

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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April 11, 2023  
Start: 9:40 a.m.  
Recess: 10:12 a.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Lynn C. Schulman, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joann Ariola  
Charles Barron  
Oswald Feliz  
Crystal Hudson  
Julie Menin  
Mercedes Narcisse  
Marjorie Velazquez  
Kalman Yeger

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. This is a  
3 microphone check for the Committee on Health. Today's  
4 date is April 11, 2023. Located in the Committee  
5 Room. Recording done by Pedro Lugo.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and  
7 welcome to the Committee on Health.

8 At this time, we ask if you could please  
9 place phones on vibrate or silent mode. Thank you.

10 Chair, we are ready to begin.

11 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: [GAVEL] Good  
12 morning. I am Council Member Lynn Schulman, Chair of  
13 the Committee on Health.

14 I want to thank you all for joining us  
15 this morning.

16 Today, the Committee on Health is voting  
17 on two important pieces of legislation, Proposed  
18 Introductions 4A and 675A.

19 Proposed Intro 4A by Deputy Speaker Ayala  
20 would prohibit pet shops in New York City from  
21 selling guinea pigs. Importantly, the bill preserves  
22 the ability of animal shelters and animal rescue  
23 groups to hold guinea pigs for adoption. I'm a proud  
24 co-prime Sponsor this legislation. Guinea pigs should  
25 be adopted, not sold in pet stores. During the height

2 of COVID, people bought guinea pigs as pets and then  
3 abandoned them in droves when they discovered the  
4 significant challenges in taking care of them. As I  
5 said, I am proud to be a co-prime Sponsor of today's  
6 legislation which will bring relief to overwhelmed  
7 animal shelters and help keep these sensitive animals  
8 safe. I have a little doll of a guinea pig here. I'm  
9 touching this. Most guinea pigs you can't touch.  
10 They're very sensitive.

11 Proposed Intro 675A by Council Member  
12 Hudson would require the creation of a Telemedicine  
13 Accessibility Plan to improve the availability and  
14 accessibility of portable monitoring devices and  
15 telehealth devices for populations that could be  
16 better served by telemedicine services. Do you have  
17 any additional remarks?

18 Thank you to the amazing advocates  
19 joining us today for your tireless efforts. Thank you  
20 to the Committee Staff for their work on this  
21 hearing, Committee Counsels Chris Pepe and Sara  
22 Sucher, Policy Analyst Mahnoor Butt, Financial  
23 Analyst Danielle Glants, as well as my team, Chief-  
24 of-Staff Jonathan Boucher, and Legislative Director  
25 Kevin McAleer.

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2 We will now move to voting. Thank you.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good  
4 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call  
5 vote Committee on Health on Proposed Introductions 4A  
6 and 675A. Items are coupled. Chair Schulman.

7 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Feliz.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Permission to  
10 explain my vote.

11 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: I vote aye, and  
13 also growing up I had a lot of different animals, a  
14 lot of different pets, including guinea pigs that I  
15 encourage everyone to adopt. They make great pets and  
16 great friends. Thank you. Aye on all.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Menin.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Narcisse.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ariola.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Permission to  
25 explain my vote.

2 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Yes, please.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Thank you. On  
4 Proposed Intro number 4A, it seems like an  
5 overreaction to an increase in guinea pig intakes by  
6 shelters during the pandemic when so many people were  
7 abandoning pets or giving them up for adoption. This  
8 was likely temporary and could be better addressed by  
9 an adoption and awareness campaign rather than an  
10 outright ban. Therefore, I am a no on Proposed Intro  
11 4A and aye on all the rest.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
13 you. By a vote of six in the affirmative, zero in the  
14 negative, and no abstentions, Proposed Introduction  
15 675A is adopted by the Committee, and with five in  
16 the affirmative, one in the negative, and no  
17 abstentions Proposed Intro 4A is also adopted by the  
18 Committee.

19 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: We're going to  
20 leave the voting open for a little bit so that other  
21 Members that aren't here can come in and vote. Thank  
22 you.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:  
24 Continuation roll call, Committee on Health. Council  
25 Member Barron.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye on all.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
4 you.

5 Continuation roll, Committee on Health.  
6 Council Member Velazquez.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Aye on all.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
9 you.

10 Continuation roll call, Committee on  
11 Health. Council Member Yeger.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I vote aye on  
13 Intro. 675 and no on Intro. 4. Thank you.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Final  
15 vote, Committee on Health. Proposed Introduction 675  
16 is adopted by the Committee with nine in the  
17 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstention,  
18 and Proposed Introduction 4A with seven in the  
19 affirmative, two in the negative, and no abstentions.  
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: With that, I'm  
22 going to close the Health Committee hearing for April  
23 11th. Thank you. [GAVEL]

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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 15, 2023