 jobs that you guys do. So, uhm, we'll circle back
20 with you at some other point but thank you.

21 CORINNE SCHIFF: Thank you Chair.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much to
23 representatives from the Administration. Chair.

24

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Uh, I would like to now
3 ask – we have Borough President Mark Levine on
4 virtually and would like to ask him to give remarks.

5 BOROUGH PRESIDENT LEVINE: Thank you so much
6 Madam Chair. It's great to see all of you. Sorry I
7 can't be there in person. I want to start by
8 acknowledging how grateful I am to the leadership of
9 New York City's Health Department, really the
10 greatest big city Health Department in the world and
11 I know they're leading now at a time of tight
12 resources and significant challenges. So, everything
13 I'm proposing today, I do understanding of what
14 they're managing and I want to thank you Chair
15 Schulman for your outstanding leadership with this
16 Committee. I'm really proud to see what you're doing
17 and grateful that you brought this issue to the floor
18 today.

19 You know after every pandemic in New York City's
20 history, we have reconsidered how we manage indoor
21 air. And it's changed the architecture of this city
22 in really profound ways that still impact us today.
23 In recent decades, we retreated from some of those
24 practices and we increasingly created for medically
25 sealed buildings which I'm not sure what the logic of

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2 that ever was but we certainly learned during COVID,
3 excuse me, that there's a real price to pay. Now is
4 the time to look again at our buildings coming out of
5 this pandemic. As we think about what comes next.
6 The inevitable next wave or next pandemic in this
7 city and there's no doubt that we have not given
8 adequate consideration to indoor air quality in the
9 city, in our schools, in our residences, in our
10 offices and I'm really pleased that we're putting
11 forth the package of bills today that would allow us
12 to take a step forward in that direction. That would
13 get us the data that we currently lack, so that we
14 can begin to formulate the policies, the standards
15 that would allow New York City to begin to prepare
16 for the next spread of airborne disease.

17 We currently do not have adequate data on Co2
18 levels, on air change rates, on particulate matter in
19 New York City buildings. That really hindered us
20 during the pandemic and getting that data is the
21 first step towards beginning to set standards and
22 ultimately to put in place remediation.

23 Without that data, we can't track our progress.
24 We can't hold ourselves accountable and I believe
25 that we can't do adequate science to understand the

1
2 impact on public health. The bills we're putting
3 forward today address this in every type of building
4 in the city, public and private, housing, office,
5 educational and while there is a cost associated with
6 it that I'm sensitive to, this is an investment that
7 we need to make now in order to prepare for the
8 standards and remediation that we're going to need to
9 prepare for the next pandemic.

10 So, thank you Madam Chair for leading on this and
11 thanks to everyone for your due consideration on this
12 legislation. Thank you so much.

13 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you Borough
14 President Levine.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much and at
16 this time, we want to hear from Lacey Tauber from the
17 Brooklyn Borough Presidents Office. If you could
18 please come. And you may begin when ready.

19 LACEY TAUBER: Thank you so much. Good afternoon
20 Chair and thank you for holding this hearing today.
21 My name is Lacey Tauber, I'm the Legislative Director
22 for Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso.

23 While the extreme heat and air quality
24 emergencies our city experienced this summer impacted
25 everyone, the fact is that low-income New Yorkers of

1
2 color disproportionately experience the impacts of
3 climate change on a daily basis. So, rather than
4 focusing on responding to emergencies, we should be
5 focusing on how we can protect these vulnerable
6 populations long term, which will in turn make us
7 more prepared when emergencies happen.

8 So, our office is in the final stages of
9 developing the Comprehensive Plan for Brooklyn.
10 You're getting a little preview of a part of it
11 today. It has a focus on the intersection of
12 planning, housing and public health. There's a few
13 maps attached that I can see you're looking at, which
14 is great. Showing some of our existing conditions
15 research about air quality and heat impacts in the
16 borough.

17 So, you can see if you look at those maps that
18 the outdoor air quality is worse on average
19 surrounding highway corridors, such as the BQE, which
20 runs through neighborhoods of color such as Sunset
21 Park and Williamsburg's Southside. And the maps also
22 indicate a correlation between asthma rates and
23 indoor air quality issue as well as associated
24 conditions such as mold and asbestos. These asthma
25 rates and concentration of these complaints are

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2 highest in neighborhoods of color in North, Central
3 and Brooklyn, neighborhoods such as Brownsville,
4 Flatbush, East New York and Bushwick. And heat
5 vulnerability tells a similar story. Per DOHMH's
6 metric, which we discussed, there are also - these
7 are also the communities that are most at risk of
8 dying during and immediately following extreme heat.

9 So, the repetition of these patterns is no
10 coincidence; rather, it's a symptom of decades of bad
11 planning and disinvestment from our communities of
12 color and our public housing. The comprehensive plan
13 for Brooklyn makes recommendations for how we can
14 begin to right these wrongs through proactive
15 planning for a more equitable borough.

16 Some of those recommendations around air quality
17 and heat include: Creating a new Million Trees
18 program to improve the tree canopy targeted to areas
19 of higher pollution and heat vulnerability.

20 Supporting the package of indoor air quality bills
21 that are being heard today from sorry, Council Member
22 Powers. I wrote Bottcher, that's not right. That's
23 my error, I will fix it.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: I'm flattered. Thank
25 you for that.

1
2 LACEY TAUBER: Apologies Council Member and
3 Borough President Levine whom we commend for a
4 creative approach to a difficult issue. Uhm,
5 advocating for capital repairs and more efficient
6 responses to tenant complaints in public housing.
7 Expanding access to cooling centers with a lower
8 threshold for opening. Requiring new development to
9 implement cooling systems such as air conditioning or
10 more sustainable methods like air source heat pumps,
11 passive house design, and cool or green roofs.

12 Require developers to include window shares or
13 blinds in new construction and requiring NYCHA and
14 all private landlords in high heat vulnerability
15 areas to install window shades or blinds for tenants
16 who request them.

17 The last bullet is about interagency coordination
18 both state and city. And these are just some
19 examples of our recommendations, which we look
20 forward to sharing the full report with you very
21 soon. So, thank you for the opportunity to testify
22 today.

23 BOROUGH PRESIDENT LEVINE: Thank you for the
24 testimony. I want to just be on the record that I am
25

1
2 not nearly as smart, talented, or good looking as
3 Eric Bottcher but one day I will hope to get there.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. At this
5 time, we are going to be moving onto public
6 testimony. As a reminder, if you would like to
7 submit written testimony for the record for this
8 hearing, you may do so up to 72 hours after the
9 conclusion of this hearing.

10 If you wish to testify in person, please fill out
11 an appearance card to ensure that your name is
12 called. Typically, how we will do this, is we will
13 hear from folks in the room first. We will then move
14 to virtual testimony on Zoom.

15 At this time, I'm going to call our in-person
16 panel. That will be Nina Prescott, Kate Krause, Cara
17 Johnson, Alexander Riccio and Alan Watts.

18 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: I just want to remind
19 everyone that there's two minutes to give. So,
20 everyone, I just want to remind you, we have a lot of
21 people both virtually and here who want to testify
22 today, so in order to give time to everyone, we
23 really want to try to limit people to two minutes.
24 You could submit your testimony. It will be put in
25 the file and it will be written up if you don't get

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2 to it. So, I just wanted to remind folks of that.
3 Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Nina Prescott, we can start
5 with you and then we will just go down the table
6 please. Thank you.

7 NINA PRESCOTT: Thank you so much and good
8 afternoon Chairperson Schulman, Council Member
9 Powers, and members of the Committee on Health. My
10 name is Nina Prescott. I am a Health and Air Quality
11 Associate at RMI, founded as Rocky Mountain
12 Institute, a non-partisan, non-profit organization
13 that works to transform global energy systems. I'm
14 speaking on behalf of RMI today to deliver our
15 comments on the proposed bills Intro.'s 1127, 1128,
16 1129 and 1130 that offer valuable advancements
17 towards healthier air quality in New York City
18 buildings.

19 We submitted written comments as well that are
20 more comprehensive and I will summarize how these
21 bills can be improved, along with three points for
22 why these bills are beneficial to New Yorkers.

23 First, in addition to the current pollutants
24 listed in the bills, we recommend including nitrogen
25 oxides, a group of toxic gases including nitrogen

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2 dioxide and nitric oxide. Nitrogen oxides play a key
3 role informing additional health harming pollutants
4 like ozone and fine particulate matter and nitrogen
5 dioxide exposure is succeeded with a range of
6 negative health impacts. Including these pollutants
7 in the proposed bills will further support the health
8 and wellbeing of New Yorkers.

9 Second, while few indoor air protective policies
10 exist in the U.S., these bills show leadership for
11 New York City to establish a first of its kind indoor
12 air quality standard for key pollutants that should
13 serve as a model for other cities.

14 Third, the proposed bills address critical indoor
15 air quality concerns including infectious disease
16 spread, wildfire smoke, emissions from fossil fuel
17 combusting equipment and appliances and the unequal
18 burden of indoor air pollution exposure in low income
19 and disadvantaged communities.

20 Fourth and finally, indoor air pollution is a
21 health threat in all buildings that necessitates the
22 proposed bills. The pilot programs will collect
23 necessary data reflecting New Yorks diverse building
24 stock and will provide New Yorkers with direct access
25 to information for their health and safety. The

1 standards for indoor air quality in schools and city
2 buildings will benefit student and worker health
3 performance and absentee's and rates.

4
5 In closing, we're deeply encouraged by the
6 proposal to address indoor air quality in New York
7 City and believe that doing so will support
8 prosperous, equitable, clean and healthy communities.
9 We have significant technical knowledge on this topic
10 and are happy to provide expertise if needed beyond
11 our written comment. Thank you for the opportunity.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Can you please
13 turn your microphone on?

14 ALEXANDER RICCIO: If I could get the five
15 seconds back? Today is a sentimental moment in
16 history of pandemics in New York City. I sit here
17 before you, the son of a man who once came to the
18 city as an urban fellow and rose to become a City
19 Commissioner while making the city his home. The
20 city is now my home, our home and what affects each
21 of us, affects all of us. It's easy for each of us
22 to forget this as we wake up in the morning but the
23 world has a way of reminding us.

24 I sit here before you to support these bills, not
25 just as another step towards ending this pandemic,

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2 the pandemic we've shared but ending all future
3 airborne pandemics for generations to come.

4 Two and a half years ago, I realized what you
5 realized today. That we need to systematically
6 collect data on the indoor air that we share and I've
7 spent most of the past three years running a project
8 to do exactly that. I watched the Governor and the
9 Mayor declare the indoor air safe, knowing that they
10 made little or no effort to check. And seeing with
11 my own eyes the many ways that it never made a
12 change. I also knew that officials testifying, some
13 before you today, would declare sporadic measurements
14 to be not representative conditions across the city
15 and while themselves, discouraging efforts to collect
16 systematic data from across the city.

17 The data that volunteers have already collected
18 from me already makes the case for action. In
19 addition to the measures proposed here today, the
20 Committee must take decisive action to expedite
21 improvements so we might benefit before the coming
22 winter waves of COVID. We must also enact guarantees
23 that the rules permitted to protect the air we share,
24 meet the minimum targets for stringency.

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2 I heard today from the First Speaker, a City
3 Official, that there was indeed concern that they
4 would know what actions the Council expects them to
5 take given the language of the bill. This is a good
6 opportunity to correct that. Set prescriptive
7 standards that they cannot ignore. I also heard
8 complaints about the usefulness of Co2 metering.
9 This is a position that is in clear contradiction.
10 The consensus among aerosol scientists not to mention
11 the contradiction of the current advice of the CDC
12 and other major public health organizations. We know
13 the ladder because we fought tooth and nail for it.

14 I finished earlier. I'm supporting these bills
15 and I want further action.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And I'm sorry, could you just
17 state your name for the record.

18 ALEXANDER RICCIO: Sure, Alexander Riccio.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

20 ALAN WATTS: Good afternoon everybody. I
21 appreciate the opportunity to be in front of you. My
22 name is Alan Watts. I'm Director with CerroZone,
23 this a Berkshire Hathaway Company and we're an
24 Indoor Air Quality management company and what we do
25 is we engineer and we manufacture technology to make

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2 indoor spaces safer and healthier. However, I am not
3 here to pitch a product or a technology. We're here
4 to offer our support in these very important pieces
5 of legislation.

6 I am also here to share in this once in a
7 generation opportunity to change the trajectory and
8 the safety and health of the infrastructure of New
9 York. As a lifelong New Yorker, I've seen the
10 effects of the New York City infrastructure
11 deteriorate over time. As a senior executive
12 professional in the Pathogen Control Space, I
13 understand the unique problems that our city faces
14 due to the age and the lack of investment in
15 ventilation systems.

16 So, the COVID-19 Pandemic has taught us a lot of
17 things and opened our eyes and here's three important
18 facts here: Humans are the source of airborne
19 disease and contamination. Number two, being in
20 close proximity at others certainly increases the
21 risk, the exposure to these harmful airborne
22 pathogens. And number three, our buildings certainly
23 lack the proper ventilation and technology to protect
24 us from the risks of airborne pathogens and VOCs. We
25 certainly can't live in bubbles. Although, there's a

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2 lot of times we'd like to live in a bubble especially
3 in this city.

4 Although this proposed legislation, through the
5 proposed legislation, we may find the opportunity to
6 So from my perspective, there are three non-
7 negotiable pillars, okay. Science and Technology,
8 validated proof and government oversight. There are
9 two specific pieces that are quite important here.
10 Sensor Technology, okay making the invisible,
11 visible. Understanding that reporting air quality is
12 fundamental and it is part of our jobs.

13 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Summarize.

14 ALAN WATTS: To summarize, we are here to offer
15 our support in any way we can to help the city kind
16 of become the city of the future in terms of clean
17 air.

18 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you.

19 ALAN WATTS: Thank you.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please.

21 CARA JOHNSON: Good afternoon Chairperson
22 Schulman, Keith Powers Majority Leader and the
23 members of the Council. Thank you so much for the
24 opportunity to be here today. My name is Cara
25 Johnson and I am Counsel to Carrier Corporation. Our

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2 founder invented modern air conditioning in 1902 and
3 we are now a leader, a global leader in healthy
4 sustainable and resilient climate and energy
5 solutions.

6 We are here today to show our enthusiastic
7 support for these bills which will drive adoption and
8 solutions to improve air quality at the pace that's
9 needed and we'll serve as a model for how to do it
10 elsewhere, as New York City so often does. Our
11 feedback falls into three buckets around feasibility
12 and implementation, technical points and rules
13 development. And we've provided that in writing, uhm
14 for your review as well. But today, I want to go off
15 script for a moment and respond to some of the
16 dialogue that we had earlier.

17 So, the University of Chicago's Energy Policy
18 Institute identified air pollution as the top global
19 threat to public health but a point that gets lost is
20 that the majority of our exposure to outdoor air
21 pollution actually happens inside. So, when you
22 think about the wildfires from this summer and the
23 advice to go inside, without air quality monitoring
24 in place, you don't actually know whether the air
25 quality inside is better than the air quality

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2 outside. So, I will echo my colleague next me who
3 said that you need to make the invisible visible.
4 Real time monitoring is about that public awareness.
5 Without it, the complaints driven system that's in
6 place today is not going to reach the public. It's
7 not going to drive that adoption and improvements in
8 indoor air quality.

9 I'm also a parent, so I echo what you said
10 earlier about trust but verify and we just want to
11 show our strong support again for these bills. Thank
12 you so much.

13 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: So, I have some questions
14 for the panel. So, Cara what science supported
15 standards recommendations exist for improving IAQ?

16 CARA JOHNSON: So, there are a number and I like
17 to go straight to the experts when it comes to
18 standards. There is the Well Building Institute.
19 There is ASHRAE 241 which is the American Society of
20 Heating and Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
21 Engineers. There is the Lancet COVID Commission on
22 safe schools and safe work right. And a lot of times
23 we think of these indoor air quality issue in silos.
24 So, COVID, wildfires, when you're improving air
25 quality of one health attribute, you're improving it

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2 for all health attributes, right? So, the Lancet
3 recommendations are foundational. It's about having
4 a tune up for your building, so commissioning your
5 HVAC system. It's about having that ventilation but
6 it needs to be filtered ventilation. It's not just
7 opening a window. And then it's high-grade
8 ventilation, so you're central ventilation needs to
9 be the MERV 13 or higher. Your in-room air
10 purification needs to be HEPA or higher for it to be
11 effective and these recommendations align with the
12 White House Clean Air and Buildings challenge as
13 well.

14 So, there are a number of science supported
15 standards out there that exist and they are health
16 based today.

17 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: And what stakeholders
18 should be involved in rules and guidance creation?

19 CARA JOHNSON: So, in our view it's really best
20 to involve all of the relevant players. That's how
21 you're going to get accuracy. That's how you're
22 going to get feasibility. That's how you're going to
23 get the buy in that you need. So, it's everyone from
24 the environmental and the public health experts,
25 industry experts within the HVAC industry. You have

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2 school officials, building owners, facility managers
3 and then the communities using those buildings are
4 key right? Again, this aligns to the White House
5 Clean Air in Buildings Challenge and that engagement
6 factor is so important.

7 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: And does anyone have a
8 response to the Administrations testimony that the
9 science isn't there yet. That the equipment is not
10 available that can actually do the measurements?

11 ALEXANDER RICCIO: What are they waiting for?

12 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: It's not proven.

13 ALEXANDER RICCIO: And how much proof do they
14 need? The science can be textbooks thick at this
15 point. The scientists have been screaming from the
16 rooftops. The aerosol scientists I work from,
17 hundreds of them have gotten together in letters WHO
18 CDC and it's entire; I'm not kidding, this is an
19 entire field of science, aerosol science.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Yeah, I know. I'm talking
21 about the, not in terms of the equality. In terms of
22 the measure, the equipment that's being used to
23 measure indoor air quality they said doesn't meet
24 certain standards. That's what I was asking about.

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2 ALEXANDER RICCIO: Co2 metering has been around
3 since the 1800's. There are times I mean, people in
4 schools that actually; I can't remember if it was
5 Chicago or Baltimore, in the late 1800's, they were
6 going in the classrooms with very primitive devices
7 and measuring Co2. In 1915, 1918 pandemic, they did
8 the same for influenza in Chicago. I mean, these
9 devices are not new. They've been used commercially
10 and industrially for a very long time. What they
11 need to know is that there are different types of
12 devices that are more accurate than others and can
13 set standards, say requiring NDIR sensors instead of
14 DVOC sensors, you will get better data.

15 As part of running my project, I've collected a
16 lot of data on this sort of thing and experiment with
17 volunteers and I've seen that there are some devices
18 that are good and all you got to do is use those.
19 It's not like this great unsolved problem.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you very much
21 all for your testimony. Appreciate it.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much to this
23 panel. Uhm, I just want to call again Kate Krause if
24 you are in the room. Not seeing Kate. Okay and just
25 one last time, if you are in the room and you wish to

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2 testify in person, please fill out an appearance card
3 so that you can speak in person. Not seeing any,
4 okay. So, that means that we will now move to
5 virtual testimony and I'm going to call our first
6 remote panel. It will be uhm, and I apologize for
7 any mispronunciations of names in advance. Paula
8 Olsiewski, Joseph Fox, Janet Handle, William
9 McQuade(SP?). We will start with Paula. You have to
10 wait for the Sergeant at Arms to call time before you
11 begin your testimony. And as a reminder, everyone
12 will have two minutes for their testimony.

13 Paula, we will start with you.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

15 PAULA OLSIEWSKI: Chairperson Schulman and
16 distinguished members of this Committee. I am
17 honored to testify today to express my strong support
18 for all four indoor air bills before this Committee.
19 I'm a contributing scholar at the Johns Hopkins
20 Center for Health Security where I direct our work on
21 indoor air quality policy.

22 Today, I'm testifying in my personal capacity as
23 a long-time resident of New York City. So, the
24 opinions expressed here and are my own and do not
25 necessarily reflect the views of Johns Hopkins.

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2 Indoor air quality is important because people
3 spend 90 percent of their time indoors. That's where
4 we breath almost a swimming pool full of air every
5 day. But unlike outdoor air or drinking water,
6 indoor air quality is not regulated. Elevated levels
7 of some airborne pollutants are associated with many
8 health problems, including pregnancy loss, cancer,
9 dementia, cardio vascular disease, asthma, COPD, and
10 more. Airborne infectious diseases such as flu and
11 COVID also float in the air on the tiny bits of
12 breath.

13 When you enter a building, you have no idea if
14 the air quality is good. Today's bills would make
15 indoor air quality visible by testing the air and
16 reporting the findings in public buildings, city
17 schools and in certain residential and commercial
18 buildings. What's missing from these bills is a plan
19 for what to do when the indoor air quality alarm goes
20 off.

21 If a fire alarm goes off, we all know who to call
22 and what to do. At the Center for Health Security,
23 we've crafted a model clean indoor act that describes
24 what to do when that IAQ alarm goes off.

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time
3 has expired.

4 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Finish, finish, go ahead
5 finish, go ahead.

6 PAULA OLSIEWSKI: Thank you. Thank you for your
7 time. That was the end. We're happy to help.

8 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: So, I have a question. I
9 know you're not here officially for Johns Hopkins but
10 what do you think that - I mean is there a program
11 that they're working on? Is there anything that
12 maybe would help us in terms of scientific discovery
13 or anything else around this issue?

14 PAULA OLSIEWSKI: You have many practicing
15 scientists or at least several who are going to
16 testify later today. The different things that I
17 quoted in terms of what diseases and so on, there is
18 well established scientific and medical evidence
19 about the harm of these different pollutants. And as
20 I said, when the indoor air quality alarm goes off,
21 we need to know what to do. And so, our center has
22 crafted a model state Clean Indoor Air Act that
23 actually the State of Massachusetts has already
24 introduced as a bill but this includes the very
25 important points that these bills, that is testing

1
2 the air and making the reports public in real time
3 but also then, what to do you know if there is a
4 problem, who should be responsible and so on. And I
5 plan to provide written testimony with more detail
6 and I'm happy to answer more questions.

7 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Appreciate that. I don't
8 know if you were here when the Administration
9 testified but the New York City -

10 PAULA OLSIEWSKI: I was.

11 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: New York City Emergency
12 Management. We had a hearing back in August around
13 the air quality and New York City Emergency
14 Management said they're working on an emergency plan
15 for this. So, uhm, hopefully that will be done soon
16 but inline with what you were talking about.

17 PAULA OLSIEWSKI: That sounds great. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you very much.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. We're
20 going to be moving on to Joseph Fox. Please wait for
21 the Sergeant at Arms to call time before you begin
22 your testimony.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

24 JOSEPH FOX: Thank you very much. My name is
25 Joseph Fox. I am a professional engineer who works

1
2 on ventilation systems in schools and I Chair the
3 Indoor Air Quality Advisory group Ontario Society
4 Professional Engineers.

5 I'd like to speak about why monitoring the air
6 and having a system with accountability is so
7 important. In the past year. I have seen engineers
8 design ventilation systems to only provide 70 percent
9 of bare minimum outdoor air flow rates from the
10 current standard ASHRAE 62.1. Their excuse was that
11 apartment was not required, so they didn't have to
12 adhere to any standard.

13 I see mechanical contractors replace ventilation
14 equipment with new equipment that has no ability to
15 supply outdoor air, so they could purchase a less
16 expensive piece of equipment. I've seen school
17 ventilation systems programed to shut off the
18 ventilation when space temperatures are satisfied.
19 I've seen dentists, doctors' offices and childcare
20 centers refuse to run their ventilation systems and
21 claim the landlord asked them not to. I've seen
22 schools with air units working properly but there's
23 an air distribution problem with the duct work and
24 some classrooms do not get any ventilation. The
25 current indoor air quality system is broken. It's

1
2 primarily reliant on the honor system from building
3 owners and facility operators and they have a
4 financial incentive to provide poor indoor air
5 quality and it hurts society as a whole.

6 A complaint-based system is also deficient. The
7 cut off for what people might feel is poor indoor air
8 quality is much lower than what is actually required
9 to provide protection from airborne diseases or other
10 adverse health effects. The system needs to change.
11 It requires monitoring the air and requiring
12 remediation to ensure people are provided with safe
13 and healthy indoor air environments, just like we
14 ensure people are provided with clean water.

15 While there might not be a system in place right
16 now, it can and should be created to create a safer
17 environment for all. Thank you.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
19 be moving onto Janet Handle. Please wait for the
20 Sergeant at Arms to call time before you begin your
21 testimony.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

23 JANET HANDLE: Thank you Chairman Schulman,
24 Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, Council
25 Member Powers and other Council Members. Thank you

1
2 for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name
3 is Janet Handle and I am President of the Waterside
4 Tenants Association. We represent the 4,000 people
5 living there but I'm also President and Co-Founder of
6 TRAIPEG. That stands for Transplant Recipients and
7 Immunocompromised Patient Advocacy Group. TRAIPEG
8 speaks for the more than seven million
9 immunocompromised in the U.S..

10 Since COVID began, we have lived very constrained
11 lives, no indoor activities without a mask. No
12 movies, no concerts, no indoor dining, no family
13 events. Vulnerable populations are depending on you,
14 the Mayor and the city agencies to keep us safe. We
15 are speaking in support of this package of indoor air
16 quality bills being considered today. Improving
17 ventilation and monitoring Co2 levels will make
18 indoor spaces for everyone. In particular, publicly
19 posted Co2 monitors would enable the
20 immunocompromised the opportunity to assess the risk
21 before they go into a particular indoor space to
22 participate in some activity.

23 We encourage you to do the following in addition
24 to passing these bills: Set standards, measure and
25 collect data and remediate as needed. Require indoor

1
2 air quality monitors to be publicly posted so
3 citizens can see them when they walk into a building.
4 Raise public awareness on air quality, indoor and
5 out, PM2.5 and Co2 as a proxy for respiratory
6 pathogens so that people understand when they walk
7 into a building and they see an air quality monitor
8 what that means for them.

9 Further, people need to understand why they
10 should wear masks when recommended during an air
11 quality alert and why they should wear high quality
12 masks not just surgical masks. Additionally,
13 disseminate information on how to make do it yourself
14 air purification devices such as the Corsi Rosenthal
15 boxes. Consider making these kits available in areas
16 with higher risk of negative health impacts and
17 without cost.

18 And then modify building codes to require
19 multifamily buildings to have robust filtration on
20 indoor air tanks and one switch shutdown of -

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time
22 has expired.

23 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: You can summarize what you
24 said and then submit the rest of it in writing.

1
2 JANET HANDLE: Yeah, my last point was just you
3 know when we had this problem with the wildfires you
4 know all of these buildings are taking that area.
5 Like we have 50 indoor air tanks in our buildings.
6 They need to be on a one switch shutdown. That's all
7 I'm saying. The building codes need to be modified.
8 So for a building there's a one switch shutdown for
9 air intakes.

10 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
12 now hear from William McQuade. Please wait for the
13 Sergeant at Arms to call time before you begin your
14 testimony.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

16 WILLIAM MCQUADE: Good afternoon Chairman
17 Schulman and members of the Health Committee. My
18 name is Bill McQuade, I am the ASHRAE Society
19 Treasurer and have been in the HVAC industry for 30
20 years and a licensed professional engineer for over
21 25. I'm pleased to submit these comments on behalf
22 of ASHRAE regarding the proposed indoor air quality
23 bills.

24 ASHRAE founded in New York City in 1894 is a
25 global technical society advancing human wellbeing

1 through sustainable technology in a build
2 environment. The society and its more than 53,000
3 members including over 2,300 in New York State
4 focuses on building systems, energy efficiency,
5 indoor air quality, refrigeration and sustainability.
6

7 This testimony is regarding the proposed
8 legislation establishing standards and reporting
9 requirements for indoor air quality in the city
10 buildings and school buildings as well as pilot
11 programs to monitor indoor air quality in certain
12 commercial and residential buildings. ASHRAE
13 suggests that these ambitious bills would be further
14 strengthened by referencing ASHRAE Standard 62.1,
15 62.2, which are both ventilation and acceptable
16 indoor air quality for commercial and residential
17 buildings and ASHRAE's new standard 241 control of
18 infectious aerosols. We recommend that bills 1127
19 regarding the school buildings and 1130 regarding
20 city buildings incorporate ASHRAE Standard 62.1
21 ventilation and acceptable indoor air quality and the
22 requirements for indoor air quality standards.

23 IEQ can significantly effect student learning and
24 development and the COVID-19 pandemic has increased
25 awareness of the impacts of IEQ and student health.

1
2 Adhering to the appropriate standards and guidelines
3 is essential to managing indoor air quality.

4 Standard 62.1 specifies minimum ventilation rates and
5 other measures intended to provide indoor air quality
6 as acceptable to human occupants and minimizes
7 adverse health effects due to poor indoor air
8 quality.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Your time has
10 expired.

11 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: You can summarize the rest
12 of what you said and also submit it to us in written
13 testimony.

14 WILLIAM MCQUADE: It has been submitted.
15 Basically 62.1 handles schools and commercial
16 buildings. 62.2 is residential buildings. I think
17 both of those should be referenced. And then our new
18 Standard 241 is really based on the knowledge that we
19 gained during the COVID pandemic about controlling
20 infectious aerosols and the components of that
21 standard can also be used when you have air quality
22 issues like wild fires and things like that to
23 protect the building occupants in those states.

24 So, ASHRAE's staff is happy to provide a briefing
25 on Standard 241 upon request including Dr. William

1
2 Boncleth(SP?) our Chair of the Committee to help
3 develop the standard. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you very much.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much to this
6 remote panel. We will now be moving to our second
7 remote panel. We'll be hearing from Richard Bruns,
8 Jaron Burke, Dr. Serene Al-Momen, Ello Ryan, Matthew
9 Cortland, and Sarah Evans. We'll hear from Richard
10 Bruns first. You'll each have two minutes. Please
11 wait for the Sergeant at Arms to call time before you
12 begin your testimony.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

14 RICHARD BRUNS: Distinguished members of this
15 Committee, thank you for holding this hearing. I'm
16 Richard Bruns, Economist of the Johns Hopkins Center
17 for Health Security and one of the authors of the
18 ASHRAE 241 Standard. The opinions expressed herein
19 are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views
20 of Johns Hopkins University or ASHRAE.

21 I specialize in cost benefit analysis of public
22 health policy, and I'd like to make three main
23 points. First, labeling saves lives, even if the
24 labeling process is imprecise. Second, PM 2.5 is the
25

1
2 most important thing to label. Third, the benefits
3 of labeling PM 2.5 are much higher than the costs.

4 Imagine a world where there were no restaurant
5 inspections and no restaurant safety scores. 110
6 years ago, New York lived in that world and thousands
7 of people died each year from food borne disease and
8 poison. The first step to saving those lives was
9 letting people know what was going into their
10 stomach. We should do something similar so that
11 people know what's going into their lungs and their
12 children's lungs.

13 The most harmful kind of air pollution is smog.
14 Technically fine particulate matter for PM 2.5.
15 That's the most important thing to label in control.
16 We know that any kind of regulation can get expensive
17 and it would be wrong to require new action if we
18 couldn't show that the benefits were higher than the
19 costs. However, we have many good studies showing
20 that the benefits of reducing smog exposure are much
21 higher than the costs, like ten times higher.

22 If you enact these four pieces of proposed
23 legislation, then in the future, there will be less
24 death and lower medical costs. These proposals will
25 reduce childhood asthma and it's pain and medical

1
2 costs. They will reduce heart attacks, strokes and
3 COPD. Individuals and governments will save money on
4 healthcare compared to a world where you don't
5 control what's going into peoples lungs.

6 Thank you again for the chance to testify today
7 and I encourage your questions on the costs and
8 benefits of indoor air quality regulation.

9 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: And I want to thank you
10 for testifying and also helping to be a resource for
11 us in our hearing today.

12 RICHARD BRUNS: Glad to help.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll now be hearing from
14 Jaron Burke. You'll have two minutes. Please wait
15 for the Sergeant at Arms to call time before you
16 begin.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

18 JARON BURKE: Thank you Chair Schulman and
19 Majority Leader Powers. My name is Jaron Burke and
20 I'm the Environmental Health Manager at WE ACT for
21 Environmental Justice. I have a master and public
22 health degree with a focus on environmental health
23 policy and air pollution and I appreciate the
24 opportunity to testify to this Committee on a matter
25 important to WE ACT and myself.

1
2 We've already heard about the health impact of
3 indoor air quality. These harms are not distributed
4 equitably across race, income, and gender. Even
5 before the COVID-19 pandemic, Black Americans were
6 three times more likely to die of asthma than White
7 Americans. Harlem, Washington Heights and the Bronx
8 also have significantly higher levels of asthma than
9 other neighborhoods in New York City.

10 Because of these health disparities, monitoring
11 indoor air quality is necessary to identify sources
12 of pollution and reduce exposure whenever possible.
13 We have to force the passage of Intro. 1130 and 1127
14 with specific amendments, first you require all
15 reporting to include an explanation of city or school
16 building to ensure that there's transparency and that
17 all buildings that are eligible participate in the
18 monitoring.

19 Second, to require remediation and improve indoor
20 air quality if necessary after gathering indoor air
21 quality data. The data is only useful if changes are
22 made and are required to be made. In regards to 1128
23 and 1129, we have the concern that they offer limited
24 benefit unless amended, we ask that there's an
25 interest in monitoring indoor air, specifically in

1 residential buildings as demonstrated by our pilot
2 project last year to measure the indoor air quality
3 impact of gas stoves.
4

5 Currently 1129 would only require monitoring for
6 common spaces and would not measure pollutants where
7 New Yorkers are exposed the most inside their homes.
8 We would be happy to see 1129 pass if amended to
9 include monitoring in homes within residential
10 buildings and/or to include monitoring for nitrogen
11 oxide specifically in buildings with combustion-based
12 boilers. We are encouraged by the proposal to
13 regulate indoor air quality in New York City, protect
14 human health and I'm grateful for the opportunity to
15 speak and provide feedback and I'll be submitting
16 written comments as well. Thank you.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
18 now be hearing from Dr. Serene Al-Momen. You'll have
19 two minutes. Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to
20 call time before you begin your testimony.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 DR. SORENE AL-MOMEN: Good afternoon and thank
23 you to Chairperson Schulman and members of the New
24 York City Council Health Committee for the
25 opportunity to testify here today. I'm Dr. Serene

1
2 Al-Momen, the CEO of Attune, and I'm here today to
3 express our support for the inclusion of indoor air
4 quality monitoring for schools, Introduction Number
5 1127 legislative proposal by Council Member Powers.

6 As the CEO of a company that makes indoor air
7 quality monitoring systems for all manners of
8 buildings, there is more to this support than our
9 business model. There is a clear need to monitor
10 indoor air quality from the perspective of students
11 and educator health, academic performance and
12 facility efficiency. We learned this first from the
13 COVID-19 pandemic and most recently with the poor
14 indoor air quality resulting from the Canadian
15 wildfires. Attune is a national leader in indoor air
16 quality monitoring in schools. We have deployed over
17 15,000 sensors in over 1,000 schools nationwide.
18 This includes the Montgomery County Schools, the
19 largest school district in Maryland. In fact, we
20 just disclosed 10,000 indoor air quality sensors,
21 which is [01:44:30] public schools.

22 We are also in the Denver, Colorado school
23 district, and presently we're working Atlanta,
24 Georgia school district and schools in Las Vegas,
25 Nevada among others. We have also worked with the

1
2 educative body in Illinois and California. Here is
3 what we have learned today. First, we need to make
4 sure we are measuring the right particulate matter
5 and the right size. We recommended the inclusion of
6 measuring particulate pollution size of 1.0 micron
7 and below. This is among the most difficult
8 particulate size to filter out. It is also the
9 particle size responsible for carrying COVID and
10 other viruses. Having a sensor measure particulate
11 of this size will help improve student and educator
12 safety, and the current legislation does not include
13 this size.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time
15 has expired.

16 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: You can wrap up if you
17 want to give a summary.

18 DR. SERENE AL-MOMEN: Yeah, just uhm the second
19 one was related adding a minimum standard for the
20 effectiveness of the sensors that are included in
21 school. We heard some concerns about emerging
22 technology and how effective they are. We are
23 advocating to include minimum standards in the bill
24 that require the sensors or the flow to be tested in
25 testified labs and show that testing so that you know

1
2 the data that is provided is trustworthy and can help
3 with decision making. So, we will submit written
4 testimony as well.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please.

6 DR. SERENE AL-MOMEN: But thank you so much for
7 letting me testify.

8 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you very much.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
10 be moving to Ello Ryan. Please wait for the Sergeant
11 at Arms to call time before you begin your testimony.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

13 ELLO RYAN: Hi, my name is Ello Ryan, I'm a
14 parent of two kids and I'm here to testify in support
15 of Intro. 1127. Thank you for bringing this bill.

16 Right now there's an invisible threat in our city
17 schools and it's in the air. The ongoing COVID-19
18 pandemic and the wildfire smoke that hit earlier this
19 year have exposed the problem but it's always been
20 there and it's time to sit up and pay attention.

21 Speaking of paying attention, we tell our kids to do
22 it. We tell them, go to school, pay attention,
23 learn, behave. Then we put them in a closed room
24 with 20 other people and zero ventilation. In rooms
25 like this, carbon dioxide levels build and levels of

1
2 Co2 are over 1400 ppm. The human brain actually
3 suffers a 50 percent cognitive decline. It's
4 declining cognitive ability. Studies have shown any
5 classroom without central air and without window air
6 vent is probably reaching these levels on a daily
7 basis.

8 I have monitors for my home and I disagree with
9 the Department of Health comments today that the data
10 is not useful. I use this data. I'm pleased to use
11 it to take steps to improve our homes' air quality.
12 Open window, close a window, turn up a filter.
13 Schools don't have these tools. They have no idea
14 how safe or more likely unsafe the air within the
15 walls is.

16 I have two young children with developing lungs
17 and brains. We had a year in public school and then
18 we decided to home school. We never planned to home
19 school. We're doing it because the air inside of
20 most schools is just plain unsafe. Parents let me
21 know this because we've been measuring it with our
22 own emerging technology, also known as credible
23 counters and Co2 monitoring.

24 I'll also say that the principal and staff in our
25 school had very little knowledge about the importance

1
2 of ventilation in classrooms and nor did they feel
3 like they had to mandate to do anything about it.

4 It became clear to us that attendance was more
5 important to our DOE than kids health. So, if I knew
6 that the air at my kids school was clean and healthy,
7 I would absolutely send my kids to school. Give us
8 this data. Pass Intro. 1127 so we can see for
9 ourselves what the air quality is like in our
10 schools. Give us this data. Set good air quality
11 standards, educate our school community so we can
12 advocate for our kids, so we can protect them. Even
13 better, make this clean air, safe, clean air
14 mandatory in our schools. Give the schools the
15 funding and the tools they need to make their air
16 safe for all our children and teachers. Monitoring
17 is a really good first step but we desperately need
18 remediation, working central air in every school.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. We'll be
22 moving on to Matthew Cortland. Please wait for the
23 Sergeant at Arms to call time before you begin your
24 testimony.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 MATTHEW CORTLAND: Chair Schulman, Council
3 Members and staff, thank you for holding this
4 important hearing. I am Matthew Cortland. I'm
5 appearing in my personal capacity but way of
6 conflict-of-interest disclosure. I'm a Senior Fellow
7 at Data for Progress, where my work is funded by the
8 Ford Foundations U.S. Disability Rights Program. I'm
9 also an attorney, I'm in an admitted practice in the
10 common wealth of Massachusetts. My graduated
11 Education in Public Health is from Boston University
12 and finally, I am myself immunocompromised.

13 Earlier, the Administration said that relative to
14 indoor quality in schools "we have a system that's
15 just as good if not better than Boston." I'm here to
16 tell you that no, New York City absolutely does not
17 have a system that's better than Boston but it could.
18 From an internet connected device anywhere in the
19 world, I can pull up real time data about the air
20 quality in any given Boston public school. I cannot
21 over emphasize how important that is to children with
22 a variety of disabilities, children who are
23 immunocompromised because of cancer treatment or
24 rheumatoid arthritis, etc., etc..

1
2 The Administration seems to place great emphasis
3 on this being a "passive approach." That might be
4 true if there wasn't a BPS indoor air quality
5 monitoring and response action plan but there is.
6 I'm sure New York City could develop something
7 similar. The Administration seems to think that
8 device calibration is the major barrier. They're
9 calibrated annually. The devices are internet
10 connected. If something appears off, it's easy to
11 tell. Finally, I wanted to tell you that clean air
12 is broadly popular with voters. In September of
13 2022, a poll of 947 likely New York voters, a poll
14 not conducted in anticipation of this suite of bills
15 but uphold that comment 67 percent of New Yorkers
16 support "changing the building code to require
17 businesses to install air quality monitors, to detect
18 and prevent outbreaks that could lead to pandemics.
19 67 percent of New Yorkers support that.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Do you want to sum up or
21 go ahead.

22 MATTHEW CORTLAND: I would just close by saying
23 this is incredibly important to disabled New Yorkers
24 and I know that New York City can lead the way here
25

1
2 and this suite of bills is a fantastic foundation for
3 that work to begin with.

4 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Mr. Cortland, I have a
5 question for you. Uhm, are you aware of any
6 legislation that's been proposed in Massachusetts
7 around air quality?

8 MATTHEW CORTLAND: The Johns Hopkins folks that
9 you were talking to earlier have a model state act
10 that is being looked on very favorably in the common
11 wealth. Boston Public Schools sort of built out
12 their program without, there wasn't a need for
13 legislation action at the state level to allow them
14 to proceed. There was some ordinances in other
15 communities in Massachusetts where the former CDC
16 director and the former COVID-19 response coordinator
17 live. Ashish Jha did a whole suite of school-based
18 things that required some local ordinances but it's
19 really that model state act.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, we're going to
21 contact them and get a copy of that. Thank you so
22 much.

23 MATTHEW CORTLAND: Thank you.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
25 be moving on to Sarah Evans. You'll have two minutes

1
2 for your testimony and please wait for the Sergeant
3 at Arms to call time before you begin.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

5 SARAH EVANS: Good afternoon. I'm an Assistant
6 Professor of Environmental Medicine in public health
7 that the Children's Environmental Health Center at
8 Mount Sinai. I'm speaking on behalf of our team of
9 pediatricians, occupational and environmental
10 medicine, physicians, nurses and scientists in
11 support of the proposed bills 1127, 1128, 1129 and
12 1130.

13 As recognized experts in children's environmental
14 health, we receive frequent inquiries from patients
15 and families impacted by poor indoor air quality.
16 Our environmental asthma clinic sees and treats
17 children with environmentally triggered asthma. A
18 task that often involves identifying and remediating
19 sources of indoor air pollution in the home.

20 The establishment of indoor air standards and
21 monitoring programs will help inform targeted
22 improvements to building conditions and empower New
23 York City communities with data about the
24 environments in which they live, learn and work.
25

1
2 At Mount Sinai, we see the impact of poor indoor
3 air quality on the most vulnerable children, pregnant
4 women and low-income and communities of color. Our
5 center is situated in East Harlem, where a higher
6 percentage of residents report maintenance problems,
7 carbon monoxide incidents and other housing issues
8 that impact air quality compared to predominantly
9 White neighborhoods.

10 Recent studies also find that children of color
11 are more likely to be exposed to air pollutants at
12 school than White students. Such inequities
13 contribute to the higher rates of asthma and school
14 absenteeism observed in Black and Latinx children in
15 New York City and elsewhere. Healthy indoor air is
16 especially important in school buildings yet poor
17 indoor air quality in school buildings is a pervasive
18 problem. A national survey administered by the GAO
19 found that 41 percent of public-school districts had
20 over half of their school in need of renovation to
21 their HVAC systems.

22 Lack of ventilation in school buildings
23 contribute to greater exposure to indoor air
24 pollutants, mold growth and increased spread of
25 airborne pathogens. The proposed standards for IEQ

1
2 in schools outlined in 1127 will improve the child
3 health and wellbeing. A study of 100 U.S. schools
4 found measurable progress in math and reading scores
5 when indoor air quality was improved, highlighting a
6 direct association between student academic
7 achievement and classroom ventilation rate.

8 In addition, the schools took steps to improve
9 ventilation, had a 39 percent lower COVID-19
10 incidents during the height of the pandemic.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired. Thank you.

12 SARAH EVANS: Okay thank you. I just would like
13 to say that New York City really has the opportunity
14 to pave the way for cities across the United States,
15 particularly for the most vulnerable and we have
16 submitted more in-depth written comments. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you very much.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much to this
19 remote panel. We will now be moving to our third
20 remote panel. We will be hearing from Paul Hennessy,
21 Dean Rose, Alia Soomro, Hickma Abdul Goni and Alena
22 Neganova (SP?). Paul Hennessy, we'll be hearing from
23 your first. You'll have two minutes. Please wait
24 for the Sergeant at Arms to call time before you
25 begin your testimony.

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

3 PAUL HENNESSY: Hi, I'm Paul Hennessy. I work in
4 New York and I am a member of the public calling in
5 just to encourage better indoor air quality. I
6 support all four bills for this. New York must be a
7 leading example in indoor air quality. Ventilation,
8 HEPA filters, Upper Room UV Lights, air scrubbers,
9 frequent air changes, and more will reduce pollution,
10 needless CO2, and limit the spread of all airborne
11 illnesses. Better indoor air quality also increases
12 alertness, which in term helps students in school,
13 and staff at the workplace. We also need improved
14 air quality and air quality monitors in every public
15 space so the public is aware of this quality. This
16 is a matter of disability access as well. Disabled
17 and high-risk individuals deserve a right to clean
18 air.

19 This investment will go to help business as well.
20 My personally, I would go out of my way to support a
21 business with the indoor air quality and I reject the
22 notion that we shouldn't implement data and
23 collection based on emerging technology. That's a
24 made-up excuse to kick the can down the road when
25 urgent action is needed now.

1
2 In fact, Belgium mandated indoor air quality
3 measures and are out here for it. Businesses and
4 public spaces need mandates otherwise they're going
5 to cut corners. I find it disturbing that the DOH
6 staff say that there is a need to track indoor air
7 quality to humans in a pandemic. As well as the
8 Department of Education staff saying school
9 ventilation is in place. Schools in New York are now
10 well ventilated.

11 Furthermore in San Francisco actually, BART
12 trains have installed denser MERV-14 filters and
13 increased air changes to every 70 seconds. It's time
14 New York does the same and modernize HVAC systems on
15 public transit, schools, commercial, residential, and
16 public buildings. I shouldn't have to put my health
17 at risk because I have to go to a public space. The
18 benefits of cleaner new air are tremendous and it's
19 going to make New York a healthier place. Humanity
20 all with irradiated [01:56:55] with clean water, so
21 it's irradiated air borne illnesses with clean air.
22 Thank you.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
24 now be hearing from Dean Rose. Please wait for the
25

1
2 Sergeant at Arms to call time before you begin your
3 testimony.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

5 DEAN ROSE: Yes, I want to thank everybody for
6 this opportunity. First and foremost, this is a
7 very, very important topic globally. I want to let
8 you know, I'm Dean Rose, CEO of Plasma Guard
9 Corporation. Excuse me, to be short of sounding
10 self-serving, I'm here for informational purposes
11 really on this important topic and more cities, more
12 governments need to really embrace this.

13 Our company has been dealing with submicron
14 particulate removal in air spaces for over 50 years,
15 mainly in outdoor harmful emissions all the way down
16 to .004 microns in size. We focused that technology
17 into indoor air quality about ten years ago. Same
18 science and we've been able to not only address PM10
19 PM2.5, but all of our monitors are particulate
20 monitors that we give away for free with our
21 technology for every building is PM1.0 and smaller.

22 The obvious threat of harmful particulate is much
23 smaller than one micron in size, certainly 2.5 cleans
24 up a lot of stuff but the real harmful stuff is even
25 smaller. You know I am only requesting opportunity

1
2 to present these technologies in a much greater
3 detail at a later date with all of your experts
4 involved. We have been leading globally in submicron
5 particulate removal pathogen destruction pathogen and
6 activation destroying the outer protein lipid
7 violators of not only virus, bacteria, fungus and
8 mold protecting everyone from schools and in office
9 buildings and nursing homes, and of course hospitals.
10 Because we really don't discriminate amongst
11 pathogens. It could be anything from COVID to -

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time
13 has expired.

14 DEAN ROSE: Thank you.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much and please
16 do submit your written testimony for the record so
17 that we can consider it. We'll be moving onto Alia
18 Soomro, you'll have two minutes and please wait for
19 the Sergeant at Arms to call time before you begin
20 your testimony.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 ALIA SOOMRO: Good afternoon. My name is Alia
23 Soomro and I am the Deputy Director for New York City
24 Policy at the New York League of Conservation Voters.
25 Thank you Chair Schulman and members of the Committee

1 on Health for the opportunity to testify. I've
2 submitted longer written testimony. One of YLCV's
3 top priorities is fighting for clean air, whether the
4 source is toxic fossil fuels from our power,
5 transportation or building sectors or wildfire smoke
6 due to climate change.
7

8 For decades, low income and communities of color
9 have faced the brunt of toxic air pollution due to
10 environmental racism and historic disinvestment.
11 Because of the neglect these communities have faced,
12 New York City has one of the country's highest rates
13 of asthma hospitalizations and deaths among children,
14 young adults, African American and Latino residents
15 and residents of high poverty neighborhoods.

16 On top of this, climate change is already
17 exacerbating existing social, environmental, economic
18 and public health disparities. For example, New
19 Yorkers face a week of poor air quality when wildfire
20 smoke from Canada blanketed our skies earlier this
21 summer. Data from DOHMH shows that New York City zip
22 codes with the highest numbers of asthma related
23 emergency room visits were disproportionately in low
24 income and predominantly Black and Hispanic
25 communities.

1
2 As our planet experienced record breaking heat
3 this summer, coupled with the fact that recent
4 reports have indicated that wildfire smoke is rolling
5 back progress on the Clean Air Act, New York must
6 continue working to reduce poor air quality and
7 mitigate its harmful impacts. We believe that the
8 indoor air quality bills introduced by Council Member
9 Powers at the request of Manhattan Borough President
10 Levine are timely and necessary. Not only to improve
11 the health of all New Yorkers but to combat the
12 impacts of climate change and further environmental
13 justice.

14 I want to iterate that these bills also align
15 with the Administrations goals contained in Plan NYC
16 getting sustainability done. That policy report
17 includes developing new air quality monitoring
18 program in 2024 as a priority.

19 NYLC –

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time
21 has expired.

22 ALIA SOOMRO: Great. I've submitted longer
23 written testimony. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you very much.
25

1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We'll
3 be turning to Hickma Abdul Goni. You'll have two
4 minutes. Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to
5 call time before you begin your testimony.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hickma Abdul Goni, are you
8 online?

9 HICKMA ABDUL GONI: Hello?

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can hear you. You
11 may begin. Hickma, we can hear you. Hickma, can you
12 hear us? Okay, we're going to go to our next
13 panelist. Next, we'll hear from Alena Neganova.

14 HICKMA ABDUL GONI: Okay.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh - okay, let's move on to
16 Delvina Nikonova while Hickma figure out her
17 technical problems. Okay Delvina Nikonova, you'll
18 have two minutes. Please wait for the Sergeant at
19 Arms to call time.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

21 DELVINA NIKONOVA: Hi, my name is Delvina
22 Nikonova, I'm a Master's Educated Nurse from Columbia
23 University. I previously worked at the hospital for
24 a special surgery Mount Sinai as well as NYU Hospital
25 in the city.

1
2 I am in support of all these bills. I would also
3 like us to think about making sure that we are
4 consistently monitoring the Co2 to be less than 500.
5 And I really want us to be working to make clean air.
6 I think a lot of us were really terrified when we saw
7 the skies turn orange and I think that New York City
8 has the opportunity to be a leader in making clean
9 indoor air. We are you know the best city in the
10 country and we have the opportunity to be leaders in
11 this to make sure that our children and all us have
12 clean indoor air. Like once we fought for clean
13 water, we have the opportunity to fight for clean air
14 now both to prevent illness and also in terms of
15 changes regarding climate change. I'll be submitting
16 more in-depth written testimony but I think it's
17 important for all us to be thinking about how we felt
18 during that week and how frightening it was and how
19 we want to make sure that you know all of us have
20 clean air when we're in our apartments and in our
21 workplaces, especially as things like the Canadian
22 wildfire smoke will keep happening during the
23 summers.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, thank you very much.
25 We're going to try to go back to Hickma Abdul Goni.

1
2 You'll have two minutes, please wait for the Sergeant
3 at Arms to call time before you begin your testimony.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

5 HICKMA ABDUL GONI: Thank you for allowing me to
6 testify. I really appreciate you all looking at this
7 and taking this seriously and I would love this to
8 happen much quicker than [LOST AUDIO [02:05:02]].

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Uhm, we're accidentally - I
10 believe chambers is accidently muting. We're working
11 on a technical issue. Thanks for your patience.

12 [02:05:16]- [02:05:28]

13 HICKMA ABDUL GONI: Hello, may I speak now?

14 [02:05:27]- [02:05:57]

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We're currently having a
16 technical issue. Thank you for your patience.

17 [02:06:00]- [02:07:20]. Uhm, okay, we're going to be
18 taking a quick break in this hearing to address
19 technical difficulties. Thank you all for your
20 patience and we'll let you know when we resume.

21 Thank you. [02:07:28]- [02:08:03]. Test, test.

22 [02:08:03]- [02:08:11]. Okay are we ready to resume?

23 Okay, great. Okay, thank you everyone for your

24 patience. We're going to resume. Apologies. We're

25 going to call up Hickma Abdul Goni one more time.

1
2 Thank you for your patience. Please wait for the
3 Sergeant at Arms to call time.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

5 HICKMA ABDUL GONI: Hello?

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can hear you.

7 Apologies, you may begin.

8 HICKMA ABDUL GONI: Okay, thank you so much for
9 your patience with this. I think you may be able to
10 tell, I'm a mom. I was literally getting my son off
11 the bus so it got a little confusing for me but the
12 reason I wanted to make sure I was on this call today
13 and was able to testify in support of this bill is
14 because I'm a mom of two children in public school.
15 I'm also a registered nurse and I work in the public
16 school system as a nurse during the worst years of
17 COVID.

18 You know I was working for the Department of
19 Health and Legal Hygiene so I understand no rules.
20 We've been doing more with less a lot but we have to
21 set a standard to improve indoor air for the health
22 and safety of our children at school and that's where
23 they spend the majority of their day is indoors. Uhm
24 so you know we are living in a time where there's
25 more airborne challenges than ever uhm with pandemic

1
2 and with climate change we can expect even more of
3 this in the future. We have to set a standard now.
4 We have to make a diagnosis now and do our best to
5 mitigate the challenges that our children are facing
6 in the future. Thank you.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. At this
8 time, we are now going to move to our last remote
9 panel. We'll be hearing from Nancy Julius, Enova
10 Sahu(SP?), Leah Olinick, and Gida Saba(SP?). I
11 apologize if I mispronounce any of your names.
12 First, we'll be hearing from Nancy Julius. You'll
13 have two minutes. Please wait for the Sergeant at
14 Arms to call time before you begin.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, Nancy is no longer on.
17 We'll be moving on to Enova Sahu. Please wait for
18 the Sergeant at Arms to call time before you begin.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

20 ENOVA SAHU: Hi. This is Enova Sahu and I am a
21 resident of New York City in Manhattan and I just
22 wanted to say that real time air quality monitoring
23 is an extremely critical part of this bill and the
24 fact that this is being overlooked by the DOE and DOH
25 is unacceptable. Sensors that measure Co2 Pm2.5 and

1
2 PM10 can help us reduce the spread of infectious
3 disease, as many other experts have said today.
4 COVID is still a threat right now and we are
5 currently in a surge. We don't need to think about
6 the next pandemic, since we need the tools right now
7 and this year. This winter, we will have another
8 surge inevitably of COVID, RSV and flu and next
9 summer, we also inevitably will have more smoke from
10 wildfires from the north.

11 The only way to change this is real time air
12 monitoring. Scores are not difficult to interpret.
13 I have no air quality credentials myself, yet they
14 can be extremely helpful and they show green, yellow
15 and red ratings. Red is bad, green is good. We all
16 know what this means.

17 On a daily basis as a New Yorker who has a gas
18 stove in my apartment, I open my window when my
19 professional real time air quality monitor starts
20 beeping or shows red. During the wildfire season,
21 IEQ monitors enabled me to use air purifiers in my
22 room effectively to know whether or not it was safe
23 for me as an asthma patient. I could change the
24 speed of my air purifiers to ensure that I was
25 breathing quality air. And all residents of New

1
2 York, as well as all children in schools and all
3 patients in healthcare settings deserve this. As a
4 patient of healthcare, as we all are, I have been in
5 many doctors offices in Mount Sinai and NYU in
6 Manhattan that do not have appropriate air quality.
7 They have extremely high Co2 above the recommended
8 rates of -

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time
10 has expired.

11 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: No, finish your thought.
12 Go ahead.

13 ENOVA SAHU: Ultimately this is an imminent
14 threat to health and making changes in the next five
15 years is not soon enough. This is dissuading people
16 like me from actively seeking healthcare since spaces
17 with 4 IEQ have higher likelihood of transmitting
18 viruses and pathogens, so the DOH and DOE need to act
19 right now.

20 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you very much.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. We're
22 going to be moving on to Leah Olinick. You'll have
23 two minutes. Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to
24 call time before you begin your testimony.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 LEAH OLINICK: Hi. My name is Leah Olinick, I am
3 a Public School Teacher and a parent to a toddler and
4 future public-school student. I'm also
5 immunocompromised due to a liver transplant and left
6 the classroom due to COVID spread in schools.
7 Finally, I'm also a climate organizer with Climate
8 Families NYC, a community of nearly 1,000 families
9 across the city who want our school buildings to be
10 healthy for all kids.

11 I'm here to express my support for Keith Powers
12 bill to monitor indoor air quality in schools and ask
13 it to go further. As a teacher, I've had students
14 miss days or even weeks of school due to asthma or
15 worsened by poor air quality from fossil fuel
16 pollution. I also saw first hand that the Intel
17 filters purchased by the city are ineffective and do
18 not get used because they are too loud to teach over.

19 With more wildfire events to come due to the
20 climate crisis and the continued spread of COVID, we
21 need to not only monitor air quality but also
22 urgently put a plan in place to improve indoor air in
23 schools and public spaces.

24 I also ask that the bill be amended to include
25 day cares, including in-home day cares and formal

1
2 education spaces that often serve babies and toddlers
3 who are most vulnerable to air pollution. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much and we'll
5 now move on to Gida Saba. You'll have two minutes.
6 Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to call time
7 before you begin your testimony.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

9 GIDA SABA: Hi Committee on Health. I come
10 before you today as a concerned New Yorker and parent
11 in support of these bills. Like many schools, the
12 DOE building where my child spends his day is over
13 100 years old and has no HVAC system. The DOE we
14 heard today recommends measuring air quality levels
15 at the start of the day with no children present but
16 that cannot provide useful data. I sent my child to
17 school two weeks ago with a portable device to
18 measure air quality and despite air filters on full
19 blast, the Co2 readings have been incredibly
20 dangerously high. Averaging for most of the day
21 above 2,000 ppm of carbon dioxide and at one point
22 during music class, reaching a dangerously high peak
23 of 3,287.

24 To put this info into context, the recommended
25 indoor Co2 level is typically below 600 ppm. My

1
2 measurements were over five times higher. Not at all
3 fine as the DOE rep earlier testified. Elevated Co2
4 levels can have detrimental effects on our health.
5 Prolonged exposure can lead to headaches, dizziness,
6 fatigue. It can impair ability to focus, concentrate
7 and learn, making it increasingly difficult for
8 children to excel academically. Studies have shown
9 high Co2 levels result in significantly lower test
10 scores on standardized tests.

11 Furthermore, inadequate air circulation turns our
12 schools into breeding grounds for respiratory illness
13 putting our children and educators at risk. The
14 spread of COVID also impacts caregivers. For high-
15 risk families like mine, we should not have to be
16 petrified to send our children to school praying they
17 don't bring home an illness that could hospitalize or
18 kill us. Studies support these findings. High Co2
19 in classrooms is linked to significant increases in
20 absenteeism, an issue that is critically effecting
21 DOE schools today.

22 I would like to take a moment to thank our school
23 for addressing this issue. After I raised this,
24 windows were forced open that have been stuck closed
25 for literally years and some improvements were made

1
2 but levels still remain over 1,000 consistently and
3 we are still looking for solutions in several spaces.

4 Had I not had the resources to send a monitor to
5 school with my child, no one would have even been
6 aware. Access to resources should not determine the
7 safety and wellbeing of our children. Real time air
8 quality monitors are needed in all classrooms
9 immediately. Teachers can open windows or –

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: That's okay, finish your
12 thought. Go ahead.

13 GIDA SABA: And so better air quality can be
14 achieved. I'm horrified to think of all the other
15 schools and classrooms with dangerous air quality
16 levels currently that no one is addressing because no
17 one or some guy in the morning is monitoring them.
18 I'm thrilled you are considering these bills. They
19 will make our children and educators safer and I
20 would just like to add, 18 months is way too long to
21 wait. We need immediate action. 70 percent of
22 household COVID cases originate with school
23 exposures. We will lose many more New Yorkers to
24 COVID during the next 18 months, lives that can be
25 saved by taking swift action on this bill and we must

1
2 set standards so that the DOE can't sit there and
3 say, "oh, well, we're doing what we can." But
4 actually do something to keep our kids and our
5 educators safe. Thank you so much.

6 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We're now going
8 to calling on Sarah Putnam. You will have two
9 minutes. Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to
10 call time before you begin your testimony.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

12 SARAH PUTNAM: Can you hear me? I'm getting a
13 weird -

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yeah, we can hear you.

15 SARAH PUTNAM: Okay, great sorry. Thank you. My
16 name is Sarah Putnam. I have a master's in public
17 health from Columbia University. I strongly support
18 the proposed legislation and I would like to say
19 please pair this work with an immediate public
20 education campaign on air quality and health. I've
21 previously worked at the New York City Department of
22 Health and Mental Hygiene including emergency
23 response and I'm so disappointed in their anti-
24 surveillance, do nothing attitude today.

1
2 Thank you Council Members for holding them to
3 account and being the voice of public health in the
4 room. Pathogens and particulates are present in our
5 water; therefore we clean our water. Pathogens and
6 particulates are present in air. We know these harm
7 health and cognition.

8 As a Public Health Scientist, to me it is clear
9 that we should be giving the same attention to
10 cleaning our air that we give to cleaning our water.
11 Let me also share my experience as an informed
12 citizen trying her best to stay healthy. As
13 individuals are responsible for risk management now,
14 I carry an Aranet4, carbon dioxide sensor to help me
15 make health risk assessments as best I can in indoor
16 settings with an imperfect tool.

17 When I took my daughter to Methodist Hospital ER
18 this summer, it was comforting to see low Co2
19 readings while she was still vulnerable. In
20 contrast, I struggle with accessing settings with
21 high Co2 readings like gyms, public transportation,
22 restaurants, cultural venues.

23 In Fall 2021, air quality mitigations were a
24 critical driver for sending my children back to
25 public school. Now, as those mitigations fall away

1 during a still ongoing pandemic and my children are
2 the one's who are plugging in classroom air filters
3 or opening windows. Not their teachers, not their
4 custodians, I find myself questioning a relationship
5 with the school system for the first time.
6

7 A citywide real time systemic solution helps the
8 entire city, which is fundamental to the meaning and
9 duty of public health. And I'll leave you with this
10 last anecdote.

11 Last month, my daughter reported an elevated Co2
12 reading to her principal. She carried the Aranet4
13 with her. The principal alerted custodial staff and
14 within 20 minutes of her call, technicians arrived on
15 site and diagnosed a problem with a belt in the
16 ventilation system. My daughters real time air
17 monitoring. Her principal's excellent response and
18 the speed with which it was handled improved the air
19 quality for the entire school community. That is
20 what a healthy future looks like and that is what I
21 hope this legislation an achieve on a citywide scale.
22 Thank you Chair Schulman and all the Committee
23 Members for hearing my testimony today.

24 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you very much for
25 testifying.

1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. At this time, I'm
3 going to call the names of folks who were not online
4 at the time that they were originally to be called.
5 Nancy Julius, Lonie Portus (SP?), Marcine Boot (SP?),
6 Sandra G., Mary Tan, Demi Ajoul (SP?), Christina
7 Choi (SP?), Erica Russie.

8 Okay and at this time if there is anyone who is
9 currently on Zoom who did not hear their name called
10 but would like to testify, please indicate so using
11 the Zoom raise hand function.

12 Okay, seeing no hands, we will turn it back over
13 to the Chair for closing remarks.

14 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you. First, before
15 we end, I want to acknowledge that Marjorie, Council
16 Member Marjorie Velázquez was on virtually. I also
17 want to say that I am a proud Co-Prime Sponsor of the
18 equality bills that were heard today. I want to
19 thank the Administration for their testimony. I
20 particularly want to thank the members of the public,
21 many of whom are experts and we will be following up
22 with them and I am very confident that we can come to
23 some kind of resolution in getting these bills moved
24 forward and passed in the Council.

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COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

And with that, I will close today's hearing.
Thank you to all. [GAVEL]

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 12, 2023