

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

----- X

October 29, 2025
Start: 10:50 a.m.
Recess: 10:58 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - 8TH FLOOR - HEARING
ROOM 3

B E F O R E: Farrah N. Louis, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Tiffany Cabán
Jennifer Gutiérrez
Kevin C. Riley
Inna Vernikov

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Testing one, two, one,
3 two. Today's date is October 29th, 2025. Today's vote
4 is on Committee on Women and Gender Equity. Being
5 recorded in HR3 by Keith Polite.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and
7 welcome to the New York City Council Committee on
8 Women and Gender Equity.

9 Please place your phone on silent or
10 vibrate mode.

11 Chair Louis, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [GAVEL] Good morning,
13 everyone. My name is Farrah Louis, and I'm the chair
14 of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity. Today,
15 the Committee will vote on two pieces of legislation.
16 Intro. 1285-A, sponsored by Council Member Gutiérrez,
17 amending the Administrative Code of the City of New
18 York in relation to a citywide doula program. And
19 Intro. 1393, sponsored by Deputy Speaker Ayala,
20 amending the Administrative Code of the City of New
21 York in relation to an education campaign on healthy
22 living and managing chronic diseases during and after
23 pregnancy.

24 First, I would like to acknowledge my
25 Colleagues who are present, Council Member Cabán,

2 Riley, and Gutiérrez. Thank you all for being here on
3 this day.

4 I am proud to support 1285-A, and I
5 applaud Council Member Gutiérrez for her earnest
6 resolve in stewarding this bill. The citywide doula
7 initiative has achieved major health milestones since
8 its launch in 2022 and made important strides towards
9 better health outcomes for Black and Hispanic
10 birthing people across the city. The initiative is
11 working to increase access to trained doulas,
12 providing continuous support during and after
13 childbirth for families in under-resourced
14 neighborhoods. This legislation establishes the
15 program by law and takes a critical step towards
16 achieving birth equity for all New Yorkers.

17 Now I would like to invite the bill
18 sponsor of the legislation, Council Member Gutiérrez,
19 to provide remarks.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Thank you,
21 Chair. It's deeply meaningful for me to be voting
22 today and to pass the Citywide Doula Program Act to
23 make comprehensive and necessary initiative permanent
24 just two years after I was honored to pass the bill
25 that codified the pilot program. For years, doulas

1 across the city have stepped up, given their time,
2 their wisdom, and their care many times for free.
3 They've taught me, they've pushed me, and they've
4 helped me see how this system could be better. This
5 bill is for them and it belongs to them. When we
6 first launched the pilot in 2022, we said, let's see
7 what happens when we give people the support they
8 deserve and advocates that are there to promote the
9 needs of a pregnant person. Outcomes improved. The
10 Comptroller's audit of the DOHMH report shared that
11 there were lower rates of C-sections, lower rates of
12 low birth weight and preterm births than the citywide
13 average. And there were zero reported pregnancy
14 associated deaths among program clients for over two
15 years. That's an amazing, amazing stat. And that is
16 transformation and proof that investing dollars in
17 women's health improves our entire public health
18 system. So today with Intro. 1285, we're saying this
19 work is not a pilot. It is not a program dependent on
20 one mayor or one budget year. It is a right. Every
21 birthing person, especially Black, Brown, immigrant
22 and low-income mothers deserve a trained advocate in
23 the room. And thanks to the doulas who never stopped
24 showing up, who give me a hard time all the time, who

2 kept teaching us and believing in what was possible.
3 We are here today and we did this together and we'll
4 keep building a system where safe births are not a
5 privilege, but a promise. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council
7 Member.

8 Finally, I would like to thank my own
9 Staff and Members of the Women and Gender Equity
10 Committee Staff, Senior Committee Counsel, Julia
11 Goldsmith-Pinkham, and Legislative Policy Analyst
12 Katie Salina, who worked to prepare this hearing.

13 Clerk, we are ready for the vote, and he
14 is on his way so, everyone, please pause.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: William
16 Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call vote, Committee on
17 Women and Gender Equity. Both items are coupled.

18 Chair Louis.

19 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I vote aye on all.
20 Just want to thank Council Member Gutiérrez for
21 keeping the pace on the doula initiative for the City
22 of New York. Appreciate you.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
24 you. Riley.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Aye.

1 COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

6

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Cabán.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:

5 Gutiérrez.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Vernikov.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: With a

10 vote of five in the affirmative, zero in the

11 negative, and no abstentions, both items have been

12 adopted by the Committee.

13 Madam Chair, that is a full Committee.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

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 November 1, 2025