



Testimony Of Commissioner Manuel Castro of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

Before the New York City Council Committees on Governmental Operations, Small Business, and Immigration

Oversight Hearing: Supporting Immigrant Small Businesses and Promoting Language Access

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Introduction

Buenos Dias Chair Ung, Chair Hanif, and Chair Menin and thank you and the members of the Governmental Operations, Immigration, and Small Business Committees for holding this hearing and the opportunity to testify. I am Commissioner Manuel Castro of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA). I am joined by my colleague, Anne Montesano, Executive Director of Interagency Initiatives and Language Access. There is no comparable place on earth that comes close to our city's demographic diversity, and this is true of the immigrant entrepreneurs that come from around the world to pursue their American Dream in New York City.

In fact, immigrants are the heart of our local economy as they own nearly half of New York City's businesses and contribute more \$195 billion to the city's Gross Domestic Product.¹

Language Diversity in NYC & MOIA's Role in Advancing Language Access

The demographic diversity of entrepreneurs also reflects a diversity in the languages they speak. More than 200 languages are spoken by residents across the five boroughs. The top 12 languages spoken by immigrant New Yorkers are Spanish with 39.4%, Chinese including Cantonese and Mandarin at 16.1%, Russian at 6.9%, Bengali 4.1%, Haitian 3.1%, French 2.6%, Arabic 2.4%, Korean, 1.9%, Polish 1.8%, Italian 1.5%, Urdu at 15% and Tagalog at 1.1%.²

Language access is essential to advancing equity for immigrant New Yorkers, including our small-business owners. Given the linguistic diversity within New York City and the number of New Yorkers who have limited English proficiency (LEP) – about two million – MOIA's role in advancing language access is a critical one. MOIA is tasked with overseeing the ongoing implementation of Local Law 30 of 2017 that requires the city to provide language services for New Yorkers with LEP. We help build the capacity of City agencies to effectively communicate to New Yorkers with LEP by advising and providing technical assistance to agencies. We hold

¹ The Forgotten Tenants: New York's City's Immigrant Small Business Owners | Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development: [https://anhd.org/report/forgotten-tenants-new-york-citys-immigrant-small-business-owners#:~:text=Introduction-,Introduction,product%20\(GDP\)%20annually3](https://anhd.org/report/forgotten-tenants-new-york-citys-immigrant-small-business-owners#:~:text=Introduction-,Introduction,product%20(GDP)%20annually3) .

² NYC's Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs 2021 Annual Report: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/immigrants/downloads/pdf/MOIA-2021-Report.pdf>



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interagency convenings to share best practices and we work with agencies to help them address language access challenges. We also provide translation and interpretation services to MOIA, Mayoral offices, and City Hall, and are thrilled to now be growing our team by hiring language access specialists in the ten Local Law 30 languages, also known as the “designated citywide languages.”

The City’s Commitment to Immigrant Small Businesses

Having led a non-profit organization at the heart of Jackson Heights, one of the most linguistically diverse neighborhoods in our city, I know the importance of our immigrant owned small businesses. And when I became Commissioner, I was proud to see this administration shared a commitment to supporting immigrant small businesses, entrepreneurship, and a more equitable economy. Now, I want to highlight some of the ways in which MOIA has worked with SBS over the years to serve immigrant owned businesses. During COVID, MOIA supported efforts by SBS to ensure business owners received information, in the languages they speak, by co-organizing dozens of in-language virtual forums with SBS and promoting them to immigrant communities. MOIA connected small business owners with the resources needed to safely re-open, provide outdoor services, ensure workers’ safety and rights, and navigate eligibility and applications for grants and loans including the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan. MOIA also provided rapid translations of COVID emergency response communications, information on business loans and business restart, and other critical resources.

Over the past few months, I visited immigrant-owned businesses across our city to listen to their concerns. Most recently I visited and spoke to a small business in Staten Island, a Sri Lankan restaurant and museum. We’ve also made our way to Brooklyn to visit Armando, who runs a small mechanic shop. Commissioner Kim and I also visited Haven Café, a cornerstone business in Chinatown that works to employ New Yorkers with autism. Finally, we both had the honor to share our experiences and help launch the new space for La Coalicion Mexicana (The Mexican Coalition), a community organization dedicated to helping immigrant entrepreneurs in the Bronx launch their business. Through these experiences and others, we have seen first-hand how immigrant owned businesses are not only the backbone of our local economy, but the pillars of our community.

Language Access Bills

I’ll now turn to the legislation being considered today. We are thankful for the partnership with the Council to make our city accessible to immigrant New Yorkers and entrepreneurs with LEP. We are interested in working with Council to craft legislation that continues to advance language access and we look forward to furthering discussions on the bills.

Regarding Intro 570 sponsored by Council Member Shahana Hanif: This bill would create an office of translation and interpretation services. MOIA currently has a Language Services Team that



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provides these services to MOIA, Mayoral offices and City Hall, and we are thrilled that it is growing – we will be hiring language access specialists in the ten Local Law 30 languages who will serve as in-house translators. Currently, agencies provide their own language services. While the delivery of language services is decentralized, given that agencies manage their own language services contracts and some agencies have small teams of in-house translators, MOIA still plays an important central and coordinating role in terms of sharing best practices, including working with language services partners, and advising agencies. We would like to discuss the bill further with you and your colleagues to better understand the intent of the bill. For example, expanding the scope of MOIA's Language Services Team to serve all agencies would require extensive resources, and further analysis would be needed to determine how to best serve various city agencies' very different needs.

Regarding Intro 697 sponsored by Council Member Ung: This bill would add the concept of “specialty languages” to the language access law. We look forward to working with you to better understand the intent of the bill and the criteria listed in the legislation.

Regarding Intro 137 sponsored by Council Member Julie Won: This bill relates to the translation and distribution of certain emergency information documents. We welcome the opportunity to think through ways that the city can more effectively reach immigrant communities with critical information about emergencies. Currently, NYCCEM provides emergency notifications in 14 languages plus sign language. The Wireless Emergency Alerts system, however, is operated by the Federal government. We look forward to working with you on improving outreach during emergencies.

Regarding Intro 382 sponsored by Council Member Gale Brewer and Intro 700 sponsored by Council Member Julie Won: These bills concern translation of enforcement and compliance documents. We support efforts to help business owners be able to understand agency enforcement-related communications. However, we have questions about the intended scope of these bills, both in terms of the languages meant to be covered, and the types of documents and materials meant to be translated. We look forward to working with you on making official City documents more easily accessible to immigrant business owners.

We thank you for your commitment to language access and immigrant small business owners and welcome the opportunity to collaborate on all these bills. My team is available for further discussions.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges that many immigrant-owned businesses faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, they kept our city moving forward. Our city owes them our full support and that is why Mayor Eric Adams, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and my colleague, Commissioner Kevin Kim and his team at the Department of Small Business Services are committed to supporting their growth and success.

TESTIMONY
BY
COMMISSIONER KEVIN D. KIM
NEW YORK CITY
DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES
BEFORE
THE COMMITTEES ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, SMALL
BUSINESS, AND IMMIGRATION
OF THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2022

Good morning Chairs Ung, Menin and Hanif and members of the respective Committees on Governmental Operations, Small Business and Immigration. My name is **Kevin D. Kim** and I am the Commissioner for the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS). I am joined by SBS Deputy Commissioner **Kitty Chan**, Commissioner **Manuel Castro** and Executive Director of Interagency Initiatives and Language Access **Anne Montesano** from the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), Deputy Commissioner **Corinne Schiff** from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), Assistant Commissioner **Carlos Ortiz** from the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP), and Deputy Commissioners **John Castelli** and **Marisa Senigo** from the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH). We are pleased to testify today on the City's commitment to supporting immigrant small businesses.

At SBS, through the work of our four divisions, we aim to unlock economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting them to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and building vibrant neighborhoods across the five boroughs. Our Division of Economic and Financial Opportunity (DEFO) helps the City's M/WBEs connect to government contracting opportunities. Our Division of Business Services (DBS) helps businesses of every size and sector start, operate, and grow in New York City, including through government navigation support. Our Neighborhood Development Division (NDD) equips community-based partners, including the City's 76 Business Improvement Districts ("BIDs"), with resources to help our commercial corridors thrive. And our Workforce Development Division (WDD) works to increase access to quality training and jobs for all New Yorkers

From Day One, Mayor Adams put equity at the center of our economic recovery strategy. It is at the heart of our mission and work at SBS. The Mayor's "**Rebuild, Renew, Reinvent,**" **Blueprint for Economic Recovery**, released in March, sets forth **70** initiatives to supercharge our economic comeback, with a meaningful focus on small businesses, particularly those led by BIPOC and immigrant entrepreneurs.

We have already made great progress. New York City's private sector has added nearly **160,000** jobs since December 2021. We have regained nearly **820,000** of the **946,000** private sector jobs lost during the height of the pandemic. New shops and restaurants emerge every day in the place of vacant spaces. EDC estimates that in Q1 of 2022 approximately **11,850 new businesses** were started in the City, an acceleration over previous quarters. Tourism and retail spending are also returning to pre-pandemic levels, and nightlife is surging.

Over my nine months as Commissioner, I have met with hundreds of small business owners in dozens of neighborhoods across the five boroughs. From Kensington in Brooklyn to Downtown Flushing in Queens, to Wakefield in the Bronx, small business owners share their stories of perseverance in the face of great challenges – as well as their optimism for the future.

This is not an accident. The City, with unprecedented inter-agency coordination, is mobilizing to forge a full and inclusive economic recovery centered on the growth of our small businesses, many of which are immigrant-owned. In fact, **nearly half** of New York City's small businesses are immigrant-owned. These businesses employ approximately half a million New Yorkers and contribute billions in economic activity.

Through **Mayor Adams' Executive Order 2 (E02)**, the City already identified an unprecedented **118** reforms to regulations that unduly burden small businesses. The reforms include the proposed repeal of **30** provisions of the City's laws and rules, the reduction of civil penalties associated with **49** provisions, and amendments to **39** provisions to include a first-time warning or cure period, or an extension of an existing cure period. This effort alone will put millions of dollars back into the hands of small businesses each year.

That's just the start. Since then, SBS has launched our **NYC Business Express Service Team (NYC BEST)**, dedicated to streamlining business interactions with government. This program provides small business owners with one-on-one assistance navigating the web of NYC's regulatory agencies, many of which are similarly updating their processes to put small businesses first. At the same time, we are working closely with the Office of Technology and Innovation to overhaul the **NYC Business Portal** to develop a modern platform that leads small businesses through seamless City government interactions including filings, permits, inspections, and fee and fine payments. I want to thank Chair Menin and the Council for your support of this initiative with the recently signed Local Law 94 of 2022.

Through these efforts we're not just working for immigrant small businesses – we're working alongside them. Last month, we launched our **Small Business Advisory Commission**, comprised of a diverse group of small business owners and community-based organizations that will advise the Mayor on matters impacting small business owners now and in the future. This Commission truly represents the diversity of our small business community by borough, size, years of operation, and industry. It includes many immigrant business owners and associations

representing immigrant communities, from the **National Supermarkets Association** to the **NY Laundromat Business Association**, to the **Street Vendors Project**. Together, we will continue the work of EO2 to cut red tape, improve business services and programming, and promote an equitable, broad-based recovery.

We also know that strengthening our commercial corridors in neighborhoods hit hardest by the pandemic, including immigrant communities, is an important tool to speed up economic recovery. At SBS, we have made critical investments to revitalize the hardest hit neighborhoods by awarding **\$800,000** in first-ever grants to bolster the formation of new BIDs. These grants will go to early-stage BID exploration, organizing, and planning, as well as late-stage BID formation in communities such as **Washington Heights in Manhattan**, and **Mott Haven in The Bronx**.

Three weeks ago, SBS launched a first-of-its-kind program to support smaller BIDs, many of which are also located in low- to moderate-income and immigrant communities, with over **\$3 million** in grant funding. I want to thank Council Member Julie Menin, Chair of the Committee on Small Business, for her advocacy and support of these programs. By supporting the creation of new BIDs and giving a boost to small BIDs, the City is investing in the quality of life and business traffic in these areas for years to come.

Moreover, through our long-standing Neighborhood 360 and Avenue NYC programs, SBS supports over two dozen additional community-based organizations engaged in merchant organizing in immigrant communities. These CBOs serve more than **14,000** businesses, combined.

Many immigrant-owned small businesses are also certified M/WBEs, and at SBS, we are using every tool in the box to expand

economic opportunities for these businesses. With purchasing power of over **\$30 billion** per year, the City's budget directly supports our diverse small business community through City contracting. New York City has made tremendous strides in the last few months to expand the pool of contracts eligible for the M/WBE program and create more opportunities for M/WBEs to win procurements.

For example, Governor Hochul last month signed a groundbreaking law doubling the size of contracts City agencies can award to M/WBEs through an accelerated process. This legislation, which the City pushed aggressively for, will make it easier than ever for City agencies to work with M/WBEs.

In September, SBS hosted the first in-person Citywide procurement fair since the pandemic with over **700 businesses** in attendance, marking the 30th year of the City's M/WBE program. We also announced that this year, the City will surpass its OneNYC goals of committing **\$25 billion** to M/WBEs – three years ahead of schedule. In total, City agencies and authorities awarded **\$6.5 billion** in contracts for M/WBEs in FY22 – a more than **55%** increase from **FY21**. In addition, over **1,600** individual M/WBEs were awarded a City contract last year, up **13%** from **FY21**.

Meanwhile, SBS continues to prioritize language access across all our free programming. Over the course of the pandemic, we translated more than **70** critical documents in **up to 17** languages, each. We also launched the SBS hotline, **1-888-SBS-4NYC**, which in FY21 and FY22 served over **1,100 calls** in languages other than English. We partnered with MOIA on webinars to ensure we were reaching a diverse group of immigrant communities.

We also engage closely with community partners with deep ties to immigrant communities. For example, our popular **Commercial Lease**

Assistance (CLA) program, works with 10 community-based organizations to ensure diverse communities are aware of our services.

In addition, our **Capital Access** unit, which helps businesses connect to financing opportunities, works closely with more than a dozen community development financial institutions (CDFIs) with experience lending to immigrant communities.

Our **Compliance Advisor** experts are out in the field every day, working with small businesses to adhere to City rules and regulations so they are not penalized in an inspection. They provide free onsite in-language consultations in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Russian, three dialects of Chinese, and Korean.

We know that proactive outreach to historically underserved communities is paramount. That's why since January 2022, SBS's community outreach team has reached **more than 6,000** businesses directly in their neighborhoods – meeting them where they are. We have focused outreach to immigrant and ethnic minority communities, including the Yemeni community, Dominican community, and the Bangladeshi community, to name a few. Through small business roundtables, to corridor tours with our elected leader partners, to organizing interagency resource fairs across all five boroughs over five days during National Small Business Week, we reached new businesses and brought our services into communities that were not well aware of SBS previously. It has been truly gratifying, to hear from communities their appreciation for bringing SBS services to their neighborhoods for the first time.

Lastly, to deepen our connection with large immigrant communities, SBS formed the Asian American Small Business Task Force last year with more than 40 partnering organizations that serve the Asian business community, and we are in the process of launching a Latino

American Small Business Task Force. These task forces bring immigrant communities to the table on a regular basis so we can co-develop strategies to address the unique challenges they face.

These are just some of the many services that we provide businesses, including immigrant-owned small businesses, to help them launch, grow, and thrive.

I would like to now turn to the proposed legislation that directly impacts SBS, Introductions 685 and 699.

Int. 685

Intro 685 would establish an Office of Small Business Digitalization to coordinate and facilitate the digitalization of small businesses in New York City.

At SBS, we know that businesses that had digital capacity for online sales and marketing weathered the pandemic better than those that did not. But not all businesses have the resources to make that digital transition. SBS offers a free six-module Digital Marketing series with classes in digital marketing, website creation, and search engine optimization. Additionally, SBS co-developed a 15-hour course with SUNY Buffalo and the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) to help businesses launch online. Our women entrepreneur initiative (WE NYC) connects women entrepreneurs with women mentors who teach classes on helping businesses go digital, and these mentors offer 1-on-1 support to WE NYC enrollees. Several of our community-based development organizations have determined that digitalization is a priority in their commercial corridors and have used SBS funds to support businesses to get online. In whole, we support Int. 685's intention to support businesses transition online and we will continue to provide resources for small businesses to do this.

Int. 699

Intro 699 sets forth many important initiatives related to language access. SBS supports efforts to ensure business owners receive information that helps them better understand and comply with rules and regulations, and thus preserve public health and safety while avoiding fines and violations. We want all businesses to operate successfully and in compliance, and our sister agencies encourage bi- and multi-lingual applicants for City agency inspector positions and the use of Language Line to facilitate communication whenever beneficial.

Section 4 of this bill would require SBS to coordinate with our partner regulatory agencies to increase the number of bilingual inspectors. SBS does not have jurisdiction over other agencies' practices. Thus, SBS would be ill-equipped to implement this requirement, which may also implicate budgets, job duties and hiring practices across the City.

Additionally, SBS and our colleagues at OATH are supportive of this bill's proposal regarding translation of final OATH decisions. However, we would want to clarify that this would pertain to decisions issued after a hearing, where OATH has reason to know of a language preference. OATH would have no way of knowing what language to send a default decision for failure to appear. My colleagues from OATH can answer any follow-up questions you may have.

Thank you for this opportunity to talk about SBS's work with immigrant small businesses. I look forward to your continued partnership on this important work. I now turn it over to my colleague Commissioner Castro, from the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to address the City's broader language access strategies. Thank you.



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Jumaane D. Williams

**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS, COMMITTEE
ON IMMIGRATION, AND COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
NOVEMBER 2, 2022**

Good morning,

My name is Jumaane D. Williams and I am the Public Advocate for the City of New York. I would like to thank Chairs Menin, Hanif, and Ung, as well as members of the Committee on Small Business, Committee on Immigration, and Committee on Governmental Operations for holding this hearing.

I have shared this sentiment time and time again: small businesses are the backbone of New York City. They are hubs of cultural enrichment, economic development, and community-building. For the past two years and counting, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been devastating for so many small businesses. For today's hearing, I want to highlight the struggles in particular for small business owners who possess limited-English proficiency (LEP) and limited-digital literacy.

Owning a small business in one of the most vibrant and busiest cities in the world is already a great task, but to take on that challenge whilst navigating a system that operates largely in English is a whole other story. Language access has been codified in the city for years through Local Law 30 of 2017, of which the Department of Small Business Services is required to follow. One thing LL30 understandably did not foresee was a health crisis that would shutter storefronts temporarily or permanently. What this means is that relevant agencies and stakeholders have to move accordingly to mitigate further negative impacts to small businesses. The bills heard today would help the City in moving closer to this goal.

One of these bills is [Int. 0685-2022](#), which would establish an Office of Small Business Digitalization to coordinate and facilitate the digitalization of small businesses in the City. When we think of New York City small businesses, we often think of our neighborhood mom-and-pop shops that often run on a cash-only basis and do not rely on higher-tech point-of-sale systems. While a number of businesses are now accessible through delivery applications, accept credit cards, and have an online presence, there are still thousands that prefer the convenience and ease of low-tech, cash-only operations. A reason for this is the digital divide that exists across demographics of business owners. There are long-standing establishments that may have decades of paper and handwritten records. Digitizing hundreds of thousands of documents may be incredibly daunting. On the other hand, there is still a case for digitalization as it can provide a backup for documents in case of the loss of paper records. With the establishment of a small business digitalization office, a key priority should be to outreach to small businesses that find digitalization difficult to understand and navigate. Digitalization of our small businesses also goes hand-in-hand with improving overall



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Jumaane D. Williams

**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
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NOVEMBER 2, 2022**

language access services and resources for our LEP-small business owners, as outlined in [Int. 0699-2022](#). SBS should also be tasked with expanding culturally and language-competent initiatives such as already-existing immigrant business services, especially as approximately half of all small businesses are immigrant-owned or led.¹

New York City would not be the city we know without our small businesses. We must meet small business owners where they are and support them in navigating beyond the pandemic. I look forward to the continued collaboration between the three committees here today, SBS, and my office as well. To continue championing the long-term success of small businesses is to keep our city running as a beacon of opportunity for all.

Thank you.

¹ [https://anhd.org/report/forgotten-tenants-new-york-citys-immigrant-small-business-owners#:~:text=Immigrant%20Owned%20small%20businesses%20comprise,product%20\(GDP\)%20annually3](https://anhd.org/report/forgotten-tenants-new-york-citys-immigrant-small-business-owners#:~:text=Immigrant%20Owned%20small%20businesses%20comprise,product%20(GDP)%20annually3).



Asian American Federation

Testimony for New York City Council

Joint Hearing of the Committees on Small Business, Immigration and Government Operations

November 2, 2022

Thank you, Committee Chairs Menin, Hanif and Ung as well as the members of the Council Committees on Small Business, Immigration and Government Operations for holding this hearing and giving us an opportunity to testify. I'm Ravi Reddi and I am the Associate Director of Advocacy and Policy at the Asian American Federation (AAF). AAF represents the collective voice of more than 70 member nonprofits serving 1.5 million Asian New Yorkers.

We're here today to discuss legislation that centers the needs of our small businesses and the broader issue of language access in our community. But first, let's talk numbers.

Since 2010, the Asian population in New York City has increased 34%, growing from over 1.1 million in 2010 to over 1.5 million in 2020, making up 17.3% of our city's total population. Overwhelmingly, Asian New Yorkers are immigrants, with two out of three in the city being foreign-born. Of those Asian immigrants, 47% arrived in 2010 or after. Additionally, language barriers remain high among Asian New Yorkers. Overall, 48% of Asians have limited English proficiency in New York City, compared to a citywide rate of 23%.

AAF's 2022 report on the state of Asian small business in NYC showed that the COVID-19 pandemic hit Asian businesses earliest and hardest. Over half of Asian businesses reported catastrophic losses of over 75%. Despite this, only a small percentage of Asian businesses were able to receive assistance from government institutions tasked with helping them. In south Flushing, around 1,000 businesses received federal Paycheck Protection Program loans in 2020 - an estimated rate of 10 percent, compared to almost 50 percent in wealthier parts of the city. These discrepancies can largely be attributed to cultural and language barriers, as well as stringent documentation requirements that were difficult to fulfill for immigrant mom-and-pop businesses.

Language barriers are systemic, everyday obstacles, ranging from licensing a new business, to keeping up with regulations and curing violations. This is where AAF does its work, helping Asian small businesses navigate systems that were built without them in mind, and providing technical and capacity-building assistance so they can thrive in their neighborhoods.

When it comes to language access in our small business community, here's what we have to say on several bills being discussed:

1) Int. 685

Int. 685 introduced by Council Member Menin moves us closer to addressing the persistent Digital Divide in our community, especially its impact on our small businesses. An Office of Digitalization, if implemented right, can be a game changer for our community. Support from



Asian American Federation

and coordination with an Office of Digitalization could further expand the impact of work being led by community-based organizations like us and our members, like through the establishment of a technical assistance program within the Office. In particular, we'd like to see an acknowledgement of the CBOs who are the experts in how such an Office can be most successful through their work with our community members.

2) Int. 699 and Int. 382

Int. 699 introduced by Council Member Ung has our support. AAF's small business team has continually raised inspection issues as a major concern in our communities. While having a business owners' bill of rights, and OATH relief measures, are certainly positive, all of these measures are bottle-necked at the actual point of interaction between the inspector and the business owner. In every single case that comes to our small business team, inspectors have issued tickets to low English-proficiency business owners without offering adequate interpretation.

With that in mind, we want to voice support in particular for section 1309 of the bill, which would require ticketing agencies to hire enough multilingual inspectors so that business owners can request inspections in their native languages. By hiring inspectors from within these immigrant communities, we can ensure that inspectors have the cultural and linguistic competency to interface respectfully with business owners. Moreover, integrating members of these communities into city agencies will boost employment in these neighborhoods, and improve trust towards city government at the grassroots level - ensuring that the faces that represent our city government in these communities are their own members.

Combined with Int. 382 introduced by Council Member Brewer, these bills focus on critical issues AAF has encountered in its work with Asian small business owners; violations not written in their language of choice, lack of bi-lingual inspectors, and appropriately-translated tickets and inspections. The lack of language accessibility when it comes to violations are grievous, and all relevant agencies should coordinate and aggregate permit and licensing information in multiple languages. These bills present a valuable opportunity for city agencies to not only source language access skills from within our communities, but create tangible relationships between the regulatory system and the communities who it should be most responsive to.

But broadly speaking, language access continues to be one of the primary bottlenecks between our community members and the services they need from their City, beyond our small business community. Since 2017, we have been a part of the Language Access Collaborative, alongside African Communities Together, Masa and the New York Immigration Coalition. Through the work of the LAC, we've been advocating for language interpretation and translation capacity commensurate to the demand in our high-LEP and immigrant communities.

Bills being discussed here like Council Member Hanif's Int. 570 take important steps in recognizing the City's fundamental purpose in overseeing language access work in the most diverse City in the world. To that end, we would like to see this bill focus on the oversight purposes that MOIA is



Asian American Federation

equipped for, and discuss more how this work fits jointly with the latest victory to get funding for language access worker cooperatives and a Community Interpreter Bank, that this Collaborative has been advocating for since 2017.

Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to speak on this legislation. While we didn't have time to get into all the legislation discussed here today, we're excited to see broad support for finally making our City more responsive to its immigrant populations. We're here to work with all of you to make sure we keep moving in the right direction. Thank you.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN
COMMUNITY BOARD #7

Julio Pena III
Chairperson

Jeremy Laufer
District Manager

Antonio Reynoso
Borough President

Brooklyn Community Board 7 Testimony before the NYC Council Committee on Immigration (Jointly with the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Government Operation)

November 2, 2022

Good morning. My name is Jeremy Laufer and I am the District Manager for Brooklyn Community Board 7. I join my colleague Shawn Campbell from Board 14 to speak to you today about the need for interpretation and translation services at New York City community boards. I am here to provide testimony in support of Intro 570 and share our board's experience with the provision of language services.

Access to government communication is an extremely important issue in our district, which is about 50% foreign born. Our Board started webcasting all our meetings in 2017 on Facebook, moving to YouTube in 2020. We have wired our meeting room with a hearing coil below our floor for people with a need to connect to our sound through a hearing aid. Over several years we have spent much of our precious little OTPS budget on equipment to enhance our ability to webcast our meetings. We were moving toward hybrid meetings before covid hit so we are ahead of many of our colleagues in being able to go hybrid now. I believe we are still the only community board in New York City that has an Ability and Access Committee which highlights the need for more accessible public space, including language access in government meetings

I'd like to share two anecdotes that demonstrate our need for this proposed service. In October of 2020, our Board held a Transportation Committee meeting regarding DOT's proposal to change 7th and 8th Avenues to one-way streets in three community districts, a meeting forced on them by an Article 78 lawsuit. In our district, this area includes the heart of Brooklyn's Chinatown with many residents who are not proficient in English. Community Board 7 scrambled to get an organization to provide the technology to hold our first, and to date only, hybrid meeting. We asked DOT to provide interpretation services so that we could properly communicate with the residents most affected by these proposed changes. DOT let us know they do not provide translation. The Board found it unacceptable to fail to communicate with those most affected by the proposal and paid for a contractor to provide interpretation in Spanish and Chinese for the three hour meeting. The \$900 cost represented about 5% of the board's entire non-salary budget for the entire year for a single meeting. Such costs are unsustainable for our tiny, independent agency if we provided interpretation for every meeting we hold, which we believe should be standard. Incidentally, DOT did not provide their presentation in any language other than English.

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Serving Sunset Park and Windsor Terrace

Just a few months later, the MTA asked us to hold a Transportation Committee meeting on adding elevators to the 8th Avenue subway station, again in the heart of Brooklyn's Chinatown. Again, we asked the agency to provide interpretation services and we were once again told that this service would fall to us and our miniscule budget. To put that another way, a \$50 Billion agency asked a quarter million dollar agency to provide a platform for their community outreach and told us that it was up to us to figure out how to communicate with the people they "wanted" to reach. As that meeting was toward the end of the fiscal year, we no longer had enough funds to pay for a contractor and had to rely on community volunteers who were unfamiliar with the acronyms and technical terms used by the agency.

While volunteers can be a stop gap, there is no quality control and our lack of knowledge of the language leaves us vulnerable to someone propagandizing the issue in their interpretation. Community Board 7 believes a budget increase for community boards, while desperately needed for a variety of reasons, should not be the City's sole answer to this need, as Ms. Campbell's and my testimonies demonstrate that different boards have different interpretation and translation needs, some greater and some lesser than others. A simple budget increase for these services penalizes those with greater need for these services as other boards can use those fungible assets for other purposes. Those with greater need would not be afforded such a luxury.

Brooklyn Community Board 7 believes the bare minimum required of us is to be able to communicate with our constituents. The haphazard way this currently happens leaves many of our residents uninformed on important issues and potential life-altering changes in our community.

Our Board has had the opportunity to read and question Councilmember Hanif's staff on Intro 570 and voted 41-0 in favor of the legislation, while also calling on the Council and Mayor to fully fund the service. This legislation will greatly enhance our abilities to communicate with our constituents, provide opportunities for marginalized populations to weigh in on community issues and share their needs and interests with the City and with the larger community in a way that has not been provided uniformly in the past and would make the city a fairer place to live and work no matter what language you speak.



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14
FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

November 2, 2022

Dear Committee Chairs and Members,

Greetings, my name is Shawn Campbell, and I am the District Manager for Brooklyn Community Board 14. I offer this testimony jointly with my colleague Jeremy Laufer from Board 7 to underscore the need for interpretation and translation services at New York City community boards. This testimony is provided in support of Intro 570 and outline our board's hurdles when it comes to the provision of language access.

As the most local city agency, tasked by the New York City Charter to ensure community voice in projects and policies alike, it is extraordinarily important that Community Boards offer language access. In Community District 14, nearly half of our residents are foreign born and nearly a quarter self-identify as not having English proficiency. The language needs are extremely diverse in our community, where 30 first languages have been identified at one of our local elementary schools.

However, Community Boards are one of the very few city agencies that have not had a significant budget increase in over two decades. As of today, there is one part-time Community Coordinator on staff in addition to my full-time role. She is responsible for updating the CB14 website to include language access, but this is in addition to an array of other tasks that compete for limited time.

Community Board 14 has relied on volunteers who have translated event notices such as flyers to our annual youth conference. We have relied on a local community-based organizations for translation into Urdu, Kreyòl, Uzbek, Russian, and Spanish. There was no way to ensure quality, including proper use of idioms, no way to copy edit and no way to maintain the resource for future use. While imposing on already stressed CBOs for special events might not be too much to ask, regular service for board meetings, committee meetings and public hearings is untenable on a volunteer basis. The city should be resourcing all of its agencies; especially the one that is responsible for garnering local input.

In order to translate meeting notices, public hearing notices, agendas, event notices, newsletters and to provide interpretation at meetings, hearings and events, Community Boards must have access to city resources, including baseline budget increases. To date, Community Boards have not been either directly or indirectly resourced in order to support language access expansion. That is to say, there has been no baseline budget increase, no opportunity to apply for language access services, not even guidance as to how we can contract with a city vendor for various language services. We've been left to go shopping on our own. The cost is prohibitive and there is no guidance as to quality control.

It is important to note that language needs vary from community district to community district. Some districts have a higher percentage of community members with limited English proficiency but need fewer languages translated/interpreted. Other communities might have a smaller percentage, but more languages needed. However, all communities have language access needs. To the extent that language

access needs correlate to percentage of community members who are foreign born, note that 35% of Brooklyn's population is foreign born; 34% in the Bronx; 28% in Manhattan; 24% in Staten Island and 48% nearly half the population of Queens is foreign born.

There are approximately a dozen intros pending in City Council regarding language access. The council has clearly recognized the importance of access when it comes to voting and when it comes to various enforcement efforts. Surely, providing New Yorkers access to their most local government office is a priority.

It is imperative that Community Boards receive guidance and funding to ensure that all efforts to provide language access in our diverse districts come to fruition.

Thank you for your attention and prompt action in this matter.

Sincerely,
Shawn Campbell
District Manager



To: Councilmember Julie Menin, Chair of Committee on Small Businesses; Sandra Ung, Chair of Committee on Government Operations; Shahana Hanif, Chair of Committee on Immigration
From: Urgen Sherpa, Chhaya Community Development Corporation
Date: November 2, 2022.

Dear Committee Chairs and Committee Members,

My name is Urgen Sherpa and I work at Chhaya Community Development Corporation as the Senior Small Business Organizer. Chhaya builds the power, housing stability, and economic well-being of South Asian and Indo-Caribbean communities in New York City. I would like to start by thanking this joint committee for allowing me to testify today. Today we have a real opportunity to support the small businesses that fuel our local economy and create a more inclusive and fairer city.

New York City is one of the most linguistically diverse cities on the planet. Our small business community is largely made up of immigrant small business owners. Many of these small business owners are not English proficient. These people are important community members who deserve the dignity of being recognized by their local government.

When discussing translation services, we are asking each other to what extent we consider our fellow New Yorkers a part of our community and worthy of the resources the government provides. This may seem like a minor administrative detail, but when people aren't afforded resources they can understand, that means they don't have access to those resources.

In my role, I work with hundreds of small business owners, many of whom operate the business themselves every single day. Consider a Bengali-speaking couple running a small restaurant in Jackson Heights. They arrive each morning at 7am, three hours before opening, to start preparing for the day's meals and stay until 10pm cleaning and checking inventory after their restaurant closes. Now, for a moment imagine that they are visited by a health inspector who only speaks English. They have trouble communicating and thus the inspector is unaware of the restaurant's HACCP plan or the staff's labeling system. This leads to a notice of violation for the business that's also issued in English. The couple is aware of the need to make improvements, but somehow outside of their busy 15-hour day, they have to find time for someone to help them and translate the content of the notice of violation, and figure out how to communicate with the next inspector that visits them.

In a city where the COVID-19 pandemic has closed too many small businesses and left so many others with crushing debt, we should be doing everything that we can to even the playing field.

Every day I work with immigrant small business owners who have trouble understanding the financial systems here, struggle with rising rents and all the typical struggles of a small business. Intro. 382 will ensure that on top of these challenges, understanding the results of an inspection isn't added to the list. If Intro. 699 were in place, the Bengali-speaking couple would be able to request an inspector who speaks their language who could better understand what's happening at the business and explain violations and remedies.

Language justice is critical. Immigrant-owned businesses are essential to a community's economy. According to a 2017 report written by the Association for Neighborhood Housing & Development (ANHD), 48% of NYC small businesses are immigrant owned, and in some neighborhoods small businesses employ up to 42% of the neighborhood population. Putting our immigrant-owned small businesses at risk not only risks the livelihoods of some of our hardest-working community members, but creates ripple effects throughout our neighborhoods and communities.

Chhaya CDC urges you to pass these bills in the spirit of creating a level playing field for business owners and in support of our local economies.

- [Int 0137-2022 \(Won\)](#) , sponsored by Council Member Julie Won, - Requiring agencies to translate and distribute to community-based organizations emergency information in the designated citywide languages.
- [Int 0382-2022 \(Brewer\)](#) , sponsored by Council Member Gail A. Brewer, - Requiring written communications regarding the results of inspections from the department of consumer and worker protection and the department of health and mental hygiene to be in the receiving business owner's language of choice.
- [Int 0570-2022 \(Hanif\)](#) , Sponsored by Shahana K. Hanif - Establishing an office of translation and interpretation within the office of immigrant affairs.
- [Int 0697-2022 \(Ung\)](#) , sponsored by Council Member Sandra Ung - Requiring translations into languages that are not included in the language access law.
- [Int 0699-2022 \(Ung\)](#) sponsored by Council Member Sandra Ung - Enhancing language access for small business owners.
- [Int 0700-2022 \(Won\)](#) sponsored by Council Member Julie Won - Translation services for compliance materials.

By passing these bills supporting language justice, we will be creating a more fair and inclusive local economy that opens opportunities for more immigrants to start their own businesses and recognizes the dignity of every human being in the city.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony to the NYC Council for bills on Language Access 11/02/2022

Lily Liang, NYC Organizer, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum,
lliang@napawf.org, 929-602-3131, 60-20 Woodside Ave, Suite 206, Woodside, NY 11377
Date: 11/02/2022

Hello, my name is Lily Liang, I am the NYC Organizer of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF). I am here today in support of all bills on NYC translation services, especially the bills 0570-2022, 0697-2022, 0699-2022.

Since the passage of local law 30, NYC has been providing unfunctional services on translations. To give you an example, we identified 48 places of omissions of translation, translation errors, idiomatic problems, omission of words and grammatical errors in the Chinese translation of HRA's home page, which are attached here. We also gave documentation of translation errors in HRA's Bangali pages to Cheryl Wertz, the Director of Language Access at the DSS on July 1st.

Why could this happen? NYC's top two contractors on translation services, LanguageLine in California, and Geneva Worldwide in New York, advocate or admit using software to translate [Machine Translation | LanguageLine Services](#), [Document Translation Services | Geneva Worldwide](#). Screenshots of their websites on using "machine" to translate are attached.

Based on the Comptroller's checkbooknyc.com, the NYC Government contracts with LanguageLine totalled about \$140M. Contracts on translations alone are \$37M with \$22M to spend; contracts on translation and interpretations are \$12M; contracts on interpretations are \$90M with \$49M to spend. A detailed breakdown is attached.

Based on the illegibility of the government agency websites, I don't see the translation work of the big contractors are different from Google translate.

If the government has to use software translation to cut down cost, please use Google translate for **FREE**. Meanwhile, redirect the money spent on the contractors to New York based human translators who otherwise are unemployed bilingual immigrants to correct errors in software translations and to community based organizations to help non-English speakers access government programs and services. By doing so, NYC can create more jobs in immigrant communities. We think the Council has the power to put the government on that path.

I will submit the testimony electronically along with supporting documents for your consideration.

Thank you!

Lily Liang

Total: 48 places.

歡迎使用 ACCESS HRA

omission of translation = 0

立即申請 / 登入

您是 AHRA 新使用者嗎? 建立帳戶

SNAP (糧食券)

申請
重新認證
定期報告
個案變更

現金援助 (Cash Assistance, CA)

申請
重新認證
一次性補助
個案變更或批准

omission

HEAP

申請

omission

Medicaid

列印續期

translation error

//

T

最新消息

omission

omission

請 (grammar mistake)

新通知! ACCESS HRA 現在可以向僅購買了 Medicaid 的客戶顯示承保範圍詳細資訊和個案狀態。登錄並找到您的個案, 以查看更多資訊。

omission

omission

工作人員 translation error

您是否正在尋找工作? HRA 正在招聘和培訓為 SNAP 和現金援助 (Cash Assistance) 申請提供幫助的專員。專員工資起薪為 \$37,000/每年, 外加福利。造訪下方連結, 瞭解關於可用就業機會及其申請方式的更多資訊:
<https://on.nyc.gov/3QEYpNL>

有關 translation error
某些 - misreading

EBT 詐騙警告: DSS 已確認有數千美元的福利遭竊取。在 EBT 機器上刷 EBT 卡時, 就有可能發生此情況。如果您使用的 EBT 機器裝有竊取裝置, 您的福利就會遭竊取。請保護好自己的福利。按 ~~X~~ 這裡以瞭解需注意的事項。

新 - omission of word

金額 - omission of word

点击 - idiomatic

我們希望聆聽您的心聲! 請協助青少年與社區發展局 (DYCD) 瞭解您所在社區的需求。按 ~~X~~ 這裡填寫 DYCD 2022 年社區需求評估問卷調查

項目 translation error
有償 - T

点击 - idiomatic
工人 - idiomatic

現金援助客戶: 紐約市公園局機會計畫 (POP) 現開放有新工作和就業訓練。POP 勞工清潔和綠化紐約市公園、遊樂場和其他設施, 每小時可以賺取 15.45 美元 (每週 40 小時)。POP 提供訓練和職業指導, 有助於在計畫結束後找工作。若要申請, 請造訪: <https://on.nyc.gov/3LyLycZ>

查看更多資訊

Page 1 total: 22 places

ACCESS HRA



通过我们的移动应用程序，您可随时管理您的个案。立即观看视频，了解更多信息！



辦公地點

尋找您附近的人力資源管理局 (Human Resources Administration, HRA) 補充營養援助計畫 (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP) 或福利領取中心 (Benefits Access Center)、愛滋病 (HIV/AIDS) 服務管理局 (HIV/AIDS Services Administration, HASA) 中心、子女撫養服務辦公室 (Office of Child Support Services, OCSS) 中心或 Medicaid 辦公室！



omission of translation

ACCESS HRA 提供者入口網站

平均 - translation error

合作机构 - translation error

如果您是合作組織，請前往 ACCESS HRA 提供者入口網站。

ACCESS HRA 用戶指南

詳細瞭解 ACCESS HRA 上的更多內容。

ACCESS HRA 常見問題解答

如需常見問題解答 (FAQ)，請按 ~~下~~ 此處！

点击 idiomatic

托兒服務

如需托兒服務表單和相關資訊，請按 ~~下~~ 此處！

表格 - translation error *idiomatic*

子女撫養費

若要支付您的子女撫養費，請按 ~~下~~ 這裡瞭解詳細資訊。

点击 - idiomatic

page 2

Total: 9 places

translation error

篩選福利 您是否符合其他福利項目?

想要瞭解您是否符合其他紐約市計畫的資格嗎? 您可在 ACCESS NYC 上篩選福利、列印表單, 並瞭解其他計畫

福利項目 ~~福利項目 - translation error~~

查看 ~~translation error~~

需要協助填寫表單?

需要協助填寫 HRA 表單, 卻找不到人可以幫忙? 請告知 HRA 工作人員, 或致電 718-557-1399 與我們聯絡。

translation error

打印表格

myBenefits - omission of translation

居住在 NYC 以外的地區? 請造訪紐約州 my Benefits 網站。

IDNYC

IDNYC 是所有紐約市居民都適用的免費身分識別卡。按一下這裡瞭解申請方式。

地點 ID

針對 HRA 合作組織

点击 idiomatic

凍結您的房租

紐約市房租凍結計畫可凍結符合資格者的房租, 以協助其住在平價住宅中。

項目 - translation error

可負擔的 - translation error

無歧視政策

請閱讀我們的無歧視政策, 以瞭解如何舉報歧視、騷擾, 包括性騷擾或報復。

食品分發處

即日起, 您可從紐約市食品分發處領取食品雜貨, 帶回家自行烹煮, 或從社區廚房領取熱食。

Omission of translation

ACCESS HRA 檔案上載應用程式

點按此處觀看關於如何提交檔案的視頻。

文件 translation error

打印 translation error

列印 Medicaid 續期申請表

Omission of translation

Fair Fares NYC 計畫

若要申請 Fair Fares NYC 折扣, 請按一下此處。

Omission of translation

点击 idiomatic

Page 3

Total: 17 places.

與我們聯絡

使用條款

Machine Translation | LanguageLine Services

https://www.languageonline.com/translation-services/translation-technology/machine-translation

LanguageLine Solutions
1989-2022

Interpretation Translation Plain Language Testing & Training Client Resources Education Contact Us Client Portal

Machine Translation

Home → Translation → Translation Technology → Machine Translation

Machine Translation

Artificial intelligence is here to stay, and this is no different in the translation world. Machine translation fits perfectly in this ever-evolving

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Customize Reject All Accept All

65°F Cloudy 2:06 PM 11/1/2022

Document Translation Services | Geneva Worldwide

https://www.genevaworldwide.com/services/translation/

GENEVA WORLDWIDE

HOME COVID-19 ABOUT WORK WITH US SERVICES RESULTS BLOG NEWS CONTACT REQUEST A QUOTE

At Geneva Worldwide, we provide translation services in all of its forms:

- ✓ Translation Editing/Proofing
- ✓ Desktop Publishing Website Localization
- ✓ Voice Over Subtitling

Depending on the type of request, translating a document can be a simple or not so simple task. Since Geneva has the combination of language skills, subject matter expertise, and experience, we deliver an accurate translation services for you. Whether legal documents, human resources documents and forms, training manuals and policies, marketing material and presentations, or more esoteric advertising and media messages, we provide the right document with attention to accuracy and timeliness. Legal documents can include common certificates and forms (birth/marriage/death certificates, diplomas, deeds and property records), to apostles, to complex contracts and transcriptions that also require translations.

By employing language experts who use state-of-the-art software equipment and secure online file transfer, we can translate any type of document to over 180 languages. You will have access to the world's best translators on a one-time or ongoing project basis that caters to all industries and subject-matters.

Our skilled project managers oversee the process of translating, editing and proofreading in its entirety to ensure our clients are satisfied and that you receive a translation with cultural adaptation.

Effective communications are the essential goal of any translation. Many organizations opt to provide their employees with translated documents to make internal communications better understood, including corporate handbooks, policy manuals, anti-harassment training material, process and procedure (SOP) documents, and other necessary forms. Companies will often better serve existing or prospective clients with translated information that is likely to expand your business into new markets, develop

WE OFFER DOCUMENT TRANSLATION SERVICES FOR:

- ✓ Official Certificates and Forms
- ✓ Legal Documents
- ✓ Medical Documents
- ✓ Financial Documents and Forms
- ✓ Human Resources Documents
- ✓ Educational Translation
- ✓ Video Voice Over
- ✓ Training Material
- ✓ Advertising, Websites and Media

PLEASE CONTACT GENEVA FOR A TRANSLATION SERVICES QUOTE OR TO DISCUSS YOUR PROJECT.

65°F Cloudy 2:07 PM 11/1/2022

LanguageLine Contracts with NYC

Source: NYC Comptroller's checkbooknyc.com

Investigator: National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum - New York Chapter

As of 10/24/2022

Categories of services are in different colors

Contracts on Translation alone: \$37.73M; spent to date: \$15.19M; **remaining: \$22.54M**

Contracts on Translation & Interpretation: \$12.144M; spent to date: \$4.435M; **remaining: \$7.7M**

[Checkbook NYC](#)

Contracts on Interpretations: \$90.79M; spent to date: \$40.96M; **remaining: \$49.83M**

[Checkbook NYC](#)

1. Contract ID: MMA185720186201608, DCASDIVISION OF MUNICIPAL SUPPLY SERVICE, Purpose: **Translation Services**, **\$27.25M**, Start Date: 06/03/2018
End Date: 06/02/2022, spent to date: **\$7.97M**
[Checkbook NYC](#)
 - a. Contract ID: CTA106920187211133, Dept of Social Services, Purpose: WRITTEN TRANSLATION SERVICES FOR HRA AND DHS, **\$14.78M**, Start Date: 06/03/2018, End Date: 06/30/2025, Spent to date: **\$4.89M**
[Checkbook NYC](#)
 - b. Contract ID: CTA184120197208733, Dept of Transportation, Purpose: Translation services, \$560K, Start Date: 06/03/2018
End Date: 06/02/2025, spent to date: \$243.3K
2. Contract ID: MMA185820126200901, Dept of Information Technology & Telecommunications, Purpose: **Language Translation and Interpreter Services**, **\$9.8M**
Start Date: 06/26/2012, End Date: 06/25/2013, Spent to date: **\$3.61M**
[Checkbook NYC](#)
3. Contract ID: MA104020209078875, Dept of Education, Purpose: **Translation and Interpretation Services**, **\$714.25K**, Start Date: 07/01/2019, End Date: 06/30/2024
Spent to date: **\$473.7K**
[Checkbook NYC](#)
4. Contract ID: MA104020069601961, Dept of Education, Purpose: **PROVIDE TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION AND OVER-THE-PHONE**, **\$1.63M**

Start Date: 09/01/2005, **End Date:** 08/31/2011, Spent to date: **\$352.4K**

[Checkbook NYC](#)

5. Contract ID: MMA185720136201006, DCASDIVISION OF MUNICIPAL SUPPLY SERVICE, Purpose: **Translation Services**, **\$10.48M**, Start Date: 06/03/2013
End Date: 06/02/2018, Spent to date: **\$7.22M**
[Checkbook NYC](#)
 - a. Contract ID: CTA106920147000225, Dept of Social Services, Purpose: written translation of foreign languages, Start Date: 07/01/2013
End Date: 06/02/2018, \$5.81M, Spent to date: \$4.29M
[Checkbook NYC](#)

6. Contract ID: MMA185720186201621, Dept of Municipal Supply Service, Purpose: **PROCURE TELEPHONIC INTERPRETATION SERVICES**, **\$53.1M**, Start Date: 06/03/2018, End Date: 06/02/2022, spent to date: **\$20.65M**
[Checkbook NYC](#)
 - a. Contract ID: CTA185820187212226 Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Purpose: 2-year Time Extension and Increase in TO amount, \$8.68M; Start Date: 06/03/2018 End Date: 06/03/2024; Spent to date: \$6.35M
[Checkbook NYC](#)
 - b. Contract ID: CTA106820227203151, Administration for Children's Services, Purpose: Over the Phone Language Interpretation 24/7, \$4M; Start Date: 06/26/2021 End Date: 06/30/2025; spent to date: \$955K
[Checkbook NYC](#)

7. Contract ID: CT185820201426195, Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Purpose: COVID19 EMERGENCY: **CONTACT TRACING TELEPHONIC INTERPRETATION**, **\$24.51M**, spent to date: **\$9M**
[Checkbook NYC](#)

8. Contract ID: MMA185720136200992, DCASDIVISION OF MUNICIPAL SUPPLY SERVICE; Purpose: **TELEPHONIC INTERPRETATION SERVICES**; Start Date: 06/03/2013, End Date: 06/02/2018; **\$10.43M**; spent to date: **\$8.22M**
[Checkbook NYC](#)

9. Contract ID: MA104020179772188; **Dept of Education: Purpose: Interpretation over the Phone**; **\$2.75M**; spent to date: **\$3.09M**; Start Date: 03/01/2016 End Date: 06/30/2019

[Checkbook NYC](#)

Dear New York City Council,

My name is Tao Zuo, 64. I live in Flushing. I am a member of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum. I am here to support all bills on NYC translation services, bill 0697-2022, 0699-2022, 0570-2022

I immigrated to the U.S. in 2000, and have been working as a home aide. My son had a brain injury and became disabled when he was in 3rd grade. My husband and I worked so hard to take care of my son. Eventually, my husband died of multiple illnesses due to overworking. The responsibility of raising my son all came down to me. While I was working as a home aide, I had to leave him in the basement we rented. He wandered on the street every day in Flushing. When he was hungry, he didn't know how to buy food with the money I left with him.

I tried to apply for disability benefits for him. I ran between NYC government agencies for two years but had no results because there was no language access. I was even scammed. A woman told me she could help me to apply but I had to give her \$100 every time we visited a government agency. After two visits, she disappeared, and the disability benefits never came.

While I was in desperation, a reporter of the World Journal, a Chinese newspaper in the U.S., reported our story. And then, Congresswoman Grace Meng Office helped me to get in touch with the Chinese American Planning Council (CPC), a community based organization in New York. They helped me obtain benefits for my son. And helped my son enroll into an institute for the disabled in the Bronx.

I am very much grateful to New York, but hope our government can improve translation and interpretation services, and fund the community based organizations adequately. There are lots of Chinese immigrants in Flushing like me, isolated, getting no help to overcome language barriers. They need help to integrate into New York.

Best regards.

Zuo, Tao

11/02/2022

Email: zuotao20151617@gmail.com

Translated by Lily Liang, NYC Organizer of National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

尊敬的纽约市议员，您好！

我叫左涛，住在法拉盛，今年64岁。我是全美
亚太妇女论坛的会员 (National Asian Pacific)

(American Women's Forum)，今天过来为所有纽约
市翻译服务的议案作证，特别是议案 0570-2022。

我2005年移民来美国。我儿子因小时候脑损伤，
留下残疾，只有几岁小孩智力水平。

我和先生辛勤工作供养孩子，最终我先生因累
劳过度而去世。我便独自挑起抚养孩子
的重任。

那时我要上班，儿子便在街上闲荡，肚子饿了
也不懂拿钱买吃的。我曾尝试着给他办残
疾人福利，但因找不到免费中文翻译服务，

我在纽约市各个机构之间奔波二年, 还曾被人骗说要帮我办理残疾人福利的手续, 每一次去曼哈顿给她\$100, 共去二次, 收了\$200, 再也不见人影。

后来, 世界日报的记者在街上看到我儿子, 把我们的故事登上了报纸, 国会议员孟昭文办公室帮我联系到社区组织华策会,

华策会 Chinese-American Planning Council
最终帮我儿子申请到了残疾人福利金,
我很感谢美国政府和纽约的福利政策, 也特别感谢社区组织华策会对我全家的帮助,

我希望政府能在翻译服务上有更好的改善, 给社区组织足够的财力支持, 以帮助像我这样的移民尽快融入美国社会。

左涛. 2022年11月9日

电话

电子邮件: zuotao20151617@gmail.com

在偏狹長殘伴兒 母愛復回

母親節系列報導之三

攜子漂洋移民 歷經周折進特殊學校 30歲愛子獲獎 送母親卡感

記者呂賢修／紐約報導

出生於福州的潘犀，父母期望他長大當個聰明人，用「心有靈犀」給他取了名字。但童年因腦部腫瘤開刀後，他的智商卻永遠停留在九歲。丈夫因病成植物人，無人照顧獨子，左濤八年前帶他來美國投靠雙目失明的母親。潘犀曾經在街頭被人當神經病，害怕被遺棄，曾拿刀砍自己，對左濤拳打腳踢，經特殊學校輔導，今年30歲的他終於用中文寫下「母親節快樂」。

腦瘤手術 終身傷害

左濤回憶，潘犀六年級時，一天在校考試，突然口吐白沫、全身痙攣，醫生發現左小腦有星型腫瘤。手術後因腦神經受損，聽力、視力均嚴重下降，只剩九歲的智商。在中國長期靠藥物控制病情，後來他再度陷入昏迷，緊急手術後挽回性命。家境並不寬裕，兩次手術花費10餘萬元人民幣，多為醫院同事捐款。

2005年，孩子在美國的外婆為兩人申請綠卡獲准後，兩人移民來到紐約。雙目失明的外婆住在布碌崙的老人看護中心，左濤選擇門檻較低的家庭看護工作，每個月收入不足千元。丈夫在中國只有小姑照顧，因此她省下來的錢，還要寄回中國貼補丈夫的醫藥費。

剛到紐約時，為孩子將來打算，左濤一心只想多賺點錢。兩人住在曼哈坦華埠東百老匯，但她多數病人都在法拉盛，孩子常獨自在街頭遊蕩。一次警察追捕歹徒，走在前

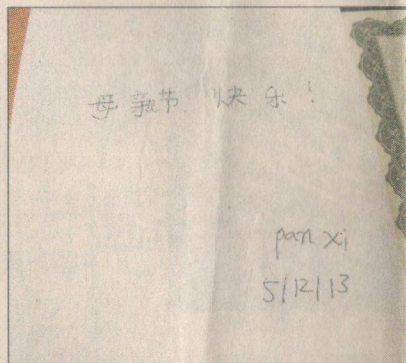
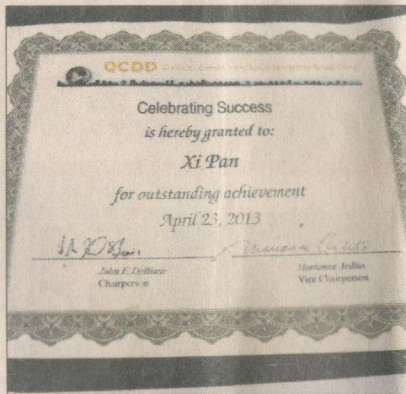
方的潘犀聽不見後方叫喊，被奔逃的歹徒一拳擊倒。在醫院急診室，他只會背母親的手機號碼。看到孩子破裂的臉頰，聽孩子說「妳把我生下來就不管我」，心痛不已的左濤決定搬家。搬到法拉盛與人分租公寓，孩子洗澡放水會淹到別人的房間，鄰居也害怕，為此搬了七次家。兩人目前住在一處家庭旅館的地下室，左濤下班後兼職負責旅館夜間門禁至深夜，也幫忙照顧房東癱瘓的父親。

撞頭紓壓 毆母發洩

潘犀來美國後沒有安全感。左濤試過把兒子單獨鎖在家裡，但他會激動地用頭撞門、拿刀砍自己，紓緩心中壓力，大喊「我沒有朋友，沒人關心我！媽媽，妳不要丟下我！」身高近六呎、體重220磅的潘犀，生氣時會推她、掐她、打她耳光，她只能哭著說「我是你媽媽，你在哪裡，哪裡就是我的家，媽媽不會遺棄你！」有時她不得已帶他到病人家上班，看到媽媽辛苦地幫別人掃廁所，潘犀就會安靜下來。

左濤外出工作時，潘犀總在法拉盛緬街上遊蕩。視力不好，常摔得滿身是血回家。見其後腦的刀疤，許多人都以為他是神經病。但大家越歧視他，他的壓力越大，越會在街上大喊發洩。

許多人都笑「大頭他媽媽，妳的孩子今天又在街上演講了」，她聽了只能苦笑。孩子一天不吃飯也不知道肚子餓，回家還聽他說「媽媽，今天我當了一天乞丐，有好心人請我喝咖啡」，她心裡的壓力就像一座大山。



醫生評估 特校接收

工作與孩子難兼顧，三年前，她開始找人幫忙申請社安補助，去了許多機構，都說不收這樣的孩子，還曾被騙錢。她英文不佳，面對一堆表格不知如何是好。也有機構說可以輔導孩子謀生技能，但必須由母親陪同上課，她心想自己不可能不工作陪孩子上課。

最後，經當時州眾議員孟昭文辦公室轉介到華策會特殊家庭服務部，熱心的社工找來多名醫生評估，認定為殘障。2011年5月，潘犀終於進入特



左濤（上圖右）說，當初帶孩子來美國看似唯一的選擇，現在看來是正確的決定。左上圖為孩子的第一張獎狀，讓左濤感到十分欣慰。知道媽媽不懂英文，左濤用歪歪扭扭的中文寫下「母親節快樂」（左下圖）。

（記者呂賢修／攝影）

殊學校。

周一至周五，早上8時有校車來接孩子，晚上8時再送回家。左濤說，學校老師教英文、數學、電腦，更重要的是學習與同學相處之道，現在孩子會守規矩，準時吃飯，不再動輒大吼或出手打人。感謝華策會的協助及美國的福利政策，她終於能安心工作。

今年4月，潘犀拿了一張良好的獎狀回家，很聽老師的話。獎狀全不懂，但她很欣慰。知道媽媽不懂英文，左濤用歪歪扭扭的中文寫下「母親節快樂」。

左濤感慨，孩子有瓜、神經病，但在美國孩子。當初帶孩子的選擇，現在看來是年55歲，有力氣打了，她希望孩子能早制的看護中心，「潘掛，不敢想像哪一天子」。

探張玉霞親屬

濫用公款案波及 花大筆不明律師費 戰況有利郭登祺

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Lange (Res) Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/2/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JAINA B KAGNAL

Address: DOBBIANS RD

I represent: NYIC

Address: 131 W 54th Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 382,699 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: Nov 2, 2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: URGEM SHERPA

Address: Hampton St. Elmhurst, NY 11373

I represent: Chhaya, CDC

Address: 37-43 77th Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/2/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shela Akhtar

Address: Belmont Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11208

I represent: NAPAWF / Shakana Hanif bill

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/2/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Fatima Mazumder

Address: Forbell St BK NY 11208

I represent: Shahana Hanif / NAPAWF

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/2/2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Corinne Schiff - Deputy Commissioner, NYC ^{Environmental/Health} DOHMH

Address: _____

I represent: NYC Health Department

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anne Montresano

Address: Executive Director of Interagency

I represent: Initiatives and Language Access

Address: Mayor's Office of Immigrant

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOHN CASTLE

Address: 100 CHURCH STREET

I represent: NYC OATH

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARISA SENIGO

Address: 100 Church St. 12th Floor

I represent: NYC OATH

Address: 100 Church St.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 11/07/2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Liang Liang

Address: Woodside Ave, Woodside

I represent: National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/02/2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Zua Tao

Address: Woodside Ave. Woodside

I represent: National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Manuel CASTRO

Address: Commissioner

I represent: Mayor's Office of Immigrant

Address: Affairs

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 382 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/12/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carlos Ortiz

Address: 47 Broadway

I represent: DCWP

Address: 47 Broadway

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Commissioner Kevin/Kim SBS

Address: Liberty Plaza

I represent: SBS

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition Kim SBS

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kitty Chan SBS

Address: Liberty Plaza

I represent: SBS

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kevin D. Kim

Address: Commissioner SBS

I represent: Small Business Services

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0577 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/21/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: 1651 1st St

Address: 4th Avenue

I represent: ADAM W. F. ...

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/6/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: John ...

Address: ...

I represent: ...

Address: ...

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Corinne Schiff

Address: _____

I represent: DOHMH

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aracelis Lucero

Address: _____ Commonwealth Ave _____ Bx NY
10473

I represent: Mosa

Address: 2770 Third Ave 1st fl Bronx NY 10455

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms