

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES
Of the
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

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HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E:
LAURIE A. CUMBO
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
BEN KALLOS
DARLENE MEALY
ELIZABETH S. CROWLEY
KAREN KOSLOWITZ

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Azadeh Khalili
Executive Director
Commission on Gender Equity

Brittany Saunders
Deputy Counsel
Mayor

Danielle Castaldi-Micca
Director of Political and Government Affairs
National Institute for Reproductive Health

Katharine Bodde
Attorney
New York Civil Liberties Union

Mary Luke
Director
UN Women Metro New York

Amanda Matos
Co-Chair
Young Women's Initiative

Gloria Malone
Co-Chair
Young Women's Initiative

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

2 [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Good afternoon. I am
4 Council Member Laurie Cumbo. This hearing of the
5 Committee on the Women's Issues is now called to
6 order. I'd like to thank you all for coming today.
7 I'd like to especially thank Speaker Melissa Mark-
8 Viverito for her support and leadership for
9 cosponsoring Intro number 1137 along with me. I'd
10 also like to thank the members of the Committee on
11 Women's Issues that are present here today. I'd
12 like to acknowledge Council Member Ben Kallos who'd
13 I'd like to add is also the only male member of the
14 Women's Issues Committee and he is here today which
15 proudly shows his commitment to this committee and
16 the work that we are doing. I recognize that he has
17 to leave shortly but we are so glad that he's able
18 to be here with us today. I'd also like to thank
19 the staff of the Committee on Women's Issues,
20 Council Woman..., and our Policy Analyst Joan Povolny
21 for their work in preparing for today's hearing.
22 Intro number 1137 is legislation that would create
23 a gender equity advisory board to study the nature
24 and extent of discrimination that women and girls
25 continue to face in the city. And we will hear more

1 about it shortly. I'd also like to thank the
2 members of the committee on the women's issues that
3 are also present. It is fitting that we are having
4 this hearing today because today is also equal pay
5 day and we just had a very dynamic press conference
6 on the steps of city hall recognizing so much of
7 the work that has happened here at the council over
8 the last ten years to bring about pay equity not
9 only here in the city but across the nation. The
10 date which symbolizes how far into the year women
11 must work to earn what men earned in the previous
12 year. So just to understand that women... a woman
13 would have to work a year and four months on
14 average just to make what her male counterpart
15 makes in one year. Gender inequity is pervasive and
16 is persistent. While numerous gains have been made
17 enormous hurdles still remain. Violence against
18 women is in its many forms from street harassment
19 to sexual assault stems from pervasive and Sidious
20 notions that women are less than. Limited access to
21 certain educational and employment opportunities
22 stems from the mistaken belief that girls and women
23 can't do certain things but we all know that that's
24 not true. Today we will discuss the ways in which
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1
2 we can help empower women and girls to knock down
3 barriers and ensure opportunities not only for
4 themselves but for the next generation of girls. In
5 June of 2015 Mayor de Blasio issued executive order
6 number 10 which established the Commission of
7 Gender Equity. The commission was established to
8 ensure that the women of the city of New York live
9 with dignity and equity and to be free from
10 violence and discrimination based on gender. Today
11 we will hear from the newly minted executive
12 director of that commission and we hope that this
13 is the beginning of a dialogue and collaboration
14 that will move this city and its women forward.
15 This is a dynamic time to be a woman in the city of
16 New York. We are creating amazing change,
17 transformational change, that is really going to
18 improve the lives of women and girls all throughout
19 the city. And I'm so proud that so many people have
20 made so many strides before us and have trail
21 blazed a path so that we can continue to stand on
22 their shoulders but to trail blaze the next path
23 for the next generation of leaders. I want to
24 invite now the members of the administration to
25 deliver their testimony and shortly after that our

1
2 committee counsel will administer the affirmation
3 and swear the witnesses in. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Will you both please
5 raise your right hands? Do you affirm to tell the
6 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth
7 in your testimony before the committee and to
8 respond honestly to council member questions? Thank
9 you.

10 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Good afternoon.

11 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Afternoon.

12 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Chairperson Cumbo,
13 distinguished members of the Committee on Women's
14 Issue. And Chair... Chairperson I would like to thank
15 you for your leadership and it was this morning's
16 event on the steps of city hall was a very... very
17 hopeful event and... and it was wonderful to stand by
18 you as we stand by pay equity. My name Azadeh
19 Khalili. Five weeks ago I was appointed by Mayor de
20 Blasio as the Founding Executive Director of the
21 New York City Commission on Gender Equity. And with
22 me is my colleague Brittany Saunders. She's the
23 Deputy Counsel to the Mayor. It is great pleasure
24 to appear before the committee to talk about the
25 critically important topic. I am pleased to report

1
2 that the de Blasio administration has made an
3 unprecedented commitment to New York City women and
4 girls. I look forward to sharing details with you
5 about our achievements from the first two years of
6 the administration. The city council has been a key
7 partner in many of these accomplishments and we
8 look forward to working with you on Intro 4345 but
9 I think I don't have the correct number. Let me
10 begin by providing some background information on
11 the Commission on Gender Equity since this is my
12 first time testifying before you. Its mission and
13 goal I... I would like to speak about its mission and
14 goals and some of the administration's key
15 accomplishments on gender equity. The Commission on
16 Gender Equity... The New York City Commission on
17 Gender Equity or CGE was created in July 2015 by
18 executive order and signifies the administration's
19 commitment to deepening work in this important
20 area, a commitment that is further evidenced by my
21 appointment as the first ever full time executive
22 director of the commission. Executive Order 10
23 structures the CGE as an advisory body that
24 supports city agencies to dismantle institutional
25 barriers for women and girls and help achieve the

1
2 mayor's commitment to reduce gender based
3 inequality and build a safer more inclusive and
4 economically mobile city for women and girls. New
5 York City's first lady Chirlane McCray and Silda
6 Palerm serve as the honorary co-chairs of the
7 commission. City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-
8 Viverito who established a young woman's initiative
9 and writer, lecturer, and feminist leader Gloria
10 Steinem also serve as honorary commission...
11 commissioners along with activist, writer, and
12 lecturer Robin Morgan. These are 20... there are 20
13 additional commissioners who were appointed by the
14 Mayor to three year term. They are a diverse group
15 of leaders standing public and private industries,
16 nonprofit organizations, and academia including
17 long time women's rights advocates, civil rights
18 clergy, journalist, SPNY's first female Battalion
19 Chief. I have attached a list of commission members
20 at the end of my testimony for your review. Role of
21 the CGE; Our Administration is committed to
22 leveraging the full power of the city government to
23 expand and increase opportunity for all New Yorkers
24 regardless of sex, gender, and sexual orientation
25 and build a city that is safe and free of

1 discrimination. The mayor and the first lady have
2 stated over and over that we cannot address
3 inequality without making sure that creating good
4 outcomes for women and girls is a top priority. The
5 CGE is integral to achieving these goals,
6 supporting city agencies, initiatives, and
7 examining policies through a gender lens to
8 identify ways of promoting gender equity.
9 Specifically, the committee on gender equity serves
10 as an advisory group to the mayor on initiatives
11 and methods to achieve the goals of the mayor's
12 platform to reduce inequality with a focus on
13 gender base inequality. Advocates for women, girls,
14 transgender, intersex residents, and supports
15 programs that have created to remove barriers to
16 full participation in all areas of women's
17 personnel and work life. Studies the nature and
18 extent of both... in... intentional and unintentional
19 discrimination that women face in the city of New
20 York and their impact on the economic, civil, and
21 social wellbeing of women. The commission makes
22 recommendations to the mayor regarding legislative
23 or executive actions to improve the lives of women,
24 educates the public about women's issues, and
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1
2 supports and work collaboratively with networks of
3 organizations in the public and private sectors
4 working to expand opportunities for women. Over the
5 past year New York City has made huge strides
6 towards gender parity including establishment of a
7 historic partnership with... women and becoming the
8 first American city to join the United Nations Safe
9 City's initiatives. And I know we have some sisters
10 from the UN here today testifying. Setting new
11 goals and improving upon minority and women based
12 initiatives, policies, and practices to make
13 contracting opportunities more easily accessible
14 for businesses... business owned by women. Creating
15 an innovative maternal mental health services
16 through Thrive NYC, and mental health initiatives
17 led by First Lady Chirlane McCray. The historic
18 rollout of Universal Pre-K. Expanding paid sick
19 leave to many of the lowest paid industries that
20 employ disproportionate amount of women. Signing
21 new amendments to the Human Rights law including
22 Intro 832 which protects victims of domestic
23 violence from housing discrimination. Making
24 unprecedented investment in Domestic Violence
25 Response and education through Mayor's Office to

1
2 combat domestic violence. Signing legislation to
3 provide six weeks of fully paid parental leave to
4 city employees. Signing legislation to... city
5 facilities, provide bathroom access to people
6 consistent with gender identity. Establishing the
7 city's Commission on Human Rights as the first
8 Human Rights agency in any major US city to certify
9 U and T visas for immigrant victims of crime and
10 human trafficking. Framing the earned income tax
11 credit as a woman's issue and encouraging lower
12 income women and mothers to take advantage of 200
13 free tax prep services and the EITC. Appointing and
14 promoting an unprecedented number of women to
15 leadership positions in city... city agencies and
16 city hall with women serving in 50 percent of the
17 administration's senior leadership position. I must
18 say that's over 50 percent. The work ahead. Even
19 though I was appointed five weeks ago we have begun
20 developing our short term goals to build off of the
21 administration's accomplishment, the CGE plans in
22 the next year to continue to conduct listening
23 sessions with key stakeholders in the public and
24 private sectors, convince public town halls to hear
25 from members of the public directly, address four

1
2 key issues; economic mobility and opportunity,
3 access to health and reproductive justice, public
4 safety, and gender policy analysis by forming
5 working groups that provide the opportunity for
6 commission members, experts in each of these areas
7 to dialogue with city agency leaders, prepare a
8 report with recommendations to the mayor, establish
9 a website to provide public access to the findings
10 and recommendations of the commission and other
11 relevant resources, Reflecting Mayor de Blasio's
12 commitment to increase women safety and decrease
13 violence against women and girls the CEG has
14 established a very close working relationship with
15 a number of city agencies including the Mayor's
16 Office to Combat Domestic Violence. Commissioner
17 Noel has personally met with commission members on
18 several occasions. Support for this intro: I would
19 like to commend Chairperson Cumbo for your
20 leadership in this issue. As you know despite the
21 strong commitment of... of Mayor de Blasio we know
22 that achieving the ambitious goals of CGE will take
23 years of sustained and consistent effort. We
24 appreciate the council's plan to recognize the
25 importance of the commission's work by codifying

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2 the commissioning law. We note that in order to
3 transition to commission from executive order to
4 charter status we will be recommending certain
5 language changes to the bill that will ensure that
6 the commission's responsibilities are consistent
7 with the structure of the charter and... advisory
8 bodies created under it. In conclusion I would like
9 to reiterate that there is still much work to be
10 done to ensure true quality... true equality in New
11 York City. And I look forward to working together
12 to make this happen. CGE helps... the mayor and the
13 administration as we work to create meaningful and
14 sustainable change in New York City. We are
15 committed to making sure women and girls know that
16 their government is working for them, that we won't
17 give up, and that we will accept nothing short of
18 creating a world in which women don't experience
19 gender related discrimination and violence, in
20 which transgender people feel safe in their
21 communities, and in which girls are thought that
22 there is no limit and no glass ceiling. In closing
23 I want to recognize the incredible work of the
24 speaker and Chairperson Cumbo and the Committee on
25 Women's Issues. Your work on behalf of the New York

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2 City women and girls has been exemplary. We look
3 forward to continue to work collectively with our
4 partners to advance gender equity. Thank you very
5 much.

6 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Thank you
7 so much for your testimony and welcome to city hall
8 for your first hearing. We're very honored to have
9 you and we know that this will be the first of many
10 hearings so that we can discuss matters more fully
11 in a more robust way. So we're certainly happy to
12 welcome you.

13 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Thank you very much
14 Council Member.

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wanted to just gain
16 a greater understanding. I know we had an
17 opportunity to meet yesterday but this is a
18 question that I wanted to ask in reference to
19 CEDAW. CDAW has been something that we've been very
20 excited about and that we have been working
21 towards. And here you state establishing a historic
22 partnership with the UN women and becoming the
23 first American city to join the United Nations Safe
24 Cities Initiative. We know that they've had a great
25 deal of success on the west coast with initiating

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2 CEDAW. What are your thoughts around it? Do you
3 have a timeline? Do you at this time understand
4 some of the components that we would need to
5 utilize in order to become... considered a CEDAW
6 city?

7 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yeah, thank you
8 Council Member. As you know New York City... we have
9 establish a historic partnership with the UN women
10 and we are the first American City who has joined
11 the United Nations Safe Cities Initiative
12 originally and we have been working very closely
13 with UN women and with the HeForShe initiative. We
14 are in the process of review the CEDAW policies and
15 recommendations and we will get back to you on
16 where the city will stand in relation to CDAW.

17 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: So have you become...
18 so has New York City been declared a CEDAW city or
19 is that something that is still going to be ironed
20 out, worked out, understood in terms of what our...
21 as I believe there's a financial commitment that
22 actually comes from a city that participates in... in
23 being designated a city for CEDAW?

24 BRITTANY SAUNDERS: I think you know
25 like Azi [phonetic] it's something that we're aware

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2 of. Obviously, it's one of the kind of... most
3 prominent proposals around gender equity from a
4 policy perspective. But it something that we're
5 still thinking through and considering so... But
6 we're happy to stay in conversation with you on
7 that.

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay definitely.

9 It's definitely something we're interested in and
10 definitely want to continue to work closely with
11 you on it. What would be the financial resources
12 dedicated to supporting the work of the Commission
13 on Gender Equity. Do you have as we're in this
14 budget process, is there a budget that's associated
15 with your office? And then there is also any budget
16 also granted for you to implement or is it that you
17 make recommendations to agencies and that's where
18 the budget recommendations come forward?

19 DIRECTOR KHALILI: It's... as you know I
20 am the first Executive Director of the Commission
21 on Gender Equity and the mayor has made a
22 commitment so just the creation of my position has...
23 is a very promising effort on behalf of the
24 administration and a number of offices and mayoral
25 staff have been assigned to work with the

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2 Commission on Gender Equity. I have access folks in
3 City Lege [phonetic] to communications to... I have
4 access to the members of council staff. I have
5 access to staff in federal legislation. So the
6 staff from around the agencies and mayoral offices
7 have been asked to work very closely with me and
8 provide resources. And my office as you know... the
9 role of the commission is an advisory commission.
10 And we will be making recommendations to the mayor
11 and city agencies and working to make gender equity
12 as part of their DNA. And... and at this point we
13 believe that we have the resources that we need to..
14 to do the work that we need. And as we develop our
15 recommendations and think about other initiatives
16 we will be in conversations with the members of
17 the... with the members of the executive office in
18 terms of future needs.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Have there been any
20 meetings actually since your appointment as
21 Executive Director? So have you and the membership..
22 I saw the list here of your Commission on Gender
23 Equity... have they been meeting previously to your
24 appointment or has it been since your appointment
25 the meetings have begun?

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2 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yeah the Commission
3 had met once before I was... before I was appointed.
4 And as you know the First Lady is the Co-Chair of
5 the Commission so they had come together for the
6 first time and met in person. And the Commission
7 met... has met once I came... once after I was
8 appointed and we have now divided the commission
9 into four working groups and the working groups
10 have begun to meet already. So we have a working
11 group as I mention on economic mobility, we have a
12 working group on access to healthcare and
13 reproductive justice. We have a working group on
14 public safety. And we have a working group on
15 gender lens and gender analysis.

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay. And when was
17 the last time actually that you met? And how do you
18 also... because when I'm looking at the list these
19 are very professional and seasoned women, how do
20 you anticipate engaging younger women, women who
21 aren't the heads of organizations, they're not the
22 heads of a corporation or a union, how will you
23 engage a younger generation of women?
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2 DIRECTOR KHALILI: As you know the
3 speaker had... has started the Young Women's
4 Initiative...

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yes.

6 DIRECTOR KHALILI: ...which has been a
7 very very powerful initiative and the Mayor's
8 Office has been very much involved with that. Maya
9 Wiley is on the Steering Committee of the Young
10 Women's Initiative. We have had conversations with
11 the Young Women's Initiative, a number of meetings,
12 and also our city agency staff have been attending
13 the working groups of the young women's initiative.
14 So we've been very much involved in that process
15 and we didn't want to recreate that process. We... we
16 are taking... we are certainly looking at the
17 recommendations that the Young Women's Initiative
18 has... has put together. And also we will be having a
19 number of public...

20 BRITTANY SAUNDERS: Town halls...

21 DIRECTOR KHALILI: ...town halls in the
22 next... in the next period. A hearing from women and
23 girls in the communities and hearing about their...
24 their concerns.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Let's say something
3 or recommendation or a concept comes to you, will
4 you be granted resources or allocations to do
5 something that you think specifically has come up
6 that you would want to take charge and ownership
7 and claim it as the commission's own is there an
8 opportunity to do that?

9 DIRECTOR KHALILI: I... absolutely. If
10 there... if there initiatives that are coming in the...
11 in the... commission's direction... recommendations
12 part of my job is to first find out which agencies
13 are implementing are... are in charge of those
14 specific issues. And then once I found out that
15 let's say it's the you know HRA or it's the
16 Department of Consumer Affairs then I will work
17 very closely in partnership with those agencies
18 making sure that they will implement that you know
19 best practice or initiative.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Do you understand
21 at... at this time in terms of recommendations are
22 made you have meetings, I suspect quarterly or you
23 have some committee meetings that happen outside of
24 that, how then will these recommendations be given
25 or communicated to the mayor?

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DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: How do those meetings happen?

DIRECTOR KHALILI: We're in the period of collecting recommendations and harnessing the best thinking of commission members, you know senior staff, members of the public, other folks who are not necessarily on the commission. We are harnessing their best thinking and then we will be putting together the recommendations for the mayor in the next few months.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

BRITTANY SAUNDERS: I should also say that... so as Azi said you can see from like the list of things that the commission's already kind of undertaken and planned that she's jumped in kind of both feet first. But this is only her fifth week but she's like still in the process of kind of identifying plans and laying out strategy and those sorts of things. So some of this stuff will be firmed up as we move down the road.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Because that would also be helpful to know when those recommendations will be presented to the mayor or if they will be

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2 presented to the mayor or by the body or does he
3 come in for a meeting, I suspect you're working out
4 all of that?

5 DIRECTOR KHALILI: All of that is being
6 worked out again, yes. Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

8 DIRECTOR KHALILI: But certainly we're...
9 we will be making recommendations to the mayor.

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

11 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Absolutely.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: For me one of the
13 issues that we've been very vocal about is that
14 while crime is down in the city of New York overall
15 crime continues to be higher as it pertains to
16 women in terms of violence that's perpetrated
17 against women is one of the only categories that we
18 have not seen a significant reduction in crime but
19 there's actually been an uptick in some areas. What
20 is the commission's stance on that? What are some
21 of the ideas that they're working out on that? How
22 do they feel that they're going to be able to play
23 a role in creating a safer city for women in the
24 city of New York?

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DIRECTOR KHALILI: Excellent question.

As you... as I mentioned earlier public safety is...

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

DIRECTOR KHALILI: ...one of our priorities, is one of the... one of our priorities and the commission members early on made a decision to create the working group on public safety. And the public safety working group has already met. We're working very closely with the Criminal Justice Coordinators Office, with the Police Department, with the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, and we will be working with the Department of Corrections. And we are committed and as you know the mayor has made a stance. We are committed in lowering crime and specifically lowering crime against women and girls.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: How do you feel that in terms of you mentioned the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence... how do you feel those sorts of relationships with the NYPD, Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence... how do you feel that you will interact and work with those agencies legislatively as well as the policy groups that come out of this?

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2 DIRECTOR KHALILI: We will be working
3 very closely with them. I am in contact with
4 Commissioner Noel on a weekly basis. We have
5 conversations... we're working with the senior staff
6 at NYPD and also... with NYPD. They are attending our
7 working... our public safety working groups. So... and
8 again I would like to reiterate that the Commission
9 on Gender Equity is an advisory body.

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

11 DIRECTOR KHALILI: So we cannot
12 implement the programs. However, we're working very
13 closely with those... with those agencies to make
14 sure that our issues are addressed.

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay. And just a few
16 more questions before I turn it over to Council
17 Member Crowley who has joined us. I also wanted to
18 ask in terms of... how is the Commission on Gender
19 Equity different from the Commission on Women's
20 Issues in the Bloomberg Administration because I
21 know that there were a lot of significant changes
22 when this was implemented and wanted to see like
23 what were some of the differences. And then going
24 after... into that going into Intro 1137 in terms of
25 talking about how you believe you will be able to

1
2 work with Intro 1137 with the work that you're
3 doing.

4 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yes, that's a good
5 question. I think that the Commission on Gender
6 Equity is different than the Commission on the
7 Status of Women. I think that a lot of good work
8 was done during the previous administration.
9 However, we've made a decision to go deeper with
10 the work, that we have decided to take on equity
11 and systematically talk about outcomes, what are
12 the outcomes that we are creating for women and
13 girls and... and hold ourselves accountable to the
14 outcomes and...

15 BRITTANY SAUNDERS: Yeah. And I'll... you
16 know Azi mentioned this briefly but she is the
17 first kind of full time paid Executive Director so
18 I think that also really emphasizes the commitment.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Oh we're finally
20 getting paid huh?

21 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yes, yes... we're
22 finally getting paid on...

23 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: On Pay Equity Day we
24 are making history every day. Go on. So wanted to
25 talk about Intro 1137.

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DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: We had a preliminary meeting and just to be clear and for the record you're in favor of Intro 1137?

DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yes, we are.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: And what does... what cost does the administration estimate will be associated with implementing Intro 1137?

BRITTANY SAUNDERS: So we're still reviewing that but that's something we can stay and talk... in conversation about.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I'm sorry?

BRITTANY SAUNDERS: We're still reviewing kind of the associated costs and estimates but that's something we can stay in communication about.

CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay. And how do you believe that the Commission on Gender Equity would work collaboratively. So you have two bodies almost that are... are going to be able to work simultaneously together. What do you think the role of each of them would be?

BRITTANY SAUNDERS: So... I mean I think that this is the space where we... you know like more

1
2 kind of smart thinking folks with a lot of energy
3 and dedication is certainly better and I think we
4 just need to kind of coordinate and make sure that
5 we're in coordination and communication but I think
6 there's lots of work to be done and so the more
7 able hands are able to do it the better. I think
8 we're... as Azi said we're supportive and...

9 DIRECTOR KHALILI: And... and as you know
10 I mean we're not... we're not interested in
11 duplicating efforts.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Exactly.

13 DIRECTOR KHALILI: And... and we would
14 like to... we will work with your staff to
15 specifically really think about how do we make sure
16 that the good work is being done and we're not
17 duplicating the work and... and there's a lot of
18 coordination to be done as we move forward. But I
19 think that... we are open and willing to work with
20 your staff to hash out some of the implementation
21 issues.

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay I'm going to... I
23 have a few more questions but in the interest of
24 time I'll turn it over to Council Member Elizabeth
25 Crowley who has questions at this time. Thank you.

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DIRECTOR KHALILI: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Thank you Chair Cumbo. Thank you hosting today's rally on equal pay, for introducing this bill, I want to add my name too as a co-sponsor, and I want to thank the administration for putting together this gender equity agency. It's actually an agency?

BRITTANY SAUNDERS: It's a commission.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: A commission.

BRITTANY SAUNDERS: Advisory.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: But do you have a budget?

DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yes, we have a budget in the sense that my... my salary is paid through the Commission on Gender Equity. [cross-talk] And I'm the first Executive Director of the Commission on Gender Equity.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: What about support staff?

DIRECTOR KHALILI: Support staff... as I said earlier I have access to a number of staff members throughout the mayor's office from... I have access to a number of folks in city lege, federal lege. I am working with members of staff through

1
2 communications are available to me, members of
3 councils' staff are available to me.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Are you looking
5 at equity in health care?

6 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yes. As I mentioned
7 earlier we have created a working group that's
8 looking at access to healthcare and reproductive
9 justice. And that certainly is one of our
10 priorities.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: When you're
12 looking at reproductive justice are you evaluating
13 how many women are getting certain types of
14 services such as IUDs or other forms of birth
15 control access?

16 DIRECTOR KHALILI: That's excellent
17 question. One of the commission members is the
18 President of the Planned Parenthood and she's
19 working very closely with the Commission and she's
20 on the health and reproductive justice working
21 group and they've been working closely with us in
22 really coming up with data and talking about the
23 needs of the... of... of the... of women around
24 reproductive justice. As I said I've just came
25 onboard five weeks ago...

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COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Right.

DIRECTOR KHALILI: ...and the working group has only met once so absolutely we will be looking at the whole spectrum of reproductive justice and reproductive health as we move forward.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Okay have you looked at job opportunities in city agencies for women... fairness and...

DIRECTOR KHALILI: Job opportunities for women...

COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Gender fairness... yeah. In terms of employment and pay.

DIRECTOR KHALILI: Pay equity as pay equity is certainly a very important issue for us from the first day I started five weeks ago pay equity has been an issue that we've taken on. And pay equity is an issue that is incredibly important to... to the first lady. She's spoken on behalf of pay equity. And as we mentioned yesterday we are... have created a working group that's looking at the pay gap among the city workers and we're going to be coming up with some innovative, sustainable solutions to take on pay equity.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: What about with
3 contract... did city contracts... are you going to be
4 looking at that?

5 DIRECTOR KHALILI: ...as my colleague to
6 respond to you.

7 BRITTANY SAUNDERS: Yeah I think that's...
8 you know obviously as you said you know you can
9 look at both the folks who work directly for the
10 city and then the folks who are employed using city
11 dollars through contracts. I think that's something
12 we're definitely giving some thought to. And it's a
13 sort of policy that you know CG might give some
14 thought to or the working group that... that Azi
15 mentioned get some thought to and in the area where
16 we definitely look forward to doing some work.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: When do you
18 think that you'll be nearing an end to your
19 surveying or coming up with the mayor
20 recommendations to bring progress in either the
21 area of equity or healthcare?

22 BRITTANY SAUNDERS: Yeah I mean it's a
23 little too early to say precisely what the date
24 will be. But I mean I think we all feel the urgency
25 here and... [cross-talk] as women in the city of New

1
2 York and people who care deeply about other women
3 in the city of New York. So yes it's... [cross-talk]
4 a focus and it's a key priority but I couldn't say...
5 you know give you a date certain.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Understood.

7 Okay no further questions Chair. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you Council
9 Member Crowley. I just wanted to just close with
10 just this final question, wanting to know does the
11 administration have any additional concerns about
12 Intro 1137 that have not been expressed? So we just
13 want to make sure with moving forward with the
14 process of voting it out are there other concerns
15 in your testimony... you mentioned certain language
16 that you would like to modify or to change, can you
17 talk a little bit about that?

18 BRITTANY SAUNDERS: Sure. I mean Azi
19 mentioned this a little bit but I think you know
20 we... we support the intent of the bill certainly and
21 want to continue working with the council on it. I
22 think as AZI mentioned there are just some largely
23 technical changes that we'd want to make to make
24 sure that it's kind of consistent with the role of
25 these types of advisory boards and some of the kind

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2 of charter requirements around how those sorts of
3 boards should function. So we want to make sure
4 that it's consistent with those sorts of concerns.
5 But yeah I would say that's kind of the majority of
6 things that we want to be working on.

7 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wonderful. Well we
8 look forward to getting that information back from
9 you so that way we can continue to move forward and
10 to vote this out of committee and to bring it
11 before the full body. I thank you so much for being
12 here on pay equity day. I thank you so much for
13 your testimony and certainly look forward to
14 working with you very closely.

15 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Thank you. Again I
16 would like to thank you for your leadership.

17 BRITTANY SAUNDERS: Thank you... [cross-
18 talk]

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wonderful. And if
20 you could stay because we just have a few people
21 testifying just to kind of hear their thoughts on
22 it would be really helpful, for as long as you can.

23 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Unfortunately I have
24 a meeting across the street at 2:00 but I know
25 that... [cross-talk] Brittany Saunders... [cross-talk]

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2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Brittany you can
3 stay?

4 DIRECTOR KHALILI: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wonderful. Thank you
6 so much. Thank you. Okay we are going to call up
7 our first panel. We'll just do it all as one panel
8 so that we can hear everyone's testimony at the
9 same time and we'll just ask that the Sergeant at
10 Arms could assist us with bringing over an
11 additional chair so that we can have a panel of
12 five. The first one will be Danielle Micca...
13 Danielle Castaldi-Micca, Katharine Bodde, Mary Luke
14 from UN Women Metro New York, Gloria Malone, and
15 Amanda Matos Girls for Gender Equity and Young
16 Women's Advisory Council. I see a lot of familiar
17 faces which is nice, very good. We can... and I... in
18 the interest of time we're just going to have
19 everybody's testimony will be three minutes and
20 then afterwards we'll be able to open for
21 questions. So we'll start first with Danielle
22 Castaldi-Micca from the National Institute for
23 Reproductive Health.

24 DANIELLE CASTALDI-MICCA: Thank you. I'm
25 a pretty loud talker. Not as loud as that

1
2 apparently. Thank you Chairwoman Cumbo for hosting
3 this hearing. It was really I think useful to hear
4 from the commission on some of their plans and the
5 roles that they plan to play. Again my name's
6 Danielle Castaldi-Micca. I'm the Director of
7 Political and Government Affairs at the National
8 Institute for Reproductive Health in our campaign
9 for a pro-choice New York. As an organization
10 dedicated to promoting reproductive rights we were
11 pleased that the administration had introduced the
12 commission on gender equity including its signaling
13 affect around new inclusion of trans people in the
14 fight for gender equality. The composition of the
15 commission aside there's a... some longstanding
16 substantive issues of reproductive health and
17 rights that really need to be addressed in this
18 city. And in meetings with the Mayor's Office last
19 year bringing some of these to light we were met
20 with the recommendation that the commission would
21 be the best place to have those addressed so I'd
22 like to outline some of them today because it seems
23 particularly relevant to their sort of plans for
24 the future. The first is that while New York City's
25 taken really positive steps to advancing

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2 comprehensive sex education and this council
3 recently passed great reporting legislation. The
4 administration really needs to prioritize keeping
5 our young people safe and healthy and take the next
6 step towards implementing medically accurate, age
7 appropriate, comprehensive sexual health education
8 in schools between... from kindergarten to high
9 school. Additionally, for more than a decade
10 advocates have worked to advance contraceptive
11 equity for New York City employees. Despite the
12 affordable care act's guaranteeing contraceptive
13 coverage without a co-pay for millions of Americans
14 many health insurance plans for New York City
15 employees either don't cover contraception or cover
16 it with a co-pay still. This is absolutely
17 unacceptable. While New York City's failure to
18 provide contraceptive coverage without a co-pay is
19 sort of legally questionable I think the principle
20 itself is clear as day and really ignores the idea
21 of gender equity. We shouldn't be setting the... we
22 should be setting the example in affirming
23 reproductive health measures, not attempting to
24 avoid this responsibility through loopholes in
25 federal law. Additionally, in 2008 this council

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2 passed access to the reproductive healthcares
3 facilities act which updated the city's protections
4 regarding protester activity outside of
5 reproductive healthcare clinics. The law was cited
6 in the 2014 supreme court decision McCullen V.
7 Coakley which is exciting as a model that balanced
8 free speech with patient protection. However,
9 despite regular reports of patient and staff
10 harassment outside of clinics New York City's law
11 has never been enforced. In the seven years since
12 the law's enactment there hasn't been a single
13 arrest for its violation. The police department's
14 deputy commissioner for collaborative policing and
15 her staff has met... have met with clinic staff and
16 advocates and reportedly observed questionable
17 protester activity outside of health centers but
18 there hasn't been any action taken by the
19 department. Finally, with so many battles being
20 fought across the country that center on access to
21 abortion and sexual and reproductive healthcare we
22 call upon the commission and the administration to
23 make this a priority and make a commitment to
24 greater communication with the advocates who are
25 experts in the field. We should be a beacon for

1
2 these issues for reproductive rights and health and
3 justice. And we hope that the council's oversight
4 capacity will help advance this cause. So we
5 support Intro 1137 and we urge the commission to
6 really address these reproductive rights issues
7 that are limiting New Yorkers right now. I have
8 written testimony that's a lot longer but in the
9 sake of time I gave the... [cross-talk]

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I would certainly
11 appreciate it if you shared out would definitely...
12 the Sergeant at Arms will assist you with that. And
13 never underestimate the power of the written
14 testimony because it helps us when we're creating
15 legislation or strengthening legislation or wanting
16 to find stats and figures that will help us to
17 craft legislation moving forward. So thank you very
18 much for your testimony. Yes, the next speaker we
19 have...

20 KATHARINE BODDE: Katharine Bodde.

21 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Katharine Bodde.

22 KATHARINE BODDE: Yes, good afternoon.

23 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you so much
24 Katharine.

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2 KATHARINE BODDE: My name is Katharine
3 Bodde. I'm an attorney with the New York Civil
4 Liberties Union. Thank you so much for having this
5 hearing Council Member Cumbo and the women's issues
6 committee. It's really good to be testifying in
7 support of this bill. The NYCLU is the affiliate of
8 the ACLU. We work across New York state on a number
9 of different gender equity issues including paid
10 family leave, pregnancy accommodation, reproductive
11 rights, you name it. In June of 2015 Mayor de
12 Blasio created a commission on gender equity tasked
13 with a quote achieving economic mobility and social
14 inclusion of all New Yorkers, particularly women
15 and girls and to ensure their public safety. While
16 the NYCLU fully supports the commission's mission
17 we have concerns regarding the individuals that
18 were appointed to the commission and the process by
19 which those appointments were made as well as the
20 need for transparency and public input regarding
21 the manner in which the commission functions. After
22 Mayor de Blasio announced that the commission had
23 been established a number of gender equity
24 advocates sent a letter to the mayor regarding the
25 composition of the commission and the commission's

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2 priorities. The advocates subsequently met with the
3 representatives in the mayor's office to address
4 their concerns regarding the lack of expertise
5 among the commission's members, uncertain issues
6 affecting women and girls, and in particular issues
7 affecting access to reproductive healthcare
8 services. The advocates offered a number of
9 different recommendations as to the commissions
10 priorities in the area of reproductive health.
11 Danielle outlined some of these recommendations and
12 I attached a copy of the letter to my testimony.
13 Since the meeting the administration has appointed
14 a reproductive health service provider as a member
15 of the commission and we applaud that appointment.
16 However, there are continuing concerns; concerns
17 about transparency, concerns about process, about
18 meetings being open to the public, meetings...
19 meeting being open and... and open to direct service
20 providers, policy exerts, and impacted people who
21 could really best inform the commission's work in
22 these areas. So we fully support all of the
23 transparency measures within Intro 1137 and we look
24 forward to working with the council to... to
25 implement it. Thanks.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. And I'll
3 have follow-up questions to the testimony as well.
4 Thank you. Next we have Mary Luke, you're Mary
5 Luke? Wonderful. Mary Luke, the UN Women Metro New
6 York. Thank you.

7 MARY LUKE: Thank you so much for your
8 leadership. And it's really wonderful to be here on
9 Equal Pay Day. What a better you know way to go.

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

11 MARY LUKE: Anyhow... UN women, we are the
12 Metro New York Chapter of the United States
13 National Committee for UN Women. So we're a local
14 registered NGO and our main function is to
15 advocate, educate, and fundraise for women... UN
16 Women programs globally. That's who we are. We
17 really want to thank all of you, the city council,
18 for the opportunity to offer our views on the
19 formation of the Gender Equity Advisory Board. UN
20 Women shares a common agenda with the commission
21 and with this new board. And we fully support this
22 legislation to codify it through the formation of
23 the advisory board. And we congratulate the mayor's
24 office and the city council for your deep
25 commitment to gender equality and the empowerment

1 of women and girls through this model legislation.
2 As the UN entity dedicated to accelerating gender
3 equality in women's empowerment we coordinate with
4 all the other UN agencies in civil society to
5 accomplish our mission. And we focus our advocacy
6 efforts on campaigns such as HeForShe and the
7 Beijing Platform for Action, Planet 50/50, and the
8 New Sustainable Development Goals signed off by 100
9 world leaders. We're very pleased and proud that UN
10 Women and the New York City signed the safe cities
11 initiative about a year ago. And New York City was
12 then the first city to join this initiative which
13 really promised safety and security for women and
14 girls in New York City. United States plays a very
15 critical role in ensuring the domestic success of
16 all of these initiatives, especially the ambitious
17 sustainable development goals agenda which is
18 supposed to be you know focused on ending poverty
19 by 2030. That would be wonderful wouldn't it. And
20 promoting shared economic opportunities, and
21 environment protection for all. Women's equality is
22 an integral part of the success of the STGs. And we
23 believe that the gender equity advisory board
24 should and... should strive to incorporate the
25

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2 objectives and the targets of these initiatives
3 such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the
4 Safe Cities Initiatives into its planning as a
5 priority. So we encourage the commission and the
6 board to take on these very important issues.
7 Firstly, that we ensure that New York City develops
8 a coherent, integrated, and sustainable strategy to
9 maintain a gender perspective across all government
10 policies and programs. And that includes using a
11 gender lens to look at the budget and to ensure it
12 that there are adequate resources to fund programs
13 that support gender equality and women's
14 empowerment. We need to make sure that... that we
15 safeguard the safety, health, and wellbeing of
16 women and girls. And that's through a public
17 education, police training, and other technologies
18 to make sure that law enforcement against abusers
19 and that there's adequate treatment for survivors.
20 We also need to make sure that men are equal
21 partners and contributors in this fight against
22 domestic violence and gender reviews. We want to
23 continue to advocate for policy and legislative
24 reforms, obviously for equal pay for equal work,
25 and we need to make sure that there are also

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2 benefits that women and... and girls can be entitled
3 to so that as they grow they are also have
4 something to put in their savings account...

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

6 MARY LUKE: ...future. Let's make sure
7 again that there are sexual and reproductive rights
8 and justice for all. I, myself, was a Director of
9 Planned Parenthood in San Francisco and spent 30
10 years in Global Women's Reproductive Health and
11 Rights and so I really really firmly believe that
12 we must be able to achieve a lot more equity in
13 this field. Let's ensure that New York City
14 continues to educate and strengthen policies...

15 [cross-talk]

16 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I'm going to have to
17 ask you to conclude, but you're fine.

18 MARY LUKE: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

20 MARY LUKE: ...like CEDAW. And thank you
21 so much for your questions about CEDAW.

22 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

23 MARY LUKE: And I promise that we will
24 work closely with you on that. So in closing I want
25 to say that the metro New York chapter really

1
2 thanks the city council for this opportunity. We
3 welcome future opportunities for collaboration and
4 sharing of resources to ensure a greater gender
5 social equality in New York City so that it is not
6 only a safe city but a shining example world wide
7 of an equal opportunity city for all women and
8 girls. Thank you very much.

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Thank you
10 so much for your testimony. And now we will hear
11 from Gloria Malone and Amanda Matos.

12 AMANDA MATOS: Matos, yeah.

13 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Alright got it.

14 AMANDA MATOS: Okay I'm on the angle
15 here. Good afternoon New York City Council Members.
16 We are... well I am Amanda Matos, this is Gloria. And
17 we are co-chairs of the Young Women's Advisory
18 Council which is housed under Girls for Gender
19 Equity and just part of the Young Women's
20 Initiative. The Young Women's Initiative as many
21 folks here know was launched by New York City
22 Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito. Just
23 recently in August of September 2015 New York City
24 Council convened over 200 key stakeholders
25 including young women and girls of color themselves

1
2 to help lead a six-month assessment process to
3 determine the needs for programming, policy
4 changes, data collection, and long term research on
5 issues impacting young women and girls of color
6 ages 12 to 24 here in New York City. On behalf of
7 the Young Women's Advisory Council we would like to
8 thank the New York City Council, the Mayor's
9 Office, city agencies, and all stakeholders for
10 making the young women's initiative a priority in
11 New York City. This is the first campaign in
12 history that is both fully dedicated to low income
13 girls of color and included young women themselves
14 in advisory and decision making roles. And now it
15 is wonderful to see New York City's further
16 commitment to women and girls both through YWI, the
17 Commission on Gender Equity, and the proposed
18 Gender Equity Advisory Board. We see an incredible
19 opportunity now for collaboration between the
20 Commission Gender Equity and the Young Women's
21 Advisory Council. Unique to YWI is the intentional
22 inclusion of young women themselves through a
23 participatory governance model. The young women's
24 advisory council served as a governing body of
25 youth experts who actively participated in

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2 workgroup meetings with policy makers, community
3 leaders, city agency staff, and council... city
4 council staff themselves in issue areas that were
5 directly impacting them including health,
6 education, economic mobility, criminal justice, and
7 anti-violence. Our framework arch towards
8 addressing issues experienced by women and girls of
9 color knowing that this aggregating inequity by
10 race and gender elucidates the disparities found in
11 communities of color. The Young Women's Initiative
12 actively embraces an open and inclusive definition
13 of women and girls by centering the voices and
14 experiences of trans women and gender nonconforming
15 people, and by using the lens that addresses the
16 intersectional experiences of immigrant and LGBTQ&T
17 young women and girls of color.

18 GLORIA MALONE: We propose that the
19 Commission of Gender Equity and its Proposed Gender
20 Equity Advisory Board views the intersectional and
21 intergenerational and collaborative framework that
22 the Young Women's Advise... the Young Woman's
23 Initiative and the Young Women's Advisory Council
24 meticulously and intentional built together. We
25 propose this because as co-chairs of the young

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2 woman's advisory council we witness the powerful
3 and thoughtful dialogue, recommendations, and
4 relationships that were forged by the young women
5 of color, community stakeholders, city staff, and
6 elected officials by being able to show... by the
7 young women being able to show up as their full
8 selves to these weekly collaborative working group
9 meetings. Two, we propose that the commission and
10 the advisory board centers the voices of young
11 women of color while giving equitable opportunities
12 for trans and gender non-conforming women and girls
13 of color to be involved in the advisory board by
14 appointing them to the advisory board in a way that
15 is safe, meaningful, and accessible, listening to
16 their... experiences as young women in New York City
17 and accepting their personal experiences as truth,
18 making sure that the advisory council has
19 leadership opportunities for trans and gender
20 nonconforming and non-transient women of color be a
21 microcosm for the diversity of New York City
22 residents by having and maintaining a variety of
23 ages, genders and gender expressions, race,
24 ethnicities, religious affiliations, educational
25 levels, sexual orientations, boroughs of residency,

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2 immigration status... immigration statuses and those
3 who are differently abled at members at all times.
4 We also propose that they hold meetings in ways
5 that are accessible to all by having language
6 interpretation available, making sure meeting
7 spaces are physically accessible by standards set
8 forth in the 1990 Americans with Disability Act and
9 include sign language and brail when necessary.
10 That the... that both internal meetings and the
11 yearly public meetings be held at times that make
12 it possible for school age youth to attend, after
13 school hours but before late evening hours, that
14 meetings include childcare options and or are child
15 friendly so that parenting individuals will be able
16 to attend and participate, include disconnected
17 youth, youth who are not in school and or working
18 and that... the procedures within the group include
19 group agreements such rules that are created as a
20 group and adhere to. As a team we believe that we
21 must ensure that voices of young women of color
22 continue to be at the forefront of New York City
23 through participatory... and ongoing education on the
24 experiences we face by centering young... young trans
25 and... women of color as active participant in

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2 governance we are demonstrating the impact of
3 intergenerational collaboration to create a city
4 that we all envision. And we believe this is an
5 ideal opportunity for the commission of gender
6 equity and the gender equity advisory board to
7 adopt an intersectional framework to support trans
8 and assist women and girls of color. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Wow. Thank you. I
10 just have a few follow-up questions. Wanted to ask
11 Katharine. So I have the... the Commission on Gender
12 Equity in terms of the current members and... and the
13 formation of who those members are. When did you
14 review this in terms of... was this before the
15 commissioner was hired or after the commissioner in
16 terms of your advocacy in terms of wanting to see
17 there be an open and transparent process? When did
18 that actually begin; before the commissioner or
19 after?

20 KATHARINE BODDE: ...that we... before the
21 commissioner. I think that we... as advocacy
22 organization started talking about the commission
23 actually right after it was formed last summer and
24 started really looking and evaluating the
25 membership of the commission and wondering what

1
2 kind of criteria the administration was using to
3 appoint the membership.

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: What were you
5 informed at that time of?

6 KATHARINE BODDE: We... I don't think that
7 there was a lot of information out there about why
8 certain people were chose and you know what they
9 were supposed to represent in terms of their work
10 experience and their representation of the New York
11 City community.

12 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: What do you think is
13 missing from your professional assessment from the
14 list of individuals that are on the commission at
15 this time? Where do you feel there are missing
16 elements, voices that are not being amplified...
17 what... what would you see are the missing components
18 to this particular commission at this time?

19 KATHARINE BODDE: Well you know
20 certainly I come from a perspective where we are
21 specifically thinking about earth through a
22 reproductive right lens and I think that was a
23 good... I think that advocates direct service
24 providers and impacted people are the people that
25 are going to be able to inform the commission the

1
2 best as to their work and making sure that those
3 three groups are... are considered when making the
4 appointments in the whole host of issues that
5 impact women and girls in New York City I think is
6 really important and not just with reproductive
7 rights but with the whole spectrum of issues that
8 affect young women and girls.

9 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Interesting. I'm
10 going to take your recommendations in terms of your
11 thoughts or questions in terms of transparency; how
12 was the selection process actually done and what is
13 missing in terms of some of those components, and
14 would like to continue to work with you to make
15 sure that this is shaped in a way that all voices
16 are amplified, people understand the process of how
17 you become a part of it. And then going to both
18 your testimonies and wanted to ask questions in
19 terms of public accessibility so that there's an
20 opportunity because you have to have that... of the
21 ability to have internal meetings but you also have
22 to open it up to the public for further discussions
23 as well.

24 KATHARINE BODDE: And you know the... the
25 commission has existed... just to add... the commission

1
2 has existed since last June and yet we're almost a
3 year into it and the advocacy organizations and
4 direct service providers who are doing the work on
5 the ground who have been working at this for
6 decades and decades and decades and have the kind
7 of expertise including the people who are going to
8 be the most impacted by these policies have yet to
9 be engaged. So I just think that that's worth
10 noting. That's also you know the transparency is
11 obviously going to be able... is going to push the
12 direction and the momentum and the movement and
13 make sure that the commission is accountable to
14 measurable outcomes.

15 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Wanted to
16 ask Ms. Luke... obviously with your work with the UN
17 have you had any time or opportunity to engage the
18 commission on gender equity since its formation in
19 June? And also my second question is, is there a
20 similar commission specifically under the UN
21 umbrella that could work very closely here in New
22 York with our commission? It's a two-part question.

23 MARY LUKE: We just recently had a
24 fundraising reception and we were fortunate to be
25 able to have the executive director address our

1
2 reception. And so that was our sort of first foray
3 on... I'm fairly new to the board so...

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

5 MARY LUKE: ...I'm not sure that we've had
6 much more contact beyond that. But we felt that
7 that was a very productive you know beginning of...
8 of a relationship. What was the second question
9 that you wanted to...

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: My second question
11 is what... is there a commission similar to this
12 operating under the umbrella of the United Nations.
13 I know that there are many women gender equity
14 programs, events, commissions... but what's the one
15 that most closely mirrors what we have here in the
16 city council and are their opportunities for them
17 to work collaboratively. And before you answer that
18 question I also want to acknowledge we've been
19 joined by Council Member Darlene Mealy of Brooklyn
20 who is also Chair of the Civil Rights Committee and
21 I am so happy that she has joined us for this
22 important conversation.

23 MARY LUKE: Thank you. Well I would say
24 that UN Women is essentially the commission because
25 we are the entity that represents the goals of

1
2 gender equality and women's empowerment. And we
3 similarly work across all the UN organizations.

4 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

5 MARY LUKE: And so... and that's we were
6 formed... we used to be called UNIFEM...

7 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

8 MARY LUKE: ...may be familiar with that..
9 [cross-talk]

10 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Right.

11 MARY LUKE: But I think that by
12 restructuring and having this UN Women we have a
13 lot more power if you will across all the other UN
14 organizations and in fact the sustainable
15 development goal is very very much a focus of goal
16 number five is all about gender equality and
17 women's empowerment. And all of the other goals and
18 all of the other agencies must have some kind of
19 gender equality initiatives and they'll be really
20 monitored and evaluated on that as well. And so I
21 think that we're essential just like the commission
22 and the... the board is central to making sure that
23 all of the other organizations within the city are
24 really you know committed towards the same goal.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Let me ask you this
3 question. What would you say have been the major
4 victories under the umbrella and the name of UN
5 Women have you experienced? How do you all quantify
6 what your successes have been. And I'm hoping that
7 a lot of this in terms of the victories that you've
8 had, the challenges as well as the triumphs that
9 you would be a partner in this commission in order
10 to assist.. You know there's no need for so many
11 reasons to reinvent the wheel and if you've done
12 this on a global scale you can certainly assist on
13 a local scale as well.

14 MARY LUKE: Absolutely. I totally agree.
15 I think that some of our biggest victories have
16 been in some of the campaigns that we're running.
17 The HeForShe is really successful across many many
18 countries getting men involved as partners in the
19 fighting, especially against domestic violence but
20 in every other way. We also very much promoting
21 women's leadership and economic development and I
22 think our campaigns to do that have really shown
23 results in other countries. I think that the
24 domestic violence campaign, gender based violence
25 is very very critical. And again our 16 days of

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2 advocacy against domestic violence every year has
3 really united... you know many many countries... it's...
4 it's our paint the country orange campaign.

5 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Yes.

6 MARY LUKE: And I think those are very
7 very visible campaigns you know that attract media
8 attention and that New York City should be part of.
9 And so I think a lot of these are the you know by
10 joining New York City in the global campaigns I
11 mean there's just no better place for it because
12 New York City is obviously such a global city in
13 many ways I think that we can really take some of
14 these successes and make sure that New York really
15 highlights them and it promotes you know global
16 recognition as well.

17 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Thank you. Thank you
18 very much. And we... certainly look forward to
19 working with you. This is an exciting time in the
20 city of New York. And with the efforts that you all
21 are doing globally and what we're doing on the
22 local level it's going to provide great
23 opportunities for synergy in order to raise the
24 voices and amplify the concerns and the challenges
25 as well as the victories of women all over the

1 world. So I thank you so much for being here. And
2 want to bring it over to my girls for gender
3 equity, my ladies, my women. So proud of the work
4 that you all have done with the Young Women's
5 Advisory Council and the work that you all are
6 doing. You spoke a lot about transparency and
7 accessibility and wanted to gain a greater
8 understanding of have you had meetings with the
9 commission and do you see yourselves ultimately as
10 having a seat at the table for this particular
11 commission and has that been discussed or broached
12 in terms of how do we bridge between the incredible
13 work that's been done over these six months in
14 order to make sure that that work transcends into
15 this commission. Has there been discussion, have
16 there been thoughts because it would be to me a
17 lost opportunity if that didn't transcend over to
18 this particular commission.

20 AMANDA MATOS: Thank you for that
21 question. Very important. So to date Gloria and I
22 have not had any meetings with the Commissioner,
23 commissioners or the Executive Director face to
24 face. To our understanding there's been interest
25 from the Executive Director and the Council Maya

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2 Wiley on collaboration but there have not been any
3 clear conversations or meetings going in depth of
4 what that would look like. And so we vision
5 ourselves being at the same table, being able to
6 influence the work more directly than just in an
7 advisory role.

8 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Okay.

9 GLORIA MALONE: In addition to ourselves
10 also the young women who were part of the Young
11 Women's Advisory Council. ...about 20 or... 20 25 young
12 women of color from all the different boroughs, all
13 different racial and religious backgrounds, gender
14 identities that were part of the Young Women's
15 Advisory Council. So in the... I... I want to just to...
16 also expand that in addition to myself and Amanda
17 and the... another co-chair who was not able to be
18 here today that we... that the young women themselves
19 are included in the commission.

20 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: Definitely. You all
21 are like the perfect panel who brought out some
22 really great information that we can definitely
23 take back and to implement and work on your behalf
24 and continue to raise your voice and amplify this
25 discussion because it is important. It's important

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2 and critical that we shape this commission in a way
3 that was its original intent. We're going to take a
4 question or two from Council Member Mealy or
5 however many questions you may have and then we're
6 going to close this hearing.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you Madam
8 Chair. I just want to say congratulations... one the
9 Young Woman Initiative Advisory Council is doing
10 excellent. I must say my community is involved with
11 it just as well and they say it's empowering. I
12 have one question for the panel. What is the
13 biggest discrimination against gender equality that
14 you feel in New York City intentionally or
15 unintentionally? What is the biggest issue that
16 we're being discriminated against? Could anyone
17 answer that question? One of the biggest issues?

18 DANIELLE CASTALDI-MICCA: I would have
19 to say housing. There are programs that are... in
20 the... that exist for people who are transitioning
21 out of prisons or jails and... traditions in...
22 transitioning them back into NYCHA housing. And a
23 lot of those programs are mostly helping men.
24 However black women are the growest [phonetic] the
25 largest and the quickest growing population in

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2 prisons across the United States and a lot of women
3 are being left out of those programs. And as we
4 know a lot of black women are the heads of
5 households. So if they are... if they're unable to
6 have a household for their children and for
7 themselves then what does that mean for generations
8 of that family. And also for young people who are
9 pregnant or parenting who may find themselves
10 homeless after telling their parents that they are...
11 you know their parents or their guardians that they
12 are... are pregnant and parenting they're often
13 homeless and because of their age they are unable
14 to find housing and because they are children with
15 children they're unable to find shelters that will
16 take them and their children at the same time.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you. That's
18 something we must look into. I knew it was
19 something. Thank you.

20 KATHARINE BODDE: And I... I would
21 actually agree with the housing situation
22 especially for victims of domestic violence which
23 is really a growing problem. I think the New York
24 Times article about this woman who was killed by
25 her husband was just you know one example of you

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2 know that problem that has grown and grown in the
3 city. I've been a volunteer with the New York Asian
4 Women's Center which runs a hotline and shelters
5 for women and there's just no question, there's
6 just not enough beds, there's not enough residences
7 for women who have decided they want to leave but
8 they just have no other choice because there's no
9 place for them to go. So I think homelessness and
10 you know and shelters in general are... there's so
11 few of them but for I think this particular
12 population it's really critical that... and it can
13 save their lives basically.

14 DANIELLE CASTALDI-MICCA: I would also
15 add and I speak specifically from a reproductive
16 health perspective. New York City has some of the
17 most extreme disparities in maternal mortality
18 rates in the country. Women in the South Bronx are
19 the most likely to die in child birth in the US.
20 And they have rates that mirror war-torn
21 impoverished third world nations. And that speaks I
22 think to the tremendous disparities in availability
23 of healthcare and availability of prenatal care and
24 availability of abortion services in New York City.
25 And I think that those public health indicators

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2 show very clearly disparities along racial and..
3 economic lines, borough lines... It's very clear
4 where people are not getting the services that they
5 need.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you. That
7 is very important just to give a little... at
8 Brownsville Recreation Center First Lady McCray is
9 going to do a baby shower for women, young women,
10 so that is going to be very phenomenal that our
11 young women could get health care, resources, to
12 make sure that they are well taken care of. And I'm
13 glad you brought that up. And one other thing that
14 was very alarming you said was that disparity is
15 in... they... they're helping more men than women
16 coming out of incarceration. That is very
17 interesting that we would definitely have to do
18 that. Because we do have to think about more women
19 are going to jail now and I think we have to put
20 something in place that being a chair I know we
21 could talk about that. Because that is... I think
22 it's just falling through the crack right now so
23 thank you for bringing that up. I'm looking forward
24 to working on that. Thank you. And thank you Madam
25 Chair.

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2 CHAIRPERSON CUMBO: I see Council Member
3 Mealy is coming up with some additional ideas for
4 committee hearings right now as we speak. No that's
5 what these hearings are for. So I really want to
6 thank you all so much for taking time out of your
7 day because I know how hard it is to do the
8 advocacy work, to live the advocacy work, and then
9 to have to take time away from the advocacy work to
10 do additional advocacy work. So I think you all so
11 much for your testimony today. I look forward..
12 looking very much forward to the passage of this
13 particular piece of legislation. Your testimonies
14 have certainly helped to strengthen it. And you've
15 let us know that we have some additional homework
16 that we need to do in order to move this forward in
17 an equitable way. So thank you so very much for
18 today. I want to thank the Sergeant at Arms. I want
19 to thank Annita Kilowan [sp?] and Joan Pavoni for
20 all of their help today. Thank you Council Member
21 Mealy for remaining and thank you all for being
22 here today. Thank you so much. This meeting is
23 adjourned.

24 [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 April 30, 2016