

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING & BUILDINGS

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October 23, 2008  
Start: 10:51am  
Recess: 10:58am

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
ERIK MARTIN DILAN  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Joel Rivera  
Tony Avella  
Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.  
Lewis A. Fidler  
Robert Jackson  
James Vacca  
James S. Oddo  
Rosie Mendez  
Maria Baez  
Thomas White, Jr.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Now, I'd like  
3 to ask everyone-- I'd like to ask the Chambers to  
4 come to order.

5 ERIC STEVENSON: Quiet, please.  
6 [off mic] outside. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: If the Chambers  
8 could please come to order. Good morning. My  
9 name is Erik Martin Dilan and I'm the Chairperson  
10 of the City Council's Housing & Buildings  
11 Committee. Today, the Committee will be  
12 considering proposed Intro 824-A for the purposes  
13 of a vote. Intro 824-A, excuse me, is a local law  
14 to amend the Administrative Code of the City of  
15 New York in relation to the filing of registration  
16 statements by owners of multiple dwellings--  
17 owners of dwellings, excuse me.

18 Proposed Intro 824-A would require  
19 owners of one and two-family dwellings, which are  
20 not occupied by the owner or a family member, to  
21 register with New York City's Department of  
22 Housing and Preservation and Development, with the  
23 goal that enabling HPD to contact owners or  
24 managers in the event of an emergency to help  
25 ensure that notices of complaints or violations

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2 are sent to the current owner or manager and not a  
3 past owner or manager.

4 Originally, the legislation  
5 included a penalty of \$2,000 for the failure to  
6 file a registration statement. It is my  
7 understanding that the failure to file a  
8 registration statement is considered a Class-A  
9 violation under the Housing Maintenance Code.  
10 Therefore, the bill was amended to remove the  
11 \$2,000 penalty provision, since the current  
12 penalty in the Housing Maintenance Code calls for  
13 a violation of \$500.

14 It is also my understanding that  
15 under the current law, owners and managers  
16 receiving Class-A violations have 90 days are  
17 receiving their notice of violation to make any  
18 necessary corrections without incurring the \$500  
19 penalty, as I stated was applicable earlier in  
20 this opening statement. Therefore, an owner or  
21 manager receiving a notice of violation for  
22 failing to file a registration statement will have  
23 a requisite 90 days to file the statement without  
24 incurring any penalty whatsoever.

25 In light of the changes and

1  
2 clarifications, I'd like to urge my colleagues to  
3 vote in favor of this legislation and would ask  
4 the clerk to please call the roll.

5 ERIC STEVENSON: Eric Stevenson,  
6 Committee Clerk. Dilan.

7 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I vote aye.

8 ERIC STEVENSON: Rivera.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye.

10 ERIC STEVENSON: Avella.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Aye.

12 ERIC STEVENSON: Comrie.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Aye.

14 ERIC STEVENSON: Fidler.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER:

16 Mr. Chairman, may I be briefly excused to explain  
17 my vote?

18 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Council Member  
19 Fidler to explain his vote.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I have a  
21 one-family property in my district that my office  
22 has been working on right now, where no one is  
23 living in the home. They're paying their taxes  
24 nonetheless. The front yard is overrun. It's  
25 become rodent-infested. And, it's become a blight

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2 on the neighborhood and a concern to the  
3 neighbors. We've had to do detective work to  
4 track down the owner of this property so that we  
5 could try and get them in to take care of the  
6 property and to get rid of the rodents. And,  
7 while I realize this is not exactly on point to  
8 this bill, this is an example of one of the  
9 reasons why this bill is so important.

10 The other thing I would point out  
11 is that if people are going to use their property,  
12 a one and two-family home, as rental property as  
13 opposed to living in it, they already enjoy the  
14 preferential treatment that we give to one and  
15 two-family homeowners as taxpayers as opposed to  
16 others. They should at least have to meet the  
17 standards of other landlords, other absentee  
18 landlords, in maintaining and running their  
19 property. And, that's what this bill does. And  
20 so, I am pleased to be a cosponsor and I vote aye.

21 ERIC STEVENSON: Jackson.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: I vote  
23 aye.

24 ERIC STEVENSON: Vacca.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I'd like to

1  
2 explain my vote. I want to associate myself with  
3 the remarks of Council Member Fidler. I was a  
4 District Manager for a Community Board and went  
5 through years of having homes where the grass  
6 wasn't cut; where the garbage was in the backyard  
7 and not being able to track down the family. The  
8 house was in an estate. The elderly person may  
9 have been in a nursing home out-of-state and who  
10 was responsible. And, how we made the quality of  
11 life on that block remain viable for the people  
12 living there was always a challenge for me. And,  
13 when do we reach out to the City because we cannot  
14 contact the owner?

15 I think that this bill is a good  
16 one. And, I think it's important. I ask my  
17 colleagues to vote yes and, if possible, I'd like  
18 to add my name as a cosponsor. Thank you.

19 ERIC STEVENSON: Oddo.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Yes.

21 ERIC STEVENSON: Vote stands at  
22 eight in the affirmative--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Hey.

24 ERIC STEVENSON: Oh, excuse me,  
25 Mendez. Mendez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I vote aye.

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ERIC STEVENSON: Vote now stands at nine in the affirmative--

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COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: My voice will be heard. I vote aye.

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ERIC STEVENSON: --no negatives, zero abstention, motion passes.

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CHAIRPERSON DILAN: As it should be, Council Member Mendez. We will leave the vote open for as long as the Rules allow to allow for some members that are in transit to vote on this item. And, at that time, this Committee will be adjourned.

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ERIC STEVENSON: Council Member Baez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER BAEZ: Aye on all.

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ERIC STEVENSON: Vote now stands at ten in the affirmative, no negative, zero abstentions.

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[pause]

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ERIC STEVENSON: Councilman White.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WHITE: Aye.

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ERIC STEVENSON: Vote now stands at 11 in the affirmative, zero negatives, no

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abstentions.

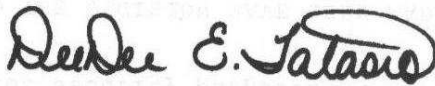
CHAIRPERSON DILAN: The Committee  
on Housing & Buildings is adjourned.



C E R T I F I C A T E

I, DeeDee E. Tataseo certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "DeeDee E. Tataseo". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Date October 30, 2008