

**Testimony of  
Gregory P. Anderson, Commissioner  
New York City Department of Sanitation**

**Hearing before the New York City Council  
Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management  
Tuesday, May 19, 2026 1:00 P.M.**

**Oversight Hearing: Street Cleanliness**

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Good afternoon Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management. I am Gregory Anderson, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Sanitation, and I am joined today by Chief of Department Anthony Pennolino and by Rebecca Kriegman, Assistant Commissioner for Policy and Planning.

Every New Yorker deserves not just a clean street, but a clean city. For decades, public space cleaning programs have been a bureaucratic patchwork, with confusing responsibilities that facilitated finger-pointing and inaction. As with so many other issues, the Mamdani administration is rejecting this status quo, and as part of the New Era for New York City, the Department of Sanitation (“DSNY”) is taking an expansive view of what it means to keep this city clean.

It isn’t just about emptying litter baskets more frequently or clearing dump-outs more quickly or enforcing our cleanliness laws more effectively. It’s about understanding that every part of this city is impacted by sanitation issues and services, from street sweeping to enforcement to public education.

In the coming years, the members of this Council and the people of your districts will see that change, will feel it, *will even smell it*, as we bring equitable cleaning resources to every part of the five boroughs.

We need New Yorkers to be our partners in this effort — to keep their property clean, to pick up after their dogs, to throw their trash in the litter basket. And largely, they do.

However, I need to address one area where many New Yorkers often do not do their part, and where our hands are very much tied.

The street sweeper is among our most effective tools for keeping streets clean, picking up as much as 1,500 pounds of trash, leaves and street debris in a single shift. And they are out across our city six days a week.

Street cleaning regulations, known as “Alternate Side Parking” or “ASP,” exist to give our street sweepers access to the curb. For 90 minutes once or twice a week, regulations require drivers to move their cars to allow our street sweepers to do their jobs. If you take a look around neighborhoods across the city, you will see that unfortunately, far too many New Yorkers who

own cars have become accustomed to disregarding these basic rules and leaving their personal property occupying valuable public space, creating dirty streets in the process.

Simply put, the current system is broken.

The risk of enforcement, done manually by Sanitation Supervisors and Traffic Enforcement Agents, is minimal. The price of non-compliance, combined with the low risk of getting caught, is a cheaper option for drivers than the opportunity cost of moving their car or paying for off-street parking. Meanwhile, good neighbors who sweep their properties and who obey ASP regulations are left angry, frustrated, even irate, when fellow drivers leave their cars on the street with no concern for the cleanliness of the neighborhood.

During a survey of 35 street cleaning routes in April, DSNY found that on average nearly 500 vehicles remained illegally parked per route. That means that on over 1,200 routes each week, nearly 500,000 cars violate street cleaning regulations and prevent us from cleaning more than 3,000 miles of streets.

To clean your neighborhoods and change the culture of filth on our streets, that must change. Last week, I was in Albany asking legislators to give New York City the authority to enforce against this practice via automated enforcement. A street sweeper camera enforcement program has passed the State Senate multiple years in a row, but stalled in the Assembly.

Our message to Albany is clear: Let. Us. Clean.

Authorizing automated enforcement by DSNY's street sweepers will lead to more reliable and consistent enforcement. This will encourage compliance and improve DSNY's access to the curb, ensuring cleaner neighborhoods.

That is not to say we want to issue more summonses. I would be thrilled if we could go through a day without issuing a single ASP summons at all. With this new program, New Yorkers will only receive a summons if they actually block the sweeper, preventing it from cleaning our streets.

And as we get better compliance and cleaner streets, we will be able to reevaluate the current street cleaning regulations—potentially reducing the frequency and duration of ASP regulations. This will lead to cleaner streets and a more convenient way for New Yorkers to do their part, benefitting all New Yorkers, from Jamaica to Jackson Heights, and from Eastchester to the East Village.

I ask every City Council member who wants cleaner streets to put their strong, vocal support behind this bill. Call your colleagues in the State legislature. Tell them to "Let Us Clean." We thank you for your advocacy in support of this state legislation.

This hearing also includes legislation that touches on a number of topics related to street cleanliness.

Several bills seek to address the fact that far too many New Yorkers with dogs simply fail to pick up after them. This practice is *disgusting*. It is *despicable*. It is *deplorable*. To New Yorkers, I say this: if you fail to pick up after your dog, you are showing the utmost disrespect for your neighbors and the community you live in.

Speaker Menin's bill, Intro. 857, would require DSNY to install and fill dog waste bag dispensers on all public litter baskets. I am proud to share that our pilot of these dispensers is going well, with dispensers now affixed to baskets in parts of the Bronx, Manhattan, and Brooklyn. In all cases, though, DSNY needs a maintenance partner — an elected official, a Business Improvement District, or a community group — to commit to refill the bags when they run out. DSNY simply does not have the resources to routinely restock the bags at any kind of scale. And what could be worse than walking your dog, expecting to find bags available and finding an empty dispenser.

Intro. 872, sponsored by Council Member Hanif, would require DSNY and DOHMH to implement a public education campaign regarding dog waste. We are eager to work with the Council to increase awareness around this issue, but, again, we do not have the resources for a broad marketing and outreach campaign.

On Chair Sanchez's bill, Intro. 906 regarding removal of dog waste, DSNY shares the Council's frustration with the repeat offenders who make certain blocks unwalkable. However, we have concerns about the practical application of this requirement if 311 complaint volumes were to increase substantially.

Intro. 883, also sponsored by Chair Sanchez, would establish an office of sidewalk and roadway café sanitation at DSNY. We agree with the Council on the importance of upholding cleanliness standards for outdoor dining setups. I'm happy to say that DSNY has a collaborative relationship with DOT around this topic, and the outdoor dining program has clear requirements regarding cleanliness and sanitation. As the Council considers expanding this program year-round, we are working with DOT and the Mayor's Office to identify additional requirements to ensure that sidewalk and roadway dining setups do not create cleanliness conditions in our commercial corridors.

On Council Member Hankerson's bill, Intro. 899 regarding construction and demolition waste, we strongly feel that this industry needs more and better regulation. Shady contractors often dump waste illegally in our parks and neighborhoods, and those who do should be severely punished. However, this is a very complicated issue, and we want to better understand the implications that new requirements will have for all construction projects, including badly needed affordable housing. We see this bill as the beginning of discussions around this important topic and look forward to working with the Council, our partner agencies, and the contractor community to develop appropriate regulations.

Council Member Gennaro's bill, Intro. 736, builds on the "Skip the Stuff" program that the Council passed several years ago. We support efforts to reduce unnecessary waste whenever and wherever possible, and we are happy to support this bill.

The last two bills have DSNY's very strong support: Intro. 31, sponsored by Council Member Abreu, and Intro. 92, sponsored by Council Member Brewer.

Intro. 31 would authorize DSNY to expand the requirement to separate compostable material to all businesses that produce food waste, fighting rats and keeping food waste out of landfills. This bill is a critical step in reducing the amount of food waste sent to landfills. It will also save businesses money, as the Commercial Waste Zones program requires carters to provide organics collection at a reduced rate compared to trash collection. We also want to ensure that the bill prioritizes the donation of edible food.

Intro. 92 undoes a grave mistake made by a prior City Council in prohibiting the use of stickers to deter drivers from violating ASP rules. We welcome any tool that will help us ensure our sweepers can effectively clean the city's streets. This bill is a great local counterpart to the state legislation I discussed earlier, which is our main focus and priority.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am now happy to answer any questions you have about specific cleanliness programs or needs in your districts. Together, we really can have a cleaner city – we just need to have the will to get it done.



**SUBMISSION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL  
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT  
RE: INTRO 31 - REQUIREMENTS FOR HANDLING COMMERCIAL**

May 22, 2026

My name is Eric A. Goldstein and I am New York City Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). NRDC is a non-profit environmental organization, active on a wide range of public health, natural resource protection, and quality-of-life issues around the globe, across the nation, and here in New York, where we opened our first office in 1970. A major regional priority for our staff has been to reform solid waste in New York. Our overarching goal is to transform waste handling here from primary reliance on landfilling and incineration to making waste prevention, composting, recycling, and equity the cornerstones of 21<sup>st</sup> century waste policy.

I am sorry to have been in Albany on Tuesday and to have missed the Committee's hearing. But I am submitting this statement to convey NRDC's views on one of the topics of this hearing – Councilmember Shaun Abreu's Intro 31, which would expand the categories of businesses subject to requirements for the disposal of commercial organic waste.

In short, NRDC strongly supports the proposed legislation. Organics -- food scraps, yard waste, and food soiled paper are the single largest portion of New York's residential and commercial waste stream. The overwhelming bulk of these wastes are sent to landfills and incinerators. But when organics are buried in landfills, they emit methane -- a very potent global warming gas. (Landfills are the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest source of methane emissions in the United States.) And when organics are added to incinerators, their high moisture content interferes with the burning process, generating dioxins and additional ground level pollutants. Making matters worse, many of these landfills and incinerators are located in low-income and/or Black and brown communities, adding to the environmental burdens in those neighborhoods. Fortunately, there is an ideal disposal route for commercial organics generated in New York City. They should be brought to composting facilities and turned into finished compost, which serves as a natural fertilizer and soil enhancer, and helps crops, trees, plants, and city greenery grow healthy. Turning organics into compost also economically sound as successful composting programs can actually save money over the long term since dropping organics at composting operations can cost less per ton than treating those organics as waste and transporting them to incinerators or landfills.

Local Law 31 is wisely designed to continue to strengthen New York's commitment to composting. It would direct the Commissioner of Sanitation to require certain commercial food service operations to separate their organic discards for composting (or such other process as the commissioner may approve of) and to phase in the separate collection of these commercially generated organics as the city's new commercial waste zone program moves forward. Among the commercial organics waste generators that would be covered by the new requirements are

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# NRDC

certain catering establishments, food manufacturing and food preparation operations, food wholesalers, retail food stores, stadiums, and certain temporary public events like street fairs. This legislation would move the city forward to a more sustainable and environmentally just waste policy by requiring commercial generators of organics to meet requirements similar to those that New York City residents are now obligated to meet with respect to the separation of valuable organics from their other discarded wastes. NRDC strongly supports the enactment of Intro 31.

We have one final recommendation. We urge the City Council -- either as part of this introduction or in a separate bill -- to enhance food rescue opportunities for city residents. Redirecting edible food away from any disposal route and to programs that will help feed food insecure New Yorkers is by far the best possible approach for organics. With more than a million New Yorkers in need of food assistance, and with hundreds of tons a day of wholesome edible food being discarded by restaurants, retail outlets, and commercial kitchens, the solution is clear. We recommend that the Council move forward to require that all large commercial food establishments adopt plans for the distribution of edible food that they would otherwise discard to New York City-based food service organizations. Such a provision would advance both the city's solid waste disposal objectives and take a bite out of the affordability problem that so many New Yorkers are confronting. Developing such a program should be a top City Council priority this summer so that legislation can be advanced this Fall.

We stand ready to work with Speaker Menin, Majority Leader Abreu, Chair Sanchez, and members of this Committee to get Intro 31 and a major new food rescue program across the finish line. And we thank the Council for its continuing leadership on these issues.

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REBNY Testimony | May 21, 2026

# The Real Estate Board of New York to The New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management Regarding Proposed Sanitation Legislation

The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) is the City's leading real estate trade association representing commercial, residential, and institutional property owners, builders, managers, investors, brokers, salespeople, and other organizations and individuals active in New York City real estate. REBNY appreciates the opportunity to submit comments to the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management regarding street cleanliness in New York City and several related legislative proposals under consideration.

REBNY members are deeply committed to maintaining clean, safe, and vibrant neighborhoods across the five boroughs. Property owners invest significant resources in building maintenance, waste management, and compliance with City sanitation rules, and play an essential role in supporting the City's cleanliness goals. We have the following comments on the specific bills.

**Bill Number:** Intro 31-2026

**Subject:** Intro. No. 31 would expand the categories of businesses that may be designated by the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) to comply with requirements related to the separation and disposal of commercial organic waste and would require the designation of additional covered establishments. Any covered establishment so designated would be required to comply with requirements regarding separation and disposal of organic waste when the commercial waste zone in which the establishment is located goes into effect, or within 6 months from DSNY's designation if the commercial waste zone was already in effect.

**Sponsors:** Council Members Abreu, Nurse, Louis, Brewer, Brooks-Powers, Hanif and J. Sanchez

REBNY recognizes the importance of diverting organic waste from landfills and supports the City's long-term sustainability goals. However, expanding the scope of covered establishments will have operational impacts on commercial buildings, mixed-use properties, and small retail establishments. For this last category, which were carved out of the original Council legislation, they often lack the space and operational capacity to safely compost food waste, while increased fines will only make it more difficult to run these businesses. For commercial and mixed-use properties, REBNY urges sufficient lead time, clear guidance, coordination with the Commercial Waste Zones program, and outreach to ensure successful implementation. REBNY also supports the existing law requirement to show prior to such an expansion that there is sufficient capacity at regional composting facilities to handle additional organics that would be collected through the proposed expansion of the program.

**Bill:** Intro 883-2026

**Subject:** Intro. No. 883 establishes an Office of Sidewalk and Roadway Café Sanitation within DSNY. The office would receive 311 service requests relating to sidewalk and roadway cafe cleanliness issues, such as trash, debris, vermin, foul odors, food scraps, and other offensive material. The office would establish lists of sidewalk and roadway cafes that receive a certain number of DSNY violations or 311 service requests and would be required to share such lists with the Department of Transportation. It would also be required to submit a report to the Council and the Mayor and conduct outreach to sidewalk and roadway cafe operators regarding compliance with sanitation and cleanliness standards. This bill would enable owners to call in, and be subject to, more 311 complaints regarding sidewalk and roadway cafe issues.

**Sponsors:** Council Members J. Sanchez and Louis

REBNY supports the intent of this legislation, as outdoor dining has introduced sanitation challenges that require coordinated oversight. However, responsibility for compliance should remain with café operators, and property owners should not be held responsible nor be issued violations for conditions outside of their control. At the same time, we would also point out that existing law provides ample enforcement mechanisms related to sanitation issues and sidewalk cafes, and adding a new office could be redundant and would take up scarce City resources.

**Bill:** Intro 899-2026

**Subject:** This bill would require the applicants for permits related to the construction of new buildings and the alteration or demolition of existing buildings to submit to the Department

of Buildings (DOB) a construction waste management and disposal plan. This plan must include, at the least, identifying licensed haulers to be used, identifying disposal or recycling facilities to receive construction and demolition waste, routes licensed haulers will use to transport construction and demolition waste to disposal and recycling facilities, and an estimate of construction and demolition waste to be generated. In addition, as part of the sign-off requirements for a permit, the permit holder must submit documentation to demonstrate compliance with the construction waste management and disposal plan, including but not limited to licensed hauler receipts and licensed facility manifests.

Prior to sign-off on a permit, this bill would require DOB, in conjunction with the Department of Sanitation and Department of Environmental Protection, to verify the permit holder's compliance with such plan. Finally, this bill would allow DOB to issue a minimum civil penalty of \$1,000 for failure to comply with the plan, and it would allow DOB and the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to suspend or revoke contractor licenses for repeated failure to adhere to such plans.

**Sponsors:** Council Members Hankerson and Louis

REBNY supports efforts to ensure responsible handling, diversion, and recycling of construction and demolition waste. However, Intro 899-2026 is overly prescriptive in ways that would impose significant administrative burdens, create compliance uncertainty, and risk delaying construction timelines without clear corresponding environmental benefits. Specifically, the bill appears to mandate highly detailed documentation, tracking, and verification requirements at multiple stages of the construction process. These requirements go beyond prevailing industry practices and existing regulatory frameworks. Rather than establishing performance-based standards, the legislation dictates specific compliance mechanisms such as documentation formats, verification steps, and interagency sign-offs, thereby limiting flexibility for project teams to implement efficient, site-appropriate waste management strategies.

The bill also layers multiple agency oversight responsibilities, particularly involving the Department of Buildings, Department of Sanitation, and Department of Environmental Protection, without clearly defining roles, timelines, or coordination protocols. This creates a risk of duplicative review, inconsistent enforcement, and project delays, especially in the absence of centralized guidance or standardized procedures across agencies. These provisions are in direct tension with the City's broader efforts to streamline development processes and reduce unnecessary regulatory burden. For example:

- The City's SPEED (Simplifying, Prioritizing, Expediting, and Enhancing Development) initiative is intended to reduce permit review timelines and eliminate

duplicative approvals; however, the bill introduces additional preconditions and multi-agency verification steps that would extend permitting timelines rather than shorten them.

- Ongoing DOB modernization efforts, including digital permitting and streamlined plan review processes, are designed to create predictable and transparent approval pathways; this bill would reintroduce uncertainty by requiring discretionary or cross-agency validation of compliance materials without clear service-level timelines.
- The City Council's broader push to reduce construction costs and facilitate housing production is undermined by the bill's administrative and compliance burdens, which would add new soft costs for tracking, reporting, and legal risk management—particularly for smaller developers and contractors.
- Recent efforts to centralize accountability within lead agencies (such as DOB for construction oversight) are complicated by the bill's diffusion of responsibility across multiple agencies, increasing the likelihood of conflicting directives and delays.
- The City has prioritized clear guidance and upfront rulemaking to support compliance; however, this bill contemplates enforcement mechanisms prior to the issuance of standardized guidance, creating compliance risk in the absence of clear, implementable rules.

In addition, the legislation appears to require proof of compliance with construction waste management and disposal plans as a condition for permit issuance or sign-off. This requirement is impractical as drafted, as it effectively requires demonstration of compliance prior to the full implementation of such plans. In practice, compliance with waste diversion and disposal requirements can only be verified over the course of construction activities, not in advance of them.

Further, the bill introduces enforcement mechanisms, including penalties and potential licensing consequences, that may be triggered by procedural or documentation deficiencies rather than substantive waste management non-compliance. This approach risks penalizing administrative missteps rather than incentivizing improved waste management outcomes. Taken together, these provisions introduce additional cost, delay, and uncertainty into the construction process, which is inconsistent with the City's broader goals to streamline permitting, reduce friction, and support housing production.

We recommend that the Council work with the construction industry to improve this legislation by aligning it with current best practices, strengthening interagency coordination, and ensuring clear guidance to industry prior to enforcement. REBNY would be glad to work with the Council on this matter.

**Bill:** Intro 906-2026

**Subject:** Intro 906 would require DSNY to act when at least 3 complaints are received about dog waste left on a City block and may result in violations issued to property owners.

**Sponsors:** Council Members J. Sanchez, Louis and Morano

We agree that the failure of New Yorkers to clean up after their dogs is a significant quality of life issue. However, the legal responsibility to clean up dog waste rests entirely on the dog owner, so we are opposed to assigning liability to property owners, who do not control public behavior, much less that of an individual's pet. In reality dog waste is often left in front of buildings by people who do not even reside in that building. Therefore, enforcement should focus entirely on the individuals responsible and be paired with public education.

REBNY recognizes that identifying and enforcing against individuals who do not clean up after their dog is a difficult thing to do. However, there are replicable models to doing such that in cities such as London, Jerusalem, Naples, and the greater Madrid region. These cities are piloting enforcement programs that use DNA to find and fine non-compliant dog owners. In the United States, these efforts have largely been driven by neighborhood associations and similar entities.

Typically, in these programs, the owner submits a cheek swab from the dog upon registration, and the DNA from the swab can be compared to DNA from any dog waste left in public spaces. When there is a match, the owner can then be levied a significant violation for not cleaning up after their dog. It is our understanding that the original DNA test costs around \$40-\$100. We recommend that New York City pilot such an effort in the neighborhoods most impacted by this problem.

Thank you again for accepting REBNY's testimony on these matters and we look forward to working with the Council to resolve our concerns.

**CONTACT:**

**Dev Awasthi**

*Vice President of New York City Legislative Affairs*  
Real Estate Board of New York  
dawasthi@rebny.com

**Daniel Avery**

*Director of Policy*  
Real Estate Board of New York  
davery@rebny.com



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**Testimony from the Contractors' Association of Greater New York, Inc.  
NYC Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**May 19, 2026**

Thank you, Chair Abreu and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

I write on behalf of the Contractors' Association of Greater New York, Inc. (CAGNY). CAGNY is a multi-employer association representing Construction Managers and General Contractors in New York City. Our members build some of the largest and most complex projects in the city, including work at NYU Langone Medical Center, 2 Penn Plaza, the Shirley Chisholm Center, and 220 Central Park South.

Safety, efficiency, and compliance on jobsites throughout New York City is our members' top priority. While CAGNY appreciates the Council's commitment to improving environmental outcomes and ensuring proper waste disposal, CAGNY opposes Int. 899-2026 (Farias). The proposed legislation is unnecessary and creates duplicative oversight as the waste and removal of construction debris is already regulated by the New York City Business Integrity Commission (BIC).

In broad terms, the proposed rule would require contractors seeking permits for construction, alteration, or demolition work to submit a construction waste management and disposal plan and would require verification of compliance before permit sign-off. That approach may be well intentioned, but it risks creating a parallel process that does not address the more direct question: whether existing BIC rules for construction and demolition debris carters are being enforced effectively.

BIC already maintains a targeted regulatory framework for businesses engaged in the removal of construction and demolition debris. BIC's Class 2 Registration applies to businesses seeking to engage in waste removal resulting solely from demolition, construction, alteration, or excavation.

That registration framework is not merely ministerial. Applicants must submit an application, signed and notarized certifications and releases, and organizational documents. BIC also requires disclosure regarding current principals, employees, vehicle operators, vehicles, the nature of the work, types of waste, sites from which waste will be removed, and how and where collected waste will be disposed. Effectively, a waste management plan.

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BIC's existing process also gives the agency meaningful integrity-review authority. The required release authorizes BIC to investigate the background of the applicant and its principals, affiliates, agents, and employees.

The Class 2 process is therefore already designed to address the very businesses and activities implicated by construction and demolition waste removal. If the Council has identified instances in which waste is being illegally removed by unregistered carters, disposed of improperly, or reported inconsistently, the more effective response is to identify why current enforcement is failing to capture these issues strengthen BIC enforcement capabilities.

Rather than adopting a new Department of Buildings (DOB)-centered planning requirement, the Council should first determine whether the challenge is lack of community awareness on how to report illegal waste removal and disposal, lack of interagency information sharing, gaps in inspections, insufficient resources for BIC enforcement, or failures to pursue existing remedies against noncompliant actors. Those questions should be answered before the Council imposes another compliance layer on projects already subject to specialized oversight, not to mention impose an additional enforcement burden on an already overburdened DOB.

CAGNY supports responsible waste management and agrees that the City should ensure construction and demolition debris is handled lawfully and transparently. But Int. 899-2026 is overlays a new permit-related process on top of an existing BIC framework that already regulates the relevant waste removal businesses and requires substantial disclosure, certification, and background review for those contractors already willing and able to comply with existing regulations – in sum, while the bill has the best of intentions, the parties punished will be those already in compliance.

Moreover, Int. 899-2026 would not burden contractors alone. The costs of preparing, submitting, and updating waste management plans, and of the cross-agency verification process the bill contemplates, will inevitably be passed through to project owners, developers, and the City itself on public projects. New York City already faces one of the highest construction-cost environments in the country. Adding another layer of regulatory process will make projects more expensive to build at a time when the City has committed to making housing and development more affordable and accessible. Legislation that increases the cost of construction runs directly counter to those stated affordability goals and risks pricing out the very projects the City needs most.

For these reasons, CAGNY respectfully urges the Council not to advance Int. 899-2026 as drafted and instead to examine how to better enforce existing BIC requirements. CAGNY stands ready to work with the Council, BIC, DOB, DSNY, and other stakeholders to identify practical enforcement improvements that address any demonstrated gaps without creating a redundant regulatory process.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

*Aislinn S. McGuire*

Aislinn S. McGuire

Contractors' Association of Greater New York, Inc.



To: NYC Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

From: Melissa Barbour, Assistant Director

Date: May 21, 2026

Re: Intro. No. 899, A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to trade waste management and disposal for construction, alterations, and demolition

My name is Melissa Barbour. I am the Assistant Director of the Mechanical Contractors Association of New York. Founded in 1885, our Association is comprised of union contractors who perform installation, service, maintenance and repair of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, refrigeration and fire sprinkler systems as well as industry manufacturers and suppliers. Our members work in every type of building and occupancy throughout New York City.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Introduction 899-2026, which was heard by the Committee on Tuesday, May 19, 2026. Int. 899 requires applicants for permits related to the construction of new buildings and the alteration or demolition of existing buildings to submit to the Department of Buildings (“DOB”) a construction waste management and disposal plan, outlining measures to ensure trade waste generated by such work is properly disposed. Prior to the sign-off of a permit, this bill would require DOB, in conjunction with the Department of Sanitation and Department of Environmental Protection, to verify the permit holder’s compliance with such a plan. Finally, this bill would allow DOB to issue a minimum civil penalty of \$1,000 for failure to comply with the plan and allow DOB and the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to suspend or revoke contractor licenses for repeated failure to adhere to such plans.

We are writing to ask for further clarity regarding who this bill is intended for, and for what types of projects. As written, this bill broadly mandates that a construction waste management and disposal plan be submitted as part of any application for a new building, alteration, or demolition and does not differentiate requirements based on work type or project scope or size. For small jobs or work not associated with a general construction permit, the requirements triggered by this bill may be onerous and disproportionately expensive relative to the work being conducted.

Furthermore, we are concerned that the multi-agency sign-off requirements have the potential to create significant project hurdles and delays. We also seek clarity regarding how this bill will be enforced.

Prior to moving this bill forward, we respectfully request that the Council further consider which sites and types of work are most problematic and may require stricter waste oversight, how this bill will impact contractors as well as the potential increase in construction associated with this bill.

Thank you.

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**Comments of Justin Wood, Director of Policy of  
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest  
to the New York City Council Committee on Sanitation  
on May 18, 2026 Regarding Intro 31 of 2026**

Good morning, my name is Justin Wood, and I am the Director of Policy at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI). We are a founding member of the Transform Don't Trash NYC coalition, which for more than a decade has advocated for fundamental reform of the city's sprawling commercial waste system. Thank you, Chair Sanchez and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify today.

**We support Intro 31 (Abreu), which would expand the number of commercial establishments required to source separate and recycle organic food waste as the new commercial waste zones (CWZ) system is implemented citywide.**

Establishments like arenas, hospitals, hotels, restaurants, grocery stores, and food manufacturers generate far greater quantities of food waste – including edible food – than individual households and residential buildings. When buried in landfills, organic matter like food scraps generates methane gas – the most potent greenhouse gas and among the primary drivers of the climate crisis whose impacts we are feeling today.

Reducing, donating, and recycling far more of this material is one of the simplest and most immediate ways to fight hunger, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower the high costs of New York City's solid waste disposal and system, and to make progress toward the City and State's zero waste and climate goals.

Intro 31 would create more uniformity and simplicity in recycling rules, facilitating public education, customer service, route density and efficiency for CWZ contractors, and simplicity of enforcement for DSNY. By the time CWZ is fully implemented at the end of 2027, all food waste generating businesses including food manufacturers, arenas, restaurants, hotels will have access to organics recycling services from the three commercial haulers in each zone.

**However, we urge the Council to amend Intro 31 to require donation of edible food.**

Far too much edible food currently ends up in black bags, dumpsters, landfills, and incinerators across our City. Grocery stores, restaurants, caterers, and cafeterias should have easily accessible options to donate this food to the 1.4 million New Yorkers estimated to face food insecurity – a problem that will only worsen severe rising global food prices.

Intro 31 should be strengthened by adding a requirement that stores, restaurants, and other establishments with excess unsold edible food donate to donate this food to the public via a local food rescue or similar

organization. This would hold NYC businesses to the same standard as businesses across the rest of New York State, where food scrap generators are required to donate edible food and recycle the remaining scraps.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to reducing emissions from food waste disposal, scaled-up programs to reduce excess food production could mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, a major contributor to U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

DSNY's 2018 Implementation Plan for Commercial Waste Zones envisioned partnerships between businesses, commercial waste haulers and food rescue organizations.<sup>2</sup> With half of the city's zones due for implementation by the end of this year, a coordinated and comprehensive approach to food donation and diversion is timely and necessary.

**We further urge DSNY to plan for additional commercial composting capacity located in and near the city, and for the Council to re-introduce and pass Intro 696 of 2024 setting minimum cumulative citywide composting capacity and mandating one or more facility per borough.**

Aerobic composting facilities like DSNY's successful Fresh Kills compost site are environmentally far preferable to anaerobic co-digestion of food waste and sewage. By developing medium and large-scale compost sites that can accept both commercial and residential food and yard waste throughout the City, DSNY and CWZ partners can reduce vehicle miles travelled to distant landfills, create nutrient rich fertilizer for our city's parks, farms, and gardens, and sustain hundreds of good green local jobs.

**Finally, we support Intro 736 (Gennaro) which builds on the City's "Skip the Stuff" law (Local Law 17 of 2023).** This bill would require food vendors at street fairs and other public events to provide single-use plastics items only upon customer request, holding street fair and public space vendors to the same standard as other food businesses. The bill would also require the use of compostable single-use plastic items at public events, which would help reduce the production, landfilling, and incineration of non-biodegradable, fossil-fuel based plastics.

Sincerely,

Justin Wood  
Director of Policy  
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest  
151 West 30th Street, 11th floor  
New York, NY 10001  
jwood@nylpi.org  
(212) 244-4664

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<sup>1</sup> See Department of Environmental Conservation, "Food Donation and Food Scrap Recycling Law." <https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/recycling-composting/organic-materials-management/food-donation-scrap-recycling-law>

<sup>2</sup> DSNY, "Commercial Waste Zones: A Plan to Reform, Reroute, and Revitalize Private Carting in NYC," 2018, p. 34. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/downloads/resources/reports/cwz-implimentation-plan/cwz-implementation-plan.pdf>

*For 50 years, NYLPI has fought to protect civil rights and achieve lived equality for communities in need. Led by community priorities, we pursue health, immigrant, disability, and environmental justice. NYLPI combines the power of law, organizing, and the private bar to make lasting change where it's needed most. Our Environmental Justice Program works to eliminate the unfair burden of environmental hazards borne by low-income communities and communities of color and seeks to create a more equitable and sustainable city.*

*For more information visit: [www.nylpi.org](http://www.nylpi.org)*



**Testimony of Alia Soomro, Deputy Director for New York City Policy  
New York League of Conservation Voters  
City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management  
Oversight Hearing on Street Cleanliness in New York City  
May 19, 2026**

My name is Katelyn Villatoro and I am the New York City Policy Fellow at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV is a statewide environmental advocacy organization representing over 30,000 members in New York City. Thank you, Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee on Sanitation for the opportunity to comment.

Cleaner streets, meeting our zero waste goals, and improving the public realm must go hand in hand. We appreciated the Council's leadership when it came to passing the Zero Waste Act of 2023, part of which required residential organics recycling. We also appreciate that the Mamdani Administration [recently reinstated](#) fines for this program, which will help improve composting rates.

NYLCV supports DSNY's waste containerization efforts since it will not only reduce litter on the ground, the mounds of plastic trash bags on our sidewalks, and the rat population but increase waste diversion. As of November 2024, residential buildings with up to 9 units must put household trash out for collection after 6 p.m. in leak-proof containers that are 55-gallons or smaller and have a tight fitting lid. On June 1, 2026, these buildings must use official NYC Bins. Residential buildings with 10 to 30 units may either set out trash in these wheeled, lidded bins, or in securely-tied heavy duty black plastic bags. In the coming years, buildings with 31 or more units will be required to place waste out for collection in stationary on-street containers, known as "Empire Bins," that are placed in the parking lane by the City and assigned for sole use by a specific property, and buildings with 10 to 30 units that do not set out trash in wheeled, lidded bins will also be required to use Empire Bins. Moreover, in 2025, DSNY rolled out a waste containerization pilot project in Manhattan Community Board 9, which [resulted in fewer rat complaints](#) in the area. This pilot project is now a model for the [rollout of 1,500 containers in Brooklyn's Community Board 2](#).

**Waste containerization also has the potential to revitalize our City's public realm for public use if designed well. We strongly support the Mamdani Administration's [recent announcement](#) of six new districts to be containerized by the end of 2027, with at least one fully containerized district in each borough, and committing to fully citywide trash containerization by the end of 2031.** While we understand that New York City's cityscape and density varies widely, from 1-2 families, to 3-6 story walk-ups, to large 5 -12 story buildings to towers, NYLCV is excited for DSNY to move towards a comprehensive containerization program

that includes residential and commercial, as well as trash, recyclables, and organic waste to increase diversion rates. We also hope that a program can one day include shared building containers on the street for smaller buildings in order to preserve sidewalk space for pedestrians.

Further, waste containerization will also benefit New Yorkers financially. A report released by the [Center for Zero Waste Design](#) found that buildings with 30 units or fewer pay \$75 per unit per month to handle their residents' waste. That cost could be reduced with an on-street waste containerization solution that is shared between neighboring residential buildings on a block. An on-street solution would free up space in buildings and along sidewalks, and cut costs for waste-related labor.

When it comes to commercial waste containerization, we support the recommendations outlined in the Center for Zero Waste Design's new report, [Curb Alert!: Reimagining commercial waste containerization to better support small businesses in NYC](#). This report looks at commercial waste containerization, particularly for small businesses as DSNY rolls out Commercial Waste Zones. Consolidating waste bins on commercial corridors in the roadway, rather than on sidewalks, would enable business owners to maintain cleaner storefronts and better separate recycling and compostable waste, which is vital if we want to meet our zero waste by 2030 goal. It will also improve the public realm, ease pick-up from haulers, and improve waste diversion in Commercial Waste Zones. We hope DSNY will consider ways to plan for waste containerization as it rolls out more Commercial Waste Zones throughout the city.

Going forward, the City will also need long-term capital funding for Automated Side-Loading Trucks and more Empire Bins. These bins, which are made in Spain, sit at the curb, can only be opened by building staff or sanitation workers with special electronic keycards issued by the city, and are emptied by [new \\$500,000-a-piece garbage trucks](#) purchased by DSNY that are equipped with lifts. NYLCV hopes the City continues to learn from the pilots in Manhattan CB9 and Brooklyn CB2 to implement and fully fund Local Law 180 of 2025. Providing capital funding for permanent, sealed containers throughout the City to hold trash bags prior to collection will improve quality of life and mitigate the issues of the bags being opened by rodents.

### Intro 31

NYLCV supports Intro 31 of 2026, sponsored by Council Member Abreu, which would expand the categories of businesses that may be subject to requirements regarding separation and disposal of commercial organic waste. This bill mandates the commercial sector to play its part in recycling organic waste and is key to the city getting closer to achieving its zero waste by 2030 goal. We recommend this bill also consider ways to help businesses reduce food waste and donate edible unused food to food pantries.

The City has made great strides when it comes to mandating residential organics separation, however, the commercial sector lags behind since it is governed by an outdated law (Local Law 146 of 2013). Passing Intro 31 is a necessary step towards reducing the massive amounts of food waste, which is the third largest source of New York City's overall emissions according to

the City's [integrated NYC Greenhouse Gas Inventory](#), after buildings and transportation. As DSNY continues to roll out the Commercial Waste Zones law, this bill provides an opportunity for businesses to divert their organic waste.

We must invest and improve our streetscapes while working toward our City's zero waste by 2030 mandate to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills. Getting trash off the sidewalk creates more opportunities for the beneficial use of public space such as bioswales, trees, bike corrals, sidewalk seating, bus shelters, delivery microhubs, and pedestrian plazas. We look forward to working with the City Council, Mamdani Administration, and advocates to reduce our waste output and improve quality of life.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



**New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**Support for funding for community composting & Construction Waste Management and Disposal Plan**

**To:** The Honorable City Councilmember Justin Sanchez, Chair

**From:** Justin Green, Big Reuse

**Date:** May 19, 2026

Chair Sanchez and members of the Sanitation Committee—

I'm Justin Green, Executive Director of Big Reuse.

Thank you Chair Sanchez for the opportunity to testify. My name is Justin Green. I am the Executive Director of Big Reuse - an environmental non-profit helping NYC reduce its climate impact through zero waste initiatives and street trees.

We strongly support [Int 0031-2026](#) to require greater participation in commercial composting. Increasing composting reduces methane emissions from landfills is a key impact on reducing our climate impact.

We also want to thank the City Council for essential funding for community based composting through Schedule C Initiative for Community Composting and ask that funding be continued in FY27. DSNY has no funding in its own budget for composting outreach and education.

City Council Schedule C Initiative for Community Composting funding now supports 13 community based composting orgs across NYC — Big Reuse, Cafeteria Culture, Brotherhood Sister Sol, Red Hook Farms, East New York Farms, Compost Power, BK Rot, NY Botanical Garden, Queens Botanical Garden, Snug Harbor, Earth Matter, LESEC, GrowNYC. Please continue this support!

We also support [Int 0899-2026](#) for construction and demolition waste plans and reporting. This bill is a great start at addressing C&D waste crisis hiding in plain sight.

Right now, there is **no requirement** that builders plan for where their waste goes or prove it went there. This bill fixes that and starts to provide some accountability - it could be improved with requirements or incentives for reuse and recycling.

NYC's construction and demolition industry throws away nearly **7 million tons of building materials every year**. C&D waste is 46% of our NY state's waste stream. Landfills that accept it are closing.

Additionally, not recycling or reusing C&D contributes to our **climate emergency**. Every time we demolish a building and landfill its materials, we create demand for energy-intensive new manufacturing. Recycling creates up to **30 times more jobs than landfilling** the same material. Reuse and deconstruction create even more green jobs.

We are here today because this bill speaks directly to the heart of our mission, and we urge its passage without hesitation.

**Thank you for your time.**

### **The Scale of the Problem**

New York City has a construction and demolition waste crisis that is hiding in plain sight. NYC's construction and demolition industry throws away nearly 7,000,000 tons of building materials annually. Many of these materials could be reclaimed, resold, and reused, instead being hauled away and buried or burned. [Bigreuse](#)

Construction and demolition waste is 18 million tons and represents 46% of all waste generated in New York State, of which 58% is landfilled, combusted, or exported. It is the single largest category of waste our state produces, and it is largely invisible to the public precisely because it lacks tracking and accountability. [Int 0899-2026](#) would start to create systems to track these materials. [Cornell](#)

The landfill crisis is compounding urgently. The state's two largest landfills that accept C&D waste — the Town of Brookhaven Landfill and Seneca Meadows — together accounting for over 30% of the state's C&D landfill capacity — are scheduled to close or stop accepting C&D waste. We are running out of places to put this material. The answer cannot be to find more landfills. The answer is to stop treating valuable building materials as waste in the first place. [Cornell](#)

### **The Climate Stakes**

C&D waste is not just a disposal problem — it is a climate problem.

Deconstruction can replace traditional demolition and greatly reduce C&D waste.

Deconstruction is the process of carefully dismantling buildings or infrastructure to maximize reuse and reuse building materials. This can involve reusing lumber, carpet tile, kitchen cabinets, flooring, windows, and doors, for reuse.

Deconstruction is a sustainable alternative to traditional demolition. Demolition destroys structures and relies on heavy machinery, sending most of the waste to landfills and producing large amounts of pollution. Deconstruction prioritizes recovering reusable materials to be repurposed, which helps reduce environmental impacts, supports economic growth, and preserves cultural heritage. [NYSDEC](#)

When we demolish a building and landfill its materials, we don't just lose the embodied carbon locked in those materials — we accelerate the need to manufacture new materials, generating additional emissions at every stage of extraction, processing, and transport. [Cornell](#)

Sending construction and demolition waste to landfills, rather than recycling and reusing the material, clogs our limited landfills and increases the production of new materials, generating greenhouse gas emissions. The number of construction and demolition landfills near New York is declining, which means fuel consumption and related emissions from transporting waste are also increasing. [City of New York](#)

[Int 0899-2026](#) is a necessary and overdue step toward accountability.

### **Why Accountability Matters: The Case for a Waste Management Plan**

Right now, there is no systematic requirement that contractors plan for where their waste goes, track where it actually ends up, or prove compliance. The result is predictable: C&D waste in New York City is poorly accounted for, some illegally dumped and much of it hauled directly out of the city without adequate documentation. [City of New York](#)

[Int 0899-2026](#) changes that. By requiring a waste management and disposal plan at the front end of every permitted project and documented proof of compliance at sign-off — the City creates a chain of custody for C&D materials that does not currently exist.

This structural intervention that can shift behavior at scale. Contractors who know they must demonstrate compliance will be far more likely to engage licensed haulers, use legitimate recycling and reuse facilities, and think carefully about material diversion from the outset.

At Big Reuse, we know from direct experience that when builders have a plan and are connected to the right facilities, diversion happens. Big Reuse's two building material reuse centers in New York City divert over 2,000 tons of building material each year for reuse. Imagine

what becomes possible when every permitted project in this city must account for where its C&D waste is going. [Zerowastedesign](#)

### **The Economic Opportunity**

Deconstruction offers significant economic advantages through increased recycling and reuse of salvaged materials. Lumber, windows, doors, and fixtures can be removed and reused, providing waste disposal savings for homeowners and contractors. The lumber recovered from older buildings is often higher quality than what is available in the marketplace. [NYSDEC](#)

Reuse creates as many as 30 times more jobs than landfills per ton of material handled. Every ton of building material that passes through a reuse center rather than a landfill represents local jobs, local wages, and local tax revenue — instead of a tipping fee paid to a landfill in Pennsylvania or Virginia. [Eco-Cycle](#)

The transition to a circular construction economy represents the possibility to unlock billions of dollars of unrealized economic activity and introduce thousands of new green jobs. New York City has an opportunity to lead that transition. [Cornell](#)

### **Our Ask**

Big Reuse urges the Council to pass this bill, and to consider the following as it moves forward:

First, ensure that implementation guidance explicitly recognizes and tracks recycling, reuse and deconstruction as qualifying diversion pathways. Ideally the bill would incentivize diversion.

Reuse is higher on the waste hierarchy and should be prioritized accordingly.

Second, work with the Department of Sanitation and the Department of Buildings to build a publicly accessible registry of licensed haulers and approved reuse and recycling facilities, so applicants know where to turn and compliance is easier to achieve.

Third, consider deconstruction training and certification and workforce development investment so that the green jobs created by a more robust reuse sector reach New Yorkers who need them most.

New York City's construction and demolition industry is the largest waste generators in the state. Our goal at Big Reuse has always been to demonstrate another option for materials diversion and to inspire the city to require recycling and reuse for construction and demolition waste. This bill does exactly that. We are proud to support it, and we thank the Council for its leadership. [Bigreuse](#)

Thank you.

*Justin Green, Executive Director Big Reuse | bigreuse.org*

### **Continue to support Community Composting**

DSNY direct funding for community based composting, compost outreach, and education for composting was eliminated during the Adams administration. Currently all community based waste reduction work is funded through the Schedule C Council Initiative for Community Composting and administered by DSNY. DSNY has dramatically cut its direct funding for community based waste reduction, outreach, composting and education. The only community programs currently funded by DSNY's own funding are recycling events in each community board as required by City Council.

City Council community composting funding now supports 13 groups across NYC — including Big Reuse, Cafeteria Culture, Red Hook Farms, East New York Farms, Compost Power, BK Rot, NY Botanical Garden, Queens Botanical Garden, Snug Harbor, Earth Matter, LESEC, GrowNYC, and Brotherhood Sister Sol. These are some of the primary organizations that built the base of community support that led to curbside composting collection in NYC. These groups all still provide very innovative community based efforts on waste.

Curbside composting needs outreach and education and community composting provides. DSNY is currently limited in their efforts to provide ongoing outreach efforts by OMB limitations on outreach spending.

Community composting and community based outreach is a *proven, community-powered climate solution*. It reduces landfill waste, lowers emissions, enriches our city's soil, and strengthens our resilience.

NYC currently sends most of the curbside organic waste to be digested with sewage- unfortunately not composted. The remaining biosolids from sewage digestion need to then be landfilled or land applied where PFAS and microplastics contamination remain a major concern.

Community composting offers an alternative approach - creating jobs, improving NYC soils in gardens, parks, street tree beds, and having the lowest impact on the climate.

For example at Big Reuse with City Council support, we have currently:

- **Re-opened and operate a mid-scale Gowanus community composting** facilities in partnership with DSNY
- Open **and operate an new innovative Central Park composting site** with Central Park Conservancy for composting landscaping waste - creating compost for the park right in the park.
- Support and collect from over **+20 food scrap drop-off sites** in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Roosevelt Island - 157,270 lbs food scraps collected & processed locally in partnership with Earth Matter and DSNY
- Installed metal rat-proof compost cubes in 40+ community gardens and parks across the city collectively capable of processing almost 500,000 lbs of material annually across all 5 boroughs. For example **we are working with New Roots Community Farm - installing rat-proof compost bins and educating volunteers on composting.**
- Supporting compost use across parks and gardens through **55 volunteer events with** 5,608 lbs browns and 4,875 lbs compost distributed. Empowering over 25,000 community members in composting through work with community partners
- Delivered **400 bags of compost to 60 schools** and through a partnership with PS 456, Big Reuse provided four hands-on compost education days connecting first-grade students to soil health and local green spaces
- **Provided 121 composting workshops** & tabling events
- Training Master Composters in Brooklyn
- **Hosted 185 curbside outreach events** across NYC
- 8,440 residents spoken with directly about curbside composting
  - 5,754 kitchen containers & 271 leaf bags distributed
- Support street tree care for over 1,000 trees annually with 2,000 volunteers
- Partner with Gowanus Canal Conservancy to expand local composting and education

And this is just our organization. Community composting funding from City Council supports **13 groups across NYC**, including:

- school composting and food waste programming at Cafeteria Culture;
- youth composting at urban farms like Red Hook Farms and East New York Farms
- composting at NYCHA with Compost Power;
- Youth composting social enterprise at BK Rot;
- composting education at NY Botanical Garden, Queens Botanical Garden, and Snug Harbor;
- community composting for Governours Island at Earth Matter;
- curbside outreach and composting work at LESEC, GrowNYC, and Brotherhood Sister Sol.

At a time when we face growing climate threats and Trump led attacks on climate programs, City Council funding helps New Yorkers act locally — with solutions that are clean, just, and empowering.

This isn't just about compost.

It's about environmental justice and climate resilience.

It's about green jobs.

It's about *investing in a better future*.

I urge the Council to continue funding community composting. Let's keep growing a cleaner, more resilient New York City — together.

Thank you.

Justin Green

Executive Director

Big Initiatives Inc d/b/a Big Reuse





# SURE WE CAN

WHERE EVERYONE COUNTS

219 McKibbin Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206  
(347) 463-9257 // [www.surewecan.org](http://www.surewecan.org) // @surewecannyc

My name is Ryan Castalia. I'm Executive Director of Sure We Can, a Brooklyn-based redemption center and nonprofit serving independent recyclers—the folks who collect the bottles and cans others just throw away. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today! New York City's solid waste and street cleanliness landscape is complex and knotted, with many stakeholders and many systems all striving to do their part in managing the incomparable amount of waste that our city generates. We're fortunate, then, that we also have a Bottle Bill—the state's most effective recycling system in terms of outcomes—that drastically and elegantly reduces street litter by around 70%, while also driving increased recycling and environmental justice. What doesn't make sense is how little attention or support the incredible successes of the Bottle Bill get. Every New Yorker relies on this system, whether they're aware of it or not, yet the workers who drive its success and even the system itself are sidelined and neglected as an afterthought. This despite the program's proven track record of success and the even more significant benefits investment, modernization, and expansion could bring—namely, saving the city around \$80 million dollars per year during a time of critically tight budgets.

The Bottle Bill works, period. It's demonstrated its efficacy continuously for decades, resulting in the diversion of millions of tons of waste and vast reductions in litter in our communities. It's the most effective recycling system we have, resulting in the diversion of millions of tons of waste and vast reductions in litter in our communities without cost to the state—in fact, it generates revenue through unclaimed deposits. Today it captures around 70% of the material it covers. It supports small businesses and drives the circular economy. It's even become a mechanism for environmental justice, creating a low-barrier way for marginalized people from all kinds of backgrounds to become independent recyclers who work, contribute to their communities, and earn a livelihood. Professional canners are invested in their communities, and return to the same places—for this reason, they do not tend to leave a mess when they gather materials. I know recyclers who have sent their children to college, one bottle or can at a time. Our redemption center, just in one part of Brooklyn, diverts approximately 1 million bottles and cans each month, and distributes hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in income into underserved communities. In a very basic way, this system makes our city cleaner and stronger.

All of this is hopelessly out of sync with the neglect the system has suffered. The bottle deposit of 5c hasn't risen for over 40 years. That means that participation in the system is not properly incentivized, resulting in a lower return rate and poorer recycling outcomes. It also means the tireless workers who pick up the bottles and cans that others throw away haven't gotten a raise

in decades. Today in New York City, canners earn on average \$5/hour<sup>1</sup>, or less than a third of minimum wage. The handling fee that supports redemption centers hasn't risen for 16 years, while the cost of operating a business has risen drastically. Redemption centers are closing every day because it's too expensive to operate—small businesses providing essential services are collapsing, and making the system at large harder to access for everyone. Vague and unenforced regulation has made accountability between redemption centers and distributors almost impossible. Finally, many types of containers are arbitrarily excluded from the system, creating needless confusion and inconsistency, not to mention increasing litter. Coca-Cola can sell a tea beverage and a soda beverage in the exact same container—same size, same shape, same material—and the soda is redeemable but the tea is not. It simply doesn't make sense. All this combines to hamper the system's efficacy, put more trash on the streets, depress small businesses, and keep independent recycling entrepreneurs trapped on the margins. These consequences are visible across the state, but are particularly dire here in the city.

After years of kicking the can down the road, the system has reached the brink of collapse. Redemption centers are disappearing, making it harder than ever to return materials. Marginalized canners are being further marginalized, and our streets, landfills, and waterways are filling with beverage containers, new and old, that aren't included in the system. The first step to a better situation is the city must wholeheartedly support the state's expansion of the Bottle Bill. With three simple updates, an already-working system could reach new heights. A 10c deposit would push our return rates, now at under 70%, up to 90%, as other states have seen. It would mean more income for independent recyclers and more revenue for the state from unredeemed deposits. An increased handling fee would allow redemption centers to flourish instead of suffer, creating new access points and driving local economic activity. More containers included would mean a drastic increase in the volume of material diverted from our landfills and waterways. According to a *Economia* report released in 2025, these changes combined would save the city around \$80 million dollars annually, and the state as a whole between \$110 and \$120 million per year.<sup>2</sup>

The opponents of this system—often polluters who seem to regard the idea of being asked to help clean up their own mess as an unconscionable moral affront—speak of updating the system as if it will cause the sky to crash down on them. “Prices will skyrocket, people will stop drinking beverages!” They said the same thing in 1982 when the Bottle Bill was first enacted. They said the same thing in 2009 when it was previously expanded. Now it's 2025, and they seem to hope we will have forgotten that the sky never fell, people buy and drink more beverages than ever, and that it is exactly rising prices that make this issue so urgent. A Siena poll conducted in 2024<sup>3</sup> showed that a majority of low-income New Yorkers, those most impacted by inflation and higher costs at the grocery store, favor the Bottle Bill and want it expanded and supported. In fact, studies have shown that someone redeeming Bottle Bill material is most likely to spend the

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<sup>1</sup> *Independent Recyclers in New York City: Sector Profile and Pathways to Inclusion*, Sure We Can, 2023, <https://www.surewecan.org/study2023>

<sup>2</sup> *New York City Case Study - Expanded Bottle Bill Impact on Municipal Collections and New York State Case Study - Expanded Bottle Bill Impact on Municipal Collections*, *Economia*, April 2025

<sup>3</sup> *Siena College Poll*, Siena College Research Institute, May 13-15, 2024

money they earn from redemption in the same venue at which they redeemed, meaning taking your bottles and cans back to the store can actually help reduce the cost of a grocery bill.

This is a state law, but it affects all New Yorkers, especially here in the city, where street litter is a major concern. The city also has the opportunity, and the clout to stand up and affirm the value of the program and the workers who drive its success by passing Reso No. 0362, encouraging the state to modernize the Bottle Bill. Our communities stand to benefit enormously, through direct litter reduction, increased environmental justice, and a budgetary windfall for the city and state. If the paralysis around this issue continues, all New Yorkers' lives will continue to be severely affected: their communities will be more littered, their waterways more polluted, and their income hampered. We're not talking about reinventing the wheel—this system works, and works very well. It simply needs to be updated to a contemporary standard, and supported by its stakeholders. New York can't afford to take it for granted any longer.

May 20, 2026

*Submitted via NYC Council Online Testimony Portal*

**To: New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**Re: Written Testimony in Support of Int. No. 0736-2026 — Reducing Single-Use Items at Street Activities**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I write in strong support of Int. No. 0736-2026, a Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to the removal of solid waste and recyclable materials and reducing the distribution of single-use items at street activities. This legislation represents a meaningful and long-overdue step toward reducing plastic waste at the thousands of permitted outdoor events that take place across our five boroughs each year.

### **Support for Int. 0736-2026**

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Street activities — block parties, street fairs, farmers markets, and commercial events — generate significant amounts of single-use plastic waste that ends up in our parks, waterways, and streets. By requiring event sponsors to ensure that food vendors provide beverage stirrers, straws, utensils, containers, condiment packets, and napkins only upon request — and that most of these items be compostable — this bill aligns New York City with national and state best practices and codifies standards that should have been in place long ago.

The compliance plan requirement, enforcement authority granted to SAPO and DSNY, and the clear civil penalty structure all give the legislation the teeth it needs to be effective. I commend Council Members Gennaro and Epstein for their leadership on this issue.

### **A Critical Gap: NYC Parks Vendors Must Be Included**

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While I strongly support this bill, I urge the Committee to amend the legislation to explicitly extend its requirements to food vendors operating within NYC Parks — including those operating under concession agreements and permits issued directly by the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, not through SAPO.

As currently written, the bill applies to street activities permitted by the Street Activity Permit Office. However, a significant number of outdoor food and beverage vendors in New York City operate within our public parks under a separate permitting framework administered by NYC Parks. These vendors — at concession stands, pop-up food stalls, and park events — generate substantial plastic waste in some of our most environmentally sensitive public spaces, yet would fall outside the scope of this legislation.

## **New York State Parks Has Already Led the Way**

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New York State's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has already established a model that the City should follow and build upon. The State's Single-Use Plastic Reduction Policy applies to all concessionaires, private nonprofit and for-profit partners, and OPRHP operations at all State park facilities — a comprehensive approach that recognizes parks as uniquely important places to reduce plastic pollution.

The State policy uses a phased approach, categorizing restricted items into three phases with progressive deadlines to give vendors time to transition. It bans the provision of plastic bags, straws (except upon specific request), stirrers, condiment packets, polystyrene, plastic utensils, and ultimately single-use plastic water bottles — the last category with a compliance deadline of December 31, 2027.

New York City should not lag behind the State on protecting its own green spaces. Millions of New Yorkers use our parks every year. The food and beverage vendors operating within those parks should be held to at least the same standards that apply to vendors at street fairs and block parties.

## **Recommended Amendment**

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I urge the Committee to amend Int. 0736-2026 to:

1. Expand the definition of covered vendors to include food vendors operating within NYC Parks under Department of Parks & Recreation concession or permit agreements;
2. Require the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation to develop a comparable compliance and enforcement framework, modeled on the SAPO requirements in this bill; and
3. Consider adopting a phased implementation timeline for Parks vendors — consistent with the approach taken by New York State — to allow adequate time for transition while establishing a clear path to full compliance.

A piecemeal approach that protects some public spaces but not others will undermine the broader goal of this legislation. Parks are precisely the places where New Yorkers experience their natural environment most directly — they deserve the same or greater protections from plastic pollution as our city streets.

## **Conclusion**

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Int. 0736-2026 is good legislation that deserves to pass. I ask the Committee to strengthen it by closing the gap that currently excludes NYC Parks vendors, taking a cue from New York State's proven, phased approach to reducing single-use plastics at public facilities. Together, these changes will make our streets, parks, and waterways cleaner for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

**Janet Thompson**

**350 Brooklyn**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



**May 19, 2026: Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**Support For: SCOOP Act, Intros 857, 872, 906**

Voters For Animal Rights supports the SCOOP Act, commonsense package of legislation that promotes cleaner neighborhoods and more responsible pet guardianship.

Being an animal-friendly city means being a responsible city. Supporting dogs and the people who love them also means keeping our streets, parks, and public spaces clean, safe, and accessible for everyone. Thoughtful policies that reduce dog waste pollution help protect public health, improve quality of life, and strengthen the bond between New Yorkers and their companion animals.

As a mother of a toddler and a crawling baby, and a homeowner in Brooklyn, this issue is personal to me. No parent should have to worry about dog waste covering the sidewalks in front of their home or contaminating the parks where children crawl, play, and learn to explore the city around them. Dog waste is not just unpleasant — it is a real public health and quality-of-life issue for families across New York City. Clean streets and parks benefit everyone, including responsible dog guardians, children, seniors, and our communities.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to the people and animals of NYC.

Allie Taylor, Board of Directors

Voters For Animal Rights

██████████, Brooklyn, NY 11221

[allie@vfar.org](mailto:allie@vfar.org)

May 20, 2026

*Submitted via NYC Council Online Testimony Portal*

**To: New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**Re: Written Testimony in Support of Int. No. 0736-2026 — Reducing Single-Use Items at Street Activities**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

As the Co-President of Beyond Plastics Queens chapter, I write in strong support of Int. No. 0736-2026, a Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to the removal of solid waste and recyclable materials and reducing the distribution of single-use items at street activities. This legislation represents a meaningful and long-overdue step toward reducing plastic waste at the thousands of permitted outdoor events that take place across our five boroughs each year. Plastic waste is a threat to human and environmental health.

### **Support for Int. 0736-2026**

Street activities — block parties, street fairs, farmers markets, and commercial events — generate significant amounts of single-use plastic waste that ends up in our parks, waterways, and streets. By requiring event sponsors to ensure that food vendors provide beverage stirrers, straws, utensils, containers, condiment packets, and napkins only upon request — and that most of these items be compostable — this bill aligns New York City with national and state best practices and codifies standards that should have been in place long ago.

The compliance plan requirement, enforcement authority granted to SAPO and DSNY, and the clear civil penalty structure all give the legislation the teeth it needs to be effective. I commend Council Members Gennaro and Epstein for their leadership on this issue.

### **A Critical Gap: NYC Parks Vendors Must Be Included**

While I strongly support this bill, I urge the Committee to amend the legislation to explicitly extend its requirements to food vendors operating within NYC Parks — including those operating under concession agreements and permits issued directly by the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, not through SAPO.

As currently written, the bill applies to street activities permitted by the Street Activity Permit Office. However, a significant number of outdoor food and beverage vendors in New York City operate within our public parks under a separate permitting framework administered by NYC Parks. These vendors — at concession stands, pop-up food stalls, and park events — generate substantial plastic waste in some of our most environmentally sensitive public spaces, yet would fall outside the scope of this legislation.

### **New York State Parks Has Already Led the Way**

New York State's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has already established a model that the City should follow and build upon. The State's Single-Use Plastic Reduction Policy applies to all concessionaires, private nonprofit and for-profit partners, and OPRHP operations at all State park facilities — a comprehensive approach that recognizes parks as uniquely important places to reduce plastic pollution.

The State policy uses a phased approach, categorizing restricted items into three phases with progressive deadlines to give vendors time to transition. It bans the provision of plastic bags, straws (except upon specific request), stirrers, condiment packets, polystyrene, plastic utensils, and ultimately single-use plastic water bottles — the last category with a compliance deadline of December 31, 2027.

New York City should not lag behind the State on protecting its own green spaces. Millions of New Yorkers use our parks every year. The food and beverage vendors operating within those parks should be held to at least the same standards that apply to vendors at street fairs and block parties.

## **Recommended Amendment**

I urge the Committee to amend Int. 0736-2026 to:

1. Expand the definition of covered vendors to include food vendors operating within NYC Parks under Department of Parks & Recreation concession or permit agreements;
  - 1 a. Expand the definition of covered items to include plastic cups.
2. Require the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation to develop a comparable compliance and enforcement framework, modeled on the SAPO requirements in this bill; and
3. Consider adopting a phased implementation timeline for Parks vendors — consistent with the approach taken by New York State — to allow adequate time for transition while establishing a clear path to full compliance.

A piecemeal approach that protects some public spaces but not others will undermine the broader goal of this legislation. Parks are precisely the places where New Yorkers experience their natural environment most directly — they deserve the same or greater protections from plastic pollution as our city streets.

## **Conclusion**

Int. 0736-2026 is good legislation that deserves to pass. I ask the Committee to strengthen it by closing the gap that currently excludes NYC Parks vendors, taking a cue from New York State's proven, phased approach to reducing single-use plastics at public facilities. Together, these changes will make our streets, parks, and waterways cleaner for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

**Rachana Shah**

**Co-President, Beyond Palstics Queens**

**[REDACTED]**

**Queens, NY 11218**

**[REDACTED]**

**From:** [Wendy Frank](#)  
**To:** [Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony May 19th Sanitation Committee  
**Date:** Thursday, May 21, 2026 1:43:38 AM

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## **Testimony**

May 19th Sanitation Committee

### **RE: Intro 736**

My name is Wendy Frank a member of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board, my testimony represents the opinions of the Manhattan SWAB Chair Matt Civello and Brooklyn SWAB Chair Mary Ellen Sullivan, and myself regarding the introduction of Intro 736 by CMs Gennaro and CM Epstein in the NYC City Council. While we are all members of our borough's Solid Waste Advisory Boards, our opinions and testimony are our own.

From open data we estimate that between Dec 2025 - 2026 there were over 36,000 plus permits issued - from parades, block parties, street fairs, flea markets and other special events. As the song goes "I love a parade." The city, which is one of the most diverse places in the world, creates a space where people from different backgrounds and communities can celebrate, connect and learn from each other. We appreciate that.

As citizens who care about reducing and properly disposing of waste, we see Street Fairs and other similar events as a valuable and fun way to educate and encourage New Yorkers and visitors on how to properly and easily dispose of recycling, organics and waste.

At NYC Street Fairs and Open Streets events where food, drink, and other fun items are sold, there is only one type of receptacle for people's waste - trash bins lined with black bags. For black bags picked by the DSNY or contracted carters, the contents will end up in landfill or incineration.

Additionally, there are 127 distinctly designated "Open Streets" locations that also hold small local events throughout the summer. We think that Street Fairs and Open Street generate a large amount of waste and typically do not recycle. Information

about the volume of trash is not available to us at this time. I attended the 9th Avenue Food Festival last weekend and witnessed deep-fried Oreos, oversized turkey legs on steroids and corn husks with no place to go but black garbage bags. At the recent 5 borough bike tour where over 30,000 riders enjoy NYC the rest stops provide bananas, but there is no composting. Can we say that is bananas?

To estimate the legislation's impact, we can leverage the Street Activity Permit Office (SAPO) to research the number and duration of street fairs. Events from Open Streets should also be added to this calculation. Using this data, the city could conduct waste audits of representative street fairs and open streets events. Waste audit data would enable the city to estimate the amount of waste, recycling and organics typically thrown away. The data would also create a baseline for the amount and types of waste impacted. After this legislation is passed and implemented, the baseline would enable the city to understand how well event attendees are disposing of their waste in appropriate bins. If the diversion rate is not improving, the city could tweak its approach to improve outcomes.

Because each street fair is unique, attendees may need help being directed to the right bins so they can dispose of their waste correctly. To make it easy, and to minimize contamination, all three waste bins should be co-located: recycling, organics, and trash. Organic bins could be restricted to areas near food stalls. However, trash and recycling bins should be co-located throughout the fairs.

Street fairs often lack composting bins for food scraps, and they don't restrict vendors to using compostable plates, utensils and cups as is done in places like Governors Island. Enforcing compostable foodware may be premature at this time, but the city can suggest it and then advise event organizers on how to compost scraps without contaminating the waste streams. Event organizers and vendors benefit from having clear and strict rules to prevent non-compostable items from getting mixed into food waste. Many examples of these guidelines exist and we have referenced them in our written testimony. [1, 2, 3] Expanding composting to street fairs makes sense. If we compost in our homes then let's compost on our streets as well.

Street Fair organizers, in collaboration with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and other merchant and chamber of commerce organizations, would be well-advised to recruit volunteers to serve as Waste Ambassadors. These volunteers could help event attendees dispose of their waste in the correct receptacles. These ambassadors could also respond to questions and explain to attendees how source separation of waste benefits the city. If New Yorkers have questions about how to get the right bins for their apartment buildings, ambassadors could direct them to the

DSNY website or suggest they contact 311.

We thank CMs Gennaro and Epstein for introducing this legislation. We look forward to working on the legislation and helping as much as possible to make its implementation a success.

We will follow up with additional written testimony and photo assets.

[LINK TO INTRO 736](#)

May 11, 2026

Carol Morrison  
Prospect Heights Rat Task Force  
Chrystal Hudson's District 35 Rat Task Force

Re: Upcoming Street and Beach Cleanliness in NYC

As a member of Council Member Crystal Hudson's District 35 Rat Task Force and the founder of the Prospect Heights Rat Task Force, I strongly support these bills as essential measures to improve our city's cleanliness.

I am writing to advocate for the proposed legislation aimed at better regulating street and beach cleanliness by expanding oversight of outdoor dining and commercial waste management. Since 2018, I have served as a community organizer in the 11238 area, dedicated to the struggle of mitigating rodents within my neighborhood and district. The overwhelming increase in the rat population during the pandemic led to heightened tensions between neighbors and the threat of disease. This crisis revealed significant flaws in city agencies and inequities in the delivery of services, while also contributing to mental health challenges like anxiety and depression within our community. The city has been moving in a positive direction due to the diligent work of the former Rat Czar, Kathy Corradi, in coordination with leadership at the DOH and DSNY, and the focused attention of City Council members like Crystal Hudson.

In my roles with the District 35 Rat Task Force and as the chairperson of the Prospect Heights rat task force, I have applauded the improvements to sanitation practices—specifically containerization—and the increased regulation of outdoor dining. Historically, outdoor dining structures have provided easy access to food scraps and shelter beneath flooring, creating ideal conditions for rats to feed and breed. As outdoor dining returns in a more limited and regulated capacity, it is critical that we continue to refine these practices and manage the waste produced by commercial interests to prevent vermin from proliferating.

I believe these bills provide the necessary tools to ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Carol Morrison  
Prospect Heights Rat Task Force  
Chrystal Hudson's District 35 Rat Task Force

May 20, 2026

*Submitted via NYC Council Online Testimony Portal*

**To: New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**Re: Written Testimony in Support of Int. No. 0736-2026 — Reducing Single-Use Items at Street Activities**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I write in strong support of Int. No. 0736-2026, a Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to the removal of solid waste and recyclable materials and reducing the distribution of single-use items at street activities. This legislation represents a meaningful and long-overdue step toward reducing plastic waste at the thousands of permitted outdoor events that take place across our five boroughs each year. Plastic waste is a threat to human and environmental health.

### **Support for Int. 0736-2026**

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Street activities — block parties, street fairs, farmers markets, and commercial events — generate significant amounts of single-use plastic waste that ends up in our parks, waterways, and streets. By requiring event sponsors to ensure that food vendors provide beverage stirrers, straws, utensils, containers, condiment packets, and napkins only upon request — and that most of these items be compostable — this bill aligns New York City with national and state best practices and codifies standards that should have been in place long ago.

The compliance plan requirement, enforcement authority granted to SAPO and DSNY, and the clear civil penalty structure all give the legislation the teeth it needs to be effective. I commend Council Members Gennaro and Epstein for their leadership on this issue.

### **A Critical Gap: NYC Parks Vendors Must Be Included**

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While I strongly support this bill, I urge the Committee to amend the legislation to explicitly extend its requirements to food vendors operating within NYC Parks — including those operating under concession agreements and permits issued directly by the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, not through SAPO.

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## **New York State Parks Has Already Led the Way**

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New York State's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has already established a model that the City should follow and build upon. The State's Single-Use Plastic Reduction Policy applies to all concessionaires, private nonprofit and for-profit partners, and OPRHP operations at all State park facilities — a comprehensive approach that recognizes parks as uniquely important places to reduce plastic pollution.

The State policy uses a phased approach, categorizing restricted items into three phases with progressive deadlines to give vendors time to transition. It bans the provision of plastic bags, straws (except upon specific request), stirrers, condiment packets, polystyrene, plastic utensils, and ultimately single-use plastic water bottles — the last category with a compliance deadline of December 31, 2027.

New York City should not lag behind the State on protecting its own green spaces. Millions of New Yorkers use our parks every year. The food and beverage vendors operating within those parks should be held to at least the same standards that apply to vendors at street fairs and block parties.

## **Recommended Amendment**

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I urge the Committee to amend Int. 0736-2026 to:

1. Expand the definition of covered vendors to include food vendors operating within NYC Parks under Department of Parks & Recreation concession or permit agreements;
  - 1 a. Expand the definition of covered items to include plastic cups.
2. Require the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation to develop a comparable compliance and enforcement framework, modeled on the SAPO requirements in this bill; and
3. Consider adopting a phased implementation timeline for Parks vendors — consistent with the approach taken by New York State — to allow adequate time for transition while establishing a clear path to full compliance.

A piecemeal approach that protects some public spaces but not others will undermine the broader goal of this legislation. Parks are precisely the places where New Yorkers experience their natural environment most directly — they deserve the same or greater protections from plastic pollution as our city streets.

## **Conclusion**

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Int. 0736-2026 is good legislation that deserves to pass. I ask the Committee to strengthen it by closing the gap that currently excludes NYC Parks vendors, taking a cue from New York State's proven, phased approach to reducing single-use plastics at public facilities. Together, these changes will make our streets, parks, and waterways cleaner for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

**Deborah Herdan**

[REDACTED]

**Brooklyn NY 11218**

[REDACTED]

**As a member of CM Crystal Hudon's District 35 Rat Task Force, I strongly support these bills as measures to improve our city's cleanliness!**

I am writing in support of the bills proposed to better regulate street and beach cleanliness by expanding oversight of outdoor dining and commercial waste management. For the last six years, I have been a community organizer in the struggle to better mitigate rodents in my neighborhood and district. The overwhelming increase during Covid of the rat population led to threats between neighbors and the threat of disease, revealed flaws in city agencies and inequities in the delivery of city services, and has been known to contribute to mental health issues like anxiety and depression. The city has been moving in a better direction due to the hard work of the former Rat Czar, Kathy Corradi, in coordination with high level employees of DOH and DSNY, and the attention paid by City Council members like Crystal Hudson, and the volunteer members of her District 35 Rat Task Force. I am a member of this task force, as well as the chairperson of the Sterling Place Block Association's rat mitigation committee, S.C.R.A.M., and I have applauded the improvement to sanitation practices (i.e. containerization) as well as the better regulation of outdoor dining. Outdoor dining has often created the easy availability of food scraps and shelter below the floor, providing an opportunity for rats to eat, seek shelter and, quite frankly, breed. And with the return of outdoor dining, albeit in more limited and better regulated ways, it will continue to create opportunity for rats and other vermin to proliferate. It is critical that we continue to develop better regulation of outdoor dining practices and the waste produced by these and other commercial interests. To that end, I believe these bills help provide the tools needed to better manage commercial waste, and to better mitigate the rats.

## **NYC Council Hearing on Sanitation Testimony (05/19/2026) by Juan Serraty**

Hello Committee Chair Sanchez. My name is Juan Serraty, a lifelong Brooklyn resident living in Bushwick. I came to voice my support for bill Intro 0857-2026 by Council Speaker Menin and Intro 0872-2026 by Council Member Hanif, and I'd like to thank them both for introducing these bills.

I firmly believe that education and access to resources are pieces that are often forgotten when we have discussions related to keeping our communities clean, orderly, and healthy. Keeping our city clean is not only a matter of decency but also of public health, for ourselves and other living beings.

I recently completed NYC Trash Academy with the Sanitation Foundation, and I hope even more New Yorkers could learn about stewarding their "own corner of the world" at no cost to them. I don't attribute any malice to those who simply don't know, but we can change that through free, accessible, and easy-to-understand educational material. Trash Academy can serve as a model of what can be done.

After a disruptive (and often lonely) pandemic, more and more people adopted companions so they no longer felt alone, and as someone who doesn't have dogs himself, I still empathize with this. The demand for pets hasn't kept up with the need for educating the public about the responsibility we all have to keep our neighborhoods clean for everyone else, especially other dog owners.

I don't come to blame dog owners for their actions, but to ask the City Council to make it easier for city residents to clean up after their pets. Time and time again, I find existing waste bag dispensers empty or broken, and some residents have had to create solutions for their own blocks. For someone who doesn't have easy access to waste bags, the feat of cleaning up after their pet is close to impossible.

I also think about the growing number of dog walkers who, I would imagine, run out of bags at some point, and since they're walking with more than one dog at the same time, it makes this task even more difficult. Adding waste bags in more places and educating the public won't solve all our problems, but it's a good first step.

Let's make a difference together and keep our city clean and healthy!

May 22, 2026

**To: New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**Re: Written Testimony in Support of Int. No. 0736-2026 — Reducing Single-Use Items at Street Activities**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Susan Boyle, I'm a Mom and I live and work in Crown Heights. I'm writing in strong support of Int. No. 0736-2026, a Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to the removal of solid waste and recyclable materials and reducing the distribution of single-use items at street activities. This legislation represents a meaningful and long-overdue step toward reducing plastic waste at the thousands of permitted outdoor events that take place across our five boroughs each year- I have one caveat, please consider including food vendors operating within NYC Parks.

The City should follow the model of New York State's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) that the City should follow and build upon. The State's Single-Use Plastic Reduction Policy applies to all concessionaires, private nonprofit and for-profit partners, and OPRHP operations at all State park facilities — a comprehensive approach that recognizes parks as an important place to reduce plastic pollution.

The State policy uses a phased approach, categorizing restricted items into three phases with progressive deadlines to give vendors time to transition. It bans the provision of plastic bags, straws (except upon specific request), stirrers, condiment packets, polystyrene, plastic utensils, and ultimately single-use plastic water bottles — the last category with a compliance deadline of December 31, 2027.

New York City should not lag behind the State on protecting its own green spaces. Millions of New Yorkers use our parks every year. The food and beverage vendors operating within those parks should be held to at least the same standards that apply to vendors at street fairs and block parties.

### **Recommended Amendment**

I urge the Committee to amend Int. 0736-2026 to:

1. Expand the definition of covered vendors to include food vendors operating within NYC Parks under Department of Parks & Recreation concession or permit agreements;
2. Require the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation to develop a comparable compliance and enforcement framework, modeled on the SAPO requirements in this bill; and
3. Consider adopting a phased implementation timeline for Parks vendors — consistent with the approach taken by New York State — to allow adequate time for transition while establishing a clear path to full compliance.

A piecemeal approach that protects some public spaces but not others will undermine the broader goal of this legislation. Parks are precisely the places where New Yorkers experience their natural environment most directly — they deserve the same or greater protections from plastic pollution as our city streets.

### **Conclusion**

Int. 0736-2026 is good legislation that deserves to pass. I ask the Committee to strengthen it by closing the gap that currently excludes NYC Parks vendors, taking a cue from New York State's proven, phased approach to reducing single-use plastics at public facilities. Together, these changes will make our streets, parks, and waterways cleaner for everyone.

Sincerely,  
Susan Boyle

██████████ Brooklyn, NY 11238

May 20, 2026

*Submitted via NYC Council Online Testimony Portal*

**To: New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

**Re: Written Testimony in Support of Int. No. 0736-2026 — Reducing Single-Use Items at Street Activities**

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### **Support for Int. 0736-2026**

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Street activities — block parties, street fairs, farmers markets, and commercial events — generate significant amounts of single-use plastic waste that ends up in our parks, waterways, and streets. By requiring event sponsors to ensure that food vendors provide beverage stirrers, straws, utensils, containers, condiment packets, and napkins only upon request — and that most of these items be compostable — this bill aligns New York City with national and state best practices and codifies standards that should have been in place long ago.

The compliance plan requirement, enforcement authority granted to SAPO and DSNY, and the clear civil penalty structure all give the legislation the teeth it needs to be effective. I commend Council Members Gennaro and Epstein for their leadership on this issue.

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## **Conclusion**

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

**Victoria Augustine**

[REDACTED]

**Astoria, NY 11106**

[REDACTED]



**PLUMBING  
FOUNDATION  
CITY OF NEW YORK**

**To:** NYC Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

**From:** April McIver, Executive Director, The Plumbing Foundation

**Date:** May 22, 2026

**Re:** Int. 899-2026

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## **INTRODUCTION**

My name is April McIver, and I am the Executive Director of the Plumbing Foundation City of New York, Inc. The Plumbing Foundation was founded in 1986 and is a non-profit organization of small and large, union and non-union plumbing contractors, engineering associations, supply houses, and manufacturers whose mission is to protect the public health and safety of New York City through the enactment and enforcement of safe plumbing codes.

We thank the NYC Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management for the opportunity to comment on Int. 899-2026, which was heard by the Committee on Tuesday, May 19, 2026. Int. 899 requires applicants for permits related to the construction of new buildings and the alteration or demolition of existing buildings to submit to the Department of Buildings (“DOB”) a construction waste management and disposal plan, outlining measures to ensure trade waste generated by such work is properly disposed. Prior to the sign-off of any permit, this bill would require DOB, in conjunction with the Department of Sanitation and Department of Environmental Protection, to verify the permit holder’s compliance with such a plan. Finally, this bill would allow DOB to issue a minimum civil penalty of \$1,000 for failure to comply with the plan, and allow DOB and the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to suspend or revoke contractor licenses for repeated failure to adhere to such plans.

## **COMMENTS**

The New York City Plumbing Industry recognizes that the appropriate disposal of construction waste is a critical issue. Failure to address this matter could lead to the illicit dumping of hazardous materials, posing a significant environmental threat. However, the provisions set forth in Int. 899 remain ambiguous and, following the hearing held on May 19, continue to present several unresolved inquiries.

- Does the requirement for a plan apply to every type of permit including smaller jobs that require a Limited Alteration Application (LAA)? LAAs are specifically designed for minor, restricted scope work which rarely generates the heavy "construction and demolition waste" that this bill *seems* to be targeting. Requiring a disposal plan seems unnecessary and burdensome.

- Is this applicable to all construction contractors work (plumbing)? (The definition while saying *not limited to* does explicitly spell out "dirt, earth, plaster, concrete, rock, rubble, slag, ashes, and waste timber and lumber")
- Does the requirement apply to subcontractors under a General Contractors' plan, or is the GC responsible for the overall project?
- The Department of Sanitation at the hearing mentioned not having enough expertise within the construction industry to fully assess how the bill would impact contractors or enforcement operations. Has the Council conducted an assessment of this impact? DSNY also mentioned it does not currently track C&D dumping separately or have data analysis confirming that correlation.
- How is this going to be enforced? It seems several agencies are involved and this raises concerns about additional administrative hurdles and redundancies in order for a contractor to get sign off on a job.

### **CONCLUSION**

We thank the Committee for their consideration of our comments and look forward to continuing to work with the Council on Int. 899. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any reason.

May 19, 2026 - Sanitation Committee Testimony from Allison Allen

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on some very important bills.

I have been immersed in this subject matter for 6+ years as a member of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board (MSWAB). However, these views are my own and do not represent MSWAB or any other organization.

A number of these bills provide important and much needed steps that must be taken to reduce waste and increase recycling and organics diversion in NYC - and ultimately reduce NYC's waste export costs, now \$600M/year and increasing, unabated, every year.

**Int 31** would expand commercial organics collections as all businesses should be required to separate organics (and recyclables) just as we now have mandatory universal residential curbside composting. Most importantly these (and existing) laws must be enforced and the City Council should be tracking and requesting data on violations issued based on the existing law to make sure enforcement and budgets are sufficient as the law potentially expands. There should be a 311 dataset on NYC Open Data if there is not one already. I hope the Council will request this asap.

Int 31 has lingered for years, despite DSNY asking for it repeatedly. After all this time, I would expect it to have more than 8 sponsors. At this point, there are only 2 sponsors from the sanitation committee - only Chair Sanchez and Council Member Hanif who I applaud. I ask that all members of the sanitation committee sign on to sponsor this bill and encourage all their colleagues to do the same to ensure it passes, finally, this year. Let's not waste another year as this bill will also help to keep the streets cleaner.

Composting/organics diversion must be seen everywhere throughout the city. The city, its agencies and businesses must set an example for the public to see, if we expect residents to participate in composting and recycling at home and in their daily lives.

Organics collection citywide achieved 7.18% capture rate in April 2026 (visit [TrackNYCrash.com](http://TrackNYCrash.com) and note summary below). Overall, recycling capture rates for paper, metal, plastic, glass, has flatlined for years at approximately 50% with a diversion rate of approximately 17%. It's long past time for the city to address this and push for

extensive and comprehensive outreach and education programs as well as an adequate budget to improve these numbers asap.

A new or updated “zero waste” plan is also needed.

**Organics capture rate by borough by month**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>CITY WIDE</b>	<b>MANHAT</b>	<b>BRONX</b>	<b>BROOKLYN</b>	<b>QUEENS</b>	<b>SI</b>
Oct 25	8.27%	5.41%	5.21%	7.05%	11.75%	14.43%
Nov 25	10.81%	5.72%	7.15%	9.06%	15.72%	19.79%
Dec 25	8.01%	5.37%	4.90%	7.24%	11.19%	13.16%
Jan 26	7.12%	6.96%	4.19%	6.38%	9.45%	9.71%
Feb 26	5.38%	4.36%	3.33%	4.84%	7.84%	6.91%
Mar 26	6.38%	4.65%	4.12%	5.58%	8.72%	11%
Apr 26	7.18%	5.16%	4.97%	6%	9.91%	12.22%

Please sign up for the [TrackNYCrash.com](http://TrackNYCrash.com) monthly newsletter for updates.

With **Int 872**, the council is requiring DOH to develop a public information campaign, in consultation with DSNY surrounding dog waste, which i fully support. I am happy to hear that we all understand that dog waste is a health hazard and is also rat food.

While dog waste left on the streets exploded during the snow storms and frigid weather, are Council Members still receiving the same number of complaints or has it subsided back to pre-winter levels? I personally do not see it as much at this point and not sure if this information is available through NYC Open Data. If not, please ask for a new dataset so that dog waste 311 complaints can also be monitored and shared with the public.

Dog waste left on the street attracts rats, but food left on the streets (and in black plastic garbage bags) also attracts rats. I have long advocated and testified asking for the DSNY to work with DOH to raise awareness for curbside composting as a rat mitigation tactic. The beauty of 872 is it puts the requirement on DOH which makes more sense.

As Int 872 asks for a public info campaign on picking up dog waste, the Council should also be asking for a similar but greater, multi pronged, public education and outreach campaign to inform the public about the importance of “composting” and recycling. I hope to see the same level of interest and attention for “composting” and diverting that rat food, if we can ever expect to capture a much greater portion of our food scraps. Food residuals comprise approximately 43% of the waste in black plastic garbage bags that we pay to export at a cost of \$600M this year alone. Organics represent 43% of that cost - \$258M annually! We could reduce our exported waste by 43% by hyper focusing on diversion of the organic material alone from the waste stream. Add textile waste (roughly 6%) and we could reduce waste by close to 50%! The programs are in place. We just need everyone to use them. We can do it with your leadership and wider partnerships.

Over the years, I have repeatedly testified that DOH should promote curbside composting as a rat mitigation tactic - to no avail. I propose that a similar 872-like bill be written and submitted to conduct a similar public outreach campaign for curbside composting as a rat mitigation tactic. I would be happy to share my prior testimony and emails sent to DOH, that detailed a number of ideas.. There is so much more that DOH could be doing to tie the 2 issues together which would hopefully result in the added benefit of increasing participation in curbside composting and cleaner streets.

Both of these public info campaigns will require funding so it's critical that adequate funding is provided. The community compost network plays a critical role and absolutely must be adequately funded in order to do the outreach and education for curbside composting. Their prior funding levels need to be increased and expanded to additional compost partners. I am eager to see the budget as it is critical that significant funding be allocated to promote “composting” every year until participation thresholds are achieved.

The current DSNY outreach campaign for curbside composting largely relies on DSNY's enforcement team. Results of DSNY's enforcement outreach work should be summarized and reported to the council and the public so that we can understand what has been learned which can be shared to better engage more buildings and residents in “composting”.

I also support **Int 736**, to require street events to recycle and divert organics and limit the use of single use plastic items which will also help set an example for residents to follow.

While it's a much needed first step in the right direction to only provide single use compostable "plastic" upon request (similar to skip the stuff), the city should be advancing towards using reusables at not only street events but any event sanctioned by the city, its employees, council members and agencies and any organization that receives funding from the city. Similarly any organization that receives city funding should also be required to "compost" and recycle properly - subject to fines.

As Chair Sanchez has identified the problem with street cleanliness this bill will go a long way towards keeping the streets cleaner. We all see overflowing litter baskets filled with single use plastic bottles, drink/coffee cups, clamshells, etc. I would like to suggest litter basket audits, perhaps in conjunction with the Sanitation Foundation which already conducts clean ups. Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks and the like should all be required to at least pilot a reuse program, as so many of their cups are branded and recognizable as they litter our streets.

NYC should look to pilot reuse programs with coffee shops and take out food providers. There are great programs and vendors for reusable foodware. Grant funding is available. Who can work on this? I'm happy to help.

As you can see from San Francisco's recent achievement, the use of reusables in place of single use plastic, can be done in a big city! I would be happy to work with anyone that can help advance such a program to keep all of this single use, toxic waste that pollutes our streets and flows down our storm drains into our waterways...

[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/tyronejue\\_reuse-zero-waste-activity-7459655265009741826-htMe/](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/tyronejue_reuse-zero-waste-activity-7459655265009741826-htMe/)

<https://www.instagram.com/reels/DYLvJEZhTlf/>

I also support **Int 883** - another very important bill which would establish an office of sidewalk and roadway cafe sanitation within DSNY.

This bill could be one of the first steps toward collecting data on commercial waste (and increased enforcement) and should also require any commercial establishment

with a sidewalk shed to “compost” - divert food scraps into rat proof bins - so these sheds do not become rat havens as they were during covid.

I applaud Chair Sanchez’s vision in creating this new office as it could also be a first step toward recreating a stronger version of DSNY’s former Bureau of Recycling & Sustainability. Many of us have advocated for the creation of a new office of circularity and reuse. Perhaps a task force can be created for relevant agency stakeholders (DSNY, DOB, DOE, DOH, social services, emergency response, etc...) to come together and reimagine New York City’s waste management (most of which is not waste). Perhaps this could be conducted under the Mayor’s new office of mass engagement, if not a dedicated new office. Again, I am happy to help.

This also ties in with my support of **Int 899** (a Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to trade waste management and disposal for construction, alterations, and demolition). It's important to note that building renovations and commercial to residential building conversions generate a horrifying amount of waste that private carters pick up and take “away” to who knows where. Sadly, commercial waste is not tracked by DSNY (or anyone) but the DOB could be required to track the waste generated with efforts made to reduce waste and encourage reuse. Perhaps with waste audits to start under each permit. This could be another opportunity for an agency like DOB to work together as a working group, consulting with DSNY and other agencies. I hope this can be fast tracked.

I had a recent experience with a friend who had an office in a building which was sold for residential conversion. While we worked hard to rehome many of the items that were no longer wanted, there was a very disturbing amount of very nice office furnishings and supplies left for trash - and what I saw represented only one of the floors in this 40 floor office tower. This is senseless waste. We can do better and we must. We should gather stakeholders into working groups to address this to come up with better ideas and programs to salvage and rehome the significant amount of reusable materials that commercial carters take away to parts unknown - when they could be kept in circulation and reused by others.. I reiterate my offer to help in any way.

Thank you for your consideration.

Allison Allen

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 5/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anthony Pennolino, Chief of Department

Address: 125 Worth St.

I represent: DSNY

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 5/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gregory Anderson, Commissioner

Address: 125 Worth St

I represent: DSNY

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rebecca Kriegman, Asst. Commissioner

Address: 125 Worth St.

I represent: DSNY

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 0362

in favor  in opposition

Date: 5/19/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ryan Castalia

Address: [Redacted] Brooklyn, NY 11206

I represent: Sore We Can, Inc.

Address: 219 McKibbin St Brooklyn, NY 11206

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 5-19-26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jackson GREEN

Address: [Redacted] Brooklyn, NY

I represent: BIG REUSE

Address: 112<sup>th</sup> St, Brooklyn, NY 11215

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0857/0972 Res. No. 2026

in favor  in opposition

Date: 05/19/2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JUAN SERRATY

Address: [Redacted] Brooklyn, NY 11277

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. INT 31 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JUSTIN WOODY

Address: 151 W 30th St, 10001

I represent: NYLPI

Address: 151 W 30th, NY NY 10001

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 7750 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: 5/19/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Wendy Frank

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: myself & the MSWAB

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms