

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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September 20, 2011
Start: 10:50am
Recess: 10:55am

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
HELEN D. FOSTER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Lewis A. Fidler
Joel Rivera
Larry B. Seabrook

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2 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Good morning
3 and welcome. My name is Council Member Helen
4 Diane Foster, and I am chair of the State and
5 Federal Legislation Committee. Today are meeting
6 to consider a resolution to support President
7 Obama's American Jobs Act of 2011. First, I'd
8 like to introduce my Committee members. We are
9 joined by Council Member Larry Seabrook of the
10 Bronx, Council Member Joel Rivera of the Bronx and
11 Council Member Lew Fidler from Brooklyn.

12 On September 8th of this year,
13 President Obama presented Congress with the
14 opportunity to pass the American Jobs Act of 2011.
15 The President's proposed plan would provide for a
16 \$447 billion package of tax cuts for workers and
17 businesses; an investment to put people back to
18 work. The President has stated that the purpose
19 of this is not only to stimulate the economy, but
20 also to rebuild it. The cornerstone of the
21 President's proposed plan seeks to promote job
22 creation, growth and stability.

23 Since the recession in 2007,
24 unemployment rates remain high. The nation
25 unemployment rate is 9.1%. New York State is 8%

1 and our city is 8.8%. The staggering statistic
2 has affected all New Yorkers, but certain boroughs
3 remain more affected than others. The Bronx has
4 the highest unemployment rate in the city and the
5 state with an unemployment rate of 12.3% and there
6 are three members of this Committee that represent
7 the Bronx and know firsthand how real that number
8 is. Now these figures do not factor in those New
9 Yorkers who would like to work, who have searched
10 for work, but have given up finding a job. It
11 also does not include those who are underemployed,
12 long-time unemployment and if they were counted,
13 unemployment in New York City would be more like
14 10.5%. The percentage of those New Yorkers who
15 are suffering from long-term unemployment and
16 underemployment is even more staggering. The
17 numbers for unemployment, underemployment and
18 long-term unemployment amongst black and Latino
19 men and women are the highest. 15% of the
20 American population is living in poverty—more than
21 any industrialized nation. More and more
22 Americans are going hungry. It is necessary to
23 find a solution to this problem. It is my belief
24 that President Obama's American Jobs Act of 2011
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2 is a step in the right direction to providing
3 American workers and businesses with much needed
4 tax relief and a pathway for those who are
5 unemployed. At this time, I'd like to see if any
6 of my Committee members would like to make a
7 statement before we vote on this resolution.
8 Council Member Seabrook?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Thank you
10 very much, Madam Chair. I think this is certainly
11 appropriate when we look and see the devastation
12 of unemployment that takes place within our
13 communities and certainly within the Bronx and
14 then as we look at consistency of African American
15 males who consistently are unemployed at the rate
16 of 50% in this entire city itself is a clear
17 indication why this resolution that sets forth in
18 terms of supporting the President is important,
19 and I'd certainly like to be listed on this
20 resolution. I think is apropos for the situation
21 in which we are in, and that the President
22 understands how to get out of this. We need to
23 support it 100%. Thank you very much.

24 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you.
25 Council Member Fidler?

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Thank you.

You know, this resolution supports a program that has been the policy of this City Council for as long as I've been here. If you look at the elements of the plan that include cutting taxes on small businesses, supporting teachers from layoffs—keeping them from being laid off, and perhaps, most relevant the investment in the capital program of infrastructure. I believe a few years back when the mayor of this city wanted to cut the capital program, about 40 some odd members of the Council joined me in a letter to him saying that cutting the capital program and disinvesting in our infrastructure was counterintuitive. This is what puts people to work in the city of New York, and I think is one of the reasons why as bad as things are here in the city, they're better here than they are in many other places. I think the policy made sense for New York and it makes sense for the United States, and so, I will be supporting this resolution as well today.

CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: Thank you very much. I'm going to ask the clerk to call the roll

2 please.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
4 Committee Clerk, roll call vote in the Committee
5 on State and Federal Legislation pre-considered
6 resolution. Council Member Foster?

7 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: I vote aye. I
8 encourage all my members to vote aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rivera?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Because of
11 your encouragement, I vote aye.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Fidler?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Seabrook?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of four
17 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no
18 abstentions, item is adopted. Members, please
19 sign the Committee report.

20 CHAIRPERSON FOSTER: We will leave
21 the roll open. Council Member Crowley is on her
22 way. Thank you.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote in the
24 Committee on State and Federal Legislation is now
25 four in the affirmative, zero in the negative and

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no abstentions. This hearing is now adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig 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

Kimberley Uhlig

Date September 22, 2011