

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON GENERAL WELFARE

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July 23, 2015
Start: 10:22 a.m.
Recess: 11:33 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E:

STEPHEN T. LEVIN
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Annabel Palma
Fernando Cabrera
Ruben Wills
Donovan J. Richards
Vanessa L. Gibson
Corey D. Johnson
Carlos Menchaca
Ritchie J. Torres
Paul A. Vallone

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

CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Good morning

everybody. I am Council Member Stephen Levin, Chair of the Council's Committee on General Welfare. Today we are going to be voting on two important pieces of legislation affecting adult protective services program at the Human Resources Administration, proposed Int. No. 89-A, sponsored by myself at the request of the Manhattan Borough President, Gale Brewer and proposed Int. 830-A, sponsored by Council Member Paul Vallone and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

I wanna thank my colleagues who have joined me this morning, Council Member Corey Johnson of Manhattan, Council Member Vanessa Gibson of the Bronx, Council Member Paul Vallone of Queens, honorary member of the committee today, Council Member Ritchie Torres of the Bronx; Council Member Donovan Richards of Queens.

APS provides a critical service in New York City, providing case management and assistance to adults, primarily seniors who are mentally and/or physically impaired, unable to manage their own resources, carry out the activities of daily living or protect themselves from abuse, neglect,

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2 exploitation or other hazardous situations without
3 assistance from others and do not have anyone willing
4 and able to responsibly provide them assistance. APS
5 caseworkers step in to care for individuals when
6 there is no one else.

7 The first bill, Int. 89, requires HRA to
8 provide semiannual reports regarding referrals to
9 Adult Protective Services; these reports will provide
10 the Council, advocates and the public with
11 information regarding total number of referrals APS
12 receives, the number of referred individuals who were
13 determined ineligible for services, disaggregated by
14 reasons such individuals were determined ineligible,
15 a general description of the source of the referrals
16 and the Council District Community Board and zip code
17 of the referred individuals. With this information
18 we will know about how individuals are coming to APS,
19 where they live and what needs they have, which will
20 in turn help us develop the appropriate amount and
21 type of services.

22 The second bill, which I will ask Council
23 Member Vallone to speak on, Int. 830, mandates
24 training for certain employees of the City of New
25 York and City-contracted agencies on adult protective

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2 services. This bill will help City employees who
3 regularly come into contact with senior to better
4 recognize when somebody may need APS' assistance and
5 how to get the individual connected with those
6 services.

7 I urge my colleagues on this committee to
8 vote yes on both pieces of legislation; I wanna give
9 a special acknowledgment to Manhattan Borough
10 President Gale Brewer for leading the way on Int. 89
11 and her greater partnership, not only for many years
12 as a member of the General Welfare Committee, but
13 carrying that on in remarkable fashion as our
14 Manhattan Borough President, so thanks so much to the
15 Borough President for that. I will now ask my
16 colleague Paul Vallone to speak on Int. 830 as the
17 lead sponsor.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you, Chair
19 Levin and thank you to the committee for making me an
20 honorary member today; I appreciate it.

21 Not too long ago The Speaker and I sat
22 down with our fellow council members and we created
23 this task force to look at senior issues in the City
24 of New York and today's bills, Chair Levin's and
25 mine, as well as everyone who's had part of it,

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2 really were just the first steps to tackle that,
3 'cause APS hasn't been looked at in over seven years
4 by the Council and we finally took a good look at how
5 we can make some hard changes and help them with
6 their overwhelming demand and caseload and today's
7 bills do that, by biannual trainings and asking where
8 the referrals are coming from are the first steps to
9 determine how you can reform and make better; you
10 just can't put layers of legislation without finding
11 out what the issue is. So I thank the committee for
12 going forward with these two bills; we also had a lot
13 of elder abuse issues come forward, so also on
14 today's Stated you're gonna have resolutions in
15 Albany calling for reforms on elder abuse and
16 financial abuse, which is the leading cause of elder
17 abuse in the City of New York, to force financial
18 institutions to give banking records when those
19 requests to determine the elder abuse is going on.
20 So I'd like to thank The Speaker, Chair Levin,
21 Margaret Chin, Laura Popa, Andrea Vasquez, Eric
22 Bernstein, James Subudhi, Jonathan Szott and Ahmed
23 Nazaar from my office, as well as all of those that
24 helped me with today's task force to get these
25 forward, and with 830, like I said, the biannual

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2 training will now happen for APS to determine how
3 these workers can look for ways to improve services
4 and that critical safety net for any one in need.
5 APS is from the age of 18 to whenever and that's such
6 a huge mandate to take care of those and 20 years in
7 the courts I sat in the guardianship parts, watching
8 those with no one to defend to them fall through the
9 cracks and these are the type of bills that will
10 allow those persons who now the City can step up and
11 actually provide the right services. So thank you,
12 Chair.

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you, Council
14 Member Vallone and thank you for your leadership on
15 leading the Council to address these issues at APS
16 and that is going to continue on an ongoing basis and
17 we look forward to continuing to focus on this issue
18 throughout this term, ensuring that seniors and those
19 that qualify for APS services are not taken advantage
20 of and are not as vulnerable anymore here in New York
21 City, but that requires the political leadership and
22 courage and so I thank you very much for that.

23 I wanna acknowledge as well Committee
24 staff Tanya Cyrus, Dojani [sp?] Sempora [sp?] and
25 Andrea Vasquez as well for their work on these bills.

2 And with that I will ask for a vote on both pieces,
3 Int. 89-A and 830-A and I encourage my colleagues to
4 vote aye on both.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
6 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on General
7 Welfare, Introductions 89-A and 830-A, items are
8 coupled. Chair Levin.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: I vote aye on all.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK: Richards.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Vote aye.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Gibson.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: With
14 congratulations to Chair Levin, as well as Council
15 Member Vallone, I proudly vote aye on all.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Johnson.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Congratulations
18 to my friend Paul Vallone. I vote aye on all.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK: Torres.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Congratulations
21 to my colleague Paul Vallone. I vote aye on all.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the
23 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
24 both items have been adopted.

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CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: We're gonna keep the roll on these items open, but I believe that the next committee is going to commence, so thank you all very much for coming out. Take care.

[background comments]

[gavel]

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Committee on General Welfare, Council Member Wills.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote now Committee on General Welfare is 6 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

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 July 27, 2015