

July 16, 2026

The Committee on Health
New York City Council

Re: Support for Intro 943

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for taking the time to hear testimony regarding the future of carriage horses in New York City.

As a private citizen, I am writing in support of banning horse-drawn carriages on New York City streets. I ask for this change based on years of following this issue, speaking with people who work with horses, and observing the realities of modern city traffic.

What stood out to me during the hearing was that many of the voices opposing a ban have a financial stake in keeping the industry operating. I understand that jobs and livelihoods matter, but I do not believe economic benefit alone is enough to justify keeping horses in an environment filled with heavy traffic, loud noises, exhaust fumes, extreme summer heat, and miles of hard pavement.

Horses are living animals, not attractions. Even well-trained horses can become frightened by sudden sounds, vehicles, construction activity, or other unexpected events. When that happens, both the horse and the passengers are put at risk. New Yorkers and visitors should not have to worry that a carriage ride could turn into a dangerous situation.

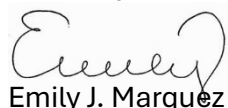
I also believe many tourists choose a carriage ride because it is marketed as a romantic and traditional New York experience. Most are not thinking about the stress on the horse or the potential safety risks. If families had a full understanding of those risks, many would likely choose another way to experience Central Park.

Traditions can be meaningful, but traditions can also change when society recognizes that there is a better and more humane option. Many cities around the world have already moved away from horse-drawn carriages and adopted alternatives that do not place animals in busy urban traffic.

I respectfully ask you to support legislation that phases out and ultimately bans carriage horses in New York City. Doing so would protect both horses and the millions of residents and visitors who use and enjoy the city every year.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the people of New York.

Sincerely,



Emily J. Marquez

[REDACTED]
Doral, FL 33178
[REDACTED]

Removing horse carriages from Central Park will bring the park astray of its intended purpose. The Park was created based on a mid-19th century belief that a fast-growing New York needed a large, beautiful space for the whole city – not just the wealthy- so that urban life would include access to nature, recreation, and shared civic experiences. The park moves further away from anything resembling nature by the day. It is now filled with fast moving, loud e-bikes on every path and corner, pedicabs blasting music, and big concentrations of vendor carts spewing exhaust. There has been a lot of enthusiasm about replacing the horses with motorized carriages, fake horses, or even golf carts that would both render Central Park into a tacky, cheap, amusement park, and take it even further from the vision of communing with nature.

It is worth noting that all private cars and buses were banned from Central Park eight years ago. “Our parks are for people, not cars. For more than a century, cars have turned parts of the world’s most iconic park into a highway. Today we take it back. We are prioritizing the safety and the health of the millions of parents, children and visitors who flock to Central Park,” said Mayor de Blasio on April 20, 2018 when announcing that all of Central Park’s drives would be permanently off limits to public vehicular traffic beginning on June 27, 2018. Only five years later, on June 20, 2023 health and safety took a backseat when the NYC Parks Department launched an Electric Micromobility Pilot “to allow electric bikes (e-bikes) and electric scooters (e-scooters) to use park drives and greenways.” That pilot remains in effect today and Central Park has become the very highway that the vehicle ban was intended to thwart.

Since the micromobility pilot began, these e-bikes and e-scooters which can and do move as fast as cars have caused countless serious, life-altering injuries and deaths of city residents. In fact, one woman remains in a coma today after being hit from behind by an e-bike while jogging in Central Park eleven days ago. <https://nypost.com/2026/07/16/us-news/central-park-jogger-in-coma-after-e-bike-crash/> Despite this very real and continuing threat to human life and limb, neither the Parks Department nor the City Council have once proposed banning e-bikes from the parks. They are content to let their constituents to continue to sustain grave injury and to lose their lives so that the park drives can be used as a highway to speed through without the inconvenience of car traffic to slow them. In contrast, the Parks Department and City Council have taken every opportunity over the past four years to push for a ban on horses, claiming it is a matter of public safety. It is hypocritical for city leaders to pick and choose whose lives matter and whose lives are of absolutely no consequence. It is also hypocritical for city leaders to have moved beyond all sense, reason and fairness to rationalize delivery workers riding recklessly and injuring people with impunity, while continually throwing carriage horse riders to the wolves. There should be some real concern about how much faster e-bikes, scooters and other “micromobility” vehicles will speed through the park, further endangering lives, if the large, slow, steady presence of the horse carriages is removed.

For all the reasons stated, the horse carriage ban must fail.

Dear New York City Council,

I urge the NYC Council to swiftly pass intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end horse carriage industry, send the horse to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment. It's time to catch up with the 21st century and put an end to this barbaric practice that has no place in our great city!

Thank you,

Emily Kraft

From: [Emily McElroy](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Now is the time
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 6:41:17 PM

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To whom it may concern, please vote to ban horse carriages rides. As a long time resident of midtown Manhattan, I can tell you that this is not a good place for these animals. I hope the drivers can find new jobs driving electric vintage cars for tourists instead. It's better and safer for both the animals and the humans.

Thank you very much, Emily McElroy

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Eric Mendez](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 2:32:26 PM

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Dear Council,

I'm encouraged to see so many supporters pushing to have nyc move to the next in freeing these poor souls from the hell they live absolutely every day. I walk home from work every day and walk by the park and always have a really hard time seeing those poor horses head home, looking defeated, knowing they have nothing to live for. Animals deserve our care and depend on us to speak up for them when there is no one else. Horses have been humans Allies for centuries, always having our back, whether in world wars, tending to farms, providing for the family or simply providing the love that's no different than any other family member. We as New Yorkers owe it to horses to properly honor them and future generations and doing everything we can to send the current ones to sanctuaries to love out the rest of their lives in peace.

Let's do the right thing and step up for these gorgeous creatures and defend them as we would any member of our family. They need our voices and our votes to give them the lives they deserve.

Thank you,

Eric

From: [Erica Lawson](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NYC Horse Carriage
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 4:48:40 PM

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Good Afternoon

My name is Erica Lawson and I am emailing today to express my opposition to banning horse drawn carriages in NYC. While I understand that animal welfare is an Important concern I believe banning the industry is not the best solution. Instead we should continue to enforce and strengthen regulations that protect the horses while preserving an important part of NYC Culture & History! For more than a century horse drawn carriages have been one of New York's most recognizable traditions. They provide visitors from around the world with a unique way to experience central park and have become an ICONIC symbol of the city itself. Eliminating the industry would erase a piece of New York's heritage that cannot easily be replaced work .

The carriage horses are protected by some of the STRICTEST animal welfare regulations in the country. They receive Regular veterinary care, mandatory rest periods, limits on working hours and routine inspections!! If there are areas where these protections can be improved then the focus should be on strengthening oversight rather than banning the industry. Many people also argue that the horses are unsafe in city traffic. While safety is always important New York has already implemented rules that limit where and when horses can The carriage horses are cared for by PEOPLE whose lives REVOLVE around them. Their owners know these horses by name spend EVERY DAY with them and depend on them not only for their livelihood but also as companions.. A ban wouldn't affect just the horses. It would impact HARDWORKING New Yorkers who have built their lives around this profession. Carriage Drivers, stable workers, Farriers, Veterinarios and many small business would lose their income overnight. I believe we can care about both the horses and the people whose lives depend on the industry. Those two things Don't have to be in conflict.. I respectfully ask you to vote against the Ban

July 15, 2026

New York City Council Committee on Health
New York City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Re: Introduction 0943-2026 - Prohibiting the Operation of Horse Drawn Cabs

Dear New York City Council Committee on Health:

I urge the New York City Council to pass Introduction 0943-2026, to prohibit horse drawn carriages in New York City and retire the horses to sanctuary so they are free to heal and live out their lives.

There is a fundamental ethical concern with using animals for profit in New York City. Animals should not be subjects for tourists or as the backbone of a career or industry. When animals are the backbone of a human's career and the provider of an industry, and when humans pay for a service such as this tourist attraction, the animals are treated as products and machinery. When animals are exploited in this capacity for human use, there will be misuse and neglect and there is guaranteed to be tragedy as we have seen time and again. It is time to reconsider this attraction, with careful consideration for the animals involved, instead of reviving or investing in an industry that is outdated and unnecessary, causing chaos and heartbreak for New Yorkers. Who is New York City to keep and revive an industry which exploits animals and which New Yorkers agree does not suit our City or serve us? New York City protects its animals and challenges industries where cruelty is required.

We know that horses are not suited for modern-day New York City, attempting to regulate themselves amongst endless stressors in our congested and stimulating streets and parks, and our increasingly hot summers and snowy winters. Anyone can see that the horses waiting for their next ride with their heads hanging and blinders and chains on, do not look joyful or fulfilled, and the way in which many evidently struggle to lug the carriage filled with people attached to them. Normalized exploitation and normalized suffering is still exploitation and suffering. The horse-drawn carriages disturb the peace and enjoyment of Central Park as it is disturbing to see an animal depressed and in distress.

This horse-drawn carriage industry does not need to be reformed or regulated, and it should not have taken outcry following the tragic death of Romanch Mahajan, whose family and friends I send my sincere condolences to, for the industry to state they want to work with the City. However, it is hard to imagine what additional cruel tactics the horses would endure should the City keep this industry with a promise of regulation or reform and New Yorkers do not want to see tighter restrictions on the horses as the answer. The horses are already limited in the capacity in which they're entitled to their species-specific needs and enjoying their interests, as every animal deserves their freedom to. The horses do not deserve tighter restrictions and tighter reins. We can not put horses in our streets and expect they will not be horses. Fleeing, spooking, and collapsing is inevitable when they're under the conditions which the horse-carriage attraction requires. There is no way to reform a horse's innate flight response or physical limitations resulting in their collapse. I want to address that I have heard the drivers question that the City isn't looking to ban vehicles or helicopters when tragedy occurs, but the difference here is predictability

of a vehicle versus an animal, and the necessity of the industry of real transportation versus a tourist attraction. We must not forget that these are living, sentient beings, not vehicles, and they ought not to be treated or considered as machinery.

The New York City Council should not wait for the next tragedy and we must learn from the pattern of chaos that the time to act is now and Introduction 0943-2026 is the safest path forward to address our shared concerns. It was chilling to learn that had former Councilmember Holden's bill passed 2 years ago and came into effect on June 1, 2026, Romanch Mahajan would still be here today, as would the horses who passed at the hands of the industry in that time. Free the horses to save horses and humans from the next inevitable tragedy.

Thank you for your time.

Written Testimony in Support of Ending Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City

I urge the Council to support legislation that ends the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Horses are large, sensitive animals whose welfare depends on environments that allow for natural movement, social interaction, and adequate rest. City streets—with heavy traffic, noise, heat, pavement, and pollution—are fundamentally different from the conditions horses evolved to live in.

While many carriage drivers care deeply for their horses, this issue is larger than individual intentions. It is about whether this type of work remains an appropriate use of animals in a modern city. As our understanding of animal welfare continues to evolve, our policies should evolve with it.

New York has the opportunity to honor its history while embracing more humane alternatives that do not rely on animals for entertainment or tourism. A transition can support both workers and horses through thoughtful planning and investment.

I respectfully ask the Council to prioritize animal welfare and support a future that no longer depends on horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Thank you for your consideration.

The New York City Council should pass Intro 943, Romanch's Law, without further delay. Horse-drawn carriages no longer belong on crowded city streets, where horses face traffic, noise, extreme weather, and the constant risk of injury. This legislation offers a humane path forward by retiring the horses to qualified sanctuaries while helping carriage drivers move into safer, sustainable employment.

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I urge you to vote yes on Romansch's Law, Intro. 967, to end the horse carriage industry in New York City. Horses do not belong in the middle of congested streets, surrounded by traffic, noise, extreme weather, and the constant risks that come with urban environments. We have seen multiple fatal instances this industry has wrought on both animals and people.

These animals deserve lives that prioritize their well-being rather than being used for entertainment. As our understanding of animal welfare has evolved, so should our policies. New York has the opportunity to lead with compassion by supporting humane alternatives that preserve jobs while ending the use of horses for carriage rides.

Please vote yes on Romansch's Law and help create a safer, more humane future for these animals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

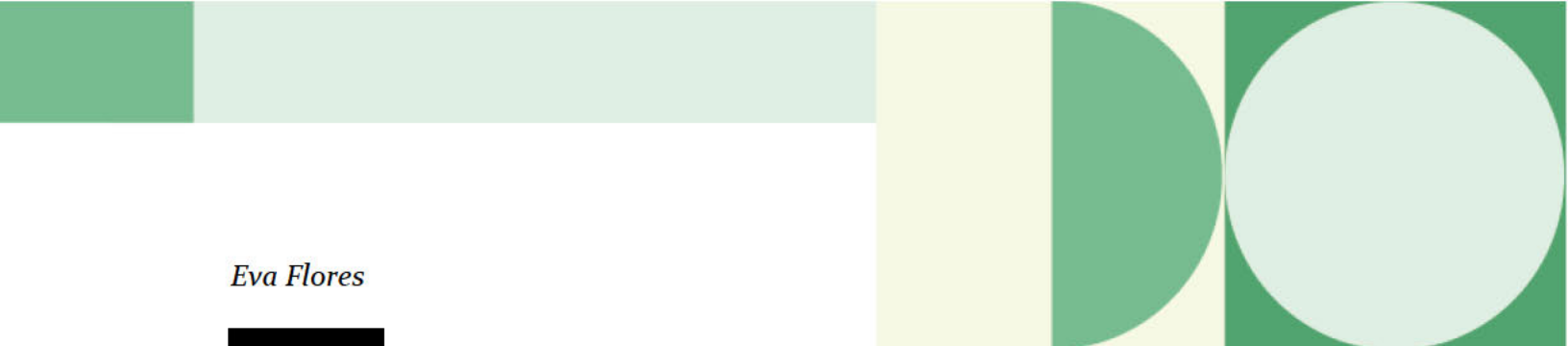
Respectfully,

Erika Gesue

From: [Eugene Ronan](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do not ban horse carriage
Date: Monday, July 13, 2026 1:08:26 PM

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There must be stricter enforcement to safety punishing drivers with clean ,goid record is COMPLETELY UNFAIN AN UN AMERICAN, HORSE AN CARRAGE ,WHO CAN BAN THIS ??? ITS AS NATURAL AS WALKING . CRACK DOWN ON NEGLIGENCE, BAD OWNERS ,YOU'LL FIND THEM IN EVERY FIELD, DONT PUNISH THE EVERYONE.



Eva Flores

[REDACTED]

NY, NY, 10019

[REDACTED]

Thank You

07/16/2026

Dear New York City Council,

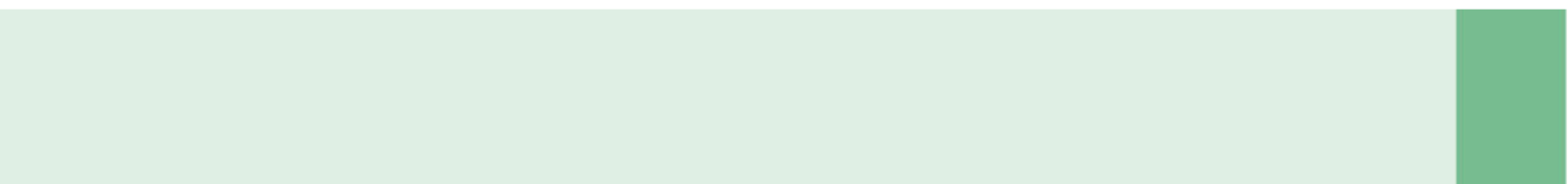
I hope this message finds you well. I would like to take a moment to express my strong support for Romanch's Law. As a lifetime NYer, a resident of Hell's Kitchen and animal respecter it is so upsetting to see the horses start their "work" and move through heavy traffic w horns and sirens blaring and cars speeding dangerously close to them. How awful it is to see these beautiful creatures subjected to the will of people simply for profits. It is the equivalent of elephant riding in East Asia or doping tigers for tourists to take pictures with them.

Your team's dedication to working to phase out this abusive, animal endangering and outdated industry is admirable and now that loss of human life has been added to the overwhelming loss of horses lives over the years, it is the time to finally act.

Thank you again for the work to get this important law pass.

Sincerely,

Eva Flores



WRITTEN TESTIMONY
CITY COUNCIL HEARING ON RYDER'S LAW 0943
EVA J. USADI
DISTRICT 2 - UNION SQUARE

JULY 13, 2025

Dear New York City Council Members:

My name is Eva Usadi, and I am a New York City trauma therapist with 40 years in the field, including 20 years of incorporating horses in psychotherapy with clients. Most of my equine work has been in a residential program I created to prevent suicide in our nation's Combat Veterans, and in which we conduct group psychotherapy sessions with Veterans and a herd of horses every day over the course of a week.

After former Mayor Di Blasio took office, one of his staff called me to ask three questions: What are the standard regulations for horses working in a therapeutic equine program; could the NYC horse carriage drivers be re-trained to work in such programs; and, would my organization be willing to accept carriage horses as rescues (definitely yes on that one). I believe this call was because of my connection to then-DVS Commissioner Loree Sutton.

In my equine work, I have seen first-hand how keenly horses depend on their senses, their social instincts, and their ability to move away from perceived danger in order to stay safe and regulated.

We work with a herd of horses at liberty, meaning we use no halters, harnesses, lead lines or other means of control or domination, and in all these years we have had NO injuries to people or to horses.

This experience has shown me that when horses are allowed to make choices and move freely, they are far better able to remain calm, avoid conflict, and protect themselves, as well as the clients they are in the arena with. It also teaches non-predatory power: that people, like horses, can choose to exercise their power in ways that do not involve aggression.

Everything we know about equine behavior is based on our understanding that horses are prey animals whose survival depends on detecting threats quickly. This is not unlike how combat Veterans are trained for battle. This is also why Veterans with PTSD are so drawn to equine therapy: the horses get them.

Horses possess acutely attuned senses.

They have nearly 360-degree vision:

- **Binocular Vision (Straight Ahead):** Horses have a small zone directly in front of them (an overlap of about 65 to 80 degrees) where both eyes work together, just like human eyes. They use this frontal zone when they need depth perception, like measuring the height of a fence before jumping.
- **Monocular Vision (The Sides and Behind):** Each individual eye covers a massive field of view—roughly 145 degrees. This allows the horse to use one eye to watch a person walking up from behind on its left side, while using the other eye to track something moving in front or to its right.

They have monaural hearing:

Horses' ears function independently. Because each ear can rotate almost 180 degrees on its own, a horse can monitor different parts of its environment simultaneously—a critical survival adaptation for a prey animal.

In New York City, this means horses are constantly taking in sirens, horns, construction noise, engines, shouting, and other sounds from multiple directions at once. Rather than helping them identify and escape danger, their highly evolved hearing is overwhelmed by continuous, unpredictable noise while they remain confined to a carriage and unable to flee.

They have an acute sense of smell:

A horse's sense of smell is highly developed and plays a critical role in its ability to assess its environment for safety. Horses use scent to recognize familiar individuals, detect potential predators or hazards, locate food and water, and determine whether an unfamiliar object or place is safe to approach. They often investigate new stimuli by sniffing before deciding how to respond.

In New York City, horses are exposed to a constant mixture of unfamiliar and intense odors, including exhaust fumes, garbage, food waste, chemicals, asphalt, smoke, and thousands of people and vehicles. For a prey animal that relies on scent to assess safety, this barrage of competing odors can make it more difficult to interpret the environment.

Horses constantly scan their surroundings for signs of danger, and their nervous systems are built to respond rapidly when they sense a threat. In a natural or low-

stimulation environment, those innate abilities help them stay safe. In an urban environment, like New York City, what may be ordinary city life to people, can be overwhelming, confusing, and frightening to a horse.

When pulling a carriage, a horse cannot move away from what it perceives as a threat. It is expected to stand still in traffic, remain calm amid chaos, and continue working even when its instincts tell it to flee.

The conflict between instinct and environment creates an unavoidable safety risk that no amount of training, experience, or regulation can eliminate.

Training may help a horse tolerate some stimuli, but it cannot change the fact that the horse is being asked to function in an environment that is fundamentally at odds with its biology. When a prey animal is repeatedly placed in situations where it cannot escape, the result is not safety; it is stress, fear, and the possibility of panic. Even a well-trained horse can react unpredictably when overwhelmed, and in a dense urban setting, that unpredictability can have serious, and sometimes fatal, consequences.

This is not only an animal welfare issue. It is also a public safety issue. A frightened horse in a crowded city can bolt, slip, fall, collide with vehicles or pedestrians, or injure the driver, passengers, bystanders, and itself. The consequences of a single incident can be severe and irreversible.

The New York City Council has a responsibility to protect the public, and that responsibility includes recognizing when a traditional practice is no longer appropriate for the environment in which it is being carried out. We do not ask other animals to perform work that places them and the public in danger simply because the practice is old, familiar, or symbolic. Tradition alone is not a sufficient reason to continue a practice that creates foreseeable risk.

My professional background in trauma therapy informs how I think about safety, regulation, and stress. In trauma work, we understand that living beings function best when they have some degree of control over their environment, and the ability to respond to threat. Horses are no different. When they are trapped in situations where they cannot choose flight, their stress response is activated. Over time, that can lead to chronic anxiety, hypervigilance, shutdown, or sudden explosive reactions.

In the context of a carriage horse working in Manhattan, those responses are not theoretical. They are exactly the kinds of reactions that can occur when an animal is asked to endure a setting it did not evolve to navigate.

We also have to be honest about what regulation can and cannot do. Rules about hours, temperatures, rest periods, or routes may reduce some risks, but they cannot eliminate the fundamental problem: a horse is still being asked to pull a carriage through one of the busiest, loudest, most visually and acoustically intense environments in the country. An environment, incidentally, that many Veterans are unable to navigate.

No regulation can change the fact that the horse's senses are constantly being stimulated, challenged, or overloaded. No regulation can give the horse the freedom to flee when it feels threatened. No regulation can make a prey animal feel safe in a setting that is inherently unsafe for it.

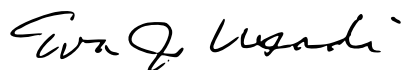
The question before the City Council is not whether some horses can be trained to tolerate parts of this work, or whether better regulations can reduce the risk to horses and citizens. **The question is whether New York City is an appropriate place to ask horses to do work their biology is not built to withstand, while also putting pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, joggers and the horses themselves at risk.**

Based on my professional experience and my understanding of equine behavior, I believe the answer is no. We cannot train away millions of years of evolution. We cannot make a prey animal stop being a prey animal. We can only decide whether we are willing to continue asking horses to endure conditions that are incompatible with their nature.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the City Council to ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City by passing Ryder's Law/Romanch's Law 0943, and to replace this industry with humane, modern alternatives that do not depend on putting horses in harm's way.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,



Eva J. Usadi



To the NYC City Council,

Please pass Romanch's Law. I agree with the many others who expressed their concern and desire for the horses to be freed from pulling the carriages. I go to Central Park with my family more days than not. Seeing the horses tied to those carriages brings me such pain and I look forward to the days when the horses are free. I was at City Hall yesterday and was happy to be part of my fellow New Yorkers who feel just as passionate about this topic. Thank you for bringing it to the forefront.

Sincerely,
Evan Kopf

To Whom it May Concern,

I strongly support legislation to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

As someone who cares deeply about animal welfare, I believe horses deserve lives that allow them to express their natural behaviors—not spend their days pulling heavy carriages through congested city streets, surrounded by traffic, noise, pollution, and extreme weather. No matter how well individual horses are cared for, the urban environment is fundamentally incompatible with their physical and behavioral needs.

Horses are prey animals that evolved to graze, socialize, and move freely across open spaces. Asking them to work on asphalt amid constant honking, construction, and unpredictable traffic puts them in situations they were never meant to endure. Accidents involving carriage horses continue to demonstrate that even with regulations, the risks cannot be eliminated.

This issue is not about blaming drivers or stable workers. Many genuinely care about their horses. It is about recognizing that our understanding of animal welfare has evolved. Practices once considered acceptable should be reexamined when better, more humane alternatives exist.

New York City has the opportunity to lead by replacing horse-drawn carriages with modern, humane transportation that preserves the city's historic charm while protecting animals. Such a transition can include support for workers and appropriate retirement or rehoming for the horses.

Compassion and progress can go hand in hand. We should celebrate New York's history without requiring horses to work in an environment that cannot meet their natural needs. I respectfully urge you to support this legislation and bring an end to horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City.

Regards

Evin Urban

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 11:02:32 AM

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Testimony in Support of Banning Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City

Good morning, Chair and members of the Council.

My name is Ewa Fedorowicz , and I am a New York City resident. I am here today to urge you to support legislation ending the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Horse-drawn carriages may be seen as a cherished tradition, but traditions should evolve when they no longer reflect our values or protect public safety. Horses are intelligent, sensitive animals that were not meant to spend their lives navigating crowded streets, breathing exhaust fumes, walking for hours on hard pavement, or enduring extreme heat, cold, and constant city noise. Even with regulations, these conditions cannot replicate the natural environment horses need to thrive. Animal welfare advocates and city officials have long argued that the urban environment is fundamentally incompatible with horses' physical and psychological well-being.

This issue is not only about animal welfare. It is also about public safety. Recent tragic incidents have demonstrated the risks posed when horses become frightened or when accidents occur. The heartbreaking death of 18-year-old tourist Romanch Mahajan has reminded us that the consequences can be devastating for both people and animals. No family should experience such a loss while visiting our city.

New York is a world leader in innovation and compassion. We have countless modern, humane alternatives for visitors to experience Central Park and the city, including walking tours, bicycles, pedicabs, and electric vehicles. We can preserve the charm of New York without relying on

horses to work in an environment that was never designed for them.

At the same time, I recognize that carriage drivers and stable workers deserve respect and support. Any transition should include fair job protections, retraining opportunities, and assistance in finding comparable employment. Protecting animals and protecting workers are goals that can and should go hand in hand.

I respectfully ask the Council to support legislation that phases out horse-drawn carriages and replaces them with humane, modern alternatives. This is an opportunity to make New York City safer, more compassionate, and more forward-looking.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ewa Fedorowicz

DATE: **July 17, 2026**

TO: **Members of the Committee on Health, New York City Council**

RE: **Testimony in Support of New York City Council Intro. 943, Romanch's Law**

FROM: **Faculty Members and Students in the Department of Environmental Studies at New York University¹**

Faculty

Becca Franks, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies; Director of the MA in Animal Studies; Director, WATR-lab; Co-Director, Wild Animal Welfare Program; Director, All Animals Initiative for Multispecies Community Building: beccafranks@nyu.edu

Colin Jerolmack, Professor of Environmental Studies; Research Director, Center for Environmental and Animal Protection: jerolmack@nyu.edu

Mia MacDonald, Adjunct Faculty in Environmental Studies (MA in Animal Studies Program); Executive Director, Brighter Green: macdonald@brightergreen.org / msm275@nyu.edu

Sonali Shukla McDermid, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies: sps246@nyu.edu

Lauri Torgerson-White, Associate Director, All Animals Initiative for Multispecies Community Building: lt2951@nyu.edu

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Amber Wooters, MA Student, Animal Studies: arw10037@nyu.edu

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in strong support of Intro. 943, which would phase out the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City while working toward a just transition to new employment for drivers and others employed in the

¹ The views expressed herein are those of the individuals whose names appear here and do not purport to represent the views, if any, of the New York University Department of Environmental Studies, NYU Animal Studies, or of any department, institution, or affiliated body of New York University. Individual titles and institutional affiliations are provided solely for identification purposes.

industry. The Intro's passage would also ensure a just and humane retirement for the horses currently used in the trade, guaranteeing that none of these individuals could be sold or transferred to another horse-drawn carriage enterprise or be sent to slaughter.

We welcome the reintroduction and renaming of the bill, now honoring Romanch Mahajan, the teenager who while visiting New York City with his family died tragically after falling from a horse-drawn carriage in Central Park on June 17th of this year, when the driver left the reins unattended and the horse, Joker, bolted. We appreciate the Council's renewed efforts to ban horse-drawn carriages from the City and, in so doing, advancing the health and welfare of the horses, New York City's residents, and our shared urban environment.

We write from the perspective of researchers, professors, and graduate students affiliated with New York University's Department of Environmental Studies, which includes NYU Animal Studies. Our work focuses on environmental and animal protection that can be useful for practitioners and policymakers alike. Much of our work intersects with a just transition framework. This framework seeks to ensure that societies shift toward economies, livelihoods, and means of production that are just, equitable, and aligned with environmental realities as well as evolving ethical principles, including recognition of animal sentience and welfare.

Our testimony outlines five key reasons why the carriage-horse trade should end and Intro. 943 should pass:

- New Yorkers of all walks of life support an end to the carriage-horse trade.
- Animal welfare matters and the welfare of horses cannot be secured in the industry.
- Public and horse safety and well-being are not compatible with the carriage-horse trade.
- Workers in the carriage-horse industry deserve consideration and support to make a just transition to new and better jobs; the horses deserve a just retirement
- Climate change demands new ways of organizing societies, economies, and relations between the human and nonhuman worlds. The carriage-horse industry is not adaptable.

We also offer concrete suggestions for how aspects of the legislation should be strengthened.

New Yorkers of all walks of life support an end to the carriage-horse trade. Civic and parks organizations; animal advocacy groups; runners and bikers; and advocates for sustainable, resilient, and climate-aware cities are all aligned around this goal. Such agreement is not common, and when it occurs, it usually points toward policy and legislation that should be enacted and that is likely to have positive public benefits.

Many offering testimony in favor of Intro. 943 have pointed to the overwhelming numbers of New Yorkers who support this legislation. A poll conducted this month found that 68 percent of adults living in New York City want an end to horse-drawn carriage operations, with “majorities from every one of the 83 demographic, geographic, and political subgroups” testing in favor of the ban.¹ The four main reasons people stated for supporting the ban were:

- To enhance public safety by reducing risks to riders, pedestrians, cyclists, and the horses themselves.
- To protect horse welfare by ending what many view as an inhumane practice.
- The belief that horse-drawn carriages don’t belong in a modern, densely populated city.
- To support a just transition by helping affected workers find new jobs and retiring carriage horses to appropriate homes

These poll results are similar to a 2022 Zogby survey that found that 71 percent of city residents supported a ban.²

Animal welfare matters and the welfare of horses cannot be secured in the industry.

Horses’ lives are shaped by municipal policies, and valuing horse welfare means ending the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City once and for all.

Policymakers, researchers, and the public increasingly recognize that many animals, including horses, have the capacity to experience pleasure and pain and merit consideration in the decisions that affect them. Legislative, judicial, and scientific recognition of animal sentience is

growing, as is public support for considering animals' interests and needs in public policies, for the animals' own sake, notwithstanding their economic value to human beings.³

As we're sure you know, the welfare of horses in New York City has animated the animal protection movement for 160 years. Henry Bergh founded the ASPCA in 1866 when he saw a driver brutally beating a carriage horse.⁴ He and many others worked tirelessly to provide the animals with water and decent shelter, and to stop them from being overworked. These efforts have been taken forward by generations of activists: from Gretchen Wyler in the 1970s;⁵ to advocates of (the failed) Local Law 89 in the 1990s;⁶ to mayors who in recent years promised to end the industry and didn't or couldn't. Just as the Council has banned circuses exploiting large animals, it's time for this industry to end, too.

You will have received extensive testimony pointing to the inadequate conditions in which the horses live and work. These have been widely documented. Newspaper articles in 2025,⁷ 2024,⁸ and 2022,⁹ exposed the long days, cramped stalls, and inadequate bedding and nutrition for the horses. The Animal Welfare Institute¹⁰ has observed that these horses, many of whom have already worked for years before becoming carriage horses, spend too much time on very hot or very cold pavement to maintain hoof health. The horses are allowed to work up to nine hours a day, seven days a week, including in hot and humid conditions and often with limited drinking water. In addition, they are assailed by the city's air and noise pollution while moving through a dense urban environment that presents plenty of unpleasant surprises to prey animals like them.

This is as true in Central Park as it is on the streets: bikers, skaters, runners, pedestrians, and dog-walkers—all 250,000 people who use the Park daily—can act in ways that could cause a horse to “spook.” None of the habitats the carriage horses live within in the City—small urban stables; streets filled with car, truck, e-bike, scooter, bicycles, and pedestrian traffic; and a busy park where roads are used by multiple people and vehicles—are natural ones for horses.

Users of Central Park also note the problem of significant quantities of manure the horses deposit in the Park, citing inconvenience and concern for public health. While clearing up the manure is

supposed to be the drivers' responsibility, the Central Park Conservancy noted in 2025 that horse manure is left behind daily on the Park's drives.¹¹

Public and horse safety and well-being are not compatible with the carriage-horse trade. As you know, the Central Park Conservancy, which advocates for the protection of a space used by 42 million people a year,¹² favors ending the industry.¹³ In June of this year, the Conservancy counted a total of eight horse-related incidents in the 13 months prior,¹⁴ to add to the hundreds of such incidents over the decades.¹⁵ Some examples of "incidents" are:

- Carriages overturning or running into other vehicles including other horse-drawn carriages.
- Tourists having to jump from a runaway carriage.
- Drivers injured and sometimes hospitalized.
- Horses running into traffic.

Only a few weeks ago, another horse, Deniz, died after she ate enough of a yew plant in the Park to be lethal. This tragedy occurred even though drivers are required to ensure that horses don't eat any Park foliage.¹⁶

Horses have repeatedly collapsed and later died on City streets, particularly during hot and humid weather: Lady, in August 2025, and Ryder, after whom this legislation was previously named, in August 2022. Ryder's driver was captured on video whipping Ryder with his reins and slapping him as he lay on the ground. While Ryder was retired after this incident, he was euthanized two months later; an autopsy found he had been suffering from leukemia.

Workers in the carriage-horse industry deserve consideration and support to make a just transition to new and better jobs; the horses deserve a just retirement. A lot has changed since Henry Bergh started the ASPCA. At the turn of the 20th century, 200,000 horses were working on the streets of New York City.¹⁷ According to the 1870 census, there were, in that year in New York alone: 6,138 carriage and wagon makers; 19,291 blacksmiths; and 5,547 harness and saddle makers.¹⁸ By 1910, the number of horses had fallen by 82,000; ten years later

that number was 56,000. When public desires and economic systems shift, livelihoods are affected, too. It happened in the move to motorized vehicles, then, and it is happening now.

We acknowledge the challenges that social and economic change can pose to individuals and their families. While it is understandable that carriage-horse operators and owners, many of whom are immigrants, want their industry to continue to operate, the drivers face a degree of precarity that make these jobs less than optimal livelihoods. Drivers are independent contractors, not formal members of the Transit Workers Union (TWU), and do not receive the benefits or job security of union status, including health insurance or sick leave. They do not have formal employment contracts or durable job security. For example, after the terrible death of Romanch Mahajan, the carriage driver was fired immediately by the carriage owner.

Workers have a right to decent and safe conditions in the workplace, and to not be exposed to conditions that may threaten their health, mobility, and lives; so do horses. The regulatory and safety environment in which the drivers and horses work is weak. The numerous incidents over several decades of horses bolting, collapsing, spooking, and even dying while pulling carriages offers strong evidence that the TWU, City agencies that regulate the industry (principally the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene), and current legislation do not and cannot ensure the horses' health or welfare or that of the operators.

Climate change demands new ways of organizing societies, economies, and relations between the human and nonhuman worlds. The carriage-horse industry is not adaptable.

In 2025, the City had a total of 14 days hotter than 90 degrees (with temperatures measured at midnight). So far this year, nine days in the City have been hotter than 90 degrees—and a new heatwave unfolding as we drafted this testimony.¹⁹

On days with high heat and humidity current law requires horses to remain in or return to the stables (generally when air temperatures reach 90F, or 80F with an equine heat index of 150 or higher). The number of such days, along with instances of extreme weather like the intense rain and windstorms the City experienced on July 3rd, are only likely to increase as the climate

warms. Indeed, the number of severe weather events that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) tracks for New York City is increasing.²⁰

For more than a decade, the City has put a priority on implementing policies and practices to adapt and become more resilient to the effects of climate change. A carriage-horse trade that risks the health and livelihoods of human and nonhuman labor in extreme cold, heat, or storms is not compatible with the realities—and challenges—of a warming world.

The legislation includes important provisions. Some aspects should be strengthened. In conclusion, to ensure a just transition for those employed in the industry, we support the bill's provision to assist in the retraining of carriage-horse operators and to provide them with workforce development services and support. We also welcome the legislation's intent to ensure that the horses in the industry receive a just retirement, through sanctuaries or other appropriate homes. We also applaud the legislation's proscription on horses being sold to other carriage businesses outside the City or sent to slaughter.²¹ However, we believe these provisions should be strengthened, by, for example, ensuring continuing City oversight of conditions for the horses as the drivers and owners transition out of the trade and the horses leave the City.

In addition, as the industry winds down, it will be crucial that the City immediately strengthen existing structures that govern working conditions and housing for the horses and their health and welfare and improve oversight and remedies and penalties for any deficiencies. The current legislation should be amended to include stronger protections for horses from overwork, inadequate nutrition, untreated injuries or disease, working in extreme weather without shelter, and other factors that lower or threaten the horses' welfare.

In conclusion, after 160 years of advocacy in New York City, it is time for horses to stop pulling carriages and for the City to secure a more compassionate, sustainable, and livable urban future.

We thank you for your public service on behalf of all New Yorkers and for considering our input in your deliberations.

Notes

- ¹ Central Park Conservancy, “New Poll: More Than Two-Thirds of New Yorkers Support Ending Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City,” press release <<https://www.centralparknyc.org/press/memo-zenith-research-x-cpc-july-2026-poll-on-horse-carriages>>.
- ² Animal Legal Defense Fund, “Seventy-One Percent of NYC Voters Support a Ban on Horse and Carriage Rides, According to New Poll,” September 6, 2022 <<https://aldf.org/article/seventy-one-percent-of-nyc-voters-support-a-ban-on-horse-and-carriage-rides-according-to-new-poll/>>.
- ³ Cleo Verkuijl, Jeff Sebo, Adalene Minelli, and Katherine Browne, “Integrating Animal Health and Welfare into the 2030 Agenda and Beyond” (Stockholm Environment Institute and New York University Center for Environmental and Animal Protection, 2025) <<https://www.sei.org/publications/animal-health-welfare-2030-agenda/>>.
- ⁴ “Horses Are at the Heart of Our History,” ASPCA, May 6, 2026 <<https://www.aspc.org/news/horses-are-heart-our-history>>.
- ⁵ Coalition to Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages, “The Political Power of NYC’s Carriage Business—A Bare-Bones History” <<https://www.banhdc.org/archives/ch-hist-thepol.html>>.
- ⁶ Peggy Parker, Carriage Horse Action Committee, “Testimony before City Council Transportation Committee re Local Law 89,” November 29, 1993, Coalition to Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages <<https://www.banhdc.org/archives/ch-hist-testimony.html>>.
- ⁷ “Debate over Horse-Drawn Carriages Pits Tradition against Welfare,” *Queens Ledger*, August 20, 2025 <<https://queensledger.com/2025/08/20/debate-over-horse-carriages-pits-tradition-against-welfare/>>.
- ⁸ “Advocates Call for Central Park Carriage Horse Ban Ahead of Driver’s Animal Abuse Trial,” *New York Post*, July 16, 2024 <<https://nypost.com/2024/07/16/us-news/advocates-call-for-central-park-carriage-horse-ban-ahead-of-drivers-animal-abuse-trial/>>.
- ⁹ “NYC Stable That Housed Fallen Carriage Horse Keeps Animals in Poor Conditions,” *New York Post*, August 27, 2022 <<https://nypost.com/2022/08/27/nyc-stable-that-housed-fallen-carriage-horse-keeps-animals-in-poor-conditions/>>.
- ¹⁰ “Horse-Drawn Carriages,” Animal Welfare Institute <<https://awionline.org/programs/equines/horse-drawn-carriages/>>.
- ¹¹ “Central Park Conservancy Calls for Ban on Horse-Drawn Carriages,” *New York Times*, August 12, 2025 <<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/12/nyregion/central-park-horse-carriages.html>>.
- ¹² “About Us,” Central Park Conservancy <<https://www.centralparknyc.org/about>>.
- ¹³ Central Park Conservancy, “New Poll: More Than Two-Thirds of New Yorkers Support Ending Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City,” press release <<https://www.centralparknyc.org/press/memo-zenith-research-x-cpc-july-2026-poll-on-horse-carriages>>.
- ¹⁴ “18-Year-Old Man Dies After Falling from Central Park Horse Carriage,” ABC News, June 18, 2026 <<https://abcnews.com/US/18-year-man-critical-condition-after-falling-central/story?id=133977133>>.
- ¹⁵ “Horse-Drawn Carriage Accidents in NYC Since 1982,” All-Creatures.org <<https://www.all-creatures.org/articles/ar-horse-carriage-accidents.html>>.
- ¹⁶ Central Park Conservancy, “Statement from the Central Park Conservancy on Most Recent Tragic Horse Carriage Incident in the Park,” June 10, 2026 <<https://www.centralparknyc.org/press/statement-from-the-central-park-conservancy-on-most-recent-tragic-horse-carriage-incident-in-the-park>>.
- ¹⁷ “The Unpleasant Side of Life with Horses in Cities,” *New York Almanack*, February 2021 <<https://www.newyorkalmanack.com/2021/02/the-unpleasant-side-of-life-with-horses-in-cities/>>.
- ¹⁸ “Most Common Jobs 150 Years Ago in New York,” Stacker, December 11, 2025 <<https://stacker.com/stories/new-york/most-common-jobs-150-years-ago-new-york>>.
- ¹⁹ “Climate,” National Weather Service, New York, NY Weather Forecast Office <<https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=okx>>.
- ²⁰ Thomas P. DiNapoli, *Severe Weather Events and Resiliency in New York State* (Office of the New York State Comptroller, October 2025) <<https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/reports/pdf/severe-weather-events-and-resiliency-in-ny-state.pdf>>.
- ²¹ “Will the NYC Carriage Horse Era Finally Draw to a Close?,” Humane World for Animals, February 18, 2026, <<https://www.humaneworld.org/en/all-animals/nyc-carriage-horse-ban>>.

Dear City Council,

I'm writing to ask you to vote **yes on Intro 943**.

I support ending horse-drawn carriages because the treatment of these horses is inhumane, and they also pose a safety risk to both people and the animals themselves. The horses spend their lives living in cramped stalls without access to pasture or the ability to socialize with other horses. They are constantly restrained and forced to pull a carriage. They never walk freely. When it's too hot to work, they are trapped in their disgusting stables without ventilation.

Horses can spook in traffic or in the park, putting everyone around them at risk AND they have. There have been several instances of horses spooking and someone has now needlessly died. RIP ROMANCH MAHAJAN. His death was preventable.

I also see carriage drivers ignoring the rules by parking wherever they want and sometimes leaving horses unattended. On top of that, horse manure is left throughout the park, making it less enjoyable for everyone.

This issue is personal to me because I live near the stables. I see these horses every day, and I smell the stables every day. I can't even enjoy Central Park, instead, I'm reminded of the conditions these animals are living in. It's heartbreaking.

I understand that banning carriages will affect people's jobs, but people transition to new careers all the time. That is not a good enough reason to continue an industry that causes animals to suffer. The good news is that this bill includes support for the workers to help them transition to another to other fields of employment.

Please vote **yes on Intro 943**.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Fawn Sullivan
Zip Code: 10018

From: [FELIPE](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 9:22:50 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to [REDACTED] as an attachment.

Thank you all for hearing us today,

If I were to post a video today on social media in favor of Intro 943 and I tagged each and every single one of you, all the council members, the mayor, the governor, etc. I would not, I repeat, I would not have to include any footage of any of the endless incidents that have occurred with the horse carriages. Do any of you know why I wouldn't have to include footage? Because by now all of you should be more than familiar with everything that has happened with the horse carriages, the accidents, colliding with cars, injury to pedestrians, horses collapsing in the middle of the street, horses running off into traffic, horses dying on the street, and now a human casualty. If you are a council member, it is safe to assume you have seen all these videos because they are all out there. If you are a council member who is not visually familiar with these incidents, and you are against Romanch's Law then you should seriously question your decision making and professionalism when it comes to approaching this matter. These incidents have been going on for way too long, we should have done away with the horse carriage industry ten years ago with DiBlasio. This is NYC, it is 2026, the Knicks are NBA Champions, yet here we are so far behind that we are discussing the damn horse carriage industry. We are years behind so many other cities that have stepped into the future! We are NYC! We are recognized for leading the world in sports, fashion, music, culture, and in the way our City is governed. We should be here today talking about personhood for cats and dogs, or banning the sale of fur in our City, instead here we are dragging out a prehistoric issue like the horse carriages. Let's do the right thing and continue to be leaders of change. Lets make history today by transitioning our City from a once loved and dear industry, to one that no longer has the oxygen to exist in our society. Thank you!

Felipe Monterosa

As an emigrant from rural Ireland, it has perplexed me why we continue to have carriage horses working in New York. As a former resident of the west side, it pains me to see these poor horses forced to go up and down 9th and 10th Avenue in extreme temps and traffic conditions. One time I observed a carriage horse left unattended outside a deli on 10th Avenue. I kept thinking how unsafe it was for both horse and potentially for pedestrians and drivers.

It's 2026. We have lost a human life, not to mention several hurt and injured carriage horses. This no longer needs to be part of a humane, progressive city. Other cities have found alternative electric carriages to support tourism. We don't need animals to do this in 2026.

I am here to strongly encourage the Council members and to remind them that they took a vow to represent the people of New York. Who overwhelmingly vote in favor of banning horse carriages.

There is no reason to not be in favor of this bill, to finally free the horses from a long experience of abuse and exploitation. Nothing about upholding the abuse of animal's is democratic, nothing about it is humane.

You have already failed to save these horses and through your complacency you have now allowed an 18 year old to die, and numerous others to be injured.

The horses that are being used for carriage driving are commonly elderly horses that have been abused their whole lives.

That have not had a day of freedom or grazing. That are being forced to drag 400-500 pounds in the blistering heat.

These workers do not care for these animals. If they did then they wouldn't be housing them in tiny concrete cells without proper access to food or water. They wouldn't be taking them out in 100 degree weather, when a horse can only handle up to 86 degrees.

Anything higher than 86 degrees outside can cause heat stress in horses. When it's this temperature they are supposed to have constant access to cool water and feed. This is not happening.

This bill has nothing to do with the workers and their jobs, there is nothing ETHICAL about a job that is built on abuse, mistreatment, and exploitation. There are obvious alternatives, such as a bike or e-bike tours that these workers can use that don't rely on abuse and are in the best interests of the public's safety, but you'd rather sit here and jeopardize every day New Yorkers and perpetuate this cycle of abuse.

But here and now, you are being offered a chance to fix your mistake. To finally end the abuse on the horses and to keep New Yorkers safe.

If you vote no on this bill, the blood of the next horse that dies, the next person that dies is on your hands.

Ban horse carriages now.

Please read it:

I support Intro 943 because I believe kindness should never depend on what kind of animal we're talking about. **Horses feel fear, pain, exhaustion, comfort, and joy.** They don't get to choose the lives we force on them, and they can't stand in front of you today to ask for something better. We have to do that for them.

I always wonder why our hearts work so differently depending on the species. Most of us would do anything for our dogs or cats. We rush them to the vet, worry when they're scared, and want them to live happy, safe lives. **If your own dog had to spend long days working in traffic, breathing fumes, surrounded by noise, heat, and danger because someone thought it was entertaining, would you accept that? If the answer is no, then horses deserve that same compassion too.**

Being an animal lover shouldn't stop with the animals we share our homes with. It should include the ones who are just as capable of suffering but have no voice and no choice. We don't have to wait for another tragedy to decide that these horses deserve better. **We already know enough to choose kindness.**

Please pass Intro 943. New York has a chance to show that compassion isn't selective—that we don't protect only the animals we cuddle, but also **the ones who have spent years serving us without ever being asked if they wanted to.**

P.S. To everyone who still thinks a carriage ride is worth more than a horse's well-being... I hope one day you learn that **tradition and entertainment are never good excuses for another living being's suffering.**

Flavia C Mensen-Dubin

Good afternoon, Chair and members of the City Council.

My name is Francesco Riccobono, and my family has proudly been part of New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry since 1979.

Forty-seven years ago, my father came to America from Sicily with nothing but a dream. He found that dream in New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry. Growing up, I didn't just watch my father work—I watched him dedicate his life to caring for his horses with love, patience, and pride. Those horses shaped my childhood and inspired my future. They are not equipment or machines. They are family.

Before I continue, I want to offer my heartfelt condolences to the family of Romanch. His tragic passing was heartbreaking, and our entire industry continues to mourn alongside his loved ones. Our thoughts and prayers remain with them.

That tragedy has only strengthened our commitment to improving safety. We are actively working with the TWU, the NYC Horse Carriage Alliance, and members of this Council to implement stronger driver training, certification programs, enhanced horse welfare standards, safer operating procedures, and additional safety measures

because protecting both people and horses is our highest priority.

That is why I respectfully ask you to oppose Intro 0943.

This bill does not solve a problem—it destroys an industry that has been part of New York City's identity for 167 years. It threatens the futures of hardworking families, stable workers, farriers, drivers, and countless others whose livelihoods depend on this profession. It also jeopardizes the futures of the horses we have devoted our lives to caring for. I personally spend approximately \$40,000 each year on each horse because their health and well-being come before anything else.

I am a newlywed and the proud father of two beautiful little girls. This industry is how I support my family, just as it supported mine growing up. Like so many others, I have dedicated my life, my savings, and my future to this profession because I truly believe in it.

If changes are needed, let's work together to make them. But please don't allow one heartbreaking tragedy to erase generations of honest, hardworking New Yorkers who have devoted their lives to this industry. Real progress comes from collaboration, compassion, and thoughtful solutions—not from dismantling an entire community.

I respectfully ask you to reject Intro 0943 and continue working with our industry to strengthen public safety, protect horse welfare, and preserve the livelihoods of families who have dedicated their lives to these remarkable animals.

Thank you for your time, and God bless America

Letter to the New York City Council

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I strongly oppose the proposed legislation to ban New York City's horse carriage industry.

For years, the Transport Workers Union has worked with horse carriage drivers and stable operators to make the industry as safe as possible for horses, workers, passengers, and the public. We have hired independent experts to review best practices in Central Park and at every horse carriage stand, established a safety committee, consulted with veterinarians, and worked with animal welfare professionals to improve standards of care.

We have also worked with city agencies, including the Department of Health, to report noncompliance and push for improvements. Even basic necessities such as permanent water troughs took years to secure because of bureaucracy and a lack of commitment from the City. We also held multiple meetings with the Conservancy about installing hitching posts, but our concerns were ignored. Those hitching posts likely would have saved that young man's life.

We are deeply saddened by the tragic accident and extend our thoughts to everyone affected. But it would be a mistake to eliminate an entire industry because of one tragedy instead of focusing on meaningful safety improvements.

After the accident, it was the Transport Workers Union—not the City—that voluntarily shut down the industry for several days to conduct mandatory retraining and review safety procedures. During that time, the City failed to offer meaningful assistance or commit resources to improve safety.

The City Council should recognize the years of work and investment that have gone into making this industry safer. Rather than banning horse carriages, the Council should work with the workers, veterinarians, industry experts, and the Union to continue improving safety for everyone.

I respectfully urge the New York City Council to reject this proposed ban and support practical, evidence-based solutions that protect both the horses and the hardworking New Yorkers whose livelihoods depend on this historic industry.

Respectfully,

Frank J. McCann

My name is Frank Joey Izzo. I grew up in Rutherford, New Jersey, and have lived in New York City since 2013, currently in Astoria, Queens. I write in support of Romanch's Law (Intro 943).

I recall my first encounter with a carriage horse in this city with unusual clarity – an animal harnessed to a cart of tourists, working its way through midtown traffic. Even then, before I knew the details of the industry, the image struck me as fundamentally out of place. Years of exposure to this practice have not changed that initial assessment; they have only confirmed it.

The record speaks for itself. Horses have died in this industry with a regularity that should trouble anyone paying attention, and the conditions many of them live in – cramped, dim stalls on the West Side, far from any semblance of pasture – reflect an industry that was never designed with the animal's welfare in mind. These are not isolated failures. They are the predictable result of asking a large animal to spend its life navigating one of the most congested cities in the world.

What has changed is that the cost of this arrangement is no longer limited to the horses. A person has now died as well. That should recalibrate how this Council weighs the risks of continuing to permit this industry to operate.

I urge the Council to pass Romanch's Law (Intro 943).

Frank Joey Izzo

Astoria, Queens

July 17, 2026

To whom it may concern,

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

This should have been enacted decades ago but here we are.

Please make it right and end this abusive and inhumane industry.

Thank you,
Frazier Braverman-Greenberg

In Favor of Intro 943, Romanch's Law.

Dear Members of the New York City Council:

I strongly urge you to pass Romanch's Law (Intro. 943) and finally end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City. The bill would phase out the industry while protecting the horses from slaughter and providing workforce transition assistance for carriage workers.

At its heart, this issue is about a simple moral principle: animals are not here for our entertainment.

Horses are intelligent, sensitive, social beings with their own needs and instincts. They should not be required to spend their lives pulling heavy carriages through crowded city streets simply so people can enjoy a nostalgic tourist attraction. No amount of regulation can change the fact that these animals are being used as commercial entertainment rather than being allowed to live in environments that respect their natural behavior.

As our understanding of animal welfare has evolved, so have our values. Society has moved away from many forms of entertainment that depended on the exploitation of animals because we recognized that tradition is not, by itself, a justification for causing unnecessary suffering or using living beings as attractions. New York City should continue to lead with compassion by recognizing that horse-drawn carriage rides belong in the past.

Romanch's Law offers a responsible path forward. It not only ends an outdated industry but also ensures humane placement for the horses and assistance for the people whose livelihoods will be affected. This is a thoughtful solution that recognizes both animal welfare and human needs.

We should not ask animals to bear the burden of human amusement. A world-class city can celebrate its history without relying on the labor of horses in one of the busiest urban environments on Earth.

I respectfully ask you to vote in favor of Romanch's Law (Intro. 943) and help create a more humane future for New York City.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gabriela Torrano
Astoria, NY

Testimony re Romanch's Law:

July 15, 2026

My name is Gabriele Schafer-Fracaro. I was there in person since 8:30am but needed to leave...

I am for passing this law finally. I've been waiting since at least B. DeBlasio's first run for mayor for it to finally get done.

World class cities have already caught on to what's obvious to any human with empathy: despite what the other camp says, horses do not belong in a busy city, and it is not their job to contribute to the human engines of capitalism.

Cities like London, Oxford, Paris, Chicago, Toronto, Philadelphia and Beijing have banned horse-drawn carriages. New York should be leading the world into the 21st century, not insisting on staying stuck in a bygone era. It's shameful that an 18-year-old had to become a martyr to this cause. Let Romanch's fate *at least* be the tipping point.

Thank you for allowing me to contribute to the record.

Gabriele Schafer-Fracaro

To the New York City Council Committee on Health,

My name is Gabriella, and I am a resident of Brooklyn submitting testimony in strong support of Intro 943, which would phase out the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City.

I want to focus my testimony on public safety, because this isn't only a question of animal welfare — it's a question of the safety of everyday New Yorkers and visitors who use Central Park.

I don't spend a lot of time in Central Park, but on two separate occasions within the past couple of years, I personally witnessed a carriage horse collapse in the middle of the park. Both times, the incident caused visible panic and distress among everyone nearby, including children. Both times, it was clear that the carriage workers present had no real plan for how to respond, even though this is something that has now happened repeatedly.

These are not isolated incidents. Just last month, an 18-year-old visitor to New York, Romanch Mahajan, was killed after the horse pulling his carriage bolted and the carriage overturned. That death came only a week after a carriage horse named Deniz collapsed and died on the same park roads. These tragedies illustrate exactly the danger I witnessed myself: a large, sensitive animal, placed into an unpredictable and often overwhelming urban environment, can become uncontrollable in an instant. And when that happens, the danger isn't limited to the horse — it extends to the carriage passengers, the driver, and every pedestrian, jogger, cyclist, and child nearby.

Central Park is one of the busiest, most crowded public spaces in the city. Even a well-trained horse can be spooked by the ordinary chaos of Manhattan — sirens, traffic, crowds, dogs, e-bikes. When a horse collapses or bolts, there's no way to control where the carriage goes or who gets hurt. I've seen the fear on the faces of people around me in those moments, and I've seen firsthand how unprepared this industry is to handle it, despite it happening again and again.

New York City should not ask its residents and visitors to accept this level of risk for the sake of an antiquated attraction. I urge the Committee to vote yes on Intro 943, protect the horses, and protect the people of this city.

Respectfully submitted,
Gabriella Zonari de Lorenzo
Brooklyn, NY

July 14, 2026

Gail McGowan

[REDACTED]
Elgin, Qc, Canada
[REDACTED]

I am writing concerning Bill 943. If passed it will effectively remove these horses from a safe & humane life as well as leave their drivers/caretakers unemployed. As a lifelong horse person who was involved in Canadian Pony Club & worked as a groom in high level competition barns I can attest to the level of commitment to horse welfare amongst NYC carriage drivers. There is no guaranteed future for these horses if they no longer have a place in the carriage industry. Some will say that these horses can be placed with a rescue or be sold to someone who wants a good safe driving horse. In my experience there are very few rescues where you would want to place a horse. Many are run by well meaning people who have little horse experience & as a result do more harm than good. The ones that are qualified are often at capacity or stretched for funding as the cost to feed & properly care for a single horse can be at a minimum of \$7,000-\$10,000 per year. Further, the market for sales horses is flooded with horses that never sell, sadly many of these horses would be amongst those that would be a difficult sale. Many could go to auction & unfortunately the fate of many auction horses is to go for meat.

Please consider improvements to the welfare of these special horses by providing turnout areas in Central Park. Imagine the joy this would bring to both horses & city kids who have limited access to nature & rural life. So much good could come from this. I know that in my own life horses have been the mainstay of almost all of my happiness & a respite from the many stresses we face. Please cancel Bill 943, the future of so many equine & human lives are relying on your decision.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gail McGowan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gail McGowan

Testimony for Committee on Health, July 15th, 2026 at 10:00AM

I beg the New York City Council to pass intro 943 and put an end to the dangerous, abusive and needless horse carriage industry.

The few hundred people who work in this industry can find employment elsewhere- the horse drawn carriages can be replaced by electric ones who would still require drivers.

Jobs should not come before **lives**.

No other living being should die for a "tourist attraction", nobody comes to NYC for horse carriage rides alone.

As a New Yorker I avoid parts of my favorite place, Central Park, because the sight of these often small, skinny, unwell looking animals pulling huge carriages with several people in them (who are usually just staring at their phones) is too heartbreaking.

Beyond their physical exploitation and neglect, I have never seen horses so "dead inside" (for lack of better words). Horses are usually communicative animals, the ones in this industry have been so stripped of their well-being.

Please, PLEASE let's put an end to this cruelty already, New Yorkers have been opposing this for decades. Please let's finally end this barbaric practice and be proud of our city.

Thank you for your time,
Gal Shulman

Public Testimony: Opposition to Intro 943

Gareth Smith

Licensed Horse-Drawn Carriage Driver, New York City

Good afternoon Chair and members of the Council. My name is Gareth Smith. I have been a licensed horse-drawn carriage driver in New York City for over 20 years.

I did not fall into this work. I was working in publishing before I did this. I chose this job. At first it was just part time, but I fell in love with it and I quit my day job to do it full time.

There is no abuse in this industry. I would not have entered into it if there was. I would not work alongside people who treated animals inhumanely. None of us would.

In 2008 I began driving a 5-year-old Percheron/Quarter Horse cross I named F. Scott. The 16 years I had the pleasure to work with him had a profound effect on me, and I am a better person for it.

People who think these horses don't have a voice have never worked with one. It is a partnership. Scott always let me know when he was hungry, bored, needed fly spray, or just needed attention.

Two years ago I decided it was time for him to retire. I spent months looking until I found the perfect place for him. They send me updates, photos and videos. I know exactly where he is and how well he is looked after. That is what responsible horsemanship looks like in this industry.

Currently I am working with two horses, Tigger and Homer. Every horse I have worked with I have come to know as an individual. This is a partnership.

In the rush to place these horses into "sanctuaries" under Intro 943, I fear the real possibility that my two charges may simply disappear. This bill prohibits sale or transfer for slaughter, but it does not and cannot guarantee a lifetime of traceable, accountable, individualized care. It also states that the horses can not work in another

horse drawn carriage industry or any other “inhumane practice”. I find that language offensive and it’s offensive to anyone who has worked alongside an animal.

The carriage industry’s importance is not simply its history. It has long provided a path for immigrants and working families to build stable, middle-class lives and create greater opportunities for their children. I am proud to be part of that tradition.

That opportunity should not be discarded lightly. Before ending an industry that has supported generations of New Yorkers and the horses we love and care for, the evidence for doing so should be irrefutable. It is not.

I respectfully ask you to vote no on Intro 943. Thank you.

RE: INTRO 943 (Romanch's Law)

I am in total support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law) and if not for a medical appointment time conflict I would be either testifying in person or on Zoom at the upcoming City Council Hearing on Wednesday July 15.

It is really unfortunate that a human being had to die, before the proposed legislation to abolish the dangerous and inhumane horse carriage industry in New York City is finally getting its rightful attention.

That being said, rather than dwell on the past let us be thankful that this current City Council is —from everything I've read and heard— seriously putting forth the effort to prevent a tragedy like Romanch's and the horse Ryder's and the numerous other injuries and negative consequences of an industry that is not sustainable in the current landscape of 21st century New York City.

It is hard enough to navigate the streets and roadways crammed with motor vehicles, E-bikes, traditional bikes, scooters, and yes, pedestrians who on the best of days are all faced with imminent danger. It only takes one E-bike going the wrong way on a bike lane and/or one pedestrian staring into their cell phone, for a tragedy to happen. It is bad enough that humans are not following the rules of the road; and that no strategies of enforcement seem imminent to control such a vast maze of movement. And then add to this mix the horses that are driven back and forth to and from the stables through the chaos of mid-town traffic; oftentimes in non-compliance with regulations put in place for the safety of the animals (e.g. drivers not complying with temperature constraints). Another seemingly hopeless enforcement conundrum as is the unpredictable behavior of horses subjected to such stress.

It is time to remove this nostalgic anachronism from our city streets.

Thank you,

Gary A. Barnett

Dear Committee Members:

I can sympathize with the carriage drivers concerned with losing their livelihoods. It would be callous not to. But a job that depends on animal abuse is a job that needs to be eliminated. I won't repeat all the reasons why forcing a horse to serve as a draft animal on the streets of Manhattan is abusive. The reasons have been eloquently enumerated already. I just want to add my voice to the chorus of those who believe that the humane treatment of these animals is demanded of us if we aspire to live in a society with a conscience. Please support Romanch's Law.

Sincerely,

Gary Edwards
Manhattan

From: [Gay Mamula](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943 -- Committee on Health-- July 15 at 10:00 AM
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 4:26:11 PM

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We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Thank you
Gay Mamula
Upper West Side Resident
Third Generation New Yorker

From: [Gennifer Delman](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony in Support of Winding Down the Carriage Horse Industry - July 15, 2026 Health Committee Hearing
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2026 2:13:42 PM

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To the Committee on Health, Chair Council Member Lynn Schulman, and Speaker Menin:

My name is Gennifer Delman. I am a New York City resident and a daily user of our public spaces, and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of the proposed legislation to begin winding down the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City.

I want to speak about why this matters, not only for the horses, but for everyone who lives in, works in, and loves this city.

The horses pay the highest price.

Central Park is not a pasture. It's a working roadway shared with cars, cyclists, runners, and pedestrians, ringed by traffic, hard pavement, and the constant noise and exhaust of midtown. This is not a humane way to keep a large, sensitive animal, and no amount of regulation changes the fundamental mismatch between what a horse needs and what this work requires.

The infrastructure burdens the whole park.

Anyone who spends real time in and around Central Park knows the daily reality: manure in the roadways, the smell that hangs in the summer air, the flies, and the runoff that ends up on paths used by families and children. The city devotes public resources to managing waste and traffic conflicts created by a single private industry. Those are costs borne by every taxpayer and every park user, for the benefit of a very small number of operators.

It degrades the experience for the people who use the park most.

Central Park belongs to all of us: the tourists who come once in a lifetime, and the cyclists, casual bikers, runners, walkers, rollerbladers, and skateboarders who use it every single day. Carriages moving slowly through the park loop force everyone else to navigate around them, creating congestion and genuine safety hazards on shared roadways. A cyclist or a skateboarder coming up on a stopped carriage, or on a horse that spooks, is a serious collision risk. The people who love this park the most end up paying for an industry most of them never asked for.

It no longer fits the city we are.

New York has spent the last two decades reimagining its streets and public spaces around

people and safe, sustainable mobility: protected bike lanes, Citi Bike, expanded pedestrian plazas, and a growing culture of walking and riding. The horse-drawn carriage is a relic that sits uneasily against that progress. Continuing it in 2026 is not tradition; it is inertia. We can honor the history of this city without asking living animals to bear the cost of a tourist novelty.

The proposed legislation to wind down the industry, with a real and fair transition, is the responsible path. Other great cities have moved on from horse-drawn carriages and are better for it. New York can, and should, do the same.

I respectfully urge the Committee to advance this legislation. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to weigh in.

Sincerely,
Gennifer Delman
New York, New York

GENNIFER DELMAN
Communications & PR Strategist
New York, New York
[website](#) · [linkedin](#) · [@flowerpedal](#)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF INTRO 943

Giancarlo Pinto
Owner, Ferrari Driving School

Good afternoon, Chair and members of the New York City Council.

My name is Giancarlo Pinto, and I am the owner of Ferrari Driving School. I am here today to express my support for Intro 943.

In my opinion, horse-drawn carriages are no longer appropriate for the crowded streets of New York City. The horses are exposed to traffic, noise, extreme temperatures, and unpredictable conditions that can place the animals, carriage operators, pedestrians, and drivers at risk.

I support a responsible transition that protects the welfare of the horses while also recognizing that carriage workers will need meaningful employment opportunities.

As the owner of Ferrari Driving School, I am willing to assist affected workers in identifying available grants and workforce-development programs that may cover the cost of CDL training for eligible applicants. Commercial driving can provide a practical path toward stable and well-paying employment, and we would be glad to help workers explore those opportunities.

I respectfully urge the City Council to support and pass Intro 943.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I urge the New York City Council to pass Intro 943 to end the horse carriage industry. The industry is exploitative and the horses are not treated humanely. They deserve the opportunity to be sent to sanctuaries where they will be treated with care and respect. The drivers should also be assisted with transitioning into new employment. I love this city and I want us to be the best city we can be. Supporting an industry that puts animal abuse on display in the streets is not New York at its best.

My name is Grace Choi, and I am an Upper West Side resident. I urge you to pass Intro 943.

I run in Central Park several times a week, and I've seen firsthand the conditions these horses endure. It's common for me to see them working in extreme heat; hear them wheezing; and on two occasions, I've seen horses suddenly sprint after being spooked by their surroundings —a reminder that these are large prey animals placed in a 21st century metropolis that is fundamentally unnatural for them.

My experience also reflects what many New Yorkers believe. A recent poll commissioned by the Central Park Conservancy found that over two-thirds of New Yorkers support ending horse-drawn carriage operations in our city.

Intro 943 protects carriage horses from inhumane treatment, makes people safer, and provides development and transition support for workers. As a child of working-class immigrants and someone who has dedicated 20 years of my professional career in human rights advocacy, I have considered the various facets around this issue. And it is clear to me that passing Intro 943 is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time.

From: [Grace Choi](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943
Date: Sunday, July 19, 2026 4:06:04 PM

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Please pass Intro 943, and end horse carriages in New York City

Dear Committee on Health,

I am an active voting constituent in the Upper West Side, and I urge the NYC Council to pass Intro 943.

I came to this issue two years ago after moving to the UWS. I run inside Central Park several times a week, and almost every time I go I see horses in physical or psychological distress. It's common for me to see them working in extreme heat (I witnessed two drivers working their horses on Friday July 17, when the temperature was above the 90 degree limit); hear them wheezing; and on at least two occasions in the past year, I've seen horses suddenly sprint after being spooked by their surroundings. Putting large prey animals in a 21st century metropolis is fundamentally unnatural for them, and a danger to pedestrians and cyclists who share increasingly crowded lanes.

As a child of working-class immigrants, I understand the challenges of making one's way in a country with little generational support. As such, it is disingenuous to hear carriage lobbyists and union representatives say they care for immigrant workers. They are painting a distorted portrait of whose interests they actually prioritize. Intro 943 offers support for workers to transition, something that isn't always afforded to workers in an arcane and dying industry.

Passing Intro 943 is what the majority of New Yorkers support. I hope the City Council does the right thing this time. Thank you.

Grace Choi
Upper West Side 10023

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to express my gratitude to the City Council for bringing Romanch's Law to a vote. As a New York City resident since 2011 and a former employee of the Central Park Conservancy, my name is Grace Diamond, and I am writing to support the phasing out of horse-drawn carriages used as cabs in NYC. Nevertheless, I urge Councilmembers to seize this moment to enact a more nuanced, forward-looking iteration of this legislation—one that ensures long-term financial support for the displaced workers and horses while preventing real estate developers and related organizations from profiting off this industry ban.

In its current form, the bill lacks adequate provisions for sustained and meaningful funding to support the affected horses and laborers. The real estate currently tied to the carriage industry holds substantial commercial value and income potential. This raises an important question: can the financial windfall generated from freeing up this real estate be directed into a permanent trust or revenue stream dedicated to the lifelong care of the horses and the fair compensation of the workers? Simply offering job placement assistance to displaced workers falls short. If this legislation genuinely aims to uphold both animal welfare and workers' rights, these individuals deserve enduring financial recompense for their sacrifices. Securing this long-term funding is a critical piece of justice that has yet to be properly addressed or resolved.

Establishing robust, protected funding is vital to making this ban equitable. During my time as a field-level employee at the Central Park Conservancy from 2022 to 2024, I witnessed no signs of abuse or mistreatment by carriage drivers. Broad characterizations that demonize these workers are entirely inaccurate; they consistently provide proper feed, water, blankets, and care in compliance with existing administrative codes. However, my role also exposed me to the working horses of the Parks Enforcement Police mounted unit housed at the Central Park Zoo lot stables. Comparing these two groups revealed a stark imbalance in institutional support and resources.

The mounted unit horses benefit from dedicated in-park stables constructed by the Central Park Conservancy, along with on-site trailers to transport them to off-site locations at the conclusion of their shifts. They have specialized handlers and ample storage facilities for their supplies. In contrast, carriage operators have never been permitted equivalent in-park infrastructure to enhance their horses' daily well-being, nor do they possess facilities to store essential equipment. Based on my observations, the only park storage allocated to the carriage workforce is a single lockable chest used by the individual responsible for clearing manure to store basic tools and personal belongings during the day.

Highlighting this disparity is crucial because the proposed bill singles out only one group of working horses for a ban. If animal welfare were the sole motivating factor, the legislation would logically extend to all working horses in New York City. This selective focus suggests underlying financial motives, particularly regarding the valuable real estate occupied by the industry. For instance, the land containing the remaining Manhattan carriage stables represents an immense financial opportunity, giving certain interests a strong incentive to clear the property

without providing equitable compensation to the upended industry. Furthermore, we must consider whether organizations like the Central Park Conservancy stand to reduce operational costs or gain financial donations from parties interested in ending carriage operations. The conservancy funded its own opinion poll and has been an active proponent of the ban; relying on data they financed. Without examining the conservancy's potential financial ties to real estate interests undermines the fairness of this legislative process.

In conclusion, while I support the core objective of phasing out horse-drawn carriages from Central Park, I strongly urge the committee to delay the vote until the transition strategy is rewritten. The updated plan must incorporate a reliable, permanent funding source for the affected workers and animals, ensuring a just and equitable outcome for the working class. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,
Grace Diamond

From: [Graceann Carlton](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 11:13:11 PM

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Hello my name is graceann carlton I was born and raised in nyc I do alot with recuses and alot with animals I live upstate now near lake George ny and will love to stand and speak for the horses this needs to end riders law I stand with a horse that died on our nyc streets on hot pavement left not heard left to die I speak for him to save he's friends from this harable act For money not the safety of the horses or people money

July 15, 2026

Testimony in Support of Romanch's Law

To whom it may concern,

My name is Graham Stone, and I am writing today in support of Romanch's Law – I respectfully ask you to vote yes!

We must prevent more tragic deaths like Romanch Mahajan. Horse-drawn carriage rides are not just an animal welfare issue—they are also a public health and safety issue.

Horse-drawn carriages do not belong on the chaotic streets of New York City. The conditions are inhumane – being forced to work in congested traffic, amongst construction, sirens, and in extreme weather. Not even the best-trained horses and handlers can predict or control the stress and chaos of NYC's streets.

Over the years, there have been numerous incidents: runaway horses who are frightened, horses collapsing from exhaustion and inadequate care. Both they and the public are put at risk. All horse drawn carriage rides carry the potential for harm to the passengers, drivers, horses, pedestrians, and motorists.

These rides are outdated and should never outweigh compassion or health and safety. Romanch's Law protects both people and horses by ending an outdated practice while providing for the humane retirement of the horses and support for affected workers.

I respectfully urge you to vote yes on Romanch's Law.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Graham Stone

07.15.2026

Gwen Lowenheim

Brooklyn, New York 11215

Queens Borough Hall

New York City Council Hearing

Jul 13, 2026

Testimony

I am Gwen Lowenheim. I am very happy to be speaking directly to the NYC Charter Revision Commission. And I'm honored to contribute to the conversation on Open Primaries in the city where my grandparents immigrated, my parents raised their kids and I raised my daughter to take our democracy very seriously and vote in all elections.

And yet, I cannot. From a young age, I wondered why two political parties, both of them private entities, were spoken about as interchangeable with democracy. How did that come to be? I never registered in either. And as we know, NYC has a closed primary system, which means I, along with the 1 + million others who choose not to limit ourselves to only two options that don't represent us, cannot vote in primaries, even though our taxes pay for them. And since primaries are key to who gets elected, I've been alienated from the process for decades.

I've attended other Charter Revision Commissions, and on occasion I've heard the commission refer to itself as "non-partisan." Music to my ears! Chairman Gaspard said the same this evening. Then the music stopped. "Non" in this case is equated with panelists affiliated with either the Democrat or Republican Parties.

I teach at Pace University in NYC & founded its Global Conversation Groups Programs which build communities with differences. I have also worked with a corporate consulting firm using cutting edge tools to support innovation.

I am inspired by the students I work with. They are in their 20's into their late 30's, and are enthusiastic about creating new possibilities. They are talented and skilled at making things happen. I hope they do not become as alienated by this whole process as I have been.

In the Brooklyn commission, I heard the chair say that the goal is to create “a government of the possible.” If you want to shoot for that, you are going to need input from all voters, not just the ones you handpick.

- For example, year after year, we’ve seen city administrators allow the destruction of affordable housing and welcome investment in unaffordable high risers: businesses and apartments. More and more people are sleeping on our streets each year. Many consider this a failure.
 - Not a government of the possible

If we opened our primaries, we’d unlock a flood of fresh ideas and practical solutions. You’d have a shot at catching up on the innovative headway being made in other parts of the country regarding homelessness, education and many of the causes we’ve heard here tonight. America thrives on innovation, and we need it now more than ever. Excluding independent voters shuts the door on millions of problem-solvers at a time when bold, forward-thinking leadership is essential, so I urge the commission to ensure that all voters can vote.

From: [Hannah Carlino](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony - July 15 Committee on Health
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2026 11:49:57 AM

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I strongly urge the New York City Council to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

I grew up riding horses and caring for them, so I know firsthand what these animals need to be healthy. Horses are intelligent, sensitive animals—not machines. They were never meant to spend their days pulling carriages through congested city streets, surrounded by traffic, sirens, exhaust, and concrete.

No amount of regulation can change the fact that Manhattan is an unnatural and stressful environment for horses. Accidents will always be a risk when horses are forced to share the road with cars, buses, bicycles, and pedestrians. We should not wait for another tragedy before acting.

This is not about blaming carriage drivers. It is about recognizing that our understanding of animal welfare has evolved. We can honor New York's history without asking horses to bear the burden of it.

As someone who has spent years around horses, I believe we owe them better. I urge you to support legislation to end horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Hannah Carlino

July 16, 2026

Re: SUPPORT OF ROMANCH'S LAW

To the Committee on Health:

My name is Hannah Fiore and I am writing in support of passing Romanch's Law to ban carriage horses in NYC.

As an animal lover, and a resident of NYC, this issue is deeply personal to me. I have seen firsthand the condition of the carriage horses, and the conditions of their stables. It is profoundly saddening to know these beautiful creatures are forced to exist in this city and pull tourists in excruciating heat. Ryder and Lady did not deserve to lose their lives to this industry.

Now, a human has lost their life as well. Sadly, this was inevitable and preventable. My condolences are with his family and friends.

We must end the cycle and stop letting horses and humans die unnecessarily.

Pass Romanch's Law!

From: [Hayley Galembo](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Constituent Support for Passing Ryders/Romanchs Law
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2026 3:43:06 PM

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Hello,

As a resident of the Upper East Side for many years, I have been grateful for your leadership and have proudly supported you throughout your time in office.

I am writing to urge you to help move Ryder/Romanch's Law forward and bring an end to horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City. I also intend to submit testimony in support of this legislation at next week's City Council hearing.

This issue is fundamentally about protecting both animals and the public. Horse-drawn carriages are not a necessary mode of transportation, and visitors have many other ways to experience the city without relying on an industry that places horses in a stressful and dangerous environment. The repeated deaths of carriage horses, along with the recent tragic death of a young man, underscore the serious risks associated with allowing this practice to continue.

New York City has earned a reputation for adopting forward-thinking policies that prioritize public safety, health, and humane treatment. Continuing to permit horse-drawn carriages is inconsistent with those values. Many residents and visitors view the practice as outdated and inhumane, and numerous cities—including nearby Philadelphia—have already taken steps to phase out or ban carriage horse operations altogether. New York should be leading on this issue, not falling behind.

I recognize that some people are concerned about the livelihoods connected to this industry. However, the purpose of public policy is to advance the broader public interest, not to preserve an outdated business model indefinitely. The City has successfully helped workers adapt during periods of change before, and it can do so again by supporting those affected while transitioning away from an industry that no longer reflects our values or priorities.

I respectfully ask you to support the passage of Ryder/Romanch's Law and demonstrate that New York City is committed to compassionate, modern policymaking. A city known for its leadership, innovation, and commitment to humane values should not continue relying on horse-drawn carriages as a form of entertainment.

Sincerely,

Hayley Galembo
[REDACTED]

New York, New York 10028



Support for Intro 943

Hello! My name is Heather, I'm a Brooklyn resident and I urge the NYC Council to approve and pass Intro 943.

The horse carriage industry is incredibly outdated, unnecessary, dangerous and an act of forced labor and enslavement of the horses in which this industry depends on via exploitation.

For public health and safety these horse drawn carriages are a hazard. The biowaste of the horses is not safe for our streets or wildlife in the city. Additionally the housing is not natural nor is it psychologically safe for the horses, only a sanctuary environment would be appropriate for them.

Release the horses to sanctuaries! There are many sanctuary facilities who would accept these horses with open arms and an entire community of New Yorkers who would support this effort to move them to safe spaces.

The workers, unlike the horses, have other options and the city can help with their transition to other tourist transportation services or other industries all together.

From: [HEATHER GILLESPIE](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in support of intro 943 Romanchs Law
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 6:19:37 PM

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This is sent to urge you to pass Romanchs Law- as a born & raised New Yorker it is an embarrassment that you have allowed horse drawn carriage rides to continue at the expense of sad, over worked and definitely abused horses.

The city has outgrown this barbaric custom. It is not romantic to watch abused horses dying in the city streets - or watching frightened visitors die in the same streets. Move forward to electric carriages providing the same tourist experience with safety.

The world is watching as well as fellow New Yorkers that you make the right moral choice. Please do pass this law & prove you are the most beautiful, progressive & caring city in the world.

Thank-you for your consideration..

Heather Gillespie

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Heena Salhotra](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Subject : Support for Romanch's Law and the Ban on Horse-Drawn Carriages
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 4:48:01 AM

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Respected members of the council,

I am writing to express my strong support for Romanch's Law and for a complete ban on horse-drawn carriages.

The tragic death of 18-year-old Romanch is a heartbreaking reminder that preventable accidents can have devastating consequences. A young man with his entire life ahead of him lost his life while reportedly protecting his mother during an incident involving a horse-drawn carriage. No family should ever have to endure such an unimaginable loss.

This tragedy has highlighted the urgent need to reconsider the continued operation of horse-drawn carriages in busy urban environments. Public safety must always come first. If stronger safety measures or a ban had already been implemented, incidents like this might have been prevented.

Supporting Romanch's Law is about more than remembering one young life. It is about creating meaningful change that protects countless others in the future. It is also about recognizing that horse-drawn carriages pose risks not only to people but also to the horses that operate in congested city streets.

I respectfully urge policymakers to support Romanch's Law and take decisive action to end horse-drawn carriage operations. Let Romanch's legacy be one that inspires safer streets and prevents future tragedies.

No family should have to experience the grief and heartbreak caused by a preventable incident.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Supporter

Written Testimony in Support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)

We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Growing up in Manhattan, the horses have always been neighbors to me. They stretch toward you as you walk past, their ears flicker forward, and soft sounds are heard. They move beautifully, and you can see they care for their drivers, and this is reciprocated. I have never been hassled or felt nervous among them, unlike some other transport entities offered in the park.

It is obvious from observation and many required health checks that the animals are healthy and fit. When a death does occur, it is generally due to natural causes; life is finite. However shocking this happens to us all. How many people have had heart attacks at work, yet jobs are not banned, and survivors go on. I feel for the family of the man who perished, but the carriage rides are still safer than any other conveyance we rely on daily, and truthfully, the human-powered vehicles in the park have critically injured and even killed a person. They aren't even regulated.

Over the years, I have noticed increasing attacks on the carriage horse rides. These are often profit-driven and based on ill-advised reasoning. Suggestions like replace them with electric cars (conveniently, the proposed concession belonged to a friend of a politician), land grabs for the real estate the stables are on, and inflammatory statements from animal rights extremists, not sensible commentary from animal welfare people and qualified vets, have fueled this and previous debates. It is too much. They are treated better than many people and pets in some homes.

Please do the right thing. I oppose Intro #943, the NYC Carriage Horse Ban and hope you will too. Show you care - Back Intro #937 and make a real difference

Respectfully,
Helen Bommer

Dear City Council,

Thank you for your time. Please pass [Romanch's Law](#) (formally known as Ryder's Law).

With deep gratitude,

Helen Greenberg

From: [Helena George](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Carriage horse hearing, July 15
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 5:27:09 PM

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Please do Not pass this bill. I am a very old, senior whose lived in NY c most life. And am avid animal lover n one time advocate. There is hardly any work for quarter horses. This is a last refuge. Change lovation of stables. This is the Trump era. So, ordinances, provisions, override or change. Carriages. Get a western motif (you'll need the ad industries aid). A buggy with a fringe on top. better overseeing of how they are cared for. treated. Limited passengers seat belts??? It's less heavy. As goes NY, so will other cities. Some horses will go to good sanctuaries, appe asing supporters, Others din din anyone,? What about future quarter horse? They euthanize race horses. Plea se don't let a tradition and this

species of equines go extinct.
valuable. Helena G.eorge.

Thank you for listening. I know your time is

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

NYC City Council -- NYS Legislature Re: Support for Ban on Horse Carriages

July 17, 2026

Dear NYC Council and State Legislature:

I want to add my voice to that of NY State Senator Erick Bottcher in calling for a prompt and appropriate phase out of all horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

For years now I have witnessed horses with hooves, teeth and coats that have not been properly taken care of while drivers increase their fees to some ridiculous \$5/minute charge to take a 10 minute circle around the park. While these beautiful, majestic animals are relentlessly worked in all kinds of NYC weather. For what? An expensive 10 minute ride in a circle in Central Park??

It is atrocious that the drivers and their Union have had such a hold on our city and legislature that this form of animal abuse continues in this great city.

As a regular walker around NYC seeing our beautiful horses in these conditions in all kinds of weather, ruins my day, ruins my walk through Central Park because I am left staring at the condition of the horses – their hooves, coats, and how the driver is treating (or usually ignoring) them. It angers me and it breaks my heart to as I walk through Central Park and across from the Plaza and see the horses amidst cars, trucks, bikers, tourists, etc. Most of the horses, as you must know, are older and have already put in years of service only now to die (*as we have seen too often over the years*) on the streets of New York. It is in a word UNACCEPTABLE to have this continue another day let alone indefinitely.

You have the opportunity now to take real action. The carriage drivers are FULLY CAPABLE of using a bicycle, cart or car to earn a living in the tourist industry as many other wonderful cities around the world have done. Here are a few examples that could be considered:

1. Washington, DC – electric, vintage-style vehicles, pedi-cab tours;
2. Toronto, Canada – bike carriages, pedi-cabs
3. Miami, FL – antique convertibles
4. Detroit, MI – Model A vintage cars
5. London – Barcelona - Lisbon – rickshaws, pedicabs, vintage cars

PLEASE I urge you as a fellow New Yorker, animal lover, and human being, please let our horses retire upstate to green pastures where they belong.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Holly E. Rouse

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

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Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

From: [ibrahim.saban](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposing intro 943
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 9:39:50 AM

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My name is Ibrahim Saban, and I am a New York City horse carriage driver. I am here today to respectfully oppose Intro 943.

Before I begin, I want to share something that deeply concerned me. At the previous hearing, I noticed that several Council Members left before many of the carriage drivers had the opportunity to testify. I understand that everyone has demanding schedules, but it was disheartening to feel that the voices of the people who are most directly affected by this legislation were not fully heard. I respectfully ask that you listen to us today with an open mind.

For many people, this is a policy debate. For me, it is my livelihood. It is how I support my family, pay my bills, and build a future. I also care deeply about the welfare of my horse. He is not just part of my job—he is my partner, and his health and safety are my responsibility every single day.

I understand that the recent incidents involving carriage horses have raised serious concerns. We all want to prevent those incidents from ever happening again. But banning an entire industry is not the answer.

Instead of eliminating an industry that has been part of New York City for generations, we should focus on preventing future incidents through practical safety improvements. That is why I urge the Council to consider Intro 937. It proposes meaningful safety measures, including improvements such as additional hitching posts and other safety measures, that can help reduce risks and improve safety for both horses and the public while allowing hardworking New Yorkers to continue earning an honest living.

Our industry is already one of the most regulated animal industries in the country. We work closely with our horses every day, and we are committed

to their care and well-being. We also support many other hardworking people, including stable workers, farriers, veterinarians, feed suppliers, and small businesses whose livelihoods depend on this industry.

I respectfully ask the Council to choose thoughtful reform over a ban. Please support solutions that improve safety instead of eliminating the livelihoods of hundreds of hardworking New Yorkers and ending a tradition that has been part of this city for generations.

Thank you for your time and for listening.

Sent from my iPhone

My name is India Nye Wenner. I live in Manhattan, help with research and advocacy at New York Communities for Change, and recently graduated high school. I also grew up around horses. Since I was five years old I have spent nearly every weekend and summer riding, caring for, and learning from them at a nonprofit horse farm. I learned firsthand the tremendous amount of work it takes to keep a working horse healthy and happy, even in the peaceful rural environment of upstate New York.

Returning to the city, I was always struck by the incongruity of carriage horses amidst the cityscape. Their gentle faces and kind eyes, confined beneath leather and wood, surrounded by traffic and construction — no place for a horse. On my walk home from school, I often stopped to pet a carriage horse waiting outside the Natural History Museum. As I stroked the horse's face it would always rest its head in my arms. Only for a moment, though, because work had to go on. New York City carriage horses work full days, and then return to multistory tenement stables, where they spend the night in stalls too small to turn around or lie down in.

Urban carriage work places horses in an environment fundamentally at odds with their welfare, no matter whether certain drivers profess to love and care for their horses. It is no surprise that the average working life for a NYC carriage horse is 4 years, compared to 14-15 years for a NYC police horse.

Horse-drawn carriages are dangerous, not only to horses but also to passengers, drivers, pedestrians, and surrounding traffic — as we were reminded by the tragic and needless death of 18-year-old Romanch. It is for this reason that last summer, the Central Park Conservancy called for officials to ban horse-drawn carriages from Central Park as “a matter of public health and safety.” Horses naturally possess a flight drive, and in my extensive time around horses, I have known them to spook and bolt at things as trivial as a shadow or a balloon. Imagine how on edge these horses must feel in Manhattan traffic.

Horse-drawn carriages are “old-fashioned,” not in the romantic sense, but in that they are outdated. They have been banned in more than a dozen cities nationally and a dozen cities internationally. More than 68 percent of New Yorkers support legislation to ban them in New York City. So why do we still allow such an outdated and dangerous practice, one that primarily serves tourists, not New Yorkers, to continue?

The time for change is now. I urge the City Council to act in accordance with common sense, animal welfare, public safety, and the desire of its constituents and pass Intro 943, “Romanch’s Law,” which must, as promised, establish a workforce development program to support drivers in transitioning to new jobs. There must be no driver or horse left behind.

Thank you, from both the little girl who grew up humbled by the magic of horses and the 18-year-old standing before you today, grateful for the opportunity to speak out on behalf of these animals and in support of the wellbeing of our city. Thank you.

Testimony of Irene Ayiotis

In Support of New York City Council Intro 943

Good afternoon, Chair and members of the City Council.

My name is Irene Ayiotis, and I am here to express my strong support for Intro 943.

Horse-drawn carriages no longer belong on New York City's crowded and dangerous streets. Horses should not be forced to work around heavy traffic, loud noises, extreme weather, and other conditions that put both the animals and the public at risk.

Intro 943 provides a responsible path forward by ending this outdated industry while helping affected workers transition into new employment and ensuring that the horses are placed humanely.

My partner is the owner of Ferrari Driving School, and we are willing to help affected carriage workers explore available grants and workforce programs that may provide free CDL training to eligible applicants. We want to be part of creating real employment opportunities for these workers as the industry transitions.

I respectfully urge the City Council to pass Intro 943. Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Subject: Support for Romanch's Law Intro 943

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to vocalize my support to pass Romanch's Law. New York City once and for all needs to ban this inhumane practice.

The tradition of horse carriage rides dates back to a time we no longer live in and we must update with the modern times we live in. There are no gravel or dirt paths, there are highly trafficked pavement streets with e-bikes flying by. The horses are kept in inhumane conditions in an environment they are not meant to live in. They work in harsh conditions of extreme heat, humidity, poor air conditions and extreme cold.

The loss of quality of life to these poor animals should be enough to ban this practice. But now a human being Romanch Mahajan has lost his life. If not now, when? Ask yourself, what is the price we are willing to pay to continue this archaic practice?

I have lived in NYC for 18 years now. When I pass through Central Park, I avoid going by the area with carriages since it is too depressing to witness in person. Continuing this is doing more to harm New Yorkers and our tourism industry than help it. There are many cities who have phased this out, Philadelphia and Chicago to name a few. NYC should be leading on this and it is time we commit to ending this harmful and barbaric practice.

Irmingard Mayer
Jackson Heights resident

I want to urge the New York City Council to pass Intro 943 to end the horse carriage industry. I have lived in the city for almost a decade, and it has always amused me how this vanguard city is so attached to a longing for a past that no longer makes sense anymore. Not so long ago, I remember seeing an exhibition about animals in the city in the Historical Society of New York. They had a section on the history of the ASPCA, and I remember learning that it was born to protect the horses-workers in the carriage industry from the public crudeness of violence of their owners in the streets. Apparently, their conditions were that miserable that even the logo depicts the ASPCA as a sort of angel offering a breath to these enslaved animals. Then, after seeing the exhibition, I crossed with several horse carriages in Central Park. It was inevitable to draw a comparison between the means of transportation before streetcars and this moment, when electrical carriages full of flowers and music are pulling happy tourists through the park. Technologies change the world, and we are lucky enough to no longer depend on animals anymore to be able to move around. I urge people in the City Council to embrace the inevitable: Horse carriage is an industry of the past, full of complications and cruelty. There is a reason why it was abandoned and replaced by automobiles more than 100 years ago. It's time to abandon inconsequential nostalgia that is only bringing suffering to horses and danger to people. This city has always embraced change, so I really don't understand why the attachment is so deep. Ending the nostalgia will open the possibilities for a new kind of stroller leisure in the park, I'm sure people will come up with something better (electric carriages are one beautiful example!). Just make sure that current drivers will have good opportunities to transition to a new job, and only good things will come with the ban. Take the risk!

Testimony for the Record
Submitted to the
Committee on Health
for the Hearing
“Romanch's Law (Intro 943)”
July 15, 2026
Isabella Orosco

Dear Chairman Schulman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Romanch's Law (Intro 943), and for placing your attention on the safety of humans and animals alike within Manhattan through a bill that would officially phase out the horse-drawn carriage industry.

My name is Isabella Orosco, and I am a New York based artist with a passion for animal welfare and advocacy. From converting to vegetarianism at 10 years old, to volunteering with various animal rights organizations in high school/college—I have dedicated countless hours fighting for animals to experience autonomy and freedom from human exploitation.

I am writing now to express my avid support for Intro 943 and to urge committee members to support this bill in the context of the growing safety issues caused by the horse drawn carriage industry. My first experience of New York was as a tourist, no different than Romanch Mahajan. Having resided here for 6 years now and navigated Central Park daily, I have witnessed the inhumane treatment of horses forced to work in historically unprecedented heat waves/weather patterns. The appeal of the carriage ride is targeted towards tourists who do not witness the negligence on a daily basis and have no context for the dangers of keeping a horse in these conditions for hours on end. To keep this industry alive is to actively endanger residents, tourists, and the animals exploited for profit. It jeopardizes the very tourists who keep many facets of New York's economy thriving, and, as evidenced by the devastating loss of Romanch alongside the countless injuries that have arisen, the danger far outweighs the novelty for those looking to make memories in the city. The permissance of the horse-drawn carriage industry is in direct opposition and disruption to ideals like community safety promoted by Mayor Mamdani. There are numerous accounts calling attention to the labor conditions and the increasing frequency of these animals collapsing on the job, which is indicative of negligence and/or malnutrition. These animals are innocent creatures being kept in conditions against their will, and forced to react in ways that actively harm the citizens around them. Romanch's Law provides a solution for citizens, tourists, and animals— all of whom outnumber the leadership overseeing and profiting off of the horse-drawn carriage industry. There are ways to fulfill a New York experience for tourists that don't require the exploitation of animals or risk of death.

I urge the Committee to recognize the importance of supporting Romanch's Law and phasing out the horse-drawn carriage industry. Thank you again for your time and consideration of this testimony, I am happy to answer any questions in the future.

Sincerely,
Isabella Orosco

Dear NYC Council,

We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Thank you,
Ivan A. Zambrano

Dear Speaker Menin,

I am writing as someone who has loved horses since childhood and has spent years around them as a rider. My concern is not political - it comes from a deep respect for these animals and an understanding of what they need to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

Every time I see carriage horses working in New York City, I cannot help but wonder why we continue to ask horses to spend their days surrounded by concrete, traffic, noise, exhaust, and crowds. Horses are sensitive animals. They evolved to move freely, graze throughout the day, and live in environments that allow them to express natural behaviors. The streets of Manhattan cannot provide that.

Many New Yorkers, including lifelong horse lovers like myself, look at these horses and see animals that appear tired, stressed, and out of place in such a demanding urban environment. Whether or not every horse receives the minimum care required by law, the larger question remains: Is this truly the life we should be providing for them?

Recent reports of carriage horse deaths have only strengthened my belief that this industry belongs in the past. No horse should have to spend its life navigating congested city streets to entertain tourists. These animals deserve access to open space, proper turnout, fresh air, and the ability to move naturally rather than standing for hours on pavement amid heavy traffic.

I respectfully urge your administration to pursue a humane transition away from horse-drawn carriages in New York City. This could include supporting alternatives that protect jobs while ending the use of live horses for this purpose. New York is a city known for innovation and compassion. We can find solutions that honor both workers and animal welfare.

As a rider and horse lover, I am asking you to take meaningful action. These horses cannot speak for themselves. We must speak for them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Iveta Vajdak

Iveta Vajdak

[REDACTED]

New York, NY 10024

[REDACTED]

Testimony in Support of Romanch's Law (Int. 0943-2026)

To the Members of the New York City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Romanch's Law (Int. 0943-2026).

I write as someone whose family's story is deeply intertwined with New York City. My ancestors came to New York more than a century ago. They arrived in a city where horses were indispensable. Horses pulled streetcars, delivered milk, hauled produce, transported goods, and carried people throughout the city. They were not a tourist attraction. One could argue that they were partners in building New York.

But here we are in 2026.

New York no longer depends on horses for transportation or commerce. The city has evolved, and so has our understanding of animal welfare. With that evolution comes the responsibility to ask whether a practice that might have seemed necessary at 100 years ago still belongs in the city we have become.

I was born and raised in New York City and lived there into adulthood. Despite spending my childhood and young adult years there, I never once took a horse-drawn carriage ride. To me, they were never part of everyday New York life. They were something I associated with visitors staying near the Plaza Hotel, strolling along Fifth Avenue, or looking for a nostalgic experience in Central Park. But when I think of the New York that shaped my life, I think of neighborhoods alive with every culture imaginable. That is the New York I knew.

Last year when I returned to New York to attend my mother's funeral, I made a trip to Central Park because it was one of the places she loved. As a child she often took me there, and walking those familiar paths was a way of honoring her memory and the time we spent in one of the most beautiful public spaces.

As I left the park, I found myself standing next to the horse-drawn carriages.

I did not see the romantic image so often presented to visitors. I saw horses standing on hard pavement, heavily harnessed, waiting for the next fare. But what struck me most was not only the physical conditions around them. It was the feeling that something essential had been taken away. I found myself thinking about what it means to be a "horse". My own experience with horses came somewhere entirely different than the experience of New York's carriage horses. When I visited my cousins' home in the Catskills as a child, I would often spend time with their two horses, Lady and Flossy. These horses spent their days outside in fresh mountain air, grazing in open pastures, running when they wanted to run, resting when they wanted to rest. Watching them gave me my earliest understanding of and interactions with horses. I experienced them not as attractions, but as living, intelligent animals with their own sense of being. Fortunately, those experiences shaped the way I think about what it means to be a "horse".

A horse is not simply an animal that can pull weight. A horse is movement, curiosity, social connection, and a relationship with the world around it. A horse explores, runs, plays, chooses where to go, and interacts with other horses. Those qualities are part of what makes a horse a horse. In Central Park, I felt as though I was seeing horses reduced from individuals into a function—a role they were expected to perform. They had become "carriage horses" before they were allowed to simply be horses.

And that was the sadness I carried with me. I wondered whether, in asking horses to serve us, we had forgotten to honor what makes them extraordinary in the first place. I had gone to Central Park to reconnect with my mother's memory and with a place that had brought us so much happiness and a cool respite from the city in summer. Instead, the lasting memory I carried home was not of the park itself, but of those horses - waiting.

The following day I returned to my new home in northern New Mexico. Driving through the high desert during the magic hour, when the evening light turns everything gold and purple and blue and orange all at once, a small band of wild horses came racing across the landscape. It remains one of the most beautiful sights I have ever witnessed. The Kiowa poet N. Scott Momaday, who lived in New Mexico for many years, begins one of his best-known poems with the simple declaration, 'I am a blue horse.' In those four words, he reminds us that imagination allows us to see ourselves not as separate from the natural world, but as part of it. As I watched them disappear into the high desert, I could not help but think about the horses I had encountered in Central Park only days before. The contrast could not have been more striking - wild horses that are free and the harnessed horses who will never experience being a "horse".

Over the course of this debate I have heard many reasons why the horses are said to be content, that they are well fed, live in clean stalls, are bred for pulling, are accustomed to city life, and would not adapt well to retirement.

While I respect the people making those arguments, none of them changes the fundamental question before this Council:

Is working on the streets of Manhattan the kind of life we should still be forcing horses to live in 2026? In my view, the answer is no.

Passing Romanch's Law will not erase New York's history. It will honor that history with gratitude while embracing another enduring New York value: the courage to move forward with compassion.

Respectfully,

J. Tumblety, A Native New Yorker

"Have we not all yearned for a life beyond the scope of the one we lead? Flaco showed that our yearning is not misplaced, that we were not merely projecting. His choice reaffirmed a truth: that given a chance, living things choose agency and freedom of movement." Carl Safina on the tragic death of Flaco, the beloved Eurasian Eagle Owl of Central Park

I'm a horse carriage driver and horse owner and I waited for almost 8 hours to speak at the hearing on Wednesday. None of the countless people opposing the carriage horse ban bill, Intro 943 were permitted to speak any testimony about it until 3 hours into the hearing, despite them having the strongest arguments to make with the most informed panels. Why did the speaker leave so early? Why did the official government account for the NYC Council social media only show posts supporting Intro 943? Why wasn't anyone who opposed it featured? Why wasn't equal time given to each side to speak?! Why did the majority of the city council members leave before they heard from all the carriage drivers whose lives this bill would completely destroy?! It's not just about a job, not just about their horse; You would literally be taking away their entire world! You would remove the one thing in life they're truly passionate about with this bill! For what? Who will that benefit?! It will make things worse for the horses, for every single person who cares for them, for all the people who enjoy seeing them or riding with them; And what does it do for the people who oppose them? Absolutely nothing. Their lives will be exactly the same except they can't show up to scream at the carriage drivers anymore. They will move on to harassing the next group of people who works with animals. Who do you think they'll target? Police horses? Zoos? Dogs on leashes? The easy answer to this debate? Those who oppose horse carriages don't have to ride in them and those who like them can and can continue to enjoy them. If the city is really concerned about how the horses are treated or if the drivers are in control of their horses and following the regulations in the city's administrative code it's on the city to better regulation, better enforce their laws, do better checks and legislate better. You don't create policy based on uninformed emotion alone and single incidents when there have been no reoccurring patterns of anything wrong in the industry. There have been different various incidents unrelated to each other with an answer on how they could be best be prevented going forward. Doing away with small businesses because some people don't like them or there are some special interest groups who are pressuring you to isn't the right thing to do.

This was the testimony I read to a nearly empty room by the time I got to speak:

"What happened to Romanch was a terrible tragedy that broke so many, but it wasn't my fault and it wasn't ANYONE here's fault; It was a horrible ACCIDENT and though the FIRST of its kind in history, already resulted in changes to further improve the safety of this industry. An ACCIDENT like all the e-bike and car accidents EVERY day. To take the job, livelihood, and beloved animals from everyone in an entire industry doesn't give anyone justice, it causes even greater heartbreak.

No one should be a voice for horses other than those of us who know them best. I won't have time to debunk every claim made by people against this industry, but as someone who reads beyond the headlines and actually UNDERSTANDS horses I can tell you with confidence there are NO systemic reoccurring issues within this industry, and NO abuse beyond the harassment carriage drivers receive from people who have dehumanized them because they misunderstand horses and have ideologies that shouldn't dictate legislation. I see the faces of people who have taunted and obsessively stalked me for years in this room, but because I have so much pride in what I do and it means so much to me, I find the strength to put up with it, to do what I love. I left the office world to pursue THIS career because happiness is more important than money and I am a HORSE person. My two horses are very bonded to me and over the nine and a half years I have driven in this industry I have taken great care of them and abided by the city's Administrative Code. I have NO plans to separate from my horses but this bill gives me no financial aid for their long-term care while simultaneously stopping me from providing them with the work they enjoy, that keeps them healthy. I don't want a different job, I CHOSE this one and it's my passion in life, where I BELONG. I have always called NYC my home and it is what my horses call home and I find it very offensive that anyone would suggest we are no longer welcome here.

I ask the council to do the right thing, avoid the guilt of ruining families and horses lives and oppose this awful bill as EVERY previous administration has done EVERY time it's reintroduced.

I expect to be back here for a hearing on Intro 937, which IS the solution to protecting this iconic tradition, while ensuring it's safety without anyone else having to lose what means the world to them."

But I wanted to make sure a few other various points get to the public record.

Did you know that the spike in recent incidents in the horse carriage industry happened after the carriage stands were moved from Central Park South to locations inside the park in 2019 and the Central Park Conservancy redesigned the park drives to allow e-bikes, cars, and pedicabs to share the carriage drive in the lane the carriage horses are supposed to have to their selves? Despite numerous warnings how dangerous those things would be and how it would lead to an increase in accidents carriage drivers were completely ignored. Horses are very unlikely to spook around things they're familiar with when they get used to being around them. When the horses were on the street right outside the park all day, exposed to the sights and sounds of the city on the carriage stands awaiting doing tours inside Central Park they were used to those surroundings and comfortable there. A Cortisol study backed up the fact that they weren't at all stressed working or living there and they were slightly stressed when they vacationed on rural pastures, which the city requires they do for a minimum of 5 weeks per year.

The reason horses don't spook over everything is because they're highly adaptable and their learn to trust their human partner. They will signal to their driver by slightly raising their head, changing the direction of their ears, slightly changing their pace, their driver will respond by a gentle squeeze of their hand on the lines (reins) that connects to the bit in the horse's mouth which is a communication device that only uses pressure, not pain, or by using their voice to reassure their horse that whatever they aren't sure of that they are thinking about spooking over isn't something they need to worry about. Every horse is different and when you build a partnership with them and learn to understand what cues they need from you when and how they like to respond to things they don't like you are able to drive them safely. Some horses like to quickly pass by something they don't like and then they slow back down. Some horses prefer to very slowly pass what they don't like. Drivers know how to time traffic lights and the patterns of traffic to put their horses in the safest possible positions at all times. There is constant communication between the horse and driver the general public usually misses. That is why this industry works so well and most incidents occur with newer horses before the horse and driver have learned each other. How long it takes a new horse to get to where they need to be varies with every single horse. In the initial stages the drivers goes out with an extra hand, but when that horse is going to be considered safe to give tours to the public is always going to be up to that individual horse and the driver's assessment of them.

For years the industry begged the city and the Central Park Conservancy for hitching posts which they know will reduce if not entirely eliminate the risk of a horse bolting away. Why have these been denied? Almost every recent incident cited as an excuse to do away with the industry could have been prevented if hitching posts had been provided.

There has been absolutely no reasonable amount of enforcement of pedicabs that park next to the carriage horse stands, or in them despite “no pedicab parking or soliciting” signs. It creates a dangerously crowded area in the park every day, but rather than addressing that issue, properly capping the number of pedicabs licensed to be in the park, and actually enforcing the law against the illegally operating pedicabs and removing them from areas around the horses, the city and the Central Park Conservancy decided the carriage horses were the ones that were in the way and crowding the park? It’s not the illegally parked pedicabs in their stands?!

Many pedicab drivers have told horse carriage drivers when the horses aren’t there during a heat suspension they can’t do any business because the only way they can convince people to take a pedicab ride is by luring them in with the offer of a horse carriage ride. They have been violating fraudulent accosting laws for years with this bait and switch scam which dating back to the DeBlasio administration told the police and park rangers to stand down on in a corrupt attempt to drive the horse carriage industry out of business. Once a pedicab driver lures someone in seeking a horse carriage ride they suddenly tell them “Oh, they only have a small 20 minute option but I can give you an hour in the pedicab to see the whole park,” when the carriage industry does offer the same hour ride or “They charge per person so that carriage ride will cost you four times what I will charge you in my pedicab” when the carriage ride is charged per ride not per person, or even “I’m the manager of the carriages and they’re all on break now. You need to book them online but we have pedicabs available now.” It is absolutely false that people aren’t coming to Central Park for a carriage ride, they’re just being swindled out of them.

The Central Park Conservancy had a mission to preserve the park’s history in the vision of park architect, Frederick Law Olmstead. The carriage drives were intended to slow everyone else down with horse carriages to create a respite for all to enjoy, escaping the busy life of the city. The park was designed with the angle you would be at from the back of a carriage in mind around every bend you made on the carriage drives and with carriage horses animating the landscape for everyone else to enjoy. They abandoned this mission to promote speeding e-bikes the carriage horses are in the way of which have led to so many people being struck by these two wheeled death machines. There are hundreds of accidents that have caused injuries and a bunch of deaths. They are no where near a safety level anyone who visits the park is close to coming near and nothing comparable to the incredibly safety record carriage horses still hold. Dave Saltonstall of the Central Park Conservancy has been seen happily shaking hands with Steve Nislick of NYCLASS at community board meetings to discuss carriage horses and it is ever since Dave started working for the Conservancy in November of 2021 changes against the horse carriage industry began to get implemented and ultimately their public stance on the industry, despite telling the Electric Vehicle Safety Alliance they would have to remain neutral on government legislative issues like e-bikes. All of a sudden the Conservancy started to make press releases nearly identical to NYCLASS, listing horse carriage accidents rather than talking about updates in the park. The horse carriage driver’s union again asked the Central Park Conservancy in a letter at the end of 2025 to install hitching posts to prevent run away horses. This was not a new request. They were ignored and then chastised when another run away incident happened. They said it was another reason to use to ban the carriage horses. They planted a highly toxic Japanese yew plant along the horse carriage drives without warning anyone and when a passing horse did grab a bite from one, as they are grazing animals and don’t understand the rules of the park, he went into cardiac arrest shortly after. Rather than taking responsibility for the plant or apologizing the Conservancy blamed the horse’s owner who

had to watch his horse die in front of him while the public screamed at him that he had abused his beloved animal. How many times do you hear someone with a dog on a leash shouting at their dog, "Drop that! Don't eat that! That's garbage! Bad!" It is no different with a horse passing by a plant where one bite can kill them in less than an hour. The plant remains in the park to the Conservancy's negligence where a child might eat a berry (the berry seeds are just as toxic.) The plant is not native to the park. The driver and owner of the horse continues to receive death threats from the public who ignored the Cornell University's necropsy stating the yew plant caused the horse's death and instead they claim the horse was overworked in the heat, though it was only 75 degrees at the time and he hadn't done that many rides. Then the Conservancy ran a biased push poll with loaded questions to sway the public into believing most people support a carriage horse ban, though many other legitimate polls have always revealed the opposite. The person who ran the poll took to social media to say that he supports a ban on carriage horses and cheered his poll for supporting that as well. The Conservancy still claims the poll was neutral.

Ryder was the case of one bad sale in 2022. He was only working in NYC for a few months. The equine vet who originally examined Ryder to license him to be a carriage horse filled out his paperwork that he was 12 or 13 years old, so the driver and owner of the horse believed the horse to be that age. No one ever found out how that vet made the error because the vet actually passed away. When a different vet was called to examine Ryder after the incident he thought his age was closer to 25-30. When Ryder was purchased he had a winter coat and his freeze brand wasn't easy to read. After the incident it was looked up and only then revealed he was 26 years old, the age he would have to retire, so he promptly was retired. Ryder tripped on his way back to the stable and his driver followed the health department's protocols that a few slaps on a rump could help a horse that has gone down get back up. He used the lines (reins) to do this which is normal to do to a horse in an emergency because it isn't good for a horse to be down for an extended time. The public spun this into a claim he had beaten the horse. The horse was trailered to the stable and examined by a vet who believed he had EPM. Because the horse was 26 and appeared to have this neurological disorder he was retired to an upstate farm. After top equine vets spent a long time trying to determine what illness Ryder had, it was ultimately decided to be a difficult to diagnose cancer that couldn't be treated and he was euthanized. When this went to court the driver was found not guilty of animal abuse.

Lady was returning to her stable last summer when she suddenly died around the corner from the stable. A necropsy revealed she had an aortic rupture caused by a small tumor that could not be detected upon her regular vet exam and she had only been in the city a couple months so there was no way to know she also had been a bad sale with underlying issues no one could have known about. The vet who did the necropsy at Cornell University said this was going to happen to her at that time whether she was in a stall, on a pasture, or pulling a carriage. This again was spun against the carriage industry as NYCLASS lied to the public about the cause of her death and they ran with it.

Aysha in 2020 had an asymptomatic PSSM episode when NYCLASS had pushed the city to move her carriage stand from flat ground to rest on a hill against carriage drivers pleas. The hill caused her to have a medical emergency and she was trailered to the stable. She later had to be euthanized. The image of her was falsely used as slander against the carriage industry for years.

None of these deaths were preventable and none were related to the horses being carriage

horses or working in a city. This isn't a pattern. These are various tragedies that can come up when you have 200 horses over 68 different businesses.

What happened with Romanch was another tragic accident. If there had been a hitching post for the driver to tie his horse to this wouldn't have happened. While it was announced in the news the driver wasn't supposed to get down to take the picture you can ask ever single person who has taken a horse carriage ride in Central Park over the last few decades if their driver got down to take a photo of them and the answer is going to be yes. That was normal in the industry and nothing bad had ever come of it before. Now after the very first human fatality in the entire history carriage drivers are retraining to no longer get off the carriage while they have customers and to either tie their horses, hold the lines (reins) or a tie rope when they are with their horses but it is very difficult to safely and comfortably operate under these new protocols if the city isn't installing the hitching posts they still desperately need which have been called for in Intro 937. While it's understandable Romanch jumped from the carriage in attempt to help his mother who had bounced out of the carriage, he unfortunately landed on his head when he made that jump. That is a very tragic accident no one in the horse carriage industry can be blamed for, so why are we seeking to end the livelihood of so many carriage drivers?

There is also still an ongoing NYPD investigation as well as other investigators looking into what spooked the horse in the first place. It is also known that members of NYCLASS have made financial offers to pedicab drivers to send them videos of horse carriage accidents. This gives them an incentive to cause those accidents as well and that's incredibly dangerous to continue to allow pedicab drivers to operate near horse carriage drivers. How could an entire industry be banned over the very first of its kind accident while there is an on going investigation into what caused it?! There are videos of NYCLASS founder Steve Nislick arriving to the scene of the accident with a big smile on his face, knowing he will use it to push the carriage horse ban bill with zero regard for Romanch. NYCLASS and PETA held a vigil/press conference for Romanch which was so disingenuous. No members of the public or family members of Romanch attended. It was just animal rights extremists and a couple politicians pushing an agenda for them. Social media comments thrilled about the accident to use it to push the bill were screen shot. Even a month earlier when one carriage horse pulled out of the line clipping another carriage horse's wheel and toppling the carriage over onto the driver, two members of NYCLASS, pedicab driver Helen David and her wife Tiffany showed up at the scene, stood next to the driver with broken ribs awaiting an ambulance, and cheered on video, "YAY NYCLASS, Horse carriage accident!" These ghouls are the people begging you to pass the carriage horse ban bill.

This bill is being pushed by ideologies people have about how horses shouldn't work or pull carriages and that type of fascist thinking doesn't belong in policy making. You don't legislate and ban an entire industry because someone else doesn't like or understand it. This bill existed before Ryder even happened. Bob Holden introduced a bill to ban carriage horses and replace them with electric carriages, then the incident with Ryder happened so they decided to use that to push the bill and named it after him. Then NYCLASS introduced a version of the bill without the electric carriage and the Health Committee decided not to advance it this past November. Chris Marte scheduled the reintroduction of the exact same bill (with the same "working protections," or rather lack thereof) and then Deniz at the toxic plant the day before it was going to be introduced. As they prepared to name the bill after Deniz the necropsy came back essentially exonerating his owner/driver and placing the negligence on the Central Park Conservancy. The very next day they got "lucky" with Romanch and decided to rename the bill after him, believing this time they could exploit his death to use as leverage in pushing their ideology on everyone else into the legislation that would do away with the entire industry. It is

disgusting how NYCLASS has manipulated this family when they were at their most vulnerable, to push their political agenda and that there are council members who went along with it! The original statements from the Majahan family stated they wanted to see more safety measures put in place and they were not asking for an entire ban of the industry until NYCLASS reached out to them. "We are in direct contact with the family," executive director of NYCLASS, Edita Birnkrant told a radio show. Animal rights extremist views do not represent the average person. Their views do not belong in our laws and do not represent the best welfare for the animals they claim to care about, though are entirely uneducated about.

Very reputable equine vet, Dr Cook explained that the NYC carriage horses he examines are healthy and happy horses who enjoy working and should be able to work like this to enrich their physical and mental health. Those who examine the horses are the only ones who should get a say on that. Not one carriage driver has ever been convicted of animal abuse because it's non-existent in the industry. Some go above and beyond for their horses and some just follow the regulations of the city, but following the regulations is nowhere near abuse.

The bill offers the carriage drivers NO job in their equestrian field of expertise, no income for while they search for other work if they choose to, no value of the medallion they spent their life savings paying off, no value for their horses which they pay a certain amount for based on how much training the horse has, their age, and how much time they expect them to work in the industry, the bill actually goes so far as to say the horse can no longer be a carriage horse in a different business and therefore is really about people not wanting horses to pull carriages and not what's best for the horses. How would a driver be able to get back the value they paid for their horse if they tell that person buying their horse they can not do the work the horse was trained to do with that horse and the horse won't be able to earn an income for themselves even though the cost of their care is thousands of dollars every month. There is NO financial aid for the horses long term care in the bill. There are no retirement homes for the horses in the bill. There is also no indication any of the carriage drivers have an interest in selling or adopting out their horses who they share a very close bond with so how are they supposed to continue caring for their horses if they can't work with them anymore? Are they going to get a reasonable pension from the city? Is the city going to cover the cost of their horse's care for the rest of their lives or is the city just taking their legal business away from them without fair compensation?

It is no secret there are wealthy real estate interests who have funded propaganda against the horse carriage industry for years because the carriage stables sit on prime real estate. Even the founder of NYCLASS, Steve Nislick is a big real estate tycoon guy. There were e-mails revealed in FOIL requests of Mr Nislick meeting with the DeBlasio administration to talk about the carriage stables land and using accidents to fuel a carriage ban by painting the industry in a negative light. There was even a documentary about it called The Last Horsemen Of New York that Liam Neeson appears in.

The carriage horse industry remains very safe statistically. Accidents are extremely rare. Romanch was the first human fatality ever in almost 200 years, the entire history of the carriage industry. No other industry comes close to that kind of safety record. Over the last 30 years, approximately 3 million trips have taken place and only 1 horse was involved in a traffic related fatality, over 15 years ago. Horses do pass away from natural causes or retire but the Department Of Health keeps very poor records of the hoof numbers and what happens to the retired horses. We have found cases of a the same horse being listed as "disappeared" three times when he is actually retired and still happily on a farm upstate now. These inaccurate records have led people to believe the horses are either being sent to slaughter or have a high turnover rate when that's absolutely false. There are times due to a clerical error a horse isn't

properly recorded having taken their vacation on pastures of the Dept Of Health has misplaced their receipt of vacation and the horse had to be issued a new hoof number because the old one "expired," leaving the record of the horse to have "disappeared." How can you fault the industry for that?

There are thousands of horses that do wind up at slaughter every year all over the country because there just aren't enough people who can afford to care for them or who aren't willing to. There are sanctuaries and rescues who beg people for donations for their horses constantly. If any of them do have a place for a horse right now, they absolutely should give it to one of those homeless horses out there and homes shouldn't be being taken away from NYC carriage horses to fill those spots. NYC carriage horses aren't in need of rescue, they're happy and healthy and have loving owners so they don't belong on a sanctuary like a neglected horse that needs to be saved. No NYC carriage driver has ever sent a horse to slaughter but what happens is even if they give or sell their horse to a new owner with the very best intentions there is just no way to guarantee that new owner will always be able to financially or physically provide for that horse for the rest of their life and in the case that horse is sold again, that is when the horse becomes at risk for being sent to slaughter by someone else. It's very expensive to care for a horse. It's even more expensive in the city. People work with horses so they can afford their care. There is a perfect business model of that operating in NYC right now. Why would you want to make 200 horses homeless? Who can afford the long term care of 200 horses for the rest of their lives when they're not even nearing a retirement age?

There's no such thing as "freeing the horses." Horses are domesticated animals that rely on human care that includes work. Feral horses in the wild live short, harsh lives compared to those in human care. Land is being bought up for AI data centers amongst other things all over. It's a fantasy to believe the horses can just be "set free." It's as silly as saying you can set all dogs "free." That just means making dogs homeless.

It is important to keep horses with us. When we push them away, we don't stop them from dying or becoming injured or ill, we further push away our understanding about them, forget about them, ultimately drive their species out of existence when we call them obsolete. We only let rich people access them, but it is when the poor kids in urban environments that don't otherwise have access to horses or the means to go to the Hamptons to experience them, they decide to pursue a future caring for or working with horses and they keep that species of animal alive but finding them a purpose. Horses built our cities & are better cared for now than ever, so we owe it to them to find places for them with us in modern society. The AWESOME (Animal Welfare Education Supporting Our Metropolitan Equines) program was set up so that low income families could bring their children for a carriage ride and schools could bring their students to Central Park for a lesson on equine welfare, a carriage ride, and stable tour. This program has so much potential and will disappear if NYC carriage horses are banned. Eliminating carriage horses from our city doesn't make them immortal, it only further distances us from understanding them to provide them with the best care.

There are nearly 200 horse carriage drivers, stablemen, harness makers, farriers, and other related industries this carriage ban would impact down the barn cats who hunt mice that everyone will forget about if this bill passes. The largest mushroom farmer on this side of the country picks up the manure from the largest carriage horse stable to use for compost. He would be out of business without this industry. It's all their families that will be impacted and some who will lose absolutely everything. The industry is mainly made up of immigrants searching for the American dream. Carriage drivers come from Turkey, Egypt, Italy, Ireland, Russia, St Lucia, Africa, Mexico, China, Tajikistan, Morocco, and so many other countries.

Together they're a mini united nations that found a community together in this industry over their love of horses.

Horses are not outdated. People still ride horses and dogs have been domesticated even longer than horses! It's one thing for a business to be driven out slowly by changing times but the fact is there are still people interested in taking carriage rides. You're not supposed to decide that something is outdated so you're going to ban it from existence. The consumer decides that! Right now the consumer still wants this industry. We're one of very few businesses to survive after the pandemic, hurricane Sandy, 9/11, and so many other events. We haven't gone out of fashion at all! If people weren't taking carriage rides we wouldn't be able to afford the high cost of the care of our horses, but we're still here. New Yorkers were so happy to see the carriage horses return to the city after they vacationed on pastures through the pandemic. They shouted, "you're the heart of this city!" We show them a sense of normalcy, When we took a week off after we were so devastated by Romanch's tragedy, the public was so welcoming! "Welcome back!" everyone kept saying as they passed by. "New York wouldn't be New York without you, thank you for your service!" a random man in Carl Wilson's district called out.

It isn't difficult for a horse to pull a carriage because even the stablemen pull the carriages out and move them around every morning with ease. Physics of pushing into a collar/harness to propel something on wheels forward is very easy. The horses have an entire administrative code with so many regulations such as a minimum of 5 weeks vacation on rural pastures, not working above 89 degrees or 80 degrees with high humidity, not working below 19 degrees, being blanketed while standing at 40 degrees or blanketed in wet weather, the stalls have to be large enough for the horses to turn around and lay down in, they can not be out for more than a 9 hour maximum in a 24 hour period including a minimum of 15 minutes rest per 2 hours of work, at least 2 vet exams per year, routine vaccines, hoof trimmings and new shoes every 4 to 6 weeks, regular dewormer and teeth floating, etc. None of this is guaranteed to any other privately owned horse.

Horses were bred to work, their bodies literally built for it and draft horses never even existed in the wild. It would be downright cruel to deprive a horse of work and this bill would do that. To take good care of a horse one of the responsibilities you have is providing that horse with work and it's easier for a horse to be driven than ridden the way the weight distribution works balancing a rider on their back.

All the carriage horse stables were originally built at stables but they have been modernized and changed from standing stalls to box stalls so the horses can lay down, they're lined with a sprinkler system and ventilation system. The stalls have rubber mats with straw or wood chip bedding over them and allow the horses to safely interact with each other without getting kicked. The largest stable has automatic water dishes and as they're all required to have 24/7 stablemen, the other stables have them fill their buckets with as much water as they need. Every stall must have a salt block as well.

If this bill passes all it does is remove the protections the city guarantees these licensed horses that other privately owned horses don't have. It doesn't protect them.

There are so many constitutional issues with this bill it would cost the city so much money fighting in court if this bill passed.

If this bill were being pushed in the name of public safety or for the welfare of the horses, it wouldn't go into effect in 2 years from now. It's very clear it isn't about that and if it isn't, why are

we even discussing it? Intro 937 has answers to any concern you have about carriage horses. It has opportunities for different stables, dedicated lanes to get the horses to/from the stable/park, hitching posts for safety, more shade in the summer, earlier start times when it's cooler in the morning in the summer and there's less traffic, the possibility of daily turnout areas, and so much more to improve this iconic tradition the majority of New Yorkers want to preserve.

If you support a carriage horse ban because the city is no place for a horse, you might as well say, a city is no place for a tree and uproot them all from our parks and sidewalks. Trees don't belong between buildings and beside streets. Trees have fallen killing more people than carriage horses ever have.

A city is no place for a child, over 120 children under 17 have been killed in New York City traffic crashes since the launch of "Vision Zero" in 2014. A city is no place for a dog to breathe polluted air, or walk on hot pavement, at risk of being struck by cars and bicycles (last week: <https://x.com/infopobn/status/2071790409244717405>)

A city is no place for any person to be, away from a natural environment where they may be struck by a train, truck, bullet, motorized scooter, emotionally disturbed individual, pedicab (this week: <https://x.com/infopobn/status/2073538889743003946/photo/1>) or fall ill, out a window, into an open manhole (just over a month ago: <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/manhattan/cause-of-death-woman-fell-down-manhole-midtown-manchattan/6504242/>), or onto subway tracks in public; A sight no one wants to see. Improving the conditions for all who live here can't be taken into consideration; The only logical solution is to eliminate all life from our cities; It's far too risky a place for anyone to be.

Some think it's outdated to care for a horse; 6,000 years of domestication only to turn around and call it antiquated in 2026. By the same logic, haven't we had enough owning dogs? They were domesticated estimates of 15,000 to 40,000 years ago; Much more outdated than horses. They're exploited for our entertainment and sometimes even "forced" to work herding, guiding the blind, alerting people to seizures, or sniffing out illicit substances or missing persons. But no bills to ban us from owning them or keeping them in our cities have been introduced.

Police horses live in similar stalls in a stable just around the corner from NYC carriage horses stables, but when the carriage horses walk up to Central Park to spend their workday in the car-free environment delighting tourists and New Yorkers, police horses usually head to Times Square where they spend their workday preventing crime, chasing criminals (a couple months ago: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxz-iubgW9E>), and protecting the public on the street. Police horses share one of the same equine veterinarian and farrier as carriage horses, but not the same regulations. They don't get any of the vacation time on pastures that NYC carriage horses get. They don't have to return to their stables when temperatures get too hot. Occasionally they get into accidents, fall ill, have run aways, and even pass away. It's also an easier job for a horse to pull a carriage than balance a rider on their back; But no bills to ban police horses from the city have been introduced.

Horses have worked alongside mankind for thousands of years, bred for their ability to handle workloads we couldn't do alone. Over time breeds designed to pull began to rely on this type of work to thrive, right as we started looking to machines to replace them. After centuries of hard labor, most of today's horses have it easy; In Central Park they literally have a walk in the park with a carriage so easy to pull, their human stablemen and drivers pull them out of the stable with ease themselves every

morning. While construction workers labor and show horses gallop over 95 degree heat across the country, carriage horses are given time off when temperatures exceed 89 degrees (or 80 with high humidity.) While New York law doesn't guarantee any vacation time for human beings, NYC carriage horses must receive a minimum of 5 weeks each year. NYC carriage horses now work under more regulations than any other carriage industry in the country. Why is it that when horses are finally living the most pampered lives, some are seeking to shut it down? After years of their labor building our cities, people turn their back on them, seeking to push them out of a place they now call home. City after city becoming one less place for horses to continue to exist.

NYC carriage horses represent a living bond to our history with horses and display a partnership between human and horse so easily forgotten when we hide it from view. A progressive city doesn't hide from their past; They learn to grow from it. Growth isn't eliminating a proud tradition, it's honoring it for future generations. We owe it to the horses that worked hard in the past to give today's horses a good life, working among us in our modern society. Horses were domesticated and bred to work and it's our responsibility to find them a place alongside us in our cities. Only a cruel and heartless individual would look to the horse and shun them away from us, after all they've done, citing the cities they built are now just too busy for them to be with us any longer. The carriage horses that were intended to slow the pace of Central Park for all to relax and enjoy are now seen as "in the way" of speeding e-bikes.

With how few horses we have left in our cities, we have already seen how detached many people have become from them; They no longer know how to read their basic body language, understand their needs and desires, or maintain an ability to provide them with a good life. They assume a horse with a hind leg cocked is injured, a horse who isn't drinking at that moment is thirsty, a horse who is at ease and relaxed is tired, a bit used properly to communicate is painful, a horse who can lay down comfortably in a stall is wishing it were even wider, and a horse who is proudly pulling a carriage is dreaming of shelter-less field, unprotected from predators. The more you remove horses from where people frequent, the further you expand this issue.

There are people who project their own hate towards their jobs onto the horses prideful of their work. They close their eyes to the long term relationships these horses form with their drivers/caretakers and tell themselves their horses would prefer being torn from those they love and their familiar routine. They imagine there's a "sanctuary" for hundreds of horses that will be able to afford their long term care. In reality those "sanctuaries" are often begging for donations to avoid shutting down and thousands of homeless horses are being shipped to slaughter every year.

It's not about the science; A cortisol (stress hormone) study on the horses revealed they weren't at all stressed working/living in the city but were slightly stressed on the pastures where they vacation (<https://youtu.be/24IUP-wTZeo?si=rcYRGQgXqZ0Pd00Z>) because their opinion is guided by their emotion and feeling formed from misinformation. These are people who look at happy, healthy, well cared for horses doing what they enjoy in a well regulated industry with accidents occurring extremely rarely and think "abuse."

No systemic, repeat patterns of illness or accident are occurring in the NYC horse carriage industry over the 68 carriage businesses with 200+ horses and 150 carriage drivers/owners in business for over 150 years, but some believe an exception should be made with how we view this industry and it isn't permissible for one horse to ever fall ill or one accident to occur, no matter how rare. This industry shall be held to standards no other has ever achieved.

The goalpost has been moved time and time again until impossible demands are all that remain and horses are completely legislated out of everyone's life. There are people who set unreasonably high expectations as the bare minimum for horses until absolutely no one can care for a horse anymore. It's taking the first steps to the extinction of a species when you have the mindset that anyone who doesn't live in a mansion may as well be homeless.

There are people who seek to push the few remaining equestrians from their home and remodel the city they've moved to into one without the animals so many others appreciate; A cold and soulless city where they can convince themselves they've "protected" the horses who never needed salvation. In reality they would be turning their backs on them so they can pretend they're immortal outside of the city. Forgotten horses aren't better off, it's just easier for people to imagine they are.

Removing the horses from this industry only removes them from the people who love them and from the regulations protecting them and financial security that ensures their care. Intro 943 doesn't even permit them to work in another horse carriage industry, anywhere.

There are people who believe their ideologies should be forced into legislation, negatively impacting people and animals unlike themselves. Horses have no trouble expressing themselves to equestrians, but they speak in a language these animal rights extremists cannot understand while aiming to "be their voice." These are not the voices that need to be heard when proposals banning animals from our lives are brought to the table. This vocal minority however are the people who have been flooding NYC council members with calls and e-mails voicing their opinion against NYC carriage horses.

The other night I was driving my carriage horse to the stable when a man on the corner of the intersection I was approaching started chanting "Pass Ryder's Law! Pass Ryder's Law" I had space to pull over and let cars pass, so I came to a full stop I don't think he expected. "Wow, it takes a really pathetic person to harass a stranger on the street and you're not at all embarrassed?" I asked him. He continued to chant. I turned my body camera towards him and asked, "Why?...Why?...Okay, why?...Why?...You can't have a conversation?...Why?" The light changed and he started to cross the street. I shouted that he was a coward and he continued walking, only interrupting his chant with, "No I'm not!" The animal rights extremists are merely parrots in support of an ideology they've been indoctrinated to follow. There's no basis or logic behind their demands. They don't even know why they want carriage horses banned from New York City, but they know how to be loud, obnoxious, and inconsiderate of others.

Opponents to a NYC horse carriage ban know the horses are well cared for, in a well regulated industry, and despite recent headlines remain the safest mode of transportation. The NYC carriage horses are an institution and a proud Central Park tradition that continues to honor our connection to our history of the partnership horses share with mankind. They bring so much joy to so many and stand to ensure future generations don't become disconnected from the spirit of the horse in an urban environment. It is when we misunderstand horses that we forget to save a place for them in modern society, ultimately turning our backs on them. It is because we love horses that we have them with us in our cities doing what they enjoy doing alongside us.

There are powerfully funded people behind carriage horse ban legislation and the battle has persisted for decades. The NYC carriage stables now still sit upon valuable land that real estate developers continue to salivate over. Their greed to conquer the few remaining horsemen has resulted in otherwise

unlikely alliances with animal rights extremists and even pedicab drivers who believe they can cash in with their involvement. It is only thanks to a few politicians, unions, and the majority of the public who spoke out that the truth and facts about the industry have prevailed over the emotionally fueled false and misleading propaganda spread. Now politicians are once again being asked to decide the fate of 200+ horses, 150+ mainly immigrant carriage drivers and owners, 68 privately owned small businesses, and something millions of tourists have sitting on their bucket list.

Will the horses be displaced from their homes, jobs, and people who love and care for them, just tossed into uncertainty for another high rise to be built, or will common sense prevail again? Will countless lives be destroyed when their livelihood is taken from them because someone shouted lies over the facts in front of them, or will politicians be on the right side of history this time around?

In the year of the horse some believe the recent storm of negative PR surrounding the industry will result in its demise, while others haven't given up yet. We can't let a small but vocal minority dictate the future of horses in our city which will in turn impact the future of horses all across the country like a stepping stone or domino effect. Now is the time to act.

The statement Chris Marte's office made to Pix 11 from June 16th in response to Deniz's necropsy reveals that the council member -who introduced the latest bill to ban NYC carriage horses (Intro 943), thinks that it's a good idea for people to become detached from animals.

Councilman Chris Marte first exposed his true ignorance about horses at the NYC Council Health Committee hearing on the previous carriage horse ban bill this past November, when he claimed that it would be inhumane to have people, cats or dogs pulling horse carriages, so it's not right to have horses doing it. He is absolutely oblivious to the strength of a horse, ease a human can pull a wheeled carriage, and that horses are domesticated animals that have a difficult time thriving without this type of work.

The councilman believes that we can convince ourselves horses don't have medical emergencies, don't fall ill, don't get injured, and don't get into accidents if we push them far from our view. Out of sight, out of mind. That's the goal of animal rights extremists; Push animals far away from us until we become so detached from what good care of them looks like we no longer provide it.

Chris Marte's issue isn't with carriage horses; It's with horses being living animals and having to accept that like all living creatures they are not immortal. He lives in a fantasy that if horses were away from the city we'd be better off because we wouldn't know about when they pass away. He'd rather horses that develop deep bonds with human beings be isolated to suffer alone than be cared for among us, if it means occasionally having to be with them when they fall ill too. It's a true animal rights ideology that has never aligned with the majority of the public.

(He hypocritically makes this claim that he can't handle seeing tragedy, while standing beside PETA, who recently put up a billboard of Deniz's last moments to push their agenda. Imagine if it were your beloved horse, dog, or other loved one being exploited in this manner.)

No one who cares about an animal's welfare would seek to push them away. No one who is a true animal person would support the animal rights agenda. No one with extremist views towards animals should be in a position of political power to decide their fate.

Another NYC council member has fallen for NYCLASS's lies and thinks carriage horses should be banned because they aren't immortal, per a Politico article.

The fact is not one NYC carriage horse has collapsed due to heat since the original law preventing them from working above 89 degrees went into effect in 1989. Necropsies and equine veterinary examinations reveal various factors into why different medical emergencies have occurred in horses over the years; Not one relating to heat or a systemic issue revealed in the industry or related to being a carriage horse.

City Council Member Shaun Abreu says he's proud to stand with NYCLASS, the real estate developer headed group investigated by the FBI, fined for campaign finance violations, who's head threatened a female daily news reporter supportive of the carriage industry, and so notorious for lying about the NYC horse carriage industry, the Transport Workers Union has a million dollar lawsuit pending against them.

The councilman also exposes he's anti-science, ignoring the peer-reviewed cortisol (stress hormone) study that appeared in the American Veterinary Association Journals, revealing while NYC carriage horses weren't at all stressed working/living in the city, they were slightly stressed on the rural pastures they vacation on every year (https://youtu.be/24IUP-wTZeo?si=7FHJC332G_fLDTrH) Although he's unable to read the body language, facial expressions, and behaviors of horses making it impossible to advocate in their best interests, he wants to be their voice.

The 200+ horses in the NYC carriage horse industry could have their lives and their driver's lives ruined if Intro 943 passes and their fate is being determined by people completely ignorant towards the equine species.

NYC horse carriage drivers have always followed NYC laws and regulations to the best of their ability and prioritized the welfare of their horses in this industry. However many laws and regulations have been passed in recent years with disingenuous intentions to hurt the horse carriage business; Sometimes even at the expense of the horse's welfare! What went from being a very functional and safe business model has undergone a death by a thousand cuts over the last decade and carriage drivers/owners have had to make due. There are times when laws now contradict each other and drivers have to make the safest and best choices for their horses, even if they may not technically be following a regulation as it was written. NYCLASS was never shy about their goal; If they can't ban the industry they will push to pass over-regulation and excessively ticket drivers to drive it out, while discouraging the city from allowing improvements to be made to the industry.

One example is within the DOT rule change that only allows passengers to get in/out of carriages where there is signage for a carriage stand and the carriage stands were moved from Central Park South into locations inside the park. While there are 68 carriages, there was only enough space made for 35-40 carriages. This means that on a slow business day, if you take a ride and there is no where to park your horse when you get back, you lose your ability to follow every law and regulation and you're forced to choose which violation to make: Parking outside of a carriage stand and letting your customer out, or holding your customer hostage circling your horse until legal parking becomes available and possibly

exceeding the minimum of 15 minutes rest per 2 hours of work for your horse.

This rule change also had the carriage horses “resting” on a downhill slope of the new 7th Ave carriage stand, unable to comfortably cock their hind leg to relax and without a brake have the weight of the carriage pushing into them; From day one carriage drivers simply stood firm to defy that and faced the other way with blocks of wood behind the carriage wheel. The hill the horses were moved off of flat ground to stand on still caused a horse with asymptomatic PSSM to have a medical emergency in 2021, ultimately resulting in her death. (NYCLASS still tries to use pictures of her episode to further their horse carriage ban agenda.)

Moving the carriage horses from their old location right outside Central Park to just inside the entrances took away their visibility to passerby nearly killing off the night shift, making it difficult to prevent potential customers from being scammed out of their horse carriage tour by pedicab street scammers around the park, and extending the adapting period of horses new to the city by exposing them to the sights and sounds of the street for much shorter periods. All these financial hardships made it more difficult to make ends meet combined with the false slander NYCLASS damaged the industry’s image with that their union is suing them over.

These are not the only examples, but it is why you may sometimes see something in the news propagated by NYCLASS about carriage drivers breaking the law. Carriage drivers continue to do what is safest for their horse and in turn that’s what protects themselves, their passengers, and the general public. An estimated 3 million NYC horse carriage tours have taken place over the past thirty years and the industry stands with an incredible safety record because their protocols and regulations had worked for them. Nearly every incident in recent years happened after the city made these recent changes to the industry. Carriage drivers also altered their practices after the first human fatality in history as an additional safety measure to keep their Vision Zero goal. The most notable difference is that even though the horses were trained to ground tie when the city failed to provide hitching posts, the drivers will now remain in the driver seat at all times when they have passengers, unless their horse is tied to something sufficient available, or there is a footman holding the horse from the ground.

Intro 937 calls for common sense safety protocols, changes to open the door for options to even further improve the welfare of the horses and seeks to undo some of the damage the city has done to the industry. The bill is not yet scheduled for a hearing, but you can help change that. NYCLASS and PETA have followers from all over the world calling our city council members; There is no reason they shouldn’t hear from every New Yorker, tourist outside of New York, or equine professional that supports the industry as well.

It takes a **strong** person to drive a horse carriage in New York City. Yes, they have to be able to handle a horse, lift a saddle, pick out a horse’s hooves, and carry buckets of feed and water, but I don’t mean physical strength.

In New York City the carriage horse industry has been under attack with slanderous claims and misinformation for decades. It’s fueled various animal rights extremist groups to hold protests in front of carriage stands, verbal insults and physical punches have been hurled at drivers, and city council members have threatened to take away their livelihood again and again.

Wrong doing is assumed and drivers are blamed every time one of their horses falls ill or passes away. Imagine the amount of pressure on someone who works with an animal that society won't accept ever dying, though they know it's coming at an undetermined time. You must be perfect at all times; There's no room for mistake; One accident and everyone will turn on you.

The harassment and demonization of horse carriage drivers intensifies after any one of their coworker's horses is involved in any type of incident. But if they respond in anger, it will be caught on camera and taken out of context to be spun against them. Everything you do is in public and will be publicized and criticized.

As they scroll social media after work they will see headlines about their industry, pictures of themselves and their coworkers, and thousands upon thousands of comments from a mostly uninformed, uneducated public sharing opinions about them and their horses.

A NYC horse carriage driver needs a strong sense of self to carry on with this kind of abuse from the public day after day. It must be ignored, laughed off, responded to calmly and kindly, or creatively done well enough to turn them off from ever shouting at them again.

NYC carriage drivers will have friends turn their backs on them because they trust false propaganda spread about them over the integrity of their friend. NYC carriage drivers have children that see their face on the news and wonder why people are shouting at them. NYC carriage drivers will have adoption agencies turn them down from adopting a pet because of what their application lists their profession as.

But a NYC carriage driver's love of their horse is what will keep them going. They will choose to endure verbal abuse, risk physical attack, and fight hard at City Hall to make sure they can keep doing what they do day after day.

A NYC carriage driver must face the world after tragedy and in uncertainty, because their horse needs to work and they both need to eat.

A NYC carriage driver carries as much pride in their work as their horse. A NYC carriage driver knows they're treating their horse well and their horse knows they're treating them well, and what other people know can not matter more than what they know.

Why is NYCLASS's horse carriage ban bill, Intro 943, they call "Ryder's law" a terrible bill for horses? Despite laws that prevent legal businesses from simply being "banned" and carriage drivers having the legal right to choose their profession, not only would this bill cease to license NYC horse carriage drivers after June 2028, it would actually cruelly prevent their personal, privately owned horses from doing the work that keeps them physically and mentally healthy. The bill prevents the horses from pulling carriages—even in other horse carriage businesses outside of the city. This means that carriage drivers wouldn't be able to move to a rural area of NY or to another state to continue to work their horse or earn an income in partnership with their horse to cover the high cost of their care.

It also means no one else would even be able to purchase their horses to pull carriages, which they're already trained and built to do, significantly decreasing their value from a business standpoint and potentially putting the horses in a dangerous situation if they were no longer able to afford their care by

working other jobs. The bill offers zero funding for the long term care of the horses and no retirement homes when there are already thousands of horses that wind up sent to slaughter every year. It leaves 200+ horses without a job, home, care, or protection from an even worse situation if they are resold.

None of the carriage drivers have even expressed interest in being separated from and adopting out/selling their personally owned horses, many of which are relatively young and not ready to be retired by any means. Any legitimate horse sanctuary or rescue with an open spot would rather take in a horse in need of a home rather than take away a home from a horse with a job and care.

The bill offers the horse carriage owners nothing for their investment in 68 valuable carriage medallions and no specific job, let alone a job in their equestrian field of expertise. It doesn't even offer the carriage drivers jobs driving e-carriages, as some people were led to believe. The bill simply says the city would have to set up a program to help the 150+ carriage drivers find other jobs, similarly to the current unemployment office. It also doesn't say what the carriage drivers would do for an income until they found another job. NYC Councilman Chris Marte (<https://www.facebook.com/reel/846946117918887>) re-introduced this cruel bill without a care in the world that it's a bad bill for horses and a bad bill for workers.

Much of the public's reaction to the recent passing of NYC carriage horse, Deniz shows us how important it is to keep carriage horses with us in our cities. A large portion of society, especially those in an urban environment have become far too detached from the realities of horses, including the fact that they are not immortal.

Some NYC council members think the answer is isolating horses from humankind that they have worked alongside for thousands of years, but in reality that will only put even further division between people and their understanding of horses and lead to horses without the human care they now rely on. Yes, it is always tragic when a horse passes away and emotionally impacting when it does happen in public, but banning carriage horses from NYC won't make horses immortal.

Like all living creatures, eventually all 200+ horses in the NYC carriage horse industry will pass away. Some will be younger than the average lifespan of a domesticated horse and some will be older. For most the cause will be of "natural causes." The lucky horses may get the luxury of passing away in their stall or while they are on vacation on pasture, but odds are a few will be doing what they love when their time comes.

Before Deniz, the last NYC carriage horse to suddenly collapse and pass away unexpectedly in Central Park happened over a decade ago. The usually carriage horse supportive or neutrally positioned Central Park Conservancy put out a revealing statement that this is "too many" times, suggesting a recent substantial donation from a group like NYCLASS with an agenda to ban the horse carriage industry. Over the past few years there have been a few people and animals that have passed away in Central Park, but the Conservancy made no such statements about their concern or kicking them out of the park. E-bike accidents are at an all time high in Central Park with locals and tourists voicing numerous concerns, but it is only the carriage horses the Central Park Conservancy has taken a stance against.

In a rural environment, some people become used to their "normal," and start to forget how many different types of environments horses can thrive in. In an urban environment, some people never learn

basic facts about horses or even have the opportunity to see them up close. This inexperience results in a reliance on the internet to form their opinion and very few people take the time to fact check their sources of information on the internet.

Ultimately some people begin to believe not only is the easy work of a horse pulling a carriage (which many are designed by breed to do) is somehow difficult or unnecessary for them, when they actually won't thrive without this type of work. They don't know what normal temperatures are for horses to exist in and how adaptable and versatile of a species they are. They personify horses and lose the understanding of what kind of stalls horses are comfortable in. Humankind forgets how hard horses used to have it when they built our cities and were relied on for transportation of people, goods, and services. In most of modern society, horses have comparatively very easy jobs now that are a "walk in the park," and quite literally in the case of the Central Park carriage horses. However an uninformed public may call that easy work "too much" or "abusive." Due to how few horses they come in contact with in today's world, many people can no longer read the basic body language of a horse and will even mistake a horse resting with a hind leg cocked because they're relaxed as a horse that has hoof/leg pain.

NYC Mayor Mamdani chose his words more carefully than some. While he did state, "I support removing horse carriages from Central Park," he added that he looks forward to "working with union partners and community leaders to actually deliver on that." TWU Local 100 will not accept a ban on NYC carriage horses. The mayor also would not say if he supported NYCLASS's NYC carriage horse ban bill, Intro 943 they're still calling "Ryder's bill" or "Ryder's law." Instead, he said he wanted to "figure out a way" forward without offering specifics. As we know from previous administrations, regardless of where a mayor stands on the NYC horse carriage industry, it's ultimately up to the NYC council to advance and vote on bills that impact the industry. The NYC Council Speaker Julie Menin didn't comment on the subject recently, but a spokesperson for the city council did say that multiple bills will be introduced to the city council this week and they would follow the legislative process to allow for input from all stakeholders.

As the public re-learns how well cared for the NYC carriage horses are, that they are working in a well regulated industry, with accidents occurring very rarely, the support for the industry resumes. NYC horse carriage drivers have undergone years of false slander and over regulation enacted against their industry. We hope to change that this year, the year of the horse.

6/9/2026:

Why, when a pet cat passes away it's, "I'm sorry for your loss." When the family dog passes away, it's "That's terrible, but there's nothing else you could do." When the horse in the country barn passes away, it's "These things happen." But when a New York City carriage horse passes away it's immediately assumed, "It must have been the driver's fault for mistreating him and we should eliminate all carriage horses."

Deniz was a fit, healthy, beautiful 16 year old horse who had just passed his veterinary exam a couple months earlier in March, by the same vet who treats the NYPD Mounted Unit horses. Deniz had enjoyed his job working in the NYC horse carriage industry for the past 10 years, where he was loved by his owner, different drivers, and the people who took rides with him.

June 9th wasn't a very hot or humid day. There was a bit of a breeze, the high was around 81 degrees in

Central Park and it was about 75 degrees when Deniz started his last carriage ride, before he was expected to return to the stable. It wasn't a particularly busy Tuesday and he had had plenty of food and water throughout the day. He hadn't been acting out of character and was being driven by his owner who knew him best.

Around 7pm, as Deniz rounded the back of Strawberry Fields on flat ground with two customers in his carriage, he suddenly passed away. His driver and owner, Nurettin was in shock despite having decades of experience in the carriage industry. Passerby helped him unharness his horse from the carriage while he made all the necessary phone calls to handle the situation. He told news stations he felt like he had just lost a member of his family and it had happened so unexpectedly and suddenly.

Within minutes bicyclists, joggers, and passerby became outraged at Nurettin, blaming him for his tragic loss. Nurettin professionally ignored the commotion and remained on the scene until the proper authorities arrived to remove Deniz's body.

Animal rights extremists and the real estate funded NYCLASS's executive director, Edita Birnkrant arrived to the scene, chastising Nurettin and calling for an outright ban of all 200+ carriage horses from the industry. Calls to punish the other 150+ carriage horse owners and drivers grew. Verbal attacks began to get hurled at other horse carriage drivers and they returned to the stables for the safety of their horses and themselves.

The carriage industry decided to close the stables the following day to mourn Deniz and for the protection of their horses and drivers. (The following few days work would be very limited for the rest of the horses with the heat and humidity expected to rise and prompt a suspension of operations throughout much of that period.)

Per TWU Local 100, Deniz will undergo a full necropsy by the pathology department at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine to determine what transpired. Until the results return, the cause of his death remains unknown, though the police stated there was no evidence to suggest wrong doing. Unfortunately no one gets to choose when and where a death will occur and this is something that could happen to any domesticated animal at any time, anywhere. Many even noted Deniz appeared strong, was a healthy weight and not even very sweaty. Some theorized it was some type of heart attack, but until the necropsy is completed, no one can say for sure.

No signs of Deniz's passing are pointing to something preventable, overwork, dehydration, or any relation to Deniz's job or home in NYC, but that didn't stop thousands of keyboard warriors from taking to the internet to point fingers, denounce the horse carriage industry, and even make death threats towards carriage drivers, as well as city council members. They cruelly shared videos of Deniz's last moments all over social media without an ounce of compassion for his owner in his time of mourning.

The timing couldn't have been worse for the industry. The next afternoon NYCLASS was already expected to hold a rally with PETA at City Hall to support reintroducing the horse carriage ban bill that the NYC Health Committee's council members voted to kill this past November. Council members Harvey Epstein, Carl Wilson, Frank Morano, and Gale Brewer stood with a few dozen NYCLASS and PETA lobbyists outside City Hall to announce Councilman Chris Marte's re-introduction of the carriage ban bill that had been defeated countless times already. Deniz's passing would be exploited by them in propaganda to fuel support of the bill.

Today the carriage ban bill will be re-introduced along with Councilman Jim Gennaro's counter bill to improve the horse carriage industry after years of slanderous damage and over regulation was enacted to drive it out of business. The question remains if common sense will prevail or we live in a society who punishes people and horses for their inability to make NYC carriage horses immortal. We are hopeful that in the year of the horse, common sense will prevail for the horses and all who love them. Stay tuned for action items as our political fight for the NYC horse carriage industry continues once again.

Wrapping Up 2025: On December 9th the NY Daily News ran an article headlined, "Adams hiring outside vet to examine Central Park carriage horses seen as assault on industry," shared on this page. On December 28th the NY Post ran the headline, "NYC horse carriages refuse animal testing, prompting threat of lawsuit or suspension by city," (link below.) What's the whole story?

The NYC horse carriage industry is composed of 68 separate privately owned small businesses. While every carriage medallion owner and/or driver must follow the rules and regulations set by NYC (such as the temperatures their horses can work in and the limit on their hours) the 200+ horses they register to work are their individually, personally owned, private property, legally speaking. While you need a carriage driving license to drive a for-hire medallioned carriage in NYC, you don't need to own the carriage or horse you drive and you don't need to own a carriage to own the horse you drive. Amongst many requirements to license your horse to work in NYC, you must send your horse on pasture vacation for a minimum of 5 weeks per year and have your horse examined by a veterinarian at least twice a year. Unless a specific report is sighted or illness/injury arises, there is no legal pretense for an additional veterinary exam.

Multiple veterinarians have examined NYC carriage horses over the years. Some have retired, passed away, or simply moved. Currently, a renowned equine veterinarian and surgeon from New England Equine has bi weekly visits to the stables at his own expense, examines scheduled horses due for submitting their health certificates to the NYC Health Department, and offers their hospital to be available to horses in emergencies if more serious health issues arise. In addition to his services, many NYC carriage horses also utilize the services of the equine vet that examines and treats the NYPD horses. (The Health Department also privately contracts an equine veterinarian as needed while they search to fill their currently open full time position.)

Some have suggested that because these private veterinarians are paid by the horse owners, just like you would pay out of pocket for your cat or dog's visit to a vet, there is a financial bias of these examinations. But that logic would suggest the vets would be finding more wrong with the horses to increase their bill upon requiring treatment of illnesses or injuries. Instead every NYC carriage horse licensed to work has a clean bill of health and is only suspended from work when illness or injuries do arise or if there are occasional mishaps with submitting their licensing paperwork too late. Every NYC carriage horse owner would in fact welcome the NYC Health Department to cover the cost of their horse's veterinary care, but it has never been offered.

While Mayor Adams had stood with the TWU Local 100 horse carriage drivers nearly his entire four year term, well aware the horses were well cared for, just a couple months before leaving office, he suddenly took on a stance against the carriage industry, flanked by his deputy mayor, Randy Mastro (previously NYCLASS's lawyer), presumably after taking a bribe from NYCLASS.

The NYC horse carriage drivers/owners union, TWU recently filed a lawsuit against NYCLASS (headed by a real estate developer who had expressed interest in the carriage horse stable properties in the past) for spreading false accusations about the industry in collusion with the Mayor Adams administration (as well as the previous DeBlasio administration who had their campaigns well funded by NYCLASS, ultimately resulting in campaign finance board fines.) This past November, NYC Councilman Bob Holden utilized a rarely used bill sponsor privilege rule to force the NYC Council's Health Committee to hold a vote on his horse carriage ban bill. They voted to kill the bill, but the corrupt mayoral administration felt that they hadn't attacked the industry hard enough, despite how little popularity there had been publicly or politically to push this bill.

During the first week of December, the Adams administration had the NYC Health Department send out a letter to some NYC horse carriage owners requesting Dr. Kraig Kulikowski examine their horse during the busy holiday season that financially holds them over during the slow season. The horse owners looked up Dr. Kraig Kulikowski and learned he's the vet of anti horse carriage group Equine Advocates, is Facebook friends with the executive director of NYCLASS, Edita Birnkrant, and found videos of him making biased remarks against certain lifestyles of horses, giving him a stance against the NYC horse carriage industry. By no means was this a fair, unbiased, and "independent" vet the Adams administration had tried to play it off as. The Health Department claimed he was the only one qualified who applied to their job posting offering up to \$20k. (Our tax dollars at work!)

Over the years the NYC horse carriage industry has welcomed legitimately independent veterinary exams and testing of their horses, as they have nothing to hide and are aware of their horses being in good health in order to be licensed to work. One example is Dr Joseph Bertone who happened to pass by the carriage horses in their stands in 2015 and requested to run a study on the horse's Cortisol levels. (Years prior the ASPCA had run a similar study but never released the results.) Carriage horse owners were so eager to learn the science behind their horse's already relaxed postures and behaviors they even helped fund the peer reviewed study, which was later published in the American Veterinary Association journals. (The study revealed the horses were not at all stressed living/working in the city, but had slightly raised Cortisol levels when they vacationed on pastures: <https://youtu.be/24IUP-wTZeo?si=bd5R6gQUrEXOPAFx>)

On December 8th Dr. Kraig Kulikowski arrived at Clinton Park Stable in the morning. Horse owners were requested to fill out an optional form if they consented to having their horse trotted or have blood drawn for his exam. The Health Department couldn't guarantee what lab the blood would wind up in or who would have access to it. It wasn't a mandated test as the carefully worded DOH letter confirmed. Not one was open to this vet who was openly against their industry and being paid per exam by orders of the mayoral administration (attempting to do away with their industry) to having him draw blood, trot, or examine their horses, who had already received the two vet exams required by law that included trotting tests and any necessary blood work. Despite the seeming accusation there was any inadequacy within the vets who had examined their horses, these exams were not offered to any NYPD horses who use one of the same vets. It was too fishy for anyone to welcome.

The Department Of Health stated that they were not able to prevent any licensed horse from going to work who did not present any health issue in order for this exam to take place, so most of the horses were unable to be seen by Dr. Kraig Kulikowski just for the reason that they were not available for an exam during the busy season; They were scheduled to work during the hours he arrived to examine them. Some of the horses were even already on vacation on pastures outside the city. The DOH's last minute job posting had also stated the exams were to be held outside of the horses working hours. A

couple of the horse owners *still* allowed their horses to be seen by Dr. Kraig Kulikowski, knowing there was absolutely nothing that could be found wrong with them and assuming it would be less hassle than declining the exam, but they denied their horse's blood to be drawn or their horse to be trotted, as it was not being legally required, did not seem necessary, and their horses had already had their full examinations done with a different, trusted vet.

Dr. Kraig Kulikowski used the "flexion" test method of testing for lameness in the horses. Multiple equine professionals even outside of the carriage industry scoffed at this being an unreliable type of exam that most sound horses would fail. He didn't say a word about the health of any of the horses, but approximately 12 hours later the NYC Health Dept contacted one of the horse owners who had allowed their horse to be seen, stating the horse must be suspended from working due to lameness Dr. Kraig Kulikowski found. If lameness had truly been found in the horse, wouldn't a legitimate vet tell the owner on the spot so that it could be remedied, treated, and the horse rested rather than permitted to work that day?

It certainly wouldn't have been out of the question to assume Dr. Kraig Kulikowski had been pressured by the Adams administration to change his original assessment of the horse after the fact. In 2011 a horse new to the carriage industry named Charlie passed away suddenly. The APSCA's equine veterinarian made a statement that the horse had passed away likely due to ulcers from their lifestyle in NYC, only to immediately retract it, saying she'd been pressured by the ASPCA to make it and didn't believe it was true. She was then suspended by the ASPCA, which later led to the ASPCA being found to have a clear bias against the industry (NYCLASS was originally cofounded by their CEO at the time) and they were removed from their duties of enforcing the carriage horse industry's regulations due to the conflict of interest. (Later, nothing related to Charlie working or living in NYC was determined to be the cause of his death and the NYPD Mounted Unit took over the duties of the ASPCA.)

The horse owner who had had his horse suspended on the 8th had the same vet that examines the NYPD horses examine his horse the following day and no lameness was found in the horse. The next day the horse owner brought the examination certificate to the Health Department to have the work suspension lifted. This cost the horse owner the cost of the additional vet exam out of pocket and work days lost during the busiest time of the year. Some say it was grounds for a lawsuit.

On December 9th Dr. Kraig Kulikowski went to the West Side Livery stable. Most of the horses he requested to see were again at the park working or out of the city vacationing on pastures. One horse owner asked the Health Department representative accompanying Dr. Kraig Kulikowski if his horse's paperwork (vet examinations) were in order; they said yes. He asked if any specific accusation or concern had been made against his horse to require an examination; they said no. He declined allowing his horse to be seen as there was no legal grounds for it and little reason to trust this veterinarian. TWU then sent a letter threatening the Adams administration, NYC Health Department, and Dr. Kraig Kulikowski with a lawsuit if the industry was further hassled with these examination requests interfering with their busy season.

On December 24th, Christmas Eve, TWU was once again busy fighting corruption against the NYC horse carriage industry that the Adams administration attempted to pursue with barely a week left in office! Spinning the story that the vet hired was "independent," "legally required," and the horse carriage industry had "something to hide" by refusing the exams, more slander was falsely spread, as well as a threat of suspending licenses or a lawsuit against the industry! NYCLASS even plans to hold a City Hall rally supporting the carriage ban bill killed by the Health Committee's November 14th vote, on

December 30th, just a day before the bill officially expires with the Adams administration January 1st, assumedly because they fear a new carriage ban bill will be difficult to pursue with the incoming Mamdani administration. The NYC carriage horse owners remain open to a truly independent equine vet examining their horses.

The amount of arrogant elitism in the horse industry is astounding. You would think with such a unique profession in modern society you would find more people standing united against animal rights extremist ideology, especially in cities where real estate development so often pushes horses further away from us.

It is when we allow ourselves to become so far detached from horses in our everyday lives that we forget how to read them and lose our ability to advocate in their best interests rather than what we might "feel" is best for them. So many think they should "be a voice" for horses that don't have one, all while the horses have no difficulty communicating with us if we know how to "listen" to them, rather than project our feelings and ideologies onto them. It is when we see horses on our streets, in our parks, and on farms on the regular that we have the ability to protect them. It's when we drive horses away to only be accessed in rural areas of vast space that we fail them in their survival for a place with us in modern society.

We forget horses went into wars with us and were how we commonly got around. We forget horses are not wild animals meant to be "free" to face the harsh realities of Mother Nature. We forget roads were paved with asphalt *for horses,* before the automobile was even invented. We forget the hard labor without today's regulations horses used to endure, far from the pampered lives they have today. We forget horses are not people and don't want to be treated as such.

The horse world is one where I occasionally run into, "Cool, I have horses too," and sometimes hear, "You keep horses different from the way I do, so your way is wrong." There is no standard. Over thousands of years of domesticating horses we now owe it to these highly adaptable animals to find places where they can still thrive where ever we may be.

If you have the space and means for a larger turnout area, stall, pasture, farm, etc that's great, but it isn't wrong if you don't and still make do. It's simply wrong to chastise someone with a perfectly adequate home and routine for their horse. Just as some people prefer to live in a rural environment and some prefer an urban environment or some live in a two story house while some live in an apartment, it's not very different with horses and neither is more "correct" or "humane" than the other.

While NYC carriage horses have box stalls that allow them to turn around and lay down in by law, others prefer standing stalls that give their horses more of a sense of security. Some prefer extra large stalls, while others fear their horses may get cast in them. Some horses prefer to spend time inside and some prefer to be outside. Some horses prefer to be around other horses, some don't, and some prefer a more protected interaction through a stall or shared work space. Some prefer to feed their horse one type of hay or grain/oats, while others prefer a different diet for their horse, yet both horses could be equally healthy. Some prefer bitless bridles or in the case of NYC carriage horses they must wear a bit by law. For some horses that aren't frequently worked, daily turnout could be helpful. For NYC carriage horses their work routine supplements any need for more time being turned out. Their longevity, healthy condition, cortisol levels, and general behavior proves this to be true.

While some horses live in hay filled, single floored wooden barns with their pastures just beside them, NYC carriage horses live in flood preventative multi-floored stables, with more fire-resistant concrete-brick walls and a sprinkler system. They trailer to their pastures on upstate NY or PA farms.

NYC police horses work more frequently on the street than carriage horses and are housed in stables with similar stalls, just a block apart from each other without time on pastures. The Royal Mews carriage horses only use box stalls and have 6 weeks vacation on pastures. The Household Cavalry are kept in straight stalls with just one month of vacation on pastures. Both the Household Cavalry and London police horses live in upper levels of their stables.

None of these ways of living are wrong or cruel for a horse, they are just different and more people need to learn to respect that what works for one horse may not work for another, but also that if one horse lives a life different from yours, which just works for them, you need to accept that reality. The "I'm right and everyone else is wrong," ideology can not be accepted in the horse world where there absolutely is no *one,* single correct way for a horse to live.

Why do some people think advocating to ban something they don't like without considering the repressions or spending time learning about the subject beyond what they've seen on the internet (which unbeknownst to them are often false or misleading claims) would ever be a beneficial stance? Why would someone go so out of their way to give their own life a feeling of meaning by attacking someone else's passion in life which they don't understand?

Attacking a horse carriage driver's career profession is not a hobby. It's something a person who is miserable within their own life and incapable of empathy might do when faced with something they don't understand. The fact is people who dedicate their lives to working with animals do so not for the love of money but for the love of animals.

When you look at the 160+ year old NYC horse carriage industry of 150-300 carriage drivers and owners at any given time, in a union of over 160k members, dozens of 24/7 stablemen, over 200 horses, 68 separate, privately owned carriage medallion businesses, bringing in millions of tourist dollars, dozens of pages of regulations enforced by 5 city agencies, 3 stables, over 100 stalls, operating under multiple types of licenses & inspections for the drivers, carriages, stables, & horses, with a minimum of 2 yearly vet exams, a vet making a minimum of bi-weekly stable visits, extremely infrequent accidents providing a 99% safety record, hoof trimmings/shoeings every 4-6 weeks, regular teeth floating, a minimum of 5 weeks vacations on pastures, maximum 9 hours work per 24 hour period, minimum 15 minutes rest per 2 hours work, maximum working temperature of 89 degrees or 79 degrees with high humidity, minimum working temperature of 19 degrees, blankets required at 40 degrees or 55 degrees in wet weather, extensive driver licensing & training process, famously appearing in hundreds of films;

How on earth do you think this industry doesn't have enough oversight or protections and why would a couple of horses passing away over the years, occasionally getting sick, or having an extremely rare accident suggest the rest of the industry should shut down?

Why should the opinion of the vocal minority who is unable to understand the difference between animal welfare and animal rights that calls to destroy the bond built being humans and animals for

thousands of years be taken into account over the majority? If we simply let people decide on what they want to support the NYC horse carriage industry naturally thrives and survives or is driven out of business if consumers aren't patronizing it to cover their extremely high overhead costs. Why do some think it's necessary for the government to step in to decide their legal businesses with their privately owned horses is now prohibited? If you don't like horse carriage rides absolutely no one is forcing you to take one, but it's wrong for you to deprive millions of people who have one on their bucket list from enjoying theirs.

The NYC carriage horse industry made it through the 2020 pandemic when the city shut down, despite many other businesses not surviving. Despite slanderous lies and misinformation spread to an often uninformed public and being used as a pawn for political favors among corrupt politicians, the NYC carriage horse industry lives on in Central Park. Making a fool of yourself because you saw an out of context photo or video on the internet doesn't mean you're being cool or trendy. To deny that every piece of negativity spread about the NYC horse carriage industry stems from false propaganda spread by real estate developers after the carriage stable properties just because it aligns with your uninformed opinion doesn't make it true.

If you don't want to understand that this is an industry that just works where workers and horses are happy to be a part of it and millions are happy to see it and patronize it, that's on you. It doesn't mean you should go out of your way to destroy what works for everyone else. You simply don't have to keep your horse in a city, don't have to register them as a NYC carriage horse, and don't have to take a ride with our horses.

Horses are highly adaptable animals that thrive alongside humankind whether that be working in an urban environment, a rural environment, a snowy climate, or a desert climate. There are a multitude of lifestyles horses thrive in being driven or ridden in different types of stalls, on different diets, different types of stables, and different work routines; One can not expect every horse to be identical in the vast variations they have been bred to survive healthily in our world. It's wrong to attempt to harm everyone else's enjoyment or advocate for something you don't fully understand that counter to your supposed goal would also negatively impact the lives of the horses you claim to care about. You can not successfully advocate for something which you don't fully understand. Banning carriage horses doesn't guarantee a better life for horses. It simply removes all the protections they have, makes one less place for horses in a modern society with so few places left for them, and tosses their future into complete uncertainty.

Why NYC Carriage Horses Should NOT Be Banned With Intro 943:

- ★ Hundreds of people (mainly immigrants) would be out of work and unable to provide for their families, as no other job in their equestrian field of expertise they choose to work in is being offered to them or income while they seek similar work.
- ★ 68 small business owners would lose their business as nothing is being offered for the value of their carriage medallion.
- ★ 200+ horses that rely on this work for their physical/mental stimulation and to cover the high cost of their care will lose their jobs, homes, and the people they have developed long term relationships with.
- ★ No financial assistance is being offered for the horses long term care or security for what will happen to them if they are placed in a new home that can no longer afford their care.
- ★ The horses would lose the numerous regulations governing their care & the 5 agencies that monitor

them.

★Millions of tourists and New Yorkers love patronizing horse carriage rides through Central Park and it should be a tradition preserved for future generations.

★The horses are well cared for, healthy, happy, living good lives and in a well regulated industry that can be even further improved by passing Intro 937, the horse welfare and job protection bill.

★Carriage horses remain the statistically safest mode of transportation in NYC, accidents remain rare, and carriage drivers recently took on new protocols for additional safety measures.

★There are no systemic issues in the carriage industry occurring repetitively and if we acted on emotion over logic to make policy for everything in our city, we would have no cars, bicycles, trees, subways, or dogs.

★The NYPD investigation into what startled the horse to cause the accident involving Romanch Mahajan is still ongoing while the carriage driver & horse involved are no longer in the industry.

★There are real estate interests eyeing the carriage stable properties that have financially fueled false and misleading propaganda against the industry.

★Central Park was designed to be seen from the back of a horse carriage, with horses animating the landscape and slowing down the pace for everyone to relax.

★Numerous equine vets and professionals who visit the stables and examine the horses agree they're in good health and speak highly of their routine & work.

★The horses are privately owned and if these privately owned, legally operating, small businesses can be taken, what's protecting another?

★Thousands of horses are sent to slaughter every year because it's extremely difficult to keep up with the rising cost of care for an unemployed horse and if any rescues or sanctuaries have room for a horse now, the spot should be reserved for one of those homeless horses.

★Over 150 years of historic and iconic NYC tradition would be lost forever.

★NYPD horses share a vet, farrier, and stable neighborhood with NYC carriage horses, have less regulations, work the street more often, and aren't being considered for a ban.

★The main ban-backers are animal rights activists with extremist views that don't result in the best choices for animals lives and don't represent the average person's views.

★When we forget our history of the bond humans share with horses by continuing to eliminate places for them to exist alongside us in our modern society, we detach from our ability to understand them in order to make the best decisions for their welfare, and ultimately take the first steps towards eliminating their species entirely.

★The horse carriage drivers are represented by the powerful Transport Workers Union who oppose a ban.

★Most New Yorkers and tourists are supportive of the industry continuing as numerous polls have shown.

★NYC Carriage horses are the heart and soul of our city; For many just the sight of a horse among us means so much and many children may never get to pet or feed a horse a carrot without them.

City Council Hearing-Health:

I have been an enthusiastic participant in the pleasure of Central Park for decades. Walker. Law abiding cyclist. Lover of nature and peace and quiet. I abhor the senseless disruption of the e bikes and micro transport. The horse drawn carriages are wonderful additions to the character of the park. The elimination of the carriages-even recognizing the occasional accident would be a travesty. The e bikes cause far more mayhem and human damage. To allow the unfortunate death on one young man to over balance the accumulated accidents and deaths and the disruption of the purpose of the park is a woeful miscalculation.

Developers have seeded the discontent for the purpose of acquiring the land where the stables are located. In my view the people who are facilitating the motorization of Central Park are urinating on the grave of Law & Olmstead. Disparaging the decades of pleasure and peace that myriad New Yorkers and visitors have experienced.

I respectfully urge the Council to retain the horse drawn carriages.

Jack Brown
Coalition Against Rogue Riding

From: [Jackie Kuhls](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 12:37:25 PM

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Greetings,

I strongly urge the City Council to pass Intro 943 also known as Romanch's Law. NYC lags behind other major cities that have ended this cruel practice. Our streets are daunting for people with the crowds, noise and fumes, it is no place for sensitive animals such as horses. Some carriage horses have been found to be older than represented by owners who've even put sick horses with cancer to work; it's a stain on all of us when pictures of collapsed horses circulate. The final straw was the tragic death of a tourist when a horse bolted. Pass this bill and send the animals to a sanctuary, help the carriage drivers crosswalk to new employment, and show the world that NYC is a humane metropolis.

Sincerely,

Jackie Kuhls

[REDACTED]

Bronx, NY 10471

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] IN FAVOR OF INTRO 943 ROMANCH'S LAW
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 2:11:41 PM

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Subject: ROMANCH'S LAW INTRO 943 MUST BE PASSED

My name is Jacqueline Barnett and since 2006 I have been involved in advocating for a ban on carriage horses. My advocacy began as I became aware of the downtrodden and dejected demeanor of the horses I would pass as I walked along Central Park on almost a daily basis. That year there was also an horrendous collision of a horse with a car in mid-town leading to further preoccupation on my part and resulting in a decision to join a group called NYC Coalition to Ban Carriage Horses.

In the ensuing years I went to dozens of protests, while the deaths of horses and vehicular accidents became more prevalent. I also became more educated about the ongoing neglect and abuse of these horses. And the resistance if the NYC City Council to take decisive action. This, in spite of the mounting evidence of animal abuse.

I personally saw the horses on the streets of NYC in below 15 degrees and above 90 degrees pulling tourists around the park despite promised reforms as a result of a NYC City Council hearing. And when during one attempt to engage in conversation with the driver, Christina Hanson, she responded with rude and offensive remarks and basically told me that I had no right to question the legality of her driving her horse in 95degree weather.

The film documentary "Blinders" which was made by Danny Moss (and I recommend all council members should watch) poignantly exposes the malicious cruelty that the horses live with on a daily basis. Some of these conditions include cell-like, tiny, filthy stalls that are their living quarters, fires which have taken place in these neglected stables, screeching noises, traffic jams as they are transported to and from their stables. Working 12 hour days, pulling tons of weight, blinders on their eyes, no time to graze or rest in a natural setting.

Physical neglect of aging and sick horses basically being worked to death.

This is not the romantic version of elegant 19th century New York. This is a nightmare which has escalated to the point that someone has now lost their life because of the carriage horse industry profiteers and their corrupt TWU100 enablers who care nothing about the safety of the humans or animals involved in this outdated, and deadly harmful industry.

And i am really tired of hearing about the deification of the poor drivers, making \$70,000 a year not counting tips. Times change and people will always need to adapt when their jobs become anarchistic. There are sufficient job opportunities and training programs to refit them into a more productive and meaning work situation. Yes they will lose their LIVELIHOODS NOT THEIR LIVES!! ROMANCH ON THE OTHER HAND LOST HIS LIFE!! And he will not be the last person to do so if this deadly industry does not come to a halt.

This fatality could have been avoided if the City Council had paid attention to the evidence presented in previous years and passed Ryder's Law last year when it was introduced by Robert Holden. And I want to mention that I was among dozens of New Yorkers who called and emailed both Lynn Schulman (Chair Health Committee) and Adrienne Adams (City Council Speaker) who never acknowledged my outreach and I believe actively blocked the hearing from taking place. Let the City Council not make the same mistake now.

At this point I wish to implore the city council members to vote in favor of Romanch's Law Intro 943 and finally bring to a close this very sad and shameful chapter of NYC history.

Thank you for reading my testimony.

Written Testimony in Support of Romanch's Law

To the Honorable Members of the New York City Council:

I respectfully urge you to vote YES on Romanch's Law and finally end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

This is not a vote about tradition. It is a vote about whether New York City will continue to use living animals for entertainment when we know there are more humane alternatives.

Horses are intelligent, sensitive prey animals. Their physical and behavioral needs evolved over thousands of years: to move freely across open spaces, graze throughout the day, socialize with other horses, and live in stable social groups. They were never meant to spend hours pulling heavy carriages through one of the busiest cities in the world, surrounded by traffic, pavement, construction, horns, sirens, exhaust fumes, extreme temperatures, and the constant unpredictability of an urban environment.

Even if every carriage owner genuinely cares about his or her horses, no amount of good husbandry can change the reality that New York City itself is an unnatural workplace for these animals. The question before the Council is not whether some horses can endure these conditions—it is whether they should be expected to.

One of the greatest concerns is the lack of meaningful transparency. Members of the public have no practical way to independently evaluate the day-to-day welfare of these horses. There is no publicly accessible system that provides meaningful insight into each horse's veterinary care, long-term health, welfare assessments, or retirement outcomes. Instead, the public is largely asked to trust that the horses are receiving appropriate care without the level of independent oversight and transparency that New Yorkers increasingly expect when animal welfare is at stake. Public confidence should never depend solely on assurances that everything is fine. Transparency is the foundation of public trust.

Unfortunately, most New Yorkers only become aware of carriage horse welfare when something goes terribly wrong—a horse collapses, a carriage overturns, or a serious injury or death makes headlines. These highly publicized incidents remind us that asking horses to navigate congested city streets is not without risk to the animals, their drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and tourists alike.

The tragic death of Romanch Mahajan has underscored that this issue extends beyond animal welfare. When horses become frightened or unpredictable in a dense urban environment, the consequences can be devastating. His family's unimaginable loss should compel us to ask whether this industry can truly be justified in today's New York.

New York City would not be acting alone. Around the world, major cities have recognized that horse-drawn carriage tourism no longer reflects modern standards of animal welfare or public safety. Cities including **Philadelphia, Chicago, London, Paris, Brussels, Barcelona, Beijing,**

and Mumbai have ended or significantly restricted horse-drawn carriage operations in their urban centers, with some replacing them with humane electric alternatives. These cities have demonstrated that history, tourism, and economic vitality can be preserved without requiring horses to work in congested city streets.

New York has long been a global leader in innovation, compassion, and progressive public policy. It should not be among the last major cities to embrace this change—it should be among those leading it.

Supporting Romanch's Law is not a criticism of every carriage driver. Many undoubtedly care deeply for their horses and have devoted years to their care. I also appreciate that this legislation recognizes the importance of protecting workers by providing a pathway for carriage drivers to transition to new employment while ensuring the horses are humanely retired. This is a thoughtful approach that balances compassion for both people and animals.

As a society, we constantly reevaluate long-standing practices through the lens of science, ethics, safety, and compassion. Many traditions that were once accepted have been abandoned because we came to understand that better and more humane alternatives existed.

This is one of those moments.

New York City has an opportunity to demonstrate that preserving history does not require preserving practices that no longer reflect our values. We can honor our past while choosing a more humane future.

History will judge us not by how long we preserved an outdated tradition, but by whether we had the courage to end unnecessary suffering when we had the opportunity to do so.

I therefore respectfully ask the New York City Council to stand on the side of compassion, transparency, public safety, and humane progress by voting **YES** on Romanch's Law.

Jacqueline Finnegan

I am giving written testimony to express my outrage that e-bikes and e-scooters that have caused hundreds of injuries have not been banned from our parks. Horse drawn carriages go 3 miles per hour compared to e-bikes which go up to 30 miles per hour and are dangerous and have injured hundreds! Why is there no outcry about these high speed vehicles going in all directions at high speeds all over our parks causing mayhem and fear for older adults and people with disabilities?

My name is Jamie Fletcher, and I support Intro 943 (Romanch's Law). I urge New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to sanctuaries, and help drivers transition responsibly to stable employment. Admittedly, I have always been somewhat uneasy around horses because of their size, and that concern has only grown as I walk through Central Park. I also live in New York City, and I am not sure why the preferences of a relatively small group of tourists seem to be taking priority over the people who live here. My partner, who is much more involved in animal welfare than I am, shared clips from Wednesday's hearing with me. It became clear that many New Yorkers no longer believe horse-drawn carriages belong in the city. The carriage industry frequently describes itself as "iconic," but iconic to whom at this point? The fact that something was once a tradition does not, by itself, justify continuing it indefinitely.

I was also deeply disappointed by some of the conduct displayed during the hearing. Mocking moments of silence and telling someone to "put them back in Bellevue where they belong" was offensive, disrespectful, and entirely inappropriate for a public hearing. Regardless of where someone stands on this legislation, that kind of behavior has no place in a public hearing and does little to inspire confidence in the industry's position. I also find it troubling that carriage drivers who do not own horses, medallions, or carriage businesses do not appear to have their own representation in this discussion. Their interests may not be the same as those of medallion owners or business owners, yet those perspectives are often presented as though they are one and the same. If the Council is considering the future of this industry, it should ensure that non-owning workers have an opportunity to speak independently from those who own the businesses.

Finally, industries change. Jobs change. People are laid off, new technology replaces older ways of doing things, and workers adapt. While difficult, they are part of how the economy evolves. What surprised me during the hearing was not that people were worried about their jobs. It was the expectation that taxpayers should be funding reforms designed to preserve an industry that many New Yorkers no longer want. Many of the reforms proposed by the industry are not reforms for horses. They are regulatory changes that would require additional city oversight, enforcement, and public funding. Those costs would ultimately be borne by New York City taxpayers, not by the tourists who take carriage rides. If the people paying for those efforts increasingly believe horse-drawn carriages no longer belong in the city, I believe that perspective deserves significant weight.

From: Jane Gussin [REDACTED]
Subject: My testimony in favor of the horse carriage industry
Date: Jul 15, 2026 at 9:11:27 AM
To: J Gussin [REDACTED]

Dear City Council,

The following is a radio interview on 77 WABC, that I videotaped, given by my friend, Nick Bacon at a rally. He was an experienced horse enthusiast, a horse trail guide, and other related professions. He advocated for keeping the horse carriage profession active in NYC.

He makes all the points accurately, expanding on the history and relationships between the horses and their drivers, and everyday people who find joy in their interactions with the horse and carriages.

I agree with his points, and include them as part of my testimony in favor of the horse carriages.

I've also been to the stables and seen the great care that is given to the carriage horses. Not only is the good treatment mandated but it is natural, that is the beautiful bond between the human driver caregivers and the horses. There is always room for improvement and a way to continue this tradition and trade.

Interview:

Nick Bacon: "I'm here today because the horses have been in the park for 150 years and I'd like to see them there for another 150 at least. I've been around horses riding them for over 30 years.

When I moved to New York I was amazed to discover that we have horses in Central Park, in those days Claremont Stables was open and I learned then that the whole history of the park was based on horses when Vaux and Olmsted laid out Central Park. They had to fight to have the carriage drives and the bridal path put in because at the time that was the means of everyday transportation."

Question - Have you been to the stables? All this talk about abuse of the

animals?

Nick: " I have been to the Stables, as a horse person I was very concerned when I heard rumors of ill treatment so I did that, which the Mayor (de Blasio) hasn't bothered to do, I actually visited the stables and I was amazed to find they're the most pampered horses I've ever come across they're certainly the most heavily regulated. They're regulated by five City agencies including the NYPD and the Department of Health. Every horse stall has got the horse's details with its medical history there.

The horses, they have to have two medical examinations a year they actually get four because they have to have an examination by a veterinarian before they go off on their 5 weeks vacation and again when they come back to make sure they're fit to travel and fit to come back to work.

And I know horse body language and I walk along the hack line and I see a collection of very well-kept very contented horses and you can see the way they act with people. We can't give them human feelings they don't have them, but they revel in the human contact.

You know you see the people give them carrots which the drivers give to feed the horses. And I know when I've gone around the stalls the horses will actually come out to say hello as you walk past the stalls, they head over and pet them behind the ears that's always the way you know that these horses they love they're very well kept they're almost treated as members of the family.

And from a purely practical point of view if you got an animal weighing 2,000 pounds I'm not going to ill treat it cause they can be just as nasty. And an animal like that is not going to do anything he doesn't want to do.

And it's what they do, they've been, they're domesticated animals they've been bred for this job for thousands of years and as far as I'm concerned I see those animals up there, they're fulfilling their destiny in one of the finest bits of urban park land in the world."

Question: So you don't think it's a a piece of history that's archaic, the

treatment you're saying isn't, but everything about it is?

Nick:" No I think we need to hold on to things from the past, if we if we lose the past we've got no way to see into the future. You know part of the problems we have now is that we don't learn from history and we need to keep this history here.

I see the way kids react when they see a horse closer. I look at a wide eyed wonder on a kid's face when they see this huge 2000 lb. animal and a child can just go and pet it and the horse will wicker in his ear, it's beautiful to see, you know men and horses have been in partnership for thousands of years and the horses were here a lot longer, before the motor cars and it's a link with our past that I think we lose, it'll be a huge gap. Central Park will not be the same without the horses as well you got 3 to 400 people whose livelihood will be lost and some of these people have been doing this for two three generations. It's not just a job for them it's a way of life and they love what they do, it's what their fathers and grandfathers did before, and people love to see them. thank you"

Sincerely,

Jane Gussin



**Nick Bacon Interview at the Horse
Carriage Driver Rally, City Hall**
[youtu.be](#)



Why I Believe Horse Carriages Should Be Banned in New York City

I believe New York City should end the use of horse-drawn carriages. While many people see them as a fun tourist attraction, I think the horses pay the price. The city is loud, crowded, and full of traffic, construction, and constant noise, which can be very stressful for animals. Even with safety rules in place, accidents can still happen, putting the horses, passengers, and pedestrians at risk. Today there are great alternatives, like electric vintage-style carriages, that could give visitors a similar experience without using live animals. Horses deserve to live in environments where they can behave naturally instead of spending long hours working on busy city streets. New York can honor its history while choosing a more humane and modern approach. I believe replacing horse-drawn carriages would be a positive change for both the city and the animals.

Sincerely,
Jane Kientzy

It is beyond time to ban horse drawn carriages from Central Park. Time and time again, the majority of New Yorkers have said that they want to see this practice come to an end. The livelihood of the carriage drivers can continue with electric carriages – prototypes for these are available and can be put in use immediately; it might not seem as “romantic” but this is a minor concern given the abuse of the horses endure. And most tourists won’t care. Any reasonable person knows the practice is anachronistic and has no place in contemporary society.

From: [NYC EVSA](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#); [NYCC Correspondence Unit](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Horse carriage testimony -"errors"-couldnt load
Date: Sunday, July 19, 2026 10:02:32 AM

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To City Council Health Committee regarding Wed July 15 hearomg on Horse Carriage Ban.

I am 100% against horse carriage ban. I was unable to load this testimony Wed, Thur, Fri. It would not work "error messages" every time Many complaints from others too. I want to be assured this is counted. Please email me back. Thank you

How dare the 25 Council Members who have signed onto and prioritized this Bill over banning E-Bikes from Central Park and all NYC parks! E bikes have been in Central Park for 3 years and there has been one death that hasn't been addressed by city council and hundreds upon hundreds of serious crashes in which e-bikes have injured pedestrians, joggers, cyclists and killed dogs. There is a woman in a coma right now who was hit by an e bike last week in Central Park. I, personally, get a Central Park e-vehicle crash notifications once or twice per week, and those notifications/photos are a small portion of what is happening out there.

Most NYC City Council members continue their complete disregard of the e-vehicle horrors that occur daily in the park and have for THREE years, since the e- vehicle" pilot" program began in 2023.

In the past three years, HUNDREDS upon HUNDREDS of people have been seriously maimed by e-vehicles in Central Park with major life altering injuries. This is evident by photo and video proof and actual ER stats, NOT the very inaccurate NYPD reporting. NYPD are rarely on the scene prior to ambulance taking victim away. And, even when NYPD is on scene, they often don't report because "the rider fled" or they "didn't personally witness accident, or they say, 'it isn't a crime.'" There are accidents almost DAILY

Permitting heavy, fast E- vehicles in our park keeps people, especially older New Yorkers and those with disabilities from going to the park at all. Our parks are for recreation and relaxation, NOT transportation. The park is our only oasis left to escape these motorized, heavy and dangerous vehicles!

Just last week, there were two very serious crashes in Central Park that WE know of, caused by e-vehicles. One was a female jogger hit and knocked unconscious with a serious head injury on West Drive at 64th who is currently IN A COMA! The other was on East Drive at 72nd in which a female pedestrian was hit and had a serious head injury. Both were written up in the press (West Side Rag and Upper East Site) only because the press got a 'real- time' heads up about these accidents. Most of these never make the press.

E-Pedicabs are 100% illegal in NYC, yet they are all over Central Park creating havoc and crashes regularly, while ripping off tourists financially. The NYC City Council is silent on this fact too.

This is total hypocrisy around safety in the park and denial about the e-vehicle crisis that is occurring

in the park every day

Janet Schroeder



NY NY 10023

I live in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, and moved back to New York City three years ago after time spent on the West Coast. Coming home, I expected the city to have changed in a lot of ways — but one thing that hadn't changed, and disappointed me deeply, was seeing horse-drawn carriages still out on the streets.

Years away gave me some distance and perspective, and coming back made it obvious just how out of place these animals are in this environment. Miserable, exhausted horses forced to navigate honking traffic, exhaust, and crowds isn't a quaint New York tradition — it's a practice the city should have left behind long ago.

At this point, this isn't a debate that needs more study or more compromise. Horses have suffered and died in this industry for years, and now a person has died as well. It is beyond time to prohibit horse-drawn carriages in this city.

I urge the Council to pass Romanch's Law (Intro 943).

Respectfully,

Janine Malina

Williamsburg, Brooklyn

Good morning, Chair and members of the Committee.

My name is Jason Homa, and I am here today in support of Intro. 943.

I don't oppose horse-drawn carriages because I dislike New York traditions. I oppose them because tradition, by itself, is not a good enough reason to continue using animals for our benefit when we have the ability to choose differently.

Around the world, there are still practices defended because "that's the way we've always done it"—bullfighting in Spain, commercial seal hunting, and the killing of sharks for their fins. But history and tradition alone do not automatically make something right.

When we know better, we do better.

There was a time when elephants performing in circuses was considered wholesome family entertainment. Today, many people see it very differently. Our values changed—not because we stopped loving tradition, but because we reconsidered what was fair to the animals.

I understand the concerns of the carriage drivers because I've lived through the loss of a career myself. I was a commercial photographer until technology, the internet, and a changing marketplace transformed my profession. It wasn't fair, but I couldn't ask the world to stop changing. I had to reinvent myself. I'm not asking these workers to do anything I wasn't willing to do myself.

The horses don't have a voice in this debate. We do.

If we could ask them whether they'd rather spend their days pulling carriages through busy Manhattan streets or living peacefully in open fields, I think we all know the answer.

They can't tell us they're tired. They can't tell us they'd rather be somewhere else. That's why the responsibility falls to us.

We have the power to choose compassion over tradition.

Because when our values evolve, we have a responsibility to change our relationship with those who cannot advocate for themselves.

I would love to see these horses one day enjoying a peaceful life, perhaps even grazing in places like Sheep Meadow in Central Park, instead of spending their lives pulling carriages through city streets.

I ask you to support Intro. 943.

Thank you for your time.

Testimony for the Committee on Health hearing July 15, 2026

Please Ban Horse Carriages in NYC Now!

For years horses have suffered and died on the city streets for the entertainment of tourists. People also have been put at risk when horses were spooked and bolted. Nothing was done, and now Romanch Mahajan, just 18 years old, has lost his life. It is long past time to put an end to this industry.

The horses should be retired to sanctuaries. If we feel a need for a similar attraction, perhaps we can use electric carriages, surrey vehicles, or replicas of the first electric horseless carriages from the late 1800's.

Surely, other work can be found for the carriage drivers and everyone else employed in the carriage industry in the city. Those people need a smooth transition, without loss of income, to other employment.

I sincerely hope that we don't have to wait for another person to die before we put the ban in place.

Sincerely,

Jean Bublely

[REDACTED]

Brooklyn, NY 11217

[REDACTED]

JEAN MARIE OFFENBACHER
New York NY 10011

The attempt to ban horse drawn carriages is fueled by developer greed. The stables used by carriage drivers are grandfathered and developers want access that now-valuable real estate.

I have lived with horses for as long as I have memory and learned to ride horses as a toddler.

I competed in 3-Day Eventing, a sport that involves jumping complex jumps over rough terrain. On occasion outsiders would show up to protest the sport. They were as misinformed about horses as the people claiming carriage drivers are abusive. My sport and carriage driving require trust and devotion between the human and the horse. The sport would have been impossibly dangerous if the horse was not engaged and physically prepared. People do not devote themselves to a costly or low paid equestrian career if they do not have a passion for horses.

If someone is concerned about the welfare of horses, they might examine the racing industry. There is no well financed lobby to ban racing because profits and ego accrue to wealthy owners (some of whom are probably funding the carriage ban); instead politicians and organizations lobbied by real estate developers attack low income carriage horse owners.

Concerns about public safety, should address the regulation of e-bikes and cars. Horse drawn carriages have caused one unfortunate tourist death in one unfortunate scenario. I ride a bike and am regularly menaced by bikes and cars, but have never been frightened by a horse. How many deaths, injuries and crimes have been committed by cars, pedicabs and e-bikes.

Concerns about animal safety and pollution might be better served by focusing on the regulation and registration of dogs. How many people and animals are menaced by dogs every day? How many dogs suffer daily at the hands of clueless new dog owners? Who has not suffered the stench of dog urine or mourned the death of a tree or plant by dog?

Unless someone despises workers and immigrants, they should support the rights of hard working horse drawn carriage drivers and their families.

Developer greed is as old as horses in the city, but the sound and presence of horses is far more charming.

Thank you for your time and attention.



Jean Marie Offenbacher

From: [jeanne reed](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] history
Date: Monday, July 6, 2026 1:40:10 PM

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hello

My concerns for the carriage horses in Manhattan began when Cleveland Amory, NYC reporter, published a piece and a photo of a horse that dropped dead in the middle of 58th street. I think his name was Whitey.

After that, and for the last forty years, I have protested AT CITY HALL, in letters to the papers, on the street, and in any way I've been able to. These days on X and threads.com. (Try to contact Tony Avila, who was running for local office. He ran on this horse abuse platform. From Queens, I believe.)

The "industry," complete with union, is protecting their income any way they can. The living things they work to death sometimes mean nothing.

Some years ago, we fought so that carriages would have "license plates," clearly visible numbers by which a citizen could identify a lawbreaker and report. Instead of hanging these from the traces (within which horses work), they painted numbers on the backs of the drivers' seats. I watched as one driver CAREFULLY hid the number with his coat....

We also fought for regular medical care for the animals. Yet, last year, two women (Asian, I think) were in a carriage. The horse went crazy and ran headlong into a tree. I think he was trying to stop the awful pain of an abscessed tooth... so much for medical care.

We also fought to keep the horses in and along Central Park. No more rides down 42nd Street, etc. This too became a law. Of course, laws only work if enforced. I don't know if this law is still in effect or if it is being obeyed.

We also fought that no carriages be driven when the temperature is 90 degrees or over. I have no idea if any of the drivers break this law too.

And now the death of a tourist. The only surprise here is that it took this long....

What the heck is this "winding down" the carriage horse industry in NYC?

JUST STOP IT. Thirty days notice. No need to replace with some other "charming" rides.

There are FOREIGNERS on line posting to fellow tourists NOT to take carriage rides in Manhattan. Ant that was BEFORE the kid died.

Screw the union. Again: screw the union. If the drivers (many of whom used to be Irish immigrants, brogue and all, and maybe still are) need other jobs, let them work. *At something else.*

I am eighty years old. Somebody please read this above testimony *in entirety* to the assembled people and into the record.

Thank you.

Jeannie Reed

[REDACTED],

NY NY 10016

[REDACTED]

It's heartbreaking to see horses forced to work in freezing weather during the winter and in unbearable heat during the summer—even when temperatures soar over 100°F. These poor animals endure long hours, often without shade while standing in Central Park. It's devastating that so many people fail to see them as slaves to a system they never chose. They deserve freedom, just like every living being.

How could the tragic collapse of Ryder, the horse who was cruelly whipped by his owner while lying helpless on the ground, not awaken compassion in people? It's impossible to understand how anyone could believe these horses are living a “good life.” The positive reviews romanticizing carriage rides ignore the reality of their suffering. Riders may seem kind to the horses in front of you, but that's just a performance—behind the scenes, it's a very different story.

These horses are nothing more than tools for profit, serving a system that treats them as commodities rather than sentient beings. As long as people continue to pay for these rides, their suffering will persist. This is abuse, plain and simple, and it's time to recognize that these beautiful animals are not okay.

Testimony to the New York City Council Health Committee

Chair and Members of the Health Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the proposal to ban horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City.

My name is Dr. Jena Questen. I have practiced veterinary medicine for more than 25 years, have owned and worked with horses for over 40 years, and currently operate an equine sanctuary dedicated to the welfare and rehabilitation of horses. My entire professional life has been devoted to improving the lives of animals while also recognizing the profound benefits that healthy human-animal relationships bring to society.

I respectfully urge the Council to reject an outright ban on carriage horses. Instead, I encourage you to pursue meaningful reforms that improve equine welfare while preserving the tremendous value these horses provide to both people and the animals themselves.

The Health Committee's mission is, appropriately, centered on human health. We often think of health in terms of hospitals, medicine, and disease prevention. But health also includes mental well-being, emotional connection, and opportunities to experience the natural world.

Millions of people live in cities where meaningful contact with animals is increasingly rare. For countless children visiting New York City, the carriage horses may be the closest they have ever stood beside a horse. Watching a horse breathe, hearing the rhythm of its footsteps, feeling its warm muzzle, or simply seeing the kindness in its eyes creates a connection to nature that no photograph or smartphone screen can replace.

These moments matter.

They inspire compassion, curiosity, and respect for living creatures. They remind us that our cities are not separate from nature but can coexist with it. Removing these horses removes one more opportunity for people—especially children—to experience that connection firsthand.

Could the horses be treated better?

Absolutely.

Every industry involving animals can and should strive for continual improvement.

Should there be stronger oversight?

Yes.

Should there be regular inspections of the stables by independent experts to ensure excellent nutrition, housing, veterinary care, hoof care, and overall welfare?

Absolutely.

Should every carriage horse demonstrate, through standardized behavioral evaluations, that it possesses the temperament and training necessary to work calmly and confidently in an urban environment?

Yes.

Should there be meaningful standards governing workload, retirement, and ongoing welfare?

Again, yes.

These are reforms that genuinely improve the lives of horses.

An outright ban does not.

Throughout my career I have seen firsthand that eliminating an industry involving animals does not necessarily eliminate animal suffering. It often shifts it somewhere less visible and less regulated.

Many carriage horses today are not purpose-bred for this work. Some come from Amish communities or other working environments where they have spent years serving people. Carriage work can provide these horses with an additional productive chapter in their lives before retirement. If that opportunity disappears, many horses may have fewer placement options. That reality deserves careful consideration when evaluating the long-term welfare consequences of a ban.

My perspective has also been shaped by observing the effects following the end of domestic horse slaughter in the United States. While intended to improve welfare, many horses instead endured lengthy transportation to slaughter facilities in Canada or Mexico. Those journeys often involved extended periods of transport and additional stress before slaughter. The lesson is not that reform is impossible, but that well-intentioned policies can sometimes produce unintended consequences if the broader system is not considered.

There is another inconsistency that deserves attention.

If the concern is that horses cannot safely or humanely exist in New York City's environment, then that same concern should logically apply to mounted police horses that work in many of the same streets, crowds, and traffic conditions.

If we believe horses are capable of safely working in urban environments with proper selection, training, veterinary oversight, and management—as demonstrated by mounted police units—then the conversation should focus on ensuring carriage horses receive those same high standards rather than eliminating the profession altogether.

No activity involving people or animals is entirely free of risk. Accidents occur with automobiles, bicycles, construction equipment, horseback riding, and countless other aspects of daily life. When tragedies occur, our responsibility is not automatically to

prohibit the activity but to learn from the event, improve standards, strengthen oversight, and reduce future risk.

That philosophy has guided advances in medicine, transportation, aviation, and animal care for decades.

It should guide us here as well.

Rather than banning carriage horses, I encourage the Council to consider establishing an independent governing body, similar in concept to the oversight models used in other equine industries. Such an organization could establish evidence-based welfare standards, conduct routine unannounced inspections, certify horses as suitable for urban work through behavioral and veterinary evaluations, monitor retirement outcomes, investigate complaints, and ensure accountability through meaningful enforcement.

This approach would directly improve the lives of horses instead of simply eliminating their role.

As a veterinarian, I have learned that the best solutions are rarely the simplest ones. They require balancing welfare, science, practical realities, and compassion.

I believe New York City has an opportunity to become a national model for humane carriage horse welfare—not by banning these animals, but by demonstrating what exemplary care, transparency, and accountability can look like.

Please do not remove this unique connection between people and horses.

Improve it.

Protect it.

Strengthen it.

The spark of wonder in a child's eyes when standing beside a horse for the very first time is something increasingly rare in our modern world. It is worth preserving, while ensuring the horses themselves receive the highest standard of care possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Jenna Wharton](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 8:46:51 PM

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Good evening,

I am a constituent living in 10473 and I am urging New York City council to swiftly pass Intro 943 to end the horse carriage industry in New York City and to send these horse to loving sanctuaries to live the rest of their lives in peace.

New York City is a leader across the US and the world, yet many cities in the US have already ended horse carriage rides. New York City must end this archaic practice now.

Kindly,
Jenna Wharton

Testimony in Support of Intro 943 (Ryder's Law)

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

My name is Jennifer Villarosa, and I am a lifelong New Yorker who loves Central Park. It has always been one of the city's greatest treasures—a place to walk, recharge, and appreciate nature in the middle of an incredibly busy city. Unfortunately, over the years, one part of the park experience has become increasingly difficult for me: seeing the carriage horses.

Every time I pass the areas where the horses line up, I see animals that often look tired, confined, and out of place amid traffic, noise, heat, and crowds. Whether or not every horse is treated the same, the reality is that these animals spend their working lives in an environment that was never designed for them. Instead of enjoying one of my favorite places in New York, I now avoid those sections of Central Park because it breaks my heart to see them waiting for their next ride.

I know many people view the carriage industry as a tradition, but our city's traditions should evolve when we recognize that we can do better. Protecting animals and preserving jobs are not mutually exclusive goals. New York has repeatedly shown that it can modernize while honoring its history.

I urge the Council to pass Ryder's Law (Intro 943). Central Park should be remembered for its beauty, not for the sadness many New Yorkers feel when they see exhausted horses working in conditions that no longer reflect our city's values.

Thank you for your time and for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Villarosa

7/1726

Good Afternoon,

I, Jennifer, urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry that has been so detrimental to these beautiful horses that deserve to live long, happy, lives in a sanctuary where they'll be properly cared for. We also ask to help drivers transition to new employment.

Thank you.

From: [j.n](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ryders Law
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 1:43:55 PM

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[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to endorse the proposal to ban the carriage horse industry from NYC. The carriage drivers union is comparing the unfortunate human fatalities in helicopter & pedi cab deaths to the horse carriage incidents. Saying more safety provisions should be in place. Of course totally ignoring the fact that horses are alive, breathing beings/animals subjected to all the uncertainty that comes with being made to work in the streets of NYC. It is time to finally end the practice of the horse drawn carriage. Please pass Ryders Law!

Thank you, Jerene Nitka

Written Testimony Regarding the Future of New York City's Horse-Drawn Carriage Industry

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I respectfully submit this written testimony regarding proposals to eliminate New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry. While I share the goal of ensuring the highest standards of animal welfare and public safety, I believe the most responsible course is not to abolish this historic industry, but to reform and modernize it.

A practical and balanced solution would be to limit horse-drawn carriage operations exclusively to Central Park, removing horses entirely from Midtown traffic. This change would significantly reduce their exposure to congested streets, vehicle emissions, excessive noise, and other urban stressors while providing a safer and more appropriate operating environment. Relocating the stables from Hell's Kitchen to a suitable site within or adjacent to Central Park, potentially by redeveloping or adapting historic stable areas, would further reduce unnecessary travel through city streets and improve both animal care and operational efficiency.

This approach would also enhance public safety. Restricting carriage operations to a controlled park environment would reduce interactions between horses, automobiles, cyclists, and pedestrians on busy city streets, lowering the risk of accidents while allowing for clearer oversight and enforcement of safety and welfare standards.

New York City's horse-drawn carriages are more than a tourist attraction; they are part of the city's cultural identity and living history. For generations, they have offered residents and visitors a distinctive way to experience Central Park and have become an iconic image recognized around the world. Many cities and historic districts continue to operate horse-drawn carriage services successfully under carefully regulated conditions, demonstrating that preservation and animal welfare can coexist when thoughtful safeguards are in place.

The industry also supports numerous working families, including carriage drivers, stable employees, farriers, veterinarians, feed suppliers, and other small businesses. Rather than eliminating these livelihoods, the City should invest in a transition that strengthens them. A park-centered model could create opportunities for expanded guided historical tours, educational programs about the park's history, partnerships with nearby museums and cultural institutions, and complementary businesses such as carriage-themed cafés, gift shops, and visitor experiences that enhance tourism while preserving jobs.

New York has long demonstrated that progress does not require abandoning its history. Instead of choosing between preserving tradition and protecting animal welfare, the City can accomplish both through thoughtful reform. I respectfully urge the Council to pursue policies that modernize and strengthen this industry by limiting operations to Central Park, relocating stables to a more appropriate location, and implementing the highest standards of care, safety, and oversight. Such an approach would protect horses, preserve jobs, support tourism, and maintain one of New York City's most enduring traditions for future generations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

My name is Jerry Trapani and I was a farrier for almost 60 years. Besides that I have owned and worked with horses my whole life. Even though I was born in Manhattan, raised in Brooklyn and Queens horses were always a part of my life thankfully. I worked for the NYPD mounted unit as well as private clients and the US Park Police. I have known many of the carriage owners and drivers for many years. As an equine professional myself, if saw any abuse or thought the practice of driving a carriage was in way cruel, I would be the first one to report it.

The tragic death of the young man is heartbreaking. The driver made a tragic mistake leaving his horse unattended, but did the family give him their phone and ask for the photo? Knowing horses the way I do, the way the bolted so fast begs the question What spooked him so badly? I do hope there will be a full and impartial investigation. It also seems odd that all the cameras were already focused on the horse at the moment it ran as if it was planned. In the case of Deniz fatally ingesting a highly toxic plant that should never have been planted in a public park. Japanese Yew is also toxic to dogs and humans. Imagine the outrage if a toddler would have done that. The conservancy never should have planted that in the park.

Many more people are injured by speeding bikes and pedicabs than the horses. Where are the ban proposal or stricter regulations for them? The carriages are strictly regulated and are a slow-moving vehicle. They have repeatedly asked for hitching posts at their station but have been denied. They have also asked that the e bikes and pedicabs pass the horses slowly and cautiously but that is also ignored and never ticketed. The total ban is unwarranted and the bill with stricter enforcement of the existing regulations and a safer environment in the park would be better.

The propaganda that the stables are inadequate or inhumane is unwarranted also. They have plenty of room to lie down, have proper bedding, ventilation, feed, water and 24/7 care. Many privately owned horses don't have those amenities. The bottom line is that the land on which the stables stand is more valuable to real estate developers who wish to build another high rise there.

The drivers, grooms, farriers, veterinarians, farmers who supply the hay, grain and remove the manure don't want another job in the hospitality industry. They love their jobs, support their families and many are hard working immigrants.

Respectfully Jerry Trapani

From: [NEZARION BRAXTON](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony In Strong Support Of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 2:54:01 PM

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Subject: Written Testimony in Strong Support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law) – Jerry Walton

Good Afternoon Chairperson and members of the Committee on Health. My name is Jerry Walton and I am a resident of Washington Heights.

I have said this probably ten thousand times already, and I will keep saying it until someone actually listens: the horse-drawn carriages have got to go. This is outright animal cruelty and as a New Yorker I'm not gonna stand for it anymore.

While the carriage operators and the Transport Workers Union claim this legislation will devastate livelihoods, we must look at the facts of the bill. Intro 943 explicitly includes a workforce transition program to guide drivers into safe, stable union jobs. The union's opposition is clearly not about a lack of worker options; it's about maintaining a highly dangerous status quo for profit and that right there is definitely NOT okay. My absolute priority here today is the safety and well being of the horses who are constantly subjected to brutal labor on asphalt with no choice and no voice. Livelihoods can be transitioned, but a horse's life cannot be replaced.

These animals are out there doing brutal, hard labor on hot concrete and asphalt in all kinds of weather and they're not even getting a paycheck, the carriage drivers are getting paid obviously but the horses aren't, instead They're just treated like disposable machines for profit and that right there is a huge problem as well, they have absolutely no business being on hot, congested city streets.

Since 1982, thirty horses have died in this city, and the danger has escalated drastically. We have lost Aisha in Central Park, then came Ryder (the horse that collapsed on the corner of Ninth Avenue and West 45th Street back in 2022), and just last month, Deniz. Worse yet, this chaos has now claimed a human life—18-year-old tourist Romanch Mahajan, who was tragically killed when a carriage flipped over. These beautiful animals, and now our city's visitors, are dying as a direct result of cruelty, greed, neglect, and an environment that was never meant for horses. I'm sick and tired of this.

It is seriously time to kill this practice entirely. We need to ban this industry and let these horses finally be among their own kind in a pasture where they belong.

I strongly urge this committee to value animal life, let the horses retire and kill this nightmare for good because really ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!!!!!!

Thank you.

Jerry Walton, Washington Heights Manhattan

From: [New York City Council](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: Wed, Jul 15 2026 @ 10:00 AM - Committee on Health
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 12:53:14 PM

Attendee will be: Submitting written testimony

[REDACTED]

Attendee name (Zoom name): Jessica Forgue

[REDACTED]

Hearing: Wed, Jul 15 2026 @ 10:00 AM - Committee on Health

Subject of testimony: I am writing to urge the City of New York to ban horse-drawn carriage rides. This practice is outdated and causes unnecessary harm to animals who deserve far better treatment. Horses are intelligent, sensitive, and gentle beings. They are capable of forming strong bonds, experiencing stress, and responding emotionally to their environments. Forcing them to work long hours in crowded, noisy city streets surrounded by traffic, pollution, and unpredictable conditions is not humane—it is animal cruelty. New York City is not a suitable environment for horses. The constant exposure to honking cars, extreme weather, hard pavement, and confined stabling conditions puts their physical and mental well-being at risk. Incidents involving carriage horses collapsing or becoming injured in traffic are not rare, and they highlight the inherent dangers of this industry. Beyond safety concerns, there is an ethical issue. In a modern city that values progress and compassion, we should not rely on animals for entertainment at the expense of their welfare. There are many alternative, humane ways to provide visitors with memorable experiences that do not involve exploiting animals. Banning horse-drawn carriage rides would be a meaningful step toward aligning New York City with contemporary standards of animal welfare. It would show a commitment to compassion, responsibility, and respect for living beings who cannot advocate for themselves. I strongly urge you to take action and end this practice.

Organization: Self

Organization if "Other":

If a testimony was uploaded, it will be in the attachments.

Written Testimony in Support of Introduction 943 (Romanch's Law)

Submitted to: New York City Council, Committee on Health **Hearing Date:** Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Submitted by: Marta Teegen, Brooklyn, NY **Contact:** [REDACTED]

Chair Schulman, Speaker Menin, and members of the Committee on Health:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Marta [Last Name]. I am a Brooklyn resident and I write in strong support of Introduction 943, Romanch's Law, which would end the issuance of new horse-drawn cab licenses immediately and wind down the industry by June 1, 2028.

I come to this issue from two places. I grew up on a farm, in a family that has farmed for generations, so I am not squeamish about working animals and I am not sentimental about them either. I also spend a great deal of my time in New York City parks. I have been a volunteer gardener at Fort Greene Park for six seasons, I am a Master Gardener and a Citizen Pruner trained by Trees New York, and this fall I begin a fellowship at NYU's Schack Institute focused on green infrastructure in cities. I care about who our parks are for, how they work, and whether they are safe.

Those two backgrounds lead me to the same conclusion. This industry should end.

The horses are not doing farm work. They are doing something we would not ask of a farm animal.

People who defend this trade often say that horses are working animals and always have been. That is true, and it is beside the point. A draft horse on a farm works on soft ground, on a variable schedule, in a herd, with turnout and long stretches of rest. A carriage horse in Manhattan works on asphalt and concrete, nine hours a day, up to seven days a week, in traffic, in heat and cold, and is then stabled in a multi-story building with no pasture and no turnout. Nothing in generations of my family's experience with working animals resembles that arrangement. Hard surfaces are hard on legs and joints. Constant noise and unpredictable stimulus are hard on an animal that is built to startle and flee. This is not tradition. It is a different thing wearing tradition's clothes.

The public safety case is now finished being argued.

A horse in traffic is a prey animal with a two-thousand-pound body and a nervous system we cannot regulate. Every incident in this industry follows the same shape: something startles a horse, the horse bolts, and a person and a vehicle are attached to it. Drivers cannot train that reflex out of an animal, and no amount of goodwill or good stablekeeping changes it.

Romanch Mahajan was eighteen years old. He came here as a visitor, and he died in Central Park. In May, a spooked horse struck another carriage on Seventh Avenue and a driver was hospitalized. The Central Park Conservancy, an organization that stayed neutral on this question for years and does not take positions lightly, has now called for a ban. When the institution that stewards the park says the park is not safe with this activity in it, the Council should take that seriously.

The question in front of this committee is not whether another serious injury or death will happen. It is whether the Council acts before it does.

The park has to work for the people who use it.

Central Park receives more than forty million visits a year. It is the closest thing many New Yorkers have to a backyard, and for a great many of them it is the only one. The carriage trade occupies the park's most heavily used entrances and drives, sets the tone at Grand Army Plaza, and produces waste, congestion, and a genuine hazard in exactly the places where the most people, including children, are entering on foot.

I understand that a park has to hold many uses at once. I have spent six seasons doing that negotiation on the ground at Fort Greene Park, where every square foot has competing claims on it. But the balance here is not close. A small commercial operation serving tourists has been allowed to impose risk and burden on millions of park users and on the animals themselves, and the justification is that it has always been there. That is not a reason. It is a description.

The workers deserve better than the choice they are being offered.

I want to be direct about the strongest argument against this bill, because it is a real one. Roughly a few hundred people make a living in this trade. Many are immigrants. Many love their horses. They should not be treated as collateral.

Introduction 943 is the right bill precisely because it takes that seriously. It does not shut anyone down tomorrow. It gives the industry until June 1, 2028, and it directs the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to run a workforce development program to move drivers into other employment. That is a two-year runway and a public commitment to the people affected. I would urge the Council to go further and fund that program specifically and generously, with real placement support rather than a referral list. A wind-down done properly costs money. It is worth it.

I would also urge the Council to hold firm on the humane disposition provisions in the bill. The prohibition on sale or transfer for slaughter, or for use in another horse-drawn cab business elsewhere, is the difference between ending this industry and exporting it. Those provisions must survive to the final version.

Please move this bill.

This Council has considered a version of this legislation before and let it die in committee. In the years since, a horse died in Central Park and a young man died in Central Park. The Speaker has said the day has come. I agree, and I ask this committee to report Introduction 943 favorably to the full Council and to pass it.

Thank you for your time and for holding this hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Marta Teegen
Brooklyn, New York

Testimony in Support of Romanch's Law

Written Testimony to the New York City Council

Submitted by: Jessica McCabe



Date: July 17, 2026

Members of the New York City Council,

I strongly urge you to pass Romanch's Law and finally bring an end to horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

The continued use of horses to pull tourists through one of the busiest and most congested urban environments in the world is indefensible. This practice belongs to another era. It has no place in a modern city that claims to be a global leader in progress, safety, and humane treatment of animals.

What is most astonishing is that cities and countries with far fewer resources have already recognized this reality. Cities in India, Egypt, and throughout the developing world have moved away from using horses as tourist attractions in dense urban environments because they understand the obvious risks and ethical concerns. Yet New York City continues to present this practice as a postcard image of itself.

We should be leading the world, not lagging behind it.

The recent death of Romanch Mahajan brought renewed attention to a danger that advocates, veterinarians, animal welfare organizations, and ordinary New Yorkers have been highlighting for decades. His tragic death exposed the reality of an industry that places animals, workers, residents, and tourists into situations where serious harm can occur.

What gives me hope is that this legislation now has substantial support within the Council. More and more elected officials are recognizing what New Yorkers have been saying for years: this practice is outdated, unnecessary, and inconsistent with the values of a compassionate city.

You do not need polling data to understand where the public stands. You can hear it on the streets, see it at demonstrations, read it in community discussions, and witness it across social media every time this issue arises. There is a growing consensus that New York City can do better than forcing horses to work amid traffic, noise, heat, and chaos for the entertainment of visitors.

I live in New York and find it deeply disturbing that animal suffering remains such a visible and normalized part of the experience around Central Park. Rather than feeling pride, I feel embarrassment that one of the world's most influential cities still defends a practice that many places have already left behind.

The question before the Council is simple.

Will New York City continue protecting a relic of the past, or will it embrace a safer, more humane future?

Romanch's Law gives you an opportunity to answer that question decisively.

Please pass this legislation and end horse-drawn carriages in New York City once and for all.

I respectfully ask that the Council pass Romanch's Law (Intro 943) for the sake of the people of New York City, the animals, and the sake of our longstanding tourism-driven economy, in light of the recent tragedies. With the highly refined evolution of knowledge we have on prey animals, the nature of their biology, and their basic needs which follow from their biology...to continue the carriage horse industry in 2026 and beyond would be a grave injustice. It undermines what we've now long known about these magnificent beings, and it undermines our capacity as the world's greatest city to make space for compassion and empathy in our industries. These animals are not suited to be working in an urban environment to begin with. This concept is not novel, but one that is backed by the now longstanding field of animal welfare science. Not every environment is one that we can ensure fulfills an animal's essential needs, and this is certainly the case for carriage horses in our city. Beyond this baseline failure of such an environment to suit this species, veterinary expertise and other oversight has revealed that the horses endure routine abuse at the hands of this industry, for example with the ages of elderly horses being overlooked or hidden in order to maintain their working status, health conditions of the horses going untreated and at times purposefully hidden as well, along with working horses in extreme weather and heavy traffic conditions. When profits are involved, it is nearly impossible to ensure that animals (especially obedient and docile ones such as horses) are receiving proper treatment from those who are entrusted to care for them while making money off of them, as the goal of any profit-focused operation is to minimize inputs and maximize profits. Historically, and as will always be the crux of exploiting animals for industry, this leads to cutting corners in the form of abandoning an animal's needs and overlooking their (obvious or not) suffering. This has demonstrably been the case for the New York City carriage horse industry. Neither this industry nor this city will ever be able to meet the needs of this species, and the industry can never be sculpted or manipulated to do so either. It is a tragic mismatch of nature, biology, environment, and industry. We cannot continue to exploit and mistreat these innocent individuals in the name of protecting profits. If we allow business to continue, so will the tragedies. Please help secure meaningful change for horses and for our beautiful city by voting YES on Romanch's Law.

I strongly urge the New York City Council to pass Intro 943, Romanch's Law. Horses should not be forced to work in dangerous city traffic for the sake of entertainment. It is time to end the horse-drawn carriage industry, retire these horses to reputable sanctuaries, and provide carriage drivers with meaningful support as they transition into new employment.

7/18/2026

To The New York City Council,

I urge the New York Council to end the horse carriage industry. It is barbaric and out of touch with the sentiments that myself and most NYC residents have towards the treatment of these animals. I can not visit Central Park, or at least the southern portion of it, as it is too depressing having to watch these miserable looking animals pulling their heavy loads in the congestion and heat of a NYC summer. We must speak for those that can not. This battle has been going on for too long. Please end horse drawn carriages in our city immediately!

Your constituent,
Jessica Sinetar

[REDACTED]

Brooklyn, NY 11226

I'm a horse carriage driver and horse owner and I waited for almost 8 hours to speak at the hearing on Wednesday. None of the countless people opposing the carriage horse ban bill, Intro 943 were permitted to speak any testimony about it until 3 hours into the hearing, despite them having the strongest arguments to make with the most informed panels. Why did the speaker leave so early? Why did the official government account for the NYC Council social media only show posts supporting Intro 943? Why wasn't anyone who opposed it featured? Why wasn't equal time given to each side to speak?! Why did the majority of the city council members leave before they heard from all the carriage drivers whose lives this bill would completely destroy?! It's not just about a job, not just about their horse; You would literally be taking away their entire world! You would remove the one thing in life they're truly passionate about with this bill! For what? Who will that benefit?! It will make things worse for the horses, for every single person who cares for them, for all the people who enjoy seeing them or riding with them; And what does it do for the people who oppose them? Absolutely nothing. Their lives will be exactly the same except they can't show up to scream at the carriage drivers anymore. They will move on to harassing the next group of people who works with animals. Who do you think they'll target? Police horses? Zoos? Dogs on leashes? The easy answer to this debate? Those who oppose horse carriages don't have to ride in them and those who like them can and can continue to enjoy them. If the city is really concerned about how the horses are treated or if the drivers are in control of their horses and following the regulations in the city's administrative code it's on the city to better regulation, better enforce their laws, do better checks and legislate better. You don't create policy based on uninformed emotion alone and single incidents when there have been no reoccurring patterns of anything wrong in the industry. There have been different various incidents unrelated to each other with an answer on how they could be best be prevented going forward. Doing away with small businesses because some people don't like them or there are some special interest groups who are pressuring you to isn't the right thing to do.

This was the testimony I read to a nearly empty room by the time I got to speak:

"What happened to Romanch was a terrible tragedy that broke so many, but it wasn't my fault and it wasn't ANYONE here's fault; It was a horrible ACCIDENT and though the FIRST of its kind in history, already resulted in changes to further improve the safety of this industry. An ACCIDENT like all the e-bike and car accidents EVERY day. To take the job, livelihood, and beloved animals from everyone in an entire industry doesn't give anyone justice, it causes even greater heartbreak.

No one should be a voice for horses other than those of us who know them best. I won't have time to debunk every claim made by people against this industry, but as someone who reads beyond the headlines and actually UNDERSTANDS horses I can tell you with confidence there are NO systemic reoccurring issues within this industry, and NO abuse beyond the harassment carriage drivers receive from people who have dehumanized them because they misunderstand horses and have ideologies that shouldn't dictate legislation. I see the faces of people who have taunted and obsessively stalked me for years in this room, but because I have so much pride in what I do and it means so much to me, I find the strength to put up with it, to do what I love. I left the office world to pursue THIS career because happiness is more important than money and I am a HORSE person. My two horses are very bonded to me and over the nine and a half years I have driven in this industry I have taken great care of them and abided by the city's Administrative Code. I have NO plans to separate from my horses but this bill gives me no financial aid for their long-term care while simultaneously stopping me from providing them with the work they enjoy, that keeps them healthy. I don't want a different job, I CHOSE this one and it's my passion in life, where I BELONG. I have always called NYC my home and it is what my horses call home and I find it very offensive that anyone would suggest we are no longer welcome here.

I ask the council to do the right thing, avoid the guilt of ruining families and horses lives and oppose this awful bill as EVERY previous administration has done EVERY time it's reintroduced.

I expect to be back here for a hearing on Intro 937, which IS the solution to protecting this iconic tradition, while ensuring it's safety without anyone else having to lose what means the world to them."

But I wanted to make sure a few other various points get to the public record.

Did you know that the spike in recent incidents in the horse carriage industry happened after the carriage stands were moved from Central Park South to locations inside the park in 2019 and the Central Park Conservancy redesigned the park drives to allow e-bikes, cars, and pedicabs to share the carriage drive in the lane the carriage horses are supposed to have to their selves? Despite numerous warnings how dangerous those things would be and how it would lead to an increase in accidents carriage drivers were completely ignored. Horses are very unlikely to spook around things they're familiar with when they get used to being around them. When the horses were on the street right outside the park all day, exposed to the sights and sounds of the city on the carriage stands awaiting doing tours inside Central Park they were used to those surroundings and comfortable there. A Cortisol study backed up the fact that they weren't at all stressed working or living there and they were slightly stressed when they vacationed on rural pastures, which the city requires they do for a minimum of 5 weeks per year.

The reason horses don't spook over everything is because they're highly adaptable and their learn to trust their human partner. They will signal to their driver by slightly raising their head, changing the direction of their ears, slightly changing their pace, their driver will respond by a gentle squeeze of their hand on the lines (reins) that connects to the bit in the horse's mouth which is a communication device that only uses pressure, not pain, or by using their voice to reassure their horse that whatever they aren't sure of that they are thinking about spooking over isn't something they need to worry about. Every horse is different and when you build a partnership with them and learn to understand what cues they need from you when and how they like to respond to things they don't like you are able to drive them safely. Some horses like to quickly pass by something they don't like and then they slow back down. Some horses prefer to very slowly pass what they don't like. Drivers know how to time traffic lights and the patterns of traffic to put their horses in the safest possible positions at all times. There is constant communication between the horse and driver the general public usually misses. That is why this industry works so well and most incidents occur with newer horses before the horse and driver have learned each other. How long it takes a new horse to get to where they need to be varies with every single horse. In the initial stages the drivers goes out with an extra hand, but when that horse is going to be considered safe to give tours to the public is always going to be up to that individual horse and the driver's assessment of them.

For years the industry begged the city and the Central Park Conservancy for hitching posts which they know will reduce if not entirely eliminate the risk of a horse bolting away. Why have these been denied? Almost every recent incident cited as an excuse to do away with the industry could have been prevented if hitching posts had been provided.

There has been absolutely no reasonable amount of enforcement of pedicabs that park next to the carriage horse stands, or in them despite “no pedicab parking or soliciting” signs. It creates a dangerously crowded area in the park every day, but rather than addressing that issue, properly capping the number of pedicabs licensed to be in the park, and actually enforcing the law against the illegally operating pedicabs and removing them from areas around the horses, the city and the Central Park Conservancy decided the carriage horses were the ones that were in the way and crowding the park? It’s not the illegally parked pedicabs in their stands?!

Many pedicab drivers have told horse carriage drivers when the horses aren’t there during a heat suspension they can’t do any business because the only way they can convince people to take a pedicab ride is by luring them in with the offer of a horse carriage ride. They have been violating fraudulent accosting laws for years with this bait and switch scam which dating back to the DeBlasio administration told the police and park rangers to stand down on in a corrupt attempt to drive the horse carriage industry out of business. Once a pedicab driver lures someone in seeking a horse carriage ride they suddenly tell them “Oh, they only have a small 20 minute option but I can give you an hour in the pedicab to see the whole park,” when the carriage industry does offer the same hour ride or “They charge per person so that carriage ride will cost you four times what I will charge you in my pedicab” when the carriage ride is charged per ride not per person, or even “I’m the manager of the carriages and they’re all on break now. You need to book them online but we have pedicabs available now.” It is absolutely false that people aren’t coming to Central Park for a carriage ride, they’re just being swindled out of them.

The Central Park Conservancy had a mission to preserve the park’s history in the vision of park architect, Frederick Law Olmstead. The carriage drives were intended to slow everyone else down with horse carriages to create a respite for all to enjoy, escaping the busy life of the city. The park was designed with the angle you would be at from the back of a carriage in mind around every bend you made on the carriage drives and with carriage horses animating the landscape for everyone else to enjoy. They abandoned this mission to promote speeding e-bikes the carriage horses are in the way of which have led to so many people being struck by these two wheeled death machines. There are hundreds of accidents that have caused injuries and a bunch of deaths. They are no where near a safety level anyone who visits the park is close to coming near and nothing comparable to the incredibly safety record carriage horses still hold. Dave Saltonstall of the Central Park Conservancy has been seen happily shaking hands with Steve Nislick of NYCLASS at community board meetings to discuss carriage horses and it is ever since Dave started working for the Conservancy in November of 2021 changes against the horse carriage industry began to get implemented and ultimately their public stance on the industry, despite telling the Electric Vehicle Safety Alliance they would have to remain neutral on government legislative issues like e-bikes. All of a sudden the Conservancy started to make press releases nearly identical to NYCLASS, listing horse carriage accidents rather than talking about updates in the park. The horse carriage driver’s union again asked the Central Park Conservancy in a letter at the end of 2025 to install hitching posts to prevent run away horses. This was not a new request. They were ignored and then chastised when another run away incident happened. They said it was another reason to use to ban the carriage horses. They planted a highly toxic Japanese yew plant along the horse carriage drives without warning anyone and when a passing horse did grab a bite from one, as they are grazing animals and don’t understand the rules of the park, he went into cardiac arrest shortly after. Rather than taking responsibility for the plant or apologizing the Conservancy blamed the horse’s owner who

had to watch his horse die in front of him while the public screamed at him that he had abused his beloved animal. How many times do you hear someone with a dog on a leash shouting at their dog, "Drop that! Don't eat that! That's garbage! Bad!" It is no different with a horse passing by a plant where one bite can kill them in less than an hour. The plant remains in the park to the Conservancy's negligence where a child might eat a berry (the berry seeds are just as toxic.) The plant is not native to the park. The driver and owner of the horse continues to receive death threats from the public who ignored the Cornell University's necropsy stating the yew plant caused the horse's death and instead they claim the horse was overworked in the heat, though it was only 75 degrees at the time and he hadn't done that many rides. Then the Conservancy ran a biased push poll with loaded questions to sway the public into believing most people support a carriage horse ban, though many other legitimate polls have always revealed the opposite. The person who ran the poll took to social media to say that he supports a ban on carriage horses and cheered his poll for supporting that as well. The Conservancy still claims the poll was neutral.

Ryder was the case of one bad sale in 2022. He was only working in NYC for a few months. The equine vet who originally examined Ryder to license him to be a carriage horse filled out his paperwork that he was 12 or 13 years old, so the driver and owner of the horse believed the horse to be that age. No one ever found out how that vet made the error because the vet actually passed away. When a different vet was called to examine Ryder after the incident he thought his age was closer to 25-30. When Ryder was purchased he had a winter coat and his freeze brand wasn't easy to read. After the incident it was looked up and only then revealed he was 26 years old, the age he would have to retire, so he promptly was retired. Ryder tripped on his way back to the stable and his driver followed the health department's protocols that a few slaps on a rump could help a horse that has gone down get back up. He used the lines (reins) to do this which is normal to do to a horse in an emergency because it isn't good for a horse to be down for an extended time. The public spun this into a claim he had beaten the horse. The horse was trailered to the stable and examined by a vet who believed he had EPM. Because the horse was 26 and appeared to have this neurological disorder he was retired to an upstate farm. After top equine vets spent a long time trying to determine what illness Ryder had, it was ultimately decided to be a difficult to diagnose cancer that couldn't be treated and he was euthanized. When this went to court the driver was found not guilty of animal abuse.

Lady was returning to her stable last summer when she suddenly died around the corner from the stable. A necropsy revealed she had an aortic rupture caused by a small tumor that could not be detected upon her regular vet exam and she had only been in the city a couple months so there was no way to know she also had been a bad sale with underlying issues no one could have known about. The vet who did the necropsy at Cornell University said this was going to happen to her at that time whether she was in a stall, on a pasture, or pulling a carriage. This again was spun against the carriage industry as NYCLASS lied to the public about the cause of her death and they ran with it.

Aysha in 2020 had an asymptomatic PSSM episode when NYCLASS had pushed the city to move her carriage stand from flat ground to rest on a hill against carriage drivers pleas. The hill caused her to have a medical emergency and she was trailered to the stable. She later had to be euthanized. The image of her was falsely used as slander against the carriage industry for years.

None of these deaths were preventable and none were related to the horses being carriage

horses or working in a city. This isn't a pattern. These are various tragedies that can come up when you have 200 horses over 68 different businesses.

What happened with Romanch was another tragic accident. If there had been a hitching post for the driver to tie his horse to this wouldn't have happened. While it was announced in the news the driver wasn't supposed to get down to take the picture you can ask ever single person who has taken a horse carriage ride in Central Park over the last few decades if their driver got down to take a photo of them and the answer is going to be yes. That was normal in the industry and nothing bad had ever come of it before. Now after the very first human fatality in the entire history carriage drivers are retraining to no longer get off the carriage while they have customers and to either tie their horses, hold the lines (reins) or a tie rope when they are with their horses but it is very difficult to safely and comfortably operate under these new protocols if the city isn't installing the hitching posts they still desperately need which have been called for in Intro 937. While it's understandable Romanch jumped from the carriage in attempt to help his mother who had bounced out of the carriage, he unfortunately landed on his head when he made that jump. That is a very tragic accident no one in the horse carriage industry can be blamed for, so why are we seeking to end the livelihood of so many carriage drivers?

There is also still an ongoing NYPD investigation as well as other investigators looking into what spooked the horse in the first place. It is also known that members of NYCLASS have made financial offers to pedicab drivers to send them videos of horse carriage accidents. This gives them an incentive to cause those accidents as well and that's incredibly dangerous to continue to allow pedicab drivers to operate near horse carriage drivers. How could an entire industry be banned over the very first of its kind accident while there is an on going investigation into what caused it?! There are videos of NYCLASS founder Steve Nislick arriving to the scene of the accident with a big smile on his face, knowing he will use it to push the carriage horse ban bill with zero regard for Romanch. NYCLASS and PETA held a vigil/press conference for Romanch which was so disingenuous. No members of the public or family members of Romanch attended. It was just animal rights extremists and a couple politicians pushing an agenda for them. Social media comments thrilled about the accident to use it to push the bill were screen shot. Even a month earlier when one carriage horse pulled out of the line clipping another carriage horse's wheel and toppling the carriage over onto the driver, two members of NYCLASS, pedicab driver Helen David and her wife Tiffany showed up at the scene, stood next to the driver with broken ribs awaiting an ambulance, and cheered on video, "YAY NYCLASS, Horse carriage accident!" These ghouls are the people begging you to pass the carriage horse ban bill.

This bill is being pushed by ideologies people have about how horses shouldn't work or pull carriages and that type of fascist thinking doesn't belong in policy making. You don't legislate and ban an entire industry because someone else doesn't like or understand it. This bill existed before Ryder even happened. Bob Holden introduced a bill to ban carriage horses and replace them with electric carriages, then the incident with Ryder happened so they decided to use that to push the bill and named it after him. Then NYCLASS introduced a version of the bill without the electric carriage and the Health Committee decided not to advance it this past November. Chris Marte scheduled the reintroduction of the exact same bill (with the same "working protections," or rather lack thereof) and then Deniz at the toxic plant the day before it was going to be introduced. As they prepared to name the bill after Deniz the necropsy came back essentially exonerating his owner/driver and placing the negligence on the Central Park Conservancy. The very next day they got "lucky" with Romanch and decided to rename the bill after him, believing this time they could exploit his death to use as leverage in pushing their ideology on everyone else into the legislation that would do away with the entire industry. It is

disgusting how NYCLASS has manipulated this family when they were at their most vulnerable, to push their political agenda and that there are council members who went along with it! The original statements from the Majahan family stated they wanted to see more safety measures put in place and they were not asking for an entire ban of the industry until NYCLASS reached out to them. "We are in direct contact with the family," executive director of NYCLASS, Edita Birnkrant told a radio show. Animal rights extremist views do not represent the average person. Their views do not belong in our laws and do not represent the best welfare for the animals they claim to care about, though are entirely uneducated about.

Very reputable equine vet, Dr Cook explained that the NYC carriage horses he examines are healthy and happy horses who enjoy working and should be able to work like this to enrich their physical and mental health. Those who examine the horses are the only ones who should get a say on that. Not one carriage driver has ever been convicted of animal abuse because it's non-existent in the industry. Some go above and beyond for their horses and some just follow the regulations of the city, but following the regulations is nowhere near abuse.

The bill offers the carriage drivers NO job in their equestrian field of expertise, no income for while they search for other work if they choose to, no value of the medallion they spent their life savings paying off, no value for their horses which they pay a certain amount for based on how much training the horse has, their age, and how much time they expect them to work in the industry, the bill actually goes so far as to say the horse can no longer be a carriage horse in a different business and therefore is really about people not wanting horses to pull carriages and not what's best for the horses. How would a driver be able to get back the value they paid for their horse if they tell that person buying their horse they can not do the work the horse was trained to do with that horse and the horse won't be able to earn an income for themselves even though the cost of their care is thousands of dollars every month. There is NO financial aid for the horses long term care in the bill. There are no retirement homes for the horses in the bill. There is also no indication any of the carriage drivers have an interest in selling or adopting out their horses who they share a very close bond with so how are they supposed to continue caring for their horses if they can't work with them anymore? Are they going to get a reasonable pension from the city? Is the city going to cover the cost of their horse's care for the rest of their lives or is the city just taking their legal business away from them without fair compensation?

It is no secret there are wealthy real estate interests who have funded propaganda against the horse carriage industry for years because the carriage stables sit on prime real estate. Even the founder of NYCLASS, Steve Nislick is a big real estate tycoon guy. There were e-mails revealed in FOIL requests of Mr Nislick meeting with the DeBlasio administration to talk about the carriage stables land and using accidents to fuel a carriage ban by painting the industry in a negative light. There was even a documentary about it called The Last Horsemen Of New York that Liam Neeson appears in.

The carriage horse industry remains very safe statistically. Accidents are extremely rare. Romanch was the first human fatality ever in almost 200 years, the entire history of the carriage industry. No other industry comes close to that kind of safety record. Over the last 30 years, approximately 3 million trips have taken place and only 1 horse was involved in a traffic related fatality, over 15 years ago. Horses do pass away from natural causes or retire but the Department Of Health keeps very poor records of the hoof numbers and what happens to the retired horses. We have found cases of a the same horse being listed as "disappeared" three times when he is actually retired and still happily on a farm upstate now. These inaccurate records have led people to believe the horses are either being sent to slaughter or have a high turnover rate when that's absolutely false. There are times due to a clerical error a horse isn't

properly recorded having taken their vacation on pastures of the Dept Of Health has misplaced their receipt of vacation and the horse had to be issued a new hoof number because the old one "expired," leaving the record of the horse to have "disappeared." How can you fault the industry for that?

There are thousands of horses that do wind up at slaughter every year all over the country because there just aren't enough people who can afford to care for them or who aren't willing to. There are sanctuaries and rescues who beg people for donations for their horses constantly. If any of them do have a place for a horse right now, they absolutely should give it to one of those homeless horses out there and homes shouldn't be being taken away from NYC carriage horses to fill those spots. NYC carriage horses aren't in need of rescue, they're happy and healthy and have loving owners so they don't belong on a sanctuary like a neglected horse that needs to be saved. No NYC carriage driver has ever sent a horse to slaughter but what happens is even if they give or sell their horse to a new owner with the very best intentions there is just no way to guarantee that new owner will always be able to financially or physically provide for that horse for the rest of their life and in the case that horse is sold again, that is when the horse becomes at risk for being sent to slaughter by someone else. It's very expensive to care for a horse. It's even more expensive in the city. People work with horses so they can afford their care. There is a perfect business model of that operating in NYC right now. Why would you want to make 200 horses homeless? Who can afford the long term care of 200 horses for the rest of their lives when they're not even nearing a retirement age?

There's no such thing as "freeing the horses." Horses are domesticated animals that rely on human care that includes work. Feral horses in the wild live short, harsh lives compared to those in human care. Land is being bought up for AI data centers amongst other things all over. It's a fantasy to believe the horses can just be "set free." It's as silly as saying you can set all dogs "free." That just means making dogs homeless.

It is important to keep horses with us. When we push them away, we don't stop them from dying or becoming injured or ill, we further push away our understanding about them, forget about them, ultimately drive their species out of existence when we call them obsolete. We only let rich people access them, but it is when the poor kids in urban environments that don't otherwise have access to horses or the means to go to the Hamptons to experience them, they decide to pursue a future caring for or working with horses and they keep that species of animal alive but finding them a purpose. Horses built our cities & are better cared for now than ever, so we owe it to them to find places for them with us in modern society. The AWESOME (Animal Welfare Education Supporting Our Metropolitan Equines) program was set up so that low income families could bring their children for a carriage ride and schools could bring their students to Central Park for a lesson on equine welfare, a carriage ride, and stable tour. This program has so much potential and will disappear if NYC carriage horses are banned. Eliminating carriage horses from our city doesn't make them immortal, it only further distances us from understanding them to provide them with the best care.

There are nearly 200 horse carriage drivers, stablemen, harness makers, farriers, and other related industries this carriage ban would impact down the barn cats who hunt mice that everyone will forget about if this bill passes. The largest mushroom farmer on this side of the country picks up the manure from the largest carriage horse stable to use for compost. He would be out of business without this industry. It's all their families that will be impacted and some who will lose absolutely everything. The industry is mainly made up of immigrants searching for the American dream. Carriage drivers come from Turkey, Egypt, Italy, Ireland, Russia, St Lucia, Africa, Mexico, China, Tajikistan, Morocco, and so many other countries.

Together they're a mini united nations that found a community together in this industry over their love of horses.

Horses are not outdated. People still ride horses and dogs have been domesticated even longer than horses! It's one thing for a business to be driven out slowly by changing times but the fact is there are still people interested in taking carriage rides. You're not supposed to decide that something is outdated so you're going to ban it from existence. The consumer decides that! Right now the consumer still wants this industry. We're one of very few businesses to survive after the pandemic, hurricane Sandy, 9/11, and so many other events. We haven't gone out of fashion at all! If people weren't taking carriage rides we wouldn't be able to afford the high cost of the care of our horses, but we're still here. New Yorkers were so happy to see the carriage horses return to the city after they vacationed on pastures through the pandemic. They shouted, "you're the heart of this city!" We show them a sense of normalcy, When we took a week off after we were so devastated by Romanch's tragedy, the public was so welcoming! "Welcome back!" everyone kept saying as they passed by. "New York wouldn't be New York without you, thank you for your service!" a random man in Carl Wilson's district called out.

It isn't difficult for a horse to pull a carriage because even the stablemen pull the carriages out and move them around every morning with ease. Physics of pushing into a collar/harness to propel something on wheels forward is very easy. The horses have an entire administrative code with so many regulations such as a minimum of 5 weeks vacation on rural pastures, not working above 89 degrees or 80 degrees with high humidity, not working below 19 degrees, being blanketed while standing at 40 degrees or blanketed in wet weather, the stalls have to be large enough for the horses to turn around and lay down in, they can not be out for more than a 9 hour maximum in a 24 hour period including a minimum of 15 minutes rest per 2 hours of work, at least 2 vet exams per year, routine vaccines, hoof trimmings and new shoes every 4 to 6 weeks, regular dewormer and teeth floating, etc. None of this is guaranteed to any other privately owned horse.

Horses were bred to work, their bodies literally built for it and draft horses never even existed in the wild. It would be downright cruel to deprive a horse of work and this bill would do that. To take good care of a horse one of the responsibilities you have is providing that horse with work and it's easier for a horse to be driven than ridden the way the weight distribution works balancing a rider on their back.

All the carriage horse stables were originally built at stables but they have been modernized and changed from standing stalls to box stalls so the horses can lay down, they're lined with a sprinkler system and ventilation system. The stalls have rubber mats with straw or wood chip bedding over them and allow the horses to safely interact with each other without getting kicked. The largest stable has automatic water dishes and as they're all required to have 24/7 stablemen, the other stables have them fill their buckets with as much water as they need. Every stall must have a salt block as well.

If this bill passes all it does is remove the protections the city guarantees these licensed horses that other privately owned horses don't have. It doesn't protect them.

There are so many constitutional issues with this bill it would cost the city so much money fighting in court if this bill passed.

If this bill were being pushed in the name of public safety or for the welfare of the horses, it wouldn't go into effect in 2 years from now. It's very clear it isn't about that and if it isn't, why are

we even discussing it? Intro 937 has answers to any concern you have about carriage horses. It has opportunities for different stables, dedicated lanes to get the horses to/from the stable/park, hitching posts for safety, more shade in the summer, earlier start times when it's cooler in the morning in the summer and there's less traffic, the possibility of daily turnout areas, and so much more to improve this iconic tradition the majority of New Yorkers want to preserve.

If you support a carriage horse ban because the city is no place for a horse, you might as well say, a city is no place for a tree and uproot them all from our parks and sidewalks. Trees don't belong between buildings and beside streets. Trees have fallen killing more people than carriage horses ever have.

A city is no place for a child, over 120 children under 17 have been killed in New York City traffic crashes since the launch of "Vision Zero" in 2014. A city is no place for a dog to breathe polluted air, or walk on hot pavement, at risk of being struck by cars and bicycles (last week: <https://x.com/infopobn/status/2071790409244717405>)

A city is no place for any person to be, away from a natural environment where they may be struck by a train, truck, bullet, motorized scooter, emotionally disturbed individual, pedicab (this week: <https://x.com/infopobn/status/2073538889743003946/photo/1>) or fall ill, out a window, into an open manhole (just over a month ago: <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/manhattan/cause-of-death-woman-fell-down-manhole-midtown-manhattan/6504242/>), or onto subway tracks in public; A sight no one wants to see. Improving the conditions for all who live here can't be taken into consideration; The only logical solution is to eliminate all life from our cities; It's far too risky a place for anyone to be.

Some think it's outdated to care for a horse; 6,000 years of domestication only to turn around and call it antiquated in 2026. By the same logic, haven't we had enough owning dogs? They were domesticated estimates of 15,000 to 40,000 years ago; Much more outdated than horses. They're exploited for our entertainment and sometimes even "forced" to work herding, guiding the blind, alerting people to seizures, or sniffing out illicit substances or missing persons. But no bills to ban us from owning them or keeping them in our cities have been introduced.

Police horses live in similar stalls in a stable just around the corner from NYC carriage horses stables, but when the carriage horses walk up to Central Park to spend their workday in the car-free environment delighting tourists and New Yorkers, police horses usually head to Times Square where they spend their workday preventing crime, chasing criminals (a couple months ago: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxz-iubgW9E>), and protecting the public on the street. Police horses share one of the same equine veterinarian and farrier as carriage horses, but not the same regulations. They don't get any of the vacation time on pastures that NYC carriage horses get. They don't have to return to their stables when temperatures get too hot. Occasionally they get into accidents, fall ill, have run aways, and even pass away. It's also an easier job for a horse to pull a carriage than balance a rider on their back; But no bills to ban police horses from the city have been introduced.

Horses have worked alongside mankind for thousands of years, bred for their ability to handle workloads we couldn't do alone. Over time breeds designed to pull began to rely on this type of work to thrive, right as we started looking to machines to replace them. After centuries of hard labor, most of today's horses have it easy; In Central Park they literally have a walk in the park with a carriage so easy to pull, their human stablemen and drivers pull them out of the stable with ease themselves every

morning. While construction workers labor and show horses gallop over 95 degree heat across the country, carriage horses are given time off when temperatures exceed 89 degrees (or 80 with high humidity.) While New York law doesn't guarantee any vacation time for human beings, NYC carriage horses must receive a minimum of 5 weeks each year. NYC carriage horses now work under more regulations than any other carriage industry in the country. Why is it that when horses are finally living the most pampered lives, some are seeking to shut it down? After years of their labor building our cities, people turn their back on them, seeking to push them out of a place they now call home. City after city becoming one less place for horses to continue to exist.

NYC carriage horses represent a living bond to our history with horses and display a partnership between human and horse so easily forgotten when we hide it from view. A progressive city doesn't hide from their past; They learn to grow from it. Growth isn't eliminating a proud tradition, it's honoring it for future generations. We owe it to the horses that worked hard in the past to give today's horses a good life, working among us in our modern society. Horses were domesticated and bred to work and it's our responsibility to find them a place alongside us in our cities. Only a cruel and heartless individual would look to the horse and shun them away from us, after all they've done, citing the cities they built are now just too busy for them to be with us any longer. The carriage horses that were intended to slow the pace of Central Park for all to relax and enjoy are now seen as "in the way" of speeding e-bikes.

With how few horses we have left in our cities, we have already seen how detached many people have become from them; They no longer know how to read their basic body language, understand their needs and desires, or maintain an ability to provide them with a good life. They assume a horse with a hind leg cocked is injured, a horse who isn't drinking at that moment is thirsty, a horse who is at ease and relaxed is tired, a bit used properly to communicate is painful, a horse who can lay down comfortably in a stall is wishing it were even wider, and a horse who is proudly pulling a carriage is dreaming of shelter-less field, unprotected from predators. The more you remove horses from where people frequent, the further you expand this issue.

There are people who project their own hate towards their jobs onto the horses prideful of their work. They close their eyes to the long term relationships these horses form with their drivers/caretakers and tell themselves their horses would prefer being torn from those they love and their familiar routine. They imagine there's a "sanctuary" for hundreds of horses that will be able to afford their long term care. In reality those "sanctuaries" are often begging for donations to avoid shutting down and thousands of homeless horses are being shipped to slaughter every year.

It's not about the science; A cortisol (stress hormone) study on the horses revealed they weren't at all stressed working/living in the city but were slightly stressed on the pastures where they vacation (<https://youtu.be/24IUP-wTZeo?si=rcYRGQgXqZ0Pd00Z>) because their opinion is guided by their emotion and feeling formed from misinformation. These are people who look at happy, healthy, well cared for horses doing what they enjoy in a well regulated industry with accidents occurring extremely rarely and think "abuse."

No systemic, repeat patterns of illness or accident are occurring in the NYC horse carriage industry over the 68 carriage businesses with 200+ horses and 150 carriage drivers/owners in business for over 150 years, but some believe an exception should be made with how we view this industry and it isn't permissible for one horse to ever fall ill or one accident to occur, no matter how rare. This industry shall be held to standards no other has ever achieved.

The goalpost has been moved time and time again until impossible demands are all that remain and horses are completely legislated out of everyone's life. There are people who set unreasonably high expectations as the bare minimum for horses until absolutely no one can care for a horse anymore. It's taking the first steps to the extinction of a species when you have the mindset that anyone who doesn't live in a mansion may as well be homeless.

There are people who seek to push the few remaining equestrians from their home and remodel the city they've moved to into one without the animals so many others appreciate; A cold and soulless city where they can convince themselves they've "protected" the horses who never needed salvation. In reality they would be turning their backs on them so they can pretend they're immortal outside of the city. Forgotten horses aren't better off, it's just easier for people to imagine they are.

Removing the horses from this industry only removes them from the people who love them and from the regulations protecting them and financial security that ensures their care. Intro 943 doesn't even permit them to work in another horse carriage industry, anywhere.

There are people who believe their ideologies should be forced into legislation, negatively impacting people and animals unlike themselves. Horses have no trouble expressing themselves to equestrians, but they speak in a language these animal rights extremists cannot understand while aiming to "be their voice." These are not the voices that need to be heard when proposals banning animals from our lives are brought to the table. This vocal minority however are the people who have been flooding NYC council members with calls and e-mails voicing their opinion against NYC carriage horses.

The other night I was driving my carriage horse to the stable when a man on the corner of the intersection I was approaching started chanting "Pass Ryder's Law! Pass Ryder's Law" I had space to pull over and let cars pass, so I came to a full stop I don't think he expected. "Wow, it takes a really pathetic person to harass a stranger on the street and you're not at all embarrassed?" I asked him. He continued to chant. I turned my body camera towards him and asked, "Why?...Why?...Okay, why?...Why?...You can't have a conversation?...Why?" The light changed and he started to cross the street. I shouted that he was a coward and he continued walking, only interrupting his chant with, "No I'm not!" The animal rights extremists are merely parrots in support of an ideology they've been indoctrinated to follow. There's no basis or logic behind their demands. They don't even know why they want carriage horses banned from New York City, but they know how to be loud, obnoxious, and inconsiderate of others.

Opponents to a NYC horse carriage ban know the horses are well cared for, in a well regulated industry, and despite recent headlines remain the safest mode of transportation. The NYC carriage horses are an institution and a proud Central Park tradition that continues to honor our connection to our history of the partnership horses share with mankind. They bring so much joy to so many and stand to ensure future generations don't become disconnected from the spirit of the horse in an urban environment. It is when we misunderstand horses that we forget to save a place for them in modern society, ultimately turning our backs on them. It is because we love horses that we have them with us in our cities doing what they enjoy doing alongside us.

There are powerfully funded people behind carriage horse ban legislation and the battle has persisted for decades. The NYC carriage stables now still sit upon valuable land that real estate developers continue to salivate over. Their greed to conquer the few remaining horsemen has resulted in otherwise

unlikely alliances with animal rights extremists and even pedicab drivers who believe they can cash in with their involvement. It is only thanks to a few politicians, unions, and the majority of the public who spoke out that the truth and facts about the industry have prevailed over the emotionally fueled false and misleading propaganda spread. Now politicians are once again being asked to decide the fate of 200+ horses, 150+ mainly immigrant carriage drivers and owners, 68 privately owned small businesses, and something millions of tourists have sitting on their bucket list.

Will the horses be displaced from their homes, jobs, and people who love and care for them, just tossed into uncertainty for another high rise to be built, or will common sense prevail again? Will countless lives be destroyed when their livelihood is taken from them because someone shouted lies over the facts in front of them, or will politicians be on the right side of history this time around?

In the year of the horse some believe the recent storm of negative PR surrounding the industry will result in its demise, while others haven't given up yet. We can't let a small but vocal minority dictate the future of horses in our city which will in turn impact the future of horses all across the country like a stepping stone or domino effect. Now is the time to act.

The statement Chris Marte's office made to Pix 11 from June 16th in response to Deniz's necropsy reveals that the council member -who introduced the latest bill to ban NYC carriage horses (Intro 943), thinks that it's a good idea for people to become detached from animals.

Councilman Chris Marte first exposed his true ignorance about horses at the NYC Council Health Committee hearing on the previous carriage horse ban bill this past November, when he claimed that it would be inhumane to have people, cats or dogs pulling horse carriages, so it's not right to have horses doing it. He is absolutely oblivious to the strength of a horse, ease a human can pull a wheeled carriage, and that horses are domesticated animals that have a difficult time thriving without this type of work.

The councilman believes that we can convince ourselves horses don't have medical emergencies, don't fall ill, don't get injured, and don't get into accidents if we push them far from our view. Out of sight, out of mind. That's the goal of animal rights extremists; Push animals far away from us until we become so detached from what good care of them looks like we no longer provide it.

Chris Marte's issue isn't with carriage horses; It's with horses being living animals and having to accept that like all living creatures they are not immortal. He lives in a fantasy that if horses were away from the city we'd be better off because we wouldn't know about when they pass away. He'd rather horses that develop deep bonds with human beings be isolated to suffer alone than be cared for among us, if it means occasionally having to be with them when they fall ill too. It's a true animal rights ideology that has never aligned with the majority of the public.

(He hypocritically makes this claim that he can't handle seeing tragedy, while standing beside PETA, who recently put up a billboard of Deniz's last moments to push their agenda. Imagine if it were your beloved horse, dog, or other loved one being exploited in this manner.)

No one who cares about an animal's welfare would seek to push them away. No one who is a true animal person would support the animal rights agenda. No one with extremist views towards animals should be in a position of political power to decide their fate.

Another NYC council member has fallen for NYCLASS's lies and thinks carriage horses should be banned because they aren't immortal, per a Politico article.

The fact is not one NYC carriage horse has collapsed due to heat since the original law preventing them from working above 89 degrees went into effect in 1989. Necropsies and equine veterinary examinations reveal various factors into why different medical emergencies have occurred in horses over the years; Not one relating to heat or a systemic issue revealed in the industry or related to being a carriage horse.

City Council Member Shaun Abreu says he's proud to stand with NYCLASS, the real estate developer headed group investigated by the FBI, fined for campaign finance violations, who's head threatened a female daily news reporter supportive of the carriage industry, and so notorious for lying about the NYC horse carriage industry, the Transport Workers Union has a million dollar lawsuit pending against them.

The councilman also exposes he's anti-science, ignoring the peer-reviewed cortisol (stress hormone) study that appeared in the American Veterinary Association Journals, revealing while NYC carriage horses weren't at all stressed working/living in the city, they were slightly stressed on the rural pastures they vacation on every year (https://youtu.be/24IUP-wTZeo?si=7FHJC332G_fLDTrH) Although he's unable to read the body language, facial expressions, and behaviors of horses making it impossible to advocate in their best interests, he wants to be their voice.

The 200+ horses in the NYC carriage horse industry could have their lives and their driver's lives ruined if Intro 943 passes and their fate is being determined by people completely ignorant towards the equine species.

NYC horse carriage drivers have always followed NYC laws and regulations to the best of their ability and prioritized the welfare of their horses in this industry. However many laws and regulations have been passed in recent years with disingenuous intentions to hurt the horse carriage business; Sometimes even at the expense of the horse's welfare! What went from being a very functional and safe business model has undergone a death by a thousand cuts over the last decade and carriage drivers/owners have had to make due. There are times when laws now contradict each other and drivers have to make the safest and best choices for their horses, even if they may not technically be following a regulation as it was written. NYCLASS was never shy about their goal; If they can't ban the industry they will push to pass over-regulation and excessively ticket drivers to drive it out, while discouraging the city from allowing improvements to be made to the industry.

One example is within the DOT rule change that only allows passengers to get in/out of carriages where there is signage for a carriage stand and the carriage stands were moved from Central Park South into locations inside the park. While there are 68 carriages, there was only enough space made for 35-40 carriages. This means that on a slow business day, if you take a ride and there is no where to park your horse when you get back, you lose your ability to follow every law and regulation and you're forced to choose which violation to make: Parking outside of a carriage stand and letting your customer out, or holding your customer hostage circling your horse until legal parking becomes available and possibly

exceeding the minimum of 15 minutes rest per 2 hours of work for your horse.

This rule change also had the carriage horses “resting” on a downhill slope of the new 7th Ave carriage stand, unable to comfortably cock their hind leg to relax and without a brake have the weight of the carriage pushing into them; From day one carriage drivers simply stood firm to defy that and faced the other way with blocks of wood behind the carriage wheel. The hill the horses were moved off of flat ground to stand on still caused a horse with asymptomatic PSSM to have a medical emergency in 2021, ultimately resulting in her death. (NYCLASS still tries to use pictures of her episode to further their horse carriage ban agenda.)

Moving the carriage horses from their old location right outside Central Park to just inside the entrances took away their visibility to passerby nearly killing off the night shift, making it difficult to prevent potential customers from being scammed out of their horse carriage tour by pedicab street scammers around the park, and extending the adapting period of horses new to the city by exposing them to the sights and sounds of the street for much shorter periods. All these financial hardships made it more difficult to make ends meet combined with the false slander NYCLASS damaged the industry’s image with that their union is suing them over.

These are not the only examples, but it is why you may sometimes see something in the news propagated by NYCLASS about carriage drivers breaking the law. Carriage drivers continue to do what is safest for their horse and in turn that’s what protects themselves, their passengers, and the general public. An estimated 3 million NYC horse carriage tours have taken place over the past thirty years and the industry stands with an incredible safety record because their protocols and regulations had worked for them. Nearly every incident in recent years happened after the city made these recent changes to the industry. Carriage drivers also altered their practices after the first human fatality in history as an additional safety measure to keep their Vision Zero goal. The most notable difference is that even though the horses were trained to ground tie when the city failed to provide hitching posts, the drivers will now remain in the driver seat at all times when they have passengers, unless their horse is tied to something sufficient available, or there is a footman holding the horse from the ground.

Intro 937 calls for common sense safety protocols, changes to open the door for options to even further improve the welfare of the horses and seeks to undo some of the damage the city has done to the industry. The bill is not yet scheduled for a hearing, but you can help change that. NYCLASS and PETA have followers from all over the world calling our city council members; There is no reason they shouldn’t hear from every New Yorker, tourist outside of New York, or equine professional that supports the industry as well.

It takes a **strong** person to drive a horse carriage in New York City. Yes, they have to be able to handle a horse, lift a saddle, pick out a horse’s hooves, and carry buckets of feed and water, but I don’t mean physical strength.

In New York City the carriage horse industry has been under attack with slanderous claims and misinformation for decades. It’s fueled various animal rights extremist groups to hold protests in front of carriage stands, verbal insults and physical punches have been hurled at drivers, and city council members have threatened to take away their livelihood again and again.

Wrong doing is assumed and drivers are blamed every time one of their horses falls ill or passes away. Imagine the amount of pressure on someone who works with an animal that society won't accept ever dying, though they know it's coming at an undetermined time. You must be perfect at all times; There's no room for mistake; One accident and everyone will turn on you.

The harassment and demonization of horse carriage drivers intensifies after any one of their coworker's horses is involved in any type of incident. But if they respond in anger, it will be caught on camera and taken out of context to be spun against them. Everything you do is in public and will be publicized and criticized.

As they scroll social media after work they will see headlines about their industry, pictures of themselves and their coworkers, and thousands upon thousands of comments from a mostly uninformed, uneducated public sharing opinions about them and their horses.

A NYC horse carriage driver needs a strong sense of self to carry on with this kind of abuse from the public day after day. It must be ignored, laughed off, responded to calmly and kindly, or creatively done well enough to turn them off from ever shouting at them again.

NYC carriage drivers will have friends turn their backs on them because they trust false propaganda spread about them over the integrity of their friend. NYC carriage drivers have children that see their face on the news and wonder why people are shouting at them. NYC carriage drivers will have adoption agencies turn them down from adopting a pet because of what their application lists their profession as.

But a NYC carriage driver's love of their horse is what will keep them going. They will choose to endure verbal abuse, risk physical attack, and fight hard at City Hall to make sure they can keep doing what they do day after day.

A NYC carriage driver must face the world after tragedy and in uncertainty, because their horse needs to work and they both need to eat.

A NYC carriage driver carries as much pride in their work as their horse. A NYC carriage driver knows they're treating their horse well and their horse knows they're treating them well, and what other people know can not matter more than what they know.

Why is NYCLASS's horse carriage ban bill, Intro 943, they call "Ryder's law" a terrible bill for horses? Despite laws that prevent legal businesses from simply being "banned" and carriage drivers having the legal right to choose their profession, not only would this bill cease to license NYC horse carriage drivers after June 2028, it would actually cruelly prevent their personal, privately owned horses from doing the work that keeps them physically and mentally healthy. The bill prevents the horses from pulling carriages—even in other horse carriage businesses outside of the city. This means that carriage drivers wouldn't be able to move to a rural area of NY or to another state to continue to work their horse or earn an income in partnership with their horse to cover the high cost of their care.

It also means no one else would even be able to purchase their horses to pull carriages, which they're already trained and built to do, significantly decreasing their value from a business standpoint and potentially putting the horses in a dangerous situation if they were no longer able to afford their care by

working other jobs. The bill offers zero funding for the long term care of the horses and no retirement homes when there are already thousands of horses that wind up sent to slaughter every year. It leaves 200+ horses without a job, home, care, or protection from an even worse situation if they are resold.

None of the carriage drivers have even expressed interest in being separated from and adopting out/selling their personally owned horses, many of which are relatively young and not ready to be retired by any means. Any legitimate horse sanctuary or rescue with an open spot would rather take in a horse in need of a home rather than take away a home from a horse with a job and care.

The bill offers the horse carriage owners nothing for their investment in 68 valuable carriage medallions and no specific job, let alone a job in their equestrian field of expertise. It doesn't even offer the carriage drivers jobs driving e-carriages, as some people were led to believe. The bill simply says the city would have to set up a program to help the 150+ carriage drivers find other jobs, similarly to the current unemployment office. It also doesn't say what the carriage drivers would do for an income until they found another job. NYC Councilman Chris Marte (<https://www.facebook.com/reel/846946117918887>) re-introduced this cruel bill without a care in the world that it's a bad bill for horses and a bad bill for workers.

Much of the public's reaction to the recent passing of NYC carriage horse, Deniz shows us how important it is to keep carriage horses with us in our cities. A large portion of society, especially those in an urban environment have become far too detached from the realities of horses, including the fact that they are not immortal.

Some NYC council members think the answer is isolating horses from humankind that they have worked alongside for thousands of years, but in reality that will only put even further division between people and their understanding of horses and lead to horses without the human care they now rely on. Yes, it is always tragic when a horse passes away and emotionally impacting when it does happen in public, but banning carriage horses from NYC won't make horses immortal.

Like all living creatures, eventually all 200+ horses in the NYC carriage horse industry will pass away. Some will be younger than the average lifespan of a domesticated horse and some will be older. For most the cause will be of "natural causes." The lucky horses may get the luxury of passing away in their stall or while they are on vacation on pasture, but odds are a few will be doing what they love when their time comes.

Before Deniz, the last NYC carriage horse to suddenly collapse and pass away unexpectedly in Central Park happened over a decade ago. The usually carriage horse supportive or neutrally positioned Central Park Conservancy put out a revealing statement that this is "too many" times, suggesting a recent substantial donation from a group like NYCLASS with an agenda to ban the horse carriage industry. Over the past few years there have been a few people and animals that have passed away in Central Park, but the Conservancy made no such statements about their concern or kicking them out of the park. E-bike accidents are at an all time high in Central Park with locals and tourists voicing numerous concerns, but it is only the carriage horses the Central Park Conservancy has taken a stance against.

In a rural environment, some people become used to their "normal," and start to forget how many different types of environments horses can thrive in. In an urban environment, some people never learn

basic facts about horses or even have the opportunity to see them up close. This inexperience results in a reliance on the internet to form their opinion and very few people take the time to fact check their sources of information on the internet.

Ultimately some people begin to believe not only is the easy work of a horse pulling a carriage (which many are designed by breed to do) is somehow difficult or unnecessary for them, when they actually won't thrive without this type of work. They don't know what normal temperatures are for horses to exist in and how adaptable and versatile of a species they are. They personify horses and lose the understanding of what kind of stalls horses are comfortable in. Humankind forgets how hard horses used to have it when they built our cities and were relied on for transportation of people, goods, and services. In most of modern society, horses have comparatively very easy jobs now that are a "walk in the park," and quite literally in the case of the Central Park carriage horses. However an uninformed public may call that easy work "too much" or "abusive." Due to how few horses they come in contact with in today's world, many people can no longer read the basic body language of a horse and will even mistake a horse resting with a hind leg cocked because they're relaxed as a horse that has hoof/leg pain.

NYC Mayor Mamdani chose his words more carefully than some. While he did state, "I support removing horse carriages from Central Park," he added that he looks forward to "working with union partners and community leaders to actually deliver on that." TWU Local 100 will not accept a ban on NYC carriage horses. The mayor also would not say if he supported NYCLASS's NYC carriage horse ban bill, Intro 943 they're still calling "Ryder's bill" or "Ryder's law." Instead, he said he wanted to "figure out a way" forward without offering specifics. As we know from previous administrations, regardless of where a mayor stands on the NYC horse carriage industry, it's ultimately up to the NYC council to advance and vote on bills that impact the industry. The NYC Council Speaker Julie Menin didn't comment on the subject recently, but a spokesperson for the city council did say that multiple bills will be introduced to the city council this week and they would follow the legislative process to allow for input from all stakeholders.

As the public re-learns how well cared for the NYC carriage horses are, that they are working in a well regulated industry, with accidents occurring very rarely, the support for the industry resumes. NYC horse carriage drivers have undergone years of false slander and over regulation enacted against their industry. We hope to change that this year, the year of the horse.

6/9/2026:

Why, when a pet cat passes away it's, "I'm sorry for your loss." When the family dog passes away, it's "That's terrible, but there's nothing else you could do." When the horse in the country barn passes away, it's "These things happen." But when a New York City carriage horse passes away it's immediately assumed, "It must have been the driver's fault for mistreating him and we should eliminate all carriage horses."

Deniz was a fit, healthy, beautiful 16 year old horse who had just passed his veterinary exam a couple months earlier in March, by the same vet who treats the NYPD Mounted Unit horses. Deniz had enjoyed his job working in the NYC horse carriage industry for the past 10 years, where he was loved by his owner, different drivers, and the people who took rides with him.

June 9th wasn't a very hot or humid day. There was a bit of a breeze, the high was around 81 degrees in

Central Park and it was about 75 degrees when Deniz started his last carriage ride, before he was expected to return to the stable. It wasn't a particularly busy Tuesday and he had had plenty of food and water throughout the day. He hadn't been acting out of character and was being driven by his owner who knew him best.

Around 7pm, as Deniz rounded the back of Strawberry Fields on flat ground with two customers in his carriage, he suddenly passed away. His driver and owner, Nurettin was in shock despite having decades of experience in the carriage industry. Passerby helped him unharness his horse from the carriage while he made all the necessary phone calls to handle the situation. He told news stations he felt like he had just lost a member of his family and it had happened so unexpectedly and suddenly.

Within minutes bicyclists, joggers, and passerby became outraged at Nurettin, blaming him for his tragic loss. Nurettin professionally ignored the commotion and remained on the scene until the proper authorities arrived to remove Deniz's body.

Animal rights extremists and the real estate funded NYCLASS's executive director, Edita Birnkrant arrived to the scene, chastising Nurettin and calling for an outright ban of all 200+ carriage horses from the industry. Calls to punish the other 150+ carriage horse owners and drivers grew. Verbal attacks began to get hurled at other horse carriage drivers and they returned to the stables for the safety of their horses and themselves.

The carriage industry decided to close the stables the following day to mourn Deniz and for the protection of their horses and drivers. (The following few days work would be very limited for the rest of the horses with the heat and humidity expected to rise and prompt a suspension of operations throughout much of that period.)

Per TWU Local 100, Deniz will undergo a full necropsy by the pathology department at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine to determine what transpired. Until the results return, the cause of his death remains unknown, though the police stated there was no evidence to suggest wrong doing. Unfortunately no one gets to choose when and where a death will occur and this is something that could happen to any domesticated animal at any time, anywhere. Many even noted Deniz appeared strong, was a healthy weight and not even very sweaty. Some theorized it was some type of heart attack, but until the necropsy is completed, no one can say for sure.

No signs of Deniz's passing are pointing to something preventable, overwork, dehydration, or any relation to Deniz's job or home in NYC, but that didn't stop thousands of keyboard warriors from taking to the internet to point fingers, denounce the horse carriage industry, and even make death threats towards carriage drivers, as well as city council members. They cruelly shared videos of Deniz's last moments all over social media without an ounce of compassion for his owner in his time of mourning.

The timing couldn't have been worse for the industry. The next afternoon NYCLASS was already expected to hold a rally with PETA at City Hall to support reintroducing the horse carriage ban bill that the NYC Health Committee's council members voted to kill this past November. Council members Harvey Epstein, Carl Wilson, Frank Morano, and Gale Brewer stood with a few dozen NYCLASS and PETA lobbyists outside City Hall to announce Councilman Chris Marte's re-introduction of the carriage ban bill that had been defeated countless times already. Deniz's passing would be exploited by them in propaganda to fuel support of the bill.

Today the carriage ban bill will be re-introduced along with Councilman Jim Gennaro's counter bill to improve the horse carriage industry after years of slanderous damage and over regulation was enacted to drive it out of business. The question remains if common sense will prevail or we live in a society who punishes people and horses for their inability to make NYC carriage horses immortal. We are hopeful that in the year of the horse, common sense will prevail for the horses and all who love them. Stay tuned for action items as our political fight for the NYC horse carriage industry continues once again.

Wrapping Up 2025: On December 9th the NY Daily News ran an article headlined, "Adams hiring outside vet to examine Central Park carriage horses seen as assault on industry," shared on this page. On December 28th the NY Post ran the headline, "NYC horse carriages refuse animal testing, prompting threat of lawsuit or suspension by city," (link below.) What's the whole story?

The NYC horse carriage industry is composed of 68 separate privately owned small businesses. While every carriage medallion owner and/or driver must follow the rules and regulations set by NYC (such as the temperatures their horses can work in and the limit on their hours) the 200+ horses they register to work are their individually, personally owned, private property, legally speaking. While you need a carriage driving license to drive a for-hire medallioned carriage in NYC, you don't need to own the carriage or horse you drive and you don't need to own a carriage to own the horse you drive. Amongst many requirements to license your horse to work in NYC, you must send your horse on pasture vacation for a minimum of 5 weeks per year and have your horse examined by a veterinarian at least twice a year. Unless a specific report is sighted or illness/injury arises, there is no legal pretense for an additional veterinary exam.

Multiple veterinarians have examined NYC carriage horses over the years. Some have retired, passed away, or simply moved. Currently, a renowned equine veterinarian and surgeon from New England Equine has bi weekly visits to the stables at his own expense, examines scheduled horses due for submitting their health certificates to the NYC Health Department, and offers their hospital to be available to horses in emergencies if more serious health issues arise. In addition to his services, many NYC carriage horses also utilize the services of the equine vet that examines and treats the NYPD horses. (The Health Department also privately contracts an equine veterinarian as needed while they search to fill their currently open full time position.)

Some have suggested that because these private veterinarians are paid by the horse owners, just like you would pay out of pocket for your cat or dog's visit to a vet, there is a financial bias of these examinations. But that logic would suggest the vets would be finding more wrong with the horses to increase their bill upon requiring treatment of illnesses or injuries. Instead every NYC carriage horse licensed to work has a clean bill of health and is only suspended from work when illness or injuries do arise or if there are occasional mishaps with submitting their licensing paperwork too late. Every NYC carriage horse owner would in fact welcome the NYC Health Department to cover the cost of their horse's veterinary care, but it has never been offered.

While Mayor Adams had stood with the TWU Local 100 horse carriage drivers nearly his entire four year term, well aware the horses were well cared for, just a couple months before leaving office, he suddenly took on a stance against the carriage industry, flanked by his deputy mayor, Randy Mastro (previously NYCLASS's lawyer), presumably after taking a bribe from NYCLASS.

The NYC horse carriage drivers/owners union, TWU recently filed a lawsuit against NYCLASS (headed by a real estate developer who had expressed interest in the carriage horse stable properties in the past) for spreading false accusations about the industry in collusion with the Mayor Adams administration (as well as the previous DeBlasio administration who had their campaigns well funded by NYCLASS, ultimately resulting in campaign finance board fines.) This past November, NYC Councilman Bob Holden utilized a rarely used bill sponsor privilege rule to force the NYC Council's Health Committee to hold a vote on his horse carriage ban bill. They voted to kill the bill, but the corrupt mayoral administration felt that they hadn't attacked the industry hard enough, despite how little popularity there had been publicly or politically to push this bill.

During the first week of December, the Adams administration had the NYC Health Department send out a letter to some NYC horse carriage owners requesting Dr. Kraig Kulikowski examine their horse during the busy holiday season that financially holds them over during the slow season. The horse owners looked up Dr. Kraig Kulikowski and learned he's the vet of anti horse carriage group Equine Advocates, is Facebook friends with the executive director of NYCLASS, Edita Birnkrant, and found videos of him making biased remarks against certain lifestyles of horses, giving him a stance against the NYC horse carriage industry. By no means was this a fair, unbiased, and "independent" vet the Adams administration had tried to play it off as. The Health Department claimed he was the only one qualified who applied to their job posting offering up to \$20k. (Our tax dollars at work!)

Over the years the NYC horse carriage industry has welcomed legitimately independent veterinary exams and testing of their horses, as they have nothing to hide and are aware of their horses being in good health in order to be licensed to work. One example is Dr Joseph Bertone who happened to pass by the carriage horses in their stands in 2015 and requested to run a study on the horse's Cortisol levels. (Years prior the ASPCA had run a similar study but never released the results.) Carriage horse owners were so eager to learn the science behind their horse's already relaxed postures and behaviors they even helped fund the peer reviewed study, which was later published in the American Veterinary Association journals. (The study revealed the horses were not at all stressed living/working in the city, but had slightly raised Cortisol levels when they vacationed on pastures: <https://youtu.be/24IUP-wTZeo?si=bd5R6gQUrEXOPAFx>)

On December 8th Dr. Kraig Kulikowski arrived at Clinton Park Stable in the morning. Horse owners were requested to fill out an optional form if they consented to having their horse trotted or have blood drawn for his exam. The Health Department couldn't guarantee what lab the blood would wind up in or who would have access to it. It wasn't a mandated test as the carefully worded DOH letter confirmed. Not one was open to this vet who was openly against their industry and being paid per exam by orders of the mayoral administration (attempting to do away with their industry) to having him draw blood, trot, or examine their horses, who had already received the two vet exams required by law that included trotting tests and any necessary blood work. Despite the seeming accusation there was any inadequacy within the vets who had examined their horses, these exams were not offered to any NYPD horses who use one of the same vets. It was too fishy for anyone to welcome.

The Department Of Health stated that they were not able to prevent any licensed horse from going to work who did not present any health issue in order for this exam to take place, so most of the horses were unable to be seen by Dr. Kraig Kulikowski just for the reason that they were not available for an exam during the busy season; They were scheduled to work during the hours he arrived to examine them. Some of the horses were even already on vacation on pastures outside the city. The DOH's last minute job posting had also stated the exams were to be held outside of the horses working hours. A

couple of the horse owners *still* allowed their horses to be seen by Dr. Kraig Kulikowski, knowing there was absolutely nothing that could be found wrong with them and assuming it would be less hassle than declining the exam, but they denied their horse's blood to be drawn or their horse to be trotted, as it was not being legally required, did not seem necessary, and their horses had already had their full examinations done with a different, trusted vet.

Dr. Kraig Kulikowski used the "flexion" test method of testing for lameness in the horses. Multiple equine professionals even outside of the carriage industry scoffed at this being an unreliable type of exam that most sound horses would fail. He didn't say a word about the health of any of the horses, but approximately 12 hours later the NYC Health Dept contacted one of the horse owners who had allowed their horse to be seen, stating the horse must be suspended from working due to lameness Dr. Kraig Kulikowski found. If lameness had truly been found in the horse, wouldn't a legitimate vet tell the owner on the spot so that it could be remedied, treated, and the horse rested rather than permitted to work that day?

It certainly wouldn't have been out of the question to assume Dr. Kraig Kulikowski had been pressured by the Adams administration to change his original assessment of the horse after the fact. In 2011 a horse new to the carriage industry named Charlie passed away suddenly. The APSCA's equine veterinarian made a statement that the horse had passed away likely due to ulcers from their lifestyle in NYC, only to immediately retract it, saying she'd been pressured by the ASPCA to make it and didn't believe it was true. She was then suspended by the ASPCA, which later led to the ASPCA being found to have a clear bias against the industry (NYCLASS was originally cofounded by their CEO at the time) and they were removed from their duties of enforcing the carriage horse industry's regulations due to the conflict of interest. (Later, nothing related to Charlie working or living in NYC was determined to be the cause of his death and the NYPD Mounted Unit took over the duties of the ASPCA.)

The horse owner who had had his horse suspended on the 8th had the same vet that examines the NYPD horses examine his horse the following day and no lameness was found in the horse. The next day the horse owner brought the examination certificate to the Health Department to have the work suspension lifted. This cost the horse owner the cost of the additional vet exam out of pocket and work days lost during the busiest time of the year. Some say it was grounds for a lawsuit.

On December 9th Dr. Kraig Kulikowski went to the West Side Livery stable. Most of the horses he requested to see were again at the park working or out of the city vacationing on pastures. One horse owner asked the Health Department representative accompanying Dr. Kraig Kulikowski if his horse's paperwork (vet examinations) were in order; they said yes. He asked if any specific accusation or concern had been made against his horse to require an examination; they said no. He declined allowing his horse to be seen as there was no legal grounds for it and little reason to trust this veterinarian. TWU then sent a letter threatening the Adams administration, NYC Health Department, and Dr. Kraig Kulikowski with a lawsuit if the industry was further hassled with these examination requests interfering with their busy season.

On December 24th, Christmas Eve, TWU was once again busy fighting corruption against the NYC horse carriage industry that the Adams administration attempted to pursue with barely a week left in office! Spinning the story that the vet hired was "independent," "legally required," and the horse carriage industry had "something to hide" by refusing the exams, more slander was falsely spread, as well as a threat of suspending licenses or a lawsuit against the industry! NYCLASS even plans to hold a City Hall rally supporting the carriage ban bill killed by the Health Committee's November 14th vote, on

December 30th, just a day before the bill officially expires with the Adams administration January 1st, assumedly because they fear a new carriage ban bill will be difficult to pursue with the incoming Mamdani administration. The NYC carriage horse owners remain open to a truly independent equine vet examining their horses.

The amount of arrogant elitism in the horse industry is astounding. You would think with such a unique profession in modern society you would find more people standing united against animal rights extremist ideology, especially in cities where real estate development so often pushes horses further away from us.

It is when we allow ourselves to become so far detached from horses in our everyday lives that we forget how to read them and lose our ability to advocate in their best interests rather than what we might "feel" is best for them. So many think they should "be a voice" for horses that don't have one, all while the horses have no difficulty communicating with us if we know how to "listen" to them, rather than project our feelings and ideologies onto them. It is when we see horses on our streets, in our parks, and on farms on the regular that we have the ability to protect them. It's when we drive horses away to only be accessed in rural areas of vast space that we fail them in their survival for a place with us in modern society.

We forget horses went into wars with us and were how we commonly got around. We forget horses are not wild animals meant to be "free" to face the harsh realities of Mother Nature. We forget roads were paved with asphalt *for horses,* before the automobile was even invented. We forget the hard labor without today's regulations horses used to endure, far from the pampered lives they have today. We forget horses are not people and don't want to be treated as such.

The horse world is one where I occasionally run into, "Cool, I have horses too," and sometimes hear, "You keep horses different from the way I do, so your way is wrong." There is no standard. Over thousands of years of domesticating horses we now owe it to these highly adaptable animals to find places where they can still thrive where ever we may be.

If you have the space and means for a larger turnout area, stall, pasture, farm, etc that's great, but it isn't wrong if you don't and still make do. It's simply wrong to chastise someone with a perfectly adequate home and routine for their horse. Just as some people prefer to live in a rural environment and some prefer an urban environment or some live in a two story house while some live in an apartment, it's not very different with horses and neither is more "correct" or "humane" than the other.

While NYC carriage horses have box stalls that allow them to turn around and lay down in by law, others prefer standing stalls that give their horses more of a sense of security. Some prefer extra large stalls, while others fear their horses may get cast in them. Some horses prefer to spend time inside and some prefer to be outside. Some horses prefer to be around other horses, some don't, and some prefer a more protected interaction through a stall or shared work space. Some prefer to feed their horse one type of hay or grain/oats, while others prefer a different diet for their horse, yet both horses could be equally healthy. Some prefer bitless bridles or in the case of NYC carriage horses they must wear a bit by law. For some horses that aren't frequently worked, daily turnout could be helpful. For NYC carriage horses their work routine supplements any need for more time being turned out. Their longevity, healthy condition, cortisol levels, and general behavior proves this to be true.

While some horses live in hay filled, single floored wooden barns with their pastures just beside them, NYC carriage horses live in flood preventative multi-floored stables, with more fire-resistant concrete-brick walls and a sprinkler system. They trailer to their pastures on upstate NY or PA farms.

NYC police horses work more frequently on the street than carriage horses and are housed in stables with similar stalls, just a block apart from each other without time on pastures. The Royal Mews carriage horses only use box stalls and have 6 weeks vacation on pastures. The Household Cavalry are kept in straight stalls with just one month of vacation on pastures. Both the Household Cavalry and London police horses live in upper levels of their stables.

None of these ways of living are wrong or cruel for a horse, they are just different and more people need to learn to respect that what works for one horse may not work for another, but also that if one horse lives a life different from yours, which just works for them, you need to accept that reality. The "I'm right and everyone else is wrong," ideology can not be accepted in the horse world where there absolutely is no *one,* single correct way for a horse to live.

Why do some people think advocating to ban something they don't like without considering the repressions or spending time learning about the subject beyond what they've seen on the internet (which unbeknownst to them are often false or misleading claims) would ever be a beneficial stance? Why would someone go so out of their way to give their own life a feeling of meaning by attacking someone else's passion in life which they don't understand?

Attacking a horse carriage driver's career profession is not a hobby. It's something a person who is miserable within their own life and incapable of empathy might do when faced with something they don't understand. The fact is people who dedicate their lives to working with animals do so not for the love of money but for the love of animals.

When you look at the 160+ year old NYC horse carriage industry of 150-300 carriage drivers and owners at any given time, in a union of over 160k members, dozens of 24/7 stablemen, over 200 horses, 68 separate, privately owned carriage medallion businesses, bringing in millions of tourist dollars, dozens of pages of regulations enforced by 5 city agencies, 3 stables, over 100 stalls, operating under multiple types of licenses & inspections for the drivers, carriages, stables, & horses, with a minimum of 2 yearly vet exams, a vet making a minimum of bi-weekly stable visits, extremely infrequent accidents providing a 99% safety record, hoof trimmings/shoeings every 4-6 weeks, regular teeth floating, a minimum of 5 weeks vacations on pastures, maximum 9 hours work per 24 hour period, minimum 15 minutes rest per 2 hours work, maximum working temperature of 89 degrees or 79 degrees with high humidity, minimum working temperature of 19 degrees, blankets required at 40 degrees or 55 degrees in wet weather, extensive driver licensing & training process, famously appearing in hundreds of films;

How on earth do you think this industry doesn't have enough oversight or protections and why would a couple of horses passing away over the years, occasionally getting sick, or having an extremely rare accident suggest the rest of the industry should shut down?

Why should the opinion of the vocal minority who is unable to understand the difference between animal welfare and animal rights that calls to destroy the bond built being humans and animals for

thousands of years be taken into account over the majority? If we simply let people decide on what they want to support the NYC horse carriage industry naturally thrives and survives or is driven out of business if consumers aren't patronizing it to cover their extremely high overhead costs. Why do some think it's necessary for the government to step in to decide their legal businesses with their privately owned horses is now prohibited? If you don't like horse carriage rides absolutely no one is forcing you to take one, but it's wrong for you to deprive millions of people who have one on their bucket list from enjoying theirs.

The NYC carriage horse industry made it through the 2020 pandemic when the city shut down, despite many other businesses not surviving. Despite slanderous lies and misinformation spread to an often uninformed public and being used as a pawn for political favors among corrupt politicians, the NYC carriage horse industry lives on in Central Park. Making a fool of yourself because you saw an out of context photo or video on the internet doesn't mean you're being cool or trendy. To deny that every piece of negativity spread about the NYC horse carriage industry stems from false propaganda spread by real estate developers after the carriage stable properties just because it aligns with your uninformed opinion doesn't make it true.

If you don't want to understand that this is an industry that just works where workers and horses are happy to be a part of it and millions are happy to see it and patronize it, that's on you. It doesn't mean you should go out of your way to destroy what works for everyone else. You simply don't have to keep your horse in a city, don't have to register them as a NYC carriage horse, and don't have to take a ride with our horses.

Horses are highly adaptable animals that thrive alongside humankind whether that be working in an urban environment, a rural environment, a snowy climate, or a desert climate. There are a multitude of lifestyles horses thrive in being driven or ridden in different types of stalls, on different diets, different types of stables, and different work routines; One can not expect every horse to be identical in the vast variations they have been bred to survive healthily in our world. It's wrong to attempt to harm everyone else's enjoyment or advocate for something you don't fully understand that counter to your supposed goal would also negatively impact the lives of the horses you claim to care about. You can not successfully advocate for something which you don't fully understand. Banning carriage horses doesn't guarantee a better life for horses. It simply removes all the protections they have, makes one less place for horses in a modern society with so few places left for them, and tosses their future into complete uncertainty.

Why NYC Carriage Horses Should NOT Be Banned With Intro 943:

- ★ Hundreds of people (mainly immigrants) would be out of work and unable to provide for their families, as no other job in their equestrian field of expertise they choose to work in is being offered to them or income while they seek similar work.
- ★ 68 small business owners would lose their business as nothing is being offered for the value of their carriage medallion.
- ★ 200+ horses that rely on this work for their physical/mental stimulation and to cover the high cost of their care will lose their jobs, homes, and the people they have developed long term relationships with.
- ★ No financial assistance is being offered for the horses long term care or security for what will happen to them if they are placed in a new home that can no longer afford their care.
- ★ The horses would lose the numerous regulations governing their care & the 5 agencies that monitor

them.

★Millions of tourists and New Yorkers love patronizing horse carriage rides through Central Park and it should be a tradition preserved for future generations.

★The horses are well cared for, healthy, happy, living good lives and in a well regulated industry that can be even further improved by passing Intro 937, the horse welfare and job protection bill.

★Carriage horses remain the statistically safest mode of transportation in NYC, accidents remain rare, and carriage drivers recently took on new protocols for additional safety measures.

★There are no systemic issues in the carriage industry occurring repetitively and if we acted on emotion over logic to make policy for everything in our city, we would have no cars, bicycles, trees, subways, or dogs.

★The NYPD investigation into what startled the horse to cause the accident involving Romanch Mahajan is still ongoing while the carriage driver & horse involved are no longer in the industry.

★There are real estate interests eyeing the carriage stable properties that have financially fueled false and misleading propaganda against the industry.

★Central Park was designed to be seen from the back of a horse carriage, with horses animating the landscape and slowing down the pace for everyone to relax.

★Numerous equine vets and professionals who visit the stables and examine the horses agree they're in good health and speak highly of their routine & work.

★The horses are privately owned and if these privately owned, legally operating, small businesses can be taken, what's protecting another?

★Thousands of horses are sent to slaughter every year because it's extremely difficult to keep up with the rising cost of care for an unemployed horse and if any rescues or sanctuaries have room for a horse now, the spot should be reserved for one of those homeless horses.

★Over 150 years of historic and iconic NYC tradition would be lost forever.

★NYPD horses share a vet, farrier, and stable neighborhood with NYC carriage horses, have less regulations, work the street more often, and aren't being considered for a ban.

★The main ban-backers are animal rights activists with extremist views that don't result in the best choices for animals lives and don't represent the average person's views.

★When we forget our history of the bond humans share with horses by continuing to eliminate places for them to exist alongside us in our modern society, we detach from our ability to understand them in order to make the best decisions for their welfare, and ultimately take the first steps towards eliminating their species entirely.

★The horse carriage drivers are represented by the powerful Transport Workers Union who oppose a ban.

★Most New Yorkers and tourists are supportive of the industry continuing as numerous polls have shown.

★NYC Carriage horses are the heart and soul of our city; For many just the sight of a horse among us means so much and many children may never get to pet or feed a horse a carrot without them.

From: [Jill Pruett](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] please end the carriage rides
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 6:08:52 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to [REDACTED] as an attachment.

Dear New York City Officials,

I am writing to urge New York City to end the use of horse-drawn carriage rides in and around Central Park. While these rides are a long-standing tradition, they are no longer appropriate in a modern city environment, where horses are exposed to traffic, noise, congestion, and extreme weather.

Sincerely,

Jill Pruett
[REDACTED], NY, NY 10023

From: [Joanie Chaney](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HORSES
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 1:15:20 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to [REDACTED] as an attachment.

All of that about those horses dying, pulling carriages having to work in the heat and over exhausted and they're all done. It needs to stop now I'm the most animal lover you've ever seen and you need to stop it now.

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Joanna Siwiec

Hello,

I am submitting written testimony to request that horse drawn carriages be banned in New York City. I grew up riding horses, and it while I always love seeing the horses in Central Park, I also know it's not in their best interest to be working in these dangerous conditions. Additionally, the recent fatal accident where a teenager visiting from India, Romanch Mahajanis, tragically died illustrates how inappropriate it is to continue to allow carriage horses to operate in New York City.

Best,

Joanne O'Donnell

I am writing today as a NYC public school teacher, as a parent, and a concerned individual who cares deeply about people and animals. I am urging you to pass Intro 943, Romach's Law. The time is now. Horses in NYC are a thing of the past, a "tradition" that this city has clearly outgrown. A majority of the public is in favor of banning horse carriage riding in NYC. We have been witnesses to the wreckless behavior of the drivers that have caused traffic accidents, horse injuries and deaths, and most recently the tragic loss of 18 year old Romach.

My son is 18, the same age as Romach when he was violently thrown from a horse carriage and lost his life. I cannot imagine the pain his family has been going through and will have to endure for the rest of their lives because of this one senseless act. There is no apology, no payment, no amount of well-wishes that will ever comfort the family. NYC cannot bring Romach back to their parents. What we can do, is right this wrong by doing what should have been done MANY years ago. How many more incidents are we going to let happen under our watch? The time to ban horse carriages is NOW.

I have open and honest discussions with my son as well as my students about the horse carriage industry in NYC. They have seen on social media and news outlets the mounting evidence and stories of horses being treated cruelly, forced to work in busy streets and dangerous conditions, dying while trying to perform a job they did not ask to do. The drivers and the owners take NO accountability. If you have ever gone by the horse "stables" on the west side of Manhattan, which I have, you can smell them before you see them. This same smell often permeates Central Park where the horses are forced to work. I often go and stand in the lot next to the building ("stable") and look into the small cut-outs meant to be "windows" in these buildings. The horses are kept on some of the top floors and if I look up long enough, I can sometimes get a peak of a horse trying to swing his/her head towards the window. I can imagine there is little to no ventilation in these unairconditioned buildings and they are trying to breathe, trying to see something more than the dimly lit small space they are given in the "stable" where they cannot lie down nor move.

Today I am using my empathy, my advocacy, and my frustration to take a stand AGAINST the horse carriage industry. There is no place for horse carriages on NYC streets in 2026. I hope the council will provide Romach's family with some form of justice by passing Intro 943 into LAW. Thank you for your time.

Jodie Quaglia
6th grade teacher (NYC Schools)

Honorable NYC Council Health Committee

RE: In support of keeping Horse Carriages in Central Park hearing testimony. If may please the council committee, was sent as a rough draft.

I honestly believe that those horses are well cared for.

I resent Animal Rights organizations interference in our local elections and I'm an animal rights supporter. I cite Election 2014 when I as a layperson expressed it to NYC & Council via Twitter that NYClass gave six figures(100.000+) to then NYC Public Advocate Bill de Blasio as Press media reported which derailed the NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn. She was rumored to run things as an Irish Warden and NYCClass couldn't buy her support, was leading in the polls and expected to clinch the Democratic Primary but this NYC Class thus was an election interference as PACS are doing eg: Fix The City in recent Election 2025 former mayor gave 8.8 million USDs and cite "Pro-Israel Group Raised Tens of Thousands for NYC Council Candidates~The candidates did not disclose Solidarity PAC's fundraising role in campaign finance disclosures." by Chris Gelardi and Julia Rock March 20th, 2025

<https://nysfocus.com/2025/03/20/new-york-city-council-mayor-election-israel-palestine>

=NYC got first Jewish NYC Council Speaker. Imagine that it took a first Muslim candidate for NYC Mayor for that to happen, unprecedented for wrong reasons. And AIPAC is in all American' elections of which NYC is not immune. NYClass was exposed as the ladies of Real Estate~wives because they wore Chanel modern & vintage in their public advertisements until I called them out then they started using regular people. Which leads me to believe that they have found a way to fund election campaigns and have reason to believe that they are endorsing candidates early on and that members are giving within limited amounts independently not to raise suspicion on the Election Board. I believe they fund the NYC Council Speakership from 2024 to present before Los Somos Puerto Rico where the cash is promised to members' districts in exchange for their promised votes. Speaker Corey Johnson foie gras ban and attempted fur ban. Do your honors really care about animal welfare as we have thousands of humans who are street homeless yet animal rights bills take precedence? Animal Rights activists won't stop until we are all vegans as AIPAC won't stop until every American candidate for office is in support of Israel regardless of Gaza genocide thus to get military aid and the only time we should've stopped was post terrorist attack retribution when Gaza was razed. IMHO Netanyahu is the one behind OCT 7th 2023 attacks from failure to prevent as the US supports Israel with military aid because they have the best global intelligence. Republicans are the problem in America and Conservatism globally many Liberals make the argument. Prime Minister Netanyahu had tried to dismantle the power of the Parliament/Knessett prior to the brutal, barbaric terrorism attack by Hamas. Egypt stated that they informed Israel and therefore they were fully informed thus had the means to prevent the rise of global antisemitism. The Israelis/Jewish people are to be blamed but who they voted for are. Israel, World, Vote Liberal.

Central Park was designed to be seen by Horse Carriage. If NYCClass the REBNY wives seek midtown stables worth millions they Central Park can build them stables maybe uptown. Horses are to be exercised and y'all climate change for horse dropping. They have access to water and food as opposed to NYC Mounted NYPD horses do not, those horses as seen at Times Square always have white mouths from their dehydration saliva. Will they come for NYC Mounted NYPD horse ban next, probably but that is where the city will draw the line. Horses are to be exercised daily. Many dog owners do not research the breed that has been bred over centuries for specific purposes and they get rid of them because it is in their DNA certain habits and demand to be exercised. Will they seek to ban sled dogs Alaskan, Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamute would face extinction from not being used as designed from boredom will take millennia to turn them into lap dogs.

The death of the tourist was an unfortunate freak accident that can be prevented with having patience posts/poles installed on sidewalks and loading areas to anchor horse carriages and load patrons safely. Conspiracy theories aside, who's to say that someone didn't spook this particular person with a laser light in their eyes or long range air rifle from somewhere hiding in the bushes. Was the matter properly investigated by the NYPD that is on par with the national average of just solving three (3) out ten (10) felonious crimes against property and persons. I am a victim of human trafficking twenty-seven years because the NYPD dismissed all my police complaints from the beginning 1999 with last at Staten Island Special Services #Stalked27Years #NYCCouncil followed my story from 2014 Speaker Melissa Viverito & I got any help. HUD landlord aids and abet because the police never made an arrest even after I begged to not accommodate the human trafficker Jeff Fernandez that plays out as the invisible domestic violence husband, landlord Castleton Preservation LLC? Stellar Management rolled out a red carpet for my personal tormenting stalker that crosses their property lines into my unit and does things/abuses me as I sleep. My landlord major stakeholder is anti-Gay bigot he attempted to evict a an LGBTQIA commercial building alleging Gay Sex Parties as affidavit and affirmations entered after finding invites to monthly thank you gatherings with lights snacks and refreshments from their garnage and recyclables. "Laurence Gluck filed suit in Manhattan Supreme Court on Wednesday, saying he rented the space to Bytelair Inc., only to discover that instead of pushing papers, the corporation was throwing illegal sex parties for transsexual, transvestite and cross-dressing participants."

<https://nypost.com/2015/02/04/office-space-being-used-for-wild-sex-parties-suit/> Matter was settled in settlement.

I went the route to tell my story & to get closure from another city agency that was rejected~my testimony as a tenant activist not just telling my suffering story but of the mass displacement half of four hundred and fifty-four units (454)=a violation of HUD AntiDisplacement Congress codified and continues to enhance adding to it to cover

more areas and peoples and is in every HUD Housing federal financing along with required accurate accounting. HPD issues a certificate of eviction after claims landlord aiding and abetting in my personal human trafficking for the pleasure of REBNY and counsel allowed to chastise me even used, with the blessing of the administration hearing officer to have HPD 100 Gold Street security to harass with Gay bigotry mentioning things they shouldn't have been privy to of my sexual preferences this went ignored by my hosts. I plan to enter my Article 78 additional to my testimony in support of keeping Horse Carriages in Central Park that I never got to file. I had thought I had to pay and couldn't afford it; moreover, NYC failed to assist me in filing. I shouldn't be evicted LT 300937-2026 Richmond County. I thought with the testimonies to NYC Mayor's Office Rental-Rip Off would get an intervention to get as I requested to get HPD Adjudications to rescind the Certificate of Eviction and they didn't. So I reported the matter to HUD IG of how HPD rule on Mitchell-Lamas to force tenants to sign blank sum leases every two years with threats of immediate eviction if they refuse then landlord adds increases of hundreds of dollars that match the Housing Choice Voucher/ Section 8 Occupancy Payments Standards increases for that fiscal year. I heard the HPD adjudications officer state over speaker phone that if my NYCHA building has HPD Section 8 that is they don't accept the rental increase of \$2,696.00 from base rent of \$776.00 that he would leverage with NYCHA Section 8 that they doing the same thing with RAD, to my amazement was accepted. HUD has limited Occupancy Standards Payment amounts for one person to \$2,700.00 & move or transfer to \$2,200.00 safe done to all households.

Yet I find time to testify today.

As California CA43 Representative Maxine Waters said "I am reclaiming my time" and as former late Georgia GA5 Representative John R. Lewis "Good Trouble" forward from victim to advocate.

This could be a murder/manslaughter all to ban Horse Carriages in Central Park which is as old as the park itself. Naming this bill after Romanch Mahajan shows the no end your honors will go to ban Horse Carriage rides in NYC. This is not the same as Amber Alert naming. It should be the will of the people and not the electeds that received endorsements(individual campaign funds from their members all a matter of connecting the dots) from the animal rights activists/organizations. Put the matter in the next mayoral election or presidential election as a proposal as there you have the most voters. Central Park is responsible for the death of a Carriage Horse. Why would they whilst opposing horse carriages plant a species of a berry plant that is known to be however climate change resilient poisonous to plants and humans. Children have died consuming the **Japanese yew** (*Taxus cuspidata*) evergreen shrub berries.

Thank you

Mx. Joe-Anthony Sierra

Honorable NYC Council Health Committee Wed., 15th of July, 2026 10 AM

RE: In support of keeping Horse Carriages in Central Park hearing testimony. If may please the council committee, which was sent as a rough first draft.

I honestly believe that those horses are well cared for.

The NYCCouncil hearing should've included Horse Carriage Ban Bill for inhabitants to have found it easier.

I resent Animal Rights organizations interference in our local elections and I'm an animal rights supporter. I cite Election 2014 when I as a layperson expressed it to NYC & Council via Twitter that NYClass gave six figures(100.000+) to then NYC Public Advocate Bill de Blasio as Press media reported which derailed the NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn. I cite

"NYClass, a key Bill de Blasio donor, hit with a subpoena in the mayor's fund-raising probe"

By Greg B. Smith NYDailyNews

<https://www.nydailynews.com/2016/04/22/exclusive-nyclass-a-key-de-blasio-donor-hit-with-subpoena-in-mayor-fund-raising-probe/>

And

"De Blasio donor's shocking testimony: \$100K bought me the mayor"

<https://nypost.com/2017/10/26/de-blasio-donors-shocking-testimony-100k-bought-me-the-mayor/>

By Kaja Whitehouse

Published Oct. 26, 2017

A private interest lobbyist seeks to buy/endorse their way to their agenda's end, un-domesticate horses as old as the US if not millennia. Horses should be free and wild then every mascot in our homes should be also. Every domesticated dog and cat & caged bird should be also, Are they not imprisoned against their will? Horse carriage rides are suspended in Heatwaves. To ban Horse Carriages then NYPD shouldn't use Mounty/ Mounted horses. They also deserve to be free and wild as nature intended.

Thank Mx. Joe-Anthony Sierra

St. George Staten Island NYC

I have lived near Central Park for well over 40 years. Throughout that time, the horse drawn carriages have been a wonderful asset to Central Park and the surrounding community. The horses bring joy to tourists and residents of our neighborhood, especially local children. Banning horses and horse-drawn carriages is a terrible idea.

On the flip side, in 2019, the Council legalized the riding of ebikes and scooters in NYC, and about 2 years ago legalized their use in Central Park. Unlike horse-drawn carriages, which have resulted in a minimal number of accidents (all of which, thanks to certain special interest groups, are highly publicized), ebikes and scooters have resulted in hundreds of injuries (both of their riders and, in even greater numbers, of pedestrians) and many deaths. Yet the Council has done nothing to ban them from city streets or even just from our parks. The Council has allocated exactly \$0 for enforcement of Vehicle and Traffic Laws against ebike and scooter riders.

Ebikes and scooters travel at speeds in excess of 40 MPH, while horse-drawn carriages travel at approximately 4 MPH. Yet the special interest groups and tech gazillionaires (such as Mark Gorton, funder of StreetsBlog and TransAlt) have donated so much to Council members' campaigns that safety concerns are completely out the window.

Who is suffering from this? Senior citizens, who are often unable to get out of the way when an ebike going 35 MPH the wrong way on a one-way street. Physically challenged persons, who are often blind-sided by scooters driving on the sidewalk. Children, who are struck by electronic motorized vehicles operating unsafely in the parks.

Who is benefiting from this? Council members, whose campaign coffers grow with each vote against ebike or scooter driver responsibility. Tech companies such as Lyft, who make \$millions subsidized by the City budget while doing nothing to make their customers responsible for their law-breaking and negligent acts.

Keep the horse-drawn carriages. Ban the ebikes, scooters, and other electronic motorized vehicles from our city's streets. Make NYC Safe for Seniors, Children, Disabled Persons, and all pedestrians.

TESTIMONY OF JOEY SCHNIDE
Before the New York City Council Committee on Health
In Support of Int. No. 943 — “Romanch’s Law”
July 15, 2026

Chair Schulman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joey Schnide. I live in Brooklyn, and I am a recent graduate of NYU School of Law, where I served as Co-President of the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund. I write in my personal capacity to urge the Committee to advance Int. No. 943.

This Committee will hear arguments this week that the carriage industry needs better oversight rather than a wind-down. I ask you to measure those arguments against the industry’s actual record under the oversight it already has. That record is long, it is recent, and it is damning.

On June 17, Romanch Mahajan, an eighteen-year-old visiting our city with his family, was killed when a carriage horse spooked and bolted in Central Park; according to news reports, the driver had stepped away from the carriage to take a photograph when the horse took off. A week before that, a sixteen-year-old carriage horse named Deniz collapsed and died in front of parkgoers near 72nd Street, still harnessed to a carriage carrying passengers; a necropsy found he had eaten Japanese yew, a plant acutely toxic to horses. The Central Park Conservancy counts eight serious carriage incidents in the past thirteen months. All of this comes four years after the collapse of Ryder, the sick, emaciated horse for whom this bill was originally named, on a Midtown street in August heat.

The industry’s answer is that these are isolated failures by individual operators. The stable inspections conducted this past December say otherwise. When a city-retained veterinarian made surprise visits to the Manhattan stables, he found abnormalities or concerns in at least a dozen of the horses. Nine of the twelve horses he examined had scarring consistent with improperly fitted tack. Seven had unsound dental conditions. One was recommended for a complete lameness work-up. His report also described skin lesions caused by too-tight harnesses and horses housed in stalls too small for them. The owners refused to permit even basic trotting and bloodwork evaluations. Those findings only became public because an advocacy organization pried them loose through a Freedom of Information Law request. An industry that turns away veterinary diagnostics while the city is watching has told you everything you need to know about how it will behave under the next set of rules.

There is also a limit to what any set of rules can accomplish here. Horses are prey animals. Their flight response is involuntary, and a fifteen-hundred-pound animal can be set off by a siren, a falling branch, or a camera flash. Hitching posts, refresher trainings, and driver testing operate at the margins of that problem; they do not reach it. Midtown Manhattan and Central Park on a summer weekend are among

the most crowded public spaces in the country, and no regulation makes them a safe place to hitch a startle reflex to a passenger vehicle. Every carriage on those drives is the next incident waiting to happen.

Int. No. 943 winds the industry down responsibly. It stops new licenses now and gives existing operations until June 1, 2028. It requires humane disposition of the horses and prohibits their sale or transfer for slaughter or for use in another carriage business, which answers the most common good-faith question about a ban: what happens to the animals. It also directs the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to run a workforce development program for drivers and stable workers. The bill has been characterized as forcing a choice between animal welfare and workers' livelihoods. That characterization does not survive a reading of the bill, which provides for both.

The Council is on firm legal ground. This body has prohibited inhumane animal practices before, and the courts have sustained its authority to do so, most recently this March, when the Appellate Division upheld the City's foie gras ban. Chicago ended carriage operations in 2021, and Montreal's ban took effect at the end of 2019, without the disruptions their carriage industries predicted. On this issue New York is behind its peers, not ahead of them.

I will end on a personal note. I have walked past the carriage line in Central Park on ninety-degree days and watched horses stand on asphalt, in traffic exhaust, for hours, so that tourists can have a photograph. I understand the pull of the tradition. But a tradition's age is not an argument for its continuation, and this one has now cost a young man his life. Nearly seven in ten New Yorkers are ready to let it go.

I urge the Committee to advance Int. No. 943 and the full Council to pass it. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Joey Schnide

Brooklyn, New York

Testimony in Support of New York City Council Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)

Submitted to the New York City Council

Chairperson and Members of the Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)**, which would responsibly phase out New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry while ensuring the humane retirement of carriage horses and providing time for workers to transition to alternative employment. The legislation proposes ending the issuance of new carriage licenses immediately and prohibiting horse-drawn carriage operations beginning June 1, 2028.

New York City is one of the world's great cities. It is also a city that has continually evolved to reflect changing public expectations around safety, ethics, and animal welfare. While horse-drawn carriages have historical significance, history alone is not sufficient justification for continuing an activity when more humane and appropriate alternatives exist.

Cities around the world have already reached this conclusion.

Major cities including **London, Paris, Toronto, Montreal, Beijing, and Mumbai**, along with numerous municipalities across Europe, Latin America, and Asia, have either prohibited or significantly restricted horse-drawn carriage tourism because of concerns relating to animal welfare, public safety, traffic congestion, or all three. These decisions have not diminished their appeal as global tourist destinations. Instead, they demonstrate that successful tourism can thrive without relying on working horses in dense urban environments.

Horse-drawn carriage rides were once a practical form of transportation. Today they exist primarily as entertainment for visitors. Unlike essential working animals in rural communities, carriage horses in Manhattan operate amid heavy traffic, construction, emergency vehicles, extreme temperatures, and millions of pedestrians each year. These conditions present risks that cannot be completely eliminated through regulation alone.

The tragic death of tourist Romanch Mahajan has highlighted the reality that these risks extend beyond the horses themselves to passengers and the public. While no single incident should determine public policy, policymakers have a responsibility to consider whether an activity that poses avoidable risks remains appropriate when safer alternatives are readily available.

Supporters of retaining the industry often argue that today's carriage horses receive excellent care. Even accepting that many owners genuinely care for their animals, the question before the Council is broader. The issue is whether horses should continue

working in one of the world's busiest urban environments simply to provide a nostalgic tourist attraction.

Many practices once considered acceptable have evolved as society's understanding of animal welfare has progressed. We have increasingly recognized that animals should not be expected to perform unnecessary work or entertainment simply because it has traditionally been accepted.

Importantly, Intro 943 recognizes the human impact of this transition. Rather than imposing an immediate prohibition, it provides a phased implementation period and requires the humane disposition of carriage horses, including protections against their sale for slaughter or transfer into another horse-drawn carriage business. This balanced approach acknowledges both animal welfare and the livelihoods of workers who deserve support during any transition.

Tourism in New York City has never depended on horse-drawn carriages alone. Visitors come to experience Central Park, Broadway, museums, architecture, restaurants, neighborhoods, and the extraordinary energy of the city itself. The city's tourism industry has continually adapted over generations and will continue to do so.

Passing Intro 943 would not diminish New York City's character. Instead, it would demonstrate that the city continues to lead by aligning public policy with contemporary standards of safety, compassion, and responsible stewardship.

Future generations should remember New York not only for preserving history, but for having the courage to evolve when evidence and values pointed toward a better path.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to support and pass Intro 943.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Eales



Subject: Ending Horse-Drawn Carriage Operations in New York City for Public and Animal Safety

To the members of the committee,

For more than 160 years, horse-drawn carriages have been a recognizable part of New York City's history and culture. However, the city in which this tradition began bears little resemblance to the New York City of today.

In the mid-19th century, the city's streets were far less congested, the population was significantly smaller, and horses were a common and necessary mode of transportation. Today's New York City is defined by heavy vehicle traffic, constant construction, crowded streets, emergency vehicles, bicycles, buses, and millions of pedestrians. The urban environment has evolved to a point where it is no longer compatible with safely operating horse-drawn carriages.

Although the industry is often described as being highly regulated, recent incidents involving horse deaths, runaway carriages, injuries, and even human fatalities raise serious questions about whether existing regulations are sufficient to protect both the animals and the public. Regulations are only effective if they adequately address the risks inherent in today's environment. Unfortunately, the evidence suggests that they do not.

Horses are prey animals and can be startled by sudden noises, unexpected movement, or other unpredictable stimuli. In a city as active and densely populated as New York, these conditions are unavoidable. Even the most experienced drivers and well-trained horses cannot eliminate the possibility of an animal becoming frightened. When that occurs, the consequences can be severe for the horse, passengers, pedestrians, motorists, and carriage operators alike.

This is not an argument against tradition. New York City has always evolved as circumstances have changed. Throughout history, longstanding customs and practices have been modified or discontinued when they no longer served the public interest or could not be conducted safely. Preserving a tradition should never come at the expense of public safety or animal welfare.

The continued operation of horse-drawn carriages presents risks that cannot be entirely mitigated through additional regulations alone. The modern realities of New York City's streets make it impossible to guarantee the safety of everyone involved. When a

practice poses recurring and foreseeable dangers despite regulation, it is appropriate to reconsider whether it should continue at all.

I respectfully urge the City of New York to phase out horse-drawn carriage operations and prohibit their continued use on city streets. Such a decision would recognize the realities of today's urban environment while prioritizing public safety, responsible governance, and the humane treatment of animals.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

John Galanakis

John Quadrozzi, Jr.

New York City Council Horse Carriage Ban – Opposition Testimony

Dear New York City Council,

Firstly, I would like to express how saddened I was over the news of the tragic death in Central Park. Having children of my own, my heart goes out to the family and friends of this wonderful young man.

I am however hereby writing in *opposition* to any ban whatsoever against horses in NYC.

There has been a call as of late, and periodically in the past, to ban Horse & Carriage related activities when unusual tragedies strike.

At these moments, animal rights organizations openly reanimate their agenda and publicly express their desire to remove all animals from people's lives and habitat.

This is a one-sided view and would be an enormous loss for New York City, New Yorkers, and visitors from all around the world loving the Horse & Carriage – they exist not as a necessity, but rather solely for this reason.

The carriage horse ride is a niche activity and easily misunderstood by non-horse experienced, non-horse care related individuals, where things like Horse Blinders that protect horses from distractions/spooking, or pulling a carriage which on level grades like NYC is less laborious than for a riding horse, can be easily misunderstood and negatively profiled.

Like in any activity, there will be accidents and bad actors for which government puts in rules and enforcement as is reasonably needed without imposing unnecessarily on functionality and enjoyment. Here too, there must be a balancing act of rules and enforcement to keep horses, horse carriage operators and the public's rights and enjoyment of carriage riding intact and safe. This includes things like; 1) establishing rules for reasonable care that Toxic Plants to specific animal species are not put where effected animals are known to frequent; or 2) that a reasonable request for Hitching Posts, Watering Troughs and some effective form of Shading (natural or otherwise) are provided where horses are typically idle/stopped - this isn't even something new to NYC but somehow has gone missing - infrastructure for horses welfare and signage for public awareness is a key responsibility of government.

To quote a comment I often see and like; "this is a historical, cultural and beautiful activity that we must protect and preserve"! No group, no matter the minority nor majority, should infringe upon this. I shudder to think that if every time an emotionally driven mentality prevailed, what the function of government would be in their duty to preserve the interests

of all ie. "*the minority*". This is hardly a "*majority wins*" matter, but one of preservation of our history, culture, and beauty for everyone. Here, what effects one area of urban horses, effects all. It seems simple enough that for those that don't like it, they don't have to ride it, but for those that do, they should be allowed to as people have done for hundreds of years!

All horses are domesticated and thrive best with continuous and close human care, and in their horse related activities as their exercise, in keeping them both healthy and strong in preserving their mental and physical well-being. *

***NOTE:** Pasture, although important while horses are not getting their exercise, in itself is not the whole picture in horse health, nor is it without common natural risks like exposure to invasive toxic plants that can literally kill them, or just the lack of close monitoring and human interaction that only happens in direct personalized relationships with owners and caretakers. In fact, the idea of "*Wild Horses*" is a misnomer, as all horses are domesticated, with those in the wild being feral that are known to live short and painful lives.

Regards,
John Quadrozzi, Jr. –

- Brooklyn equestrian facility partner & operator; pony & trail rides, kids after-school, summer and adult **horse care & riding** programs – Community Board 7 & Prospect Park
- Reviver of NYC oldest and continuously active riding stable est. 1917 – Windsor Terrace
- Father of two daughters who grew up riding horses, with the eldest attending both SUNY Morrisville and Centenary University to which she made the Dean's List, both in their equine studies programs,
- Took formal adult horse lessons at NYC's former Jamaica Bay Riding Academy and Clarmont Riding Academy
- As a child from the age of 5 did regular recreational horse riding
- My father was a NYC horse owner, self-taught trick rider and as a kid was the hammer man for his father a farrier
- My grandfather was an Italian Immigrant that came through Ellis Island as a commercial horse farrier known in the Rockaways as "the Village Blacksmith"

*see spreadsheet **Exhibit A**

New York City Council - Horse & Carriage ban opposition myths vs facts; John Quadrozzi, Jr.		Exhibit A
#	myths	facts
1		
2		
3	Happy the Elephant	<i>not relevant</i> - wild animal
	"animals are people too "	<i>ignorance</i> - horses are herbivores, prey, herd animals while humans are omnivorous, predators, pack animals. However in the manner horses were domesticated, they most closely resemble humans in the productive work manner in which they live and earn their keep, a most noble shared quality.
	hitching posts don't solve the problem	<i>not in the absolute, but surely help tremendously and why established and requested by horse people</i> - but are any solutions absolute in manner in which we as intelligent beings reduce our exposure or the likely hood of negative consequences, e.g. can a leash always stop a dog, or brakes always stop a bike, pedicab, scooter, motorcycle, car, bus, truck, train!
4	horses in the wild	<i>NOT as healthy as a horse</i> - as horses in the wild lack continuous human care, they mostly live short and painful lives https://wildlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/FactSheet-HorsesAndBurros_FINAL-1.pdf https://duckduckgo.com/?q=common+health+problems+with+feral+horses&atb=v508-1&we_feature_name=requery&we_started_at=00-07-34_436
	New York City should follow others in banning Horse & Carriages	<i>quite to the contrary</i> - NYC is an innovator, a trend setter, a solution finder/maker, and should never be know as giving up on it's culture nor fossilizing it!
5	wild horses	<i>misnomer</i> - there are NO wild horses as horses in the wild, including the Mustang are feral, even the Prysalski Horse well documented as the only true wild horse has been proven by science in 2018 to have domestic genes thus is feral https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aao3297?_cf_chl_tk=tNkUg4tKJop6FnV.mvhvgicZe0QC3e4AdU_nWXwyZNI-1784418376-1.0.1.1-.5HpCOYzQuz_VK3YMMAdMpPgYnZSIDF5LsbsExCCG6c
7	*no solutions	<i>nothing further from the truth:</i>
		<i>cooling station</i> - misting evaporative cooling and hose & nozzle
		<i>footing</i> - soft yet compacted unpaved earth/fine stone blend creating natural geothermal cooling and drainage
8		<i>hitching posts</i> - heavy bollards
		<i>shading</i> - under trees or constructed shelter
9		<i>watering troughs</i> - stone structures with fill & overflow/drain means to provide cool, fresh clean drinking water
10		

From: [Jonathan Lipsmeyer](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New York City carriage horse industry
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2026 2:55:52 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to [REDACTED] as an attachment.

This is regarding the New York City carriage horse industry.

I have long felt very strongly that this practice is cruel and needless, in addition to a nuisance. Recent events have added to this immeasurably.

Please work to ban carriage horses immediately. Failing this venue, Ryders Law 943 can accomplish this, and it's overdue.

Rather than a gradual phase out, I think it's finally time to admit that: horses pulling heavy loads aside cars, atop paved concrete, breathing endless auto exhaust, in deadly heat, promulgating the odor of manure all over south Central Park where they reside, is already bad enough.

But, if on top of that, they are a danger to both themselves **and** others? We've really run out of time to admit this is all terrible and untenable.

Please end this immediately.

Respectfully,

--

Jonathan Lipsmeyer

[REDACTED]
Brooklyn NY 11201

From: [Jonathan Parisen](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Council Hearing Today - Please pass Romanch's Law!
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 2:10:55 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to [REDACTED] as an attachment.

Dear Members of the Council, Thank you for your attention and focus on this important issue - this is a long time coming and long overdue. And thank you, Chris Marte and Speaker Menin for your leadership.

I had come down to testify in person this morning, but it was so packed outside they said we could wait but probably would not get in, and it would be better to testify online. I have been watching the hearing today on Zoom.

I urge the City Council to pass Romanch's Law and permanently end horse-drawn carriages while helping workers transition to new jobs.

The majority of New Yorkers agree that the Horse carriage Industry in a place like NYC is not safe for people, and not safe for horses and needs to be ended. We have just witnessed the heartbreaking and preventable death of a young man, Romanch Mahajan, and death of a 16-year-old horse Deniz. No family should have to endure the loss that Romanch's family is experiencing, and no horse should be forced to work under conditions that continue to result in needless suffering and death.

We continue to witness accidents over and over - In the last 13 months alone there have been seven horse-related incidents in Central Park.

I have been running in the park three times a week for years and regularly witness horses out in overly hot or overly cold weather. Carriages loaded up with people and narrowly missing bikes and pedestrians. Horses tied up in full sun with no shade or water. It is totally chaotic. This is outdated and unnecessary in our city and needs to end.

Encouragingly, I have learned today from this committee meeting that there seems to be pathways for both workers to find alternate work and to find safe and caring homes for the horses.

And that it seems that council and the department of health are listening to the over 70% of New Yorkers who want this industry to end. This is a very achievable situation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address the council and please pass Romanch's Law before we have any more tragedies.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Parisen

Jonathan Parisen

[REDACTED]

New York, NY 10024

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Support for Intro 943

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, to send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help the drivers transition to new employment.

Dearly,

Jose B. Castiblanco M.

July 16, 2026

Dear Council,

It is with the greatest sadness that not only do the horses suffer but now we have a family that is suffering and will continue to suffer due to the death of their son that could have been avoided.

The suffering that these horses have had to endure is from the cowards that continue to fight for their job!!! There are other industries they can find jobs in.

Keep these poor animals off the streets and let them live in the nature that they were born to be and live in.

Not one human being cares about who is pulling their carriage through the streets of NYC. They only care about the sites that they can see..... Just ask anyone of them if they ever look at the horse...

STOP THE SUFFERING BEFORE MORE ANIMAL DIE AND HUMANS.

Josephine Esposito

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I am writing to express my support for ending the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Cities evolve. The way we move, the way we work, and the way we think about the treatment of animals has changed dramatically over the past century. I believe it is time for our policies to reflect that progress.

Horse-drawn carriages were once a practical form of transportation. Today, they exist solely as a tourist attraction. In my view, there is no longer a compelling reason to ask animals to perform this role when modern alternatives are readily available.

This issue is about more than preserving or ending a tradition. It is about deciding what kind of city we want to be. New York has often led the nation in adopting policies that reflect evolving public values. Extending that same spirit of progress to animal welfare is a natural next step.

Many New Yorkers and visitors no longer see horse-drawn carriages as charming or iconic. Instead, they see an outdated practice that raises ethical concerns about using animals for entertainment. Whether someone believes the horses are well cared for or not, I believe we should ask a simpler question: if this practice were proposed for the first time today, would we choose to create it? I believe the answer is no.

Ending the horse-drawn carriage industry is not about erasing history. It is about recognizing that traditions can be honored without being preserved indefinitely. We can celebrate New York City's past while choosing policies that reflect today's understanding of compassion and responsible stewardship.

I respectfully encourage the Council to support legislation that phases out horse-drawn carriages and embraces humane alternatives. Doing so would demonstrate thoughtful leadership and reaffirm New York City's commitment to building a future that reflects both innovation and respect for all living beings.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Josh Peck

"We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment."

From: [Juhi Virdi](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Subject : Support for Romanch's Law and the Ban on Horse-Drawn Carriages
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 6:10:42 AM

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Respected members of the council,

I am writing to express my strong support for Romanch's Law and for a complete ban on horse-drawn carriages.

The tragic death of 18-year-old Romanch is a heartbreaking reminder that preventable accidents can have devastating consequences. A young man with his entire life ahead of him lost his life while reportedly protecting his mother during an incident involving a horse-drawn carriage. No family should ever have to endure such an unimaginable loss.

This tragedy has highlighted the urgent need to reconsider the continued operation of horse-drawn carriages in busy urban environments. Public safety must always come first. If stronger safety measures or a ban had already been implemented, incidents like this might have been prevented.

Supporting Romanch's Law is about more than remembering one young life. It is about creating meaningful change that protects countless others in the future. It is also about recognizing that horse-drawn carriages pose risks not only to people but also to the horses that operate in congested city streets.

I respectfully urge policymakers to support Romanch's Law and take decisive action to end horse-drawn carriage operations. Let Romanch's legacy be one that inspires safer streets and prevents future tragedies.

No family should have to experience the grief and heartbreak caused by a preventable incident.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Supporter

Please end the horse drawn carriages. As a New Yorker, I know the most important part of New York is its people. We lost Romanch recently, and we cannot lose another. And it's cruel to the horses. New York is better than this. Please. Thank you.

- Julia Fein

From: [Julia Chen Rinaldi](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SUPPORT Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 9:43:22 AM

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Hello,

My name is Julia Rinaldi and I strongly urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Thank you.

Julia Rinaldi
Brooklyn, NY

Good afternoon, members of the New York City Council.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I urge you to finally end the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City.

For many visitors, these rides may seem like a charming tradition. But behind that image are horses who spend their working lives navigating congested streets, breathing traffic pollution, standing on hard pavement for hours, and sharing the road with cars, buses, emergency vehicles, bicycles, and constant noise. No matter how well an individual horse is cared for, this is not an environment that reflects their natural needs or behavior.

Their lives don't end when the workday does. Many carriage horses spend much of their time confined in stalls with limited turnout and opportunities to socialize, graze, or roam freely—activities that are essential to their physical and psychological well-being.

This issue is also about people. Carriage drivers deserve support in transitioning to sustainable livelihoods that do not depend on exploiting animals. Protecting animal welfare and supporting workers are not opposing goals—they can and should go hand in hand.

New York City has long been a leader in social progress. As our understanding of animal welfare evolves, so too should our policies. What may once have been accepted as tradition no longer aligns with the values of a modern, compassionate city.

We no longer need horses to pull carriages through one of the busiest urban environments in the world. We have humane alternatives that preserve the city's character without compromising animal welfare.

I respectfully ask the Council to phase out horse-drawn carriage rides and help create a future that reflects both compassion and progress—for the horses, for the drivers, and for New York City itself.

Thank you for your time.

Julie

Re: Horse Drawn Carriages
July 16, 2026

Please focus on what is destroying NYC, the reckless bicycles, and not the quiet, serene horses that are loved.

I have a concussion after a cyclist ran a stop sign and crashed into me in Central Park. I thought I was dead. Numerous other victims have been killed or severely injured by cyclists. Instead of addressing these extreme hazards, the city has only become obsessed with horses. Few have been injured by horses over the past few decades.

I am in Central Park every day with my dog. The horses are the most polite and attentive of all that transport people. If you want to save lives, ban electric vehicles. Also, license, regulate, and insure all cyclists because they are frequently killing people. Bicycles have become weapons, while the city focuses on horses.

Provide safe streets for people AND horses, instead of fueling the fire and promoting more bicycle mayhem.

Additionally, watching any horse die can be traumatizing, but death is a part of life. People have heart attacks in public areas and die on the spot. No one claimed abuse then. In Central Park, we have seen hawks eat squirrels, tearing apart their flesh in front of us. Has the city banned the hawks yet?

Again, please focus on what is destroying NYC, the reckless bicycles, and not the quiet, serene horses that are loved.

Very truly yours,

Julie Harvey

Dear Councilors:

I am writing to urge you to support and advance Ryder's Law and finally bring an end to the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City.

On June 9, 2026, a 16-year-old carriage horse named Deniz collapsed and died while pulling a carriage carrying tourists in Central Park. Witnesses described a devastating scene as the horse struggled before dying in front of park visitors, families, and children. For many who witnessed it, the experience was deeply disturbing and traumatic.

This was not an isolated incident in a long series of accidents, collapses, injuries, and deaths involving horses forced to work in one of the most congested and stressful urban environments in the world.

Just weeks earlier, a carriage horse became spooked and crashed into another carriage in Central Park, overturning it and injuring a driver. Before Deniz, there was Ryder, whose collapse and subsequent death in 2022 became a national symbol of the suffering inherent in this industry and inspired Ryder's Law. Ryder was supposed to be the wake-up call. Yet years later, horses are still collapsing, still being injured, and still dying.

Supporters of the carriage industry often claim these horses are well cared for. That is not the central issue. The issue is that no amount of care can change the fact that horses are prey animals evolved to roam across open landscapes, graze, socialize with other horses, and respond instinctively to threats. They were not meant to spend their working lives navigating traffic, sirens, crowds, construction noise, heat radiating from pavement, exhaust fumes, and the constant pressures of Manhattan streets.

The question before the Council is not whether some carriage operators care about their horses. The question is whether New York City should continue permitting horses to be used as tourist attractions under conditions that repeatedly lead to suffering, accidents, collapses, and death.

What is particularly troubling is that supporters of the industry often justify its continuation by claiming horse-drawn carriages are essential to New York City's tourism economy. Yet there appears to be little evidence supporting that assertion.

While polls have found substantial support among New York City voters for ending the carriage industry, there has never been a widely cited independent survey demonstrating that tourists would stop visiting New York if horse-drawn carriages were replaced with humane alternatives. New York attracts tens of millions of visitors every year because of Central Park, Broadway, museums, architecture, food, history, sports, and culture—not because tourists believe horses should be pulling carriages through a modern city.

If the industry claims horse-drawn carriages are indispensable to tourism, then it should be able to provide credible evidence. The burden should not be on animal welfare

advocates to prove tourists would still come to New York without horse-drawn carriages. The burden should be on the industry to prove that exposing horses to these conditions is necessary for the city's economy. To date, that evidence has not been produced.

At some point, repeated tragedies stop being accidents and become policy failures.

Every time a horse collapses or a person is injured, the public is told that regulations are sufficient. Every time there is a crash, injury, or death, we hear that the incident was unfortunate but exceptional. Yet the incidents continue. The pattern continues. The suffering continues.

New York City has evolved beyond many practices once defended as traditions. Tradition alone is not a justification for continuing a practice that raises serious concerns about animal welfare and public safety. The city's values should be measured not by what traditions it preserves, but by its willingness to abandon practices that no longer reflect modern standards of compassion and responsibility.

Ryder's Law offers a practical and reasonable path forward. It would allow New York City to retire an outdated industry while providing opportunities for workers to transition to humane alternatives. It recognizes that protecting animals and supporting working families are not mutually exclusive goals.

Deniz should be the last horse to die pulling tourists through Central Park.

How many more horses must collapse before action is taken? How many more deaths will be explained away as isolated incidents? How many more visitors must witness an animal suffer and die before the Council acknowledges that the system itself is the problem?

History will remember whether New York City chose to lead or chose to delay.

I urge you to advance Ryder's Law and finally end horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City.

Sincerely,

J. Tumblety

Native New Yorker

💔 TONIGHT IN CENTRAL PARK
ANOTHER NYC CARRIAGE HORSE DIED.



Testimony to the New York City Council

As someone whose life has been profoundly changed by horses, I respectfully ask you to support an end to the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Working with horses has taught me that they are deeply sensitive, intelligent, and social beings. They thrive when they have the opportunity to move freely, interact with other horses, graze, rest, and express their natural behaviors. Busy city streets filled with traffic, noise, pavement, and pollution cannot provide the environment they were evolved to live in.

While I recognize that many carriage drivers genuinely care about their horses and have devoted years of their lives to them, I believe we can honor both the people and the animals by moving toward a more humane future. This does not have to be about blame. It can be about progress.

Our understanding of animal welfare continues to evolve. As a society, we have an opportunity to ask whether traditions should continue simply because they have existed for a long time, or whether we should make changes when better options become available.

I hope New York can become a leader in creating solutions that prioritize horse welfare while supporting workers through a thoughtful transition.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your consideration of this important issue.

Respectfully,

Juliet Grace

Dear Council,

I'm writing in support of bill Intro 943 banning horse-drawn carriage rides in NYC. The cruelties and opposition have been well communicated so I won't repeat them.

The argument that because something was, it should always be is illogical and at best, specious. In fact, by this logic, women would never have the right to vote and we would still have slaves.

The Council needs to include a plan for transition to new employment with zero job loss for the drivers in part to avoid future bills highlighting this bill's employment failure as a reason not to change.

Please finally do what many mayors have promised and end the horse carriage rides in NYC now.

Committee on Health
New York City

Nicole Pinto

[REDACTED]
Middleburg, FL 32068

Jul 17, 2026

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the horse carriages in New York City. I ask that you do not pass Intro 943 and instead pass Intro 937.

I have been a horse carriage service provider in Florida since 2009, a tourist of NYC and a board member of the Carriage Operators of North America.

New York City is seen around the world as a leader as are the horse carriages that are there. What better way to show the rest of the world that NYC is a leader than by empowering the horse carriages to be the very best that they can be. They need the city's support for that. They need you to extend a hand to help that happen. What a way to lead with a shining example of wonderful horse care and safe carriage operations. Intro 937 brings this into action.

Statistics show that accidents with horse carriages are very low in comparison to other modes of transportation like bicycles, golf carts, e-bikes, e-scooters and cars.

The horses in the NYC carriage service have a home there and like anything else, they are well-cared for to ensure that they can do the job that is asked of them easily and happily. Not every horse is as lucky to have a home and rescues around the country struggle to support the homeless horses that they have. I know that I see horse rescues close every year due to lack of funds. It's where the need is more than they can support.

The horse carriage drivers love their work. They love their animals. It is not an hourly job that once they clock out, they are done. No, they think about their horses and their needs even after hours as horses require round the clock care. It is a relationship between human and animal and it's beautiful but takes commitment. It's hard enough finding one's passion in life but these people have found what makes them happy and that is giving happy memories with their horses to the people that visit Central Park. Taking away someone's passion, it is such a mental health blow that I worry that some of these drivers may not recover as well as the horses, who share this bond with their drivers.

As a board member of the Carriage Operators of North America, we would like to extend our hand in helping implement what we see as the best practices for horse carriages as far as horse

welfare, carriage ride safety and driver training. Please reach out if we can be of any assistance. Our mission is to help horse carriages be the best that they can be.

Please do not support Intro 943 - banning the horse carriages.

Please support Intro 937 - empower your horse carriage industry to be a gem for all the world to see!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Have a lovely week.

~Nicole Pinto and my own fur-babies

Owner of Pinto Carriage Works, LLC

Board Member of Carriage Operators of North America

Hello –

My name is Kacie Rettig, I'm a resident of City Council District 6 on the Upper West Side and am writing in support of Romanch's Law (Intro 943).

New York is an ever evolving city and while I appreciate the need to remember traditions and history, horse drawn carriages in the park need to be retired. As we have seen, the use of these animals in such a congested area has only made the area more congested and has tragically resulted in the death of a young man and many horses over the years.

Romanch's tragic death is an unfortunate result of the somewhat chaotic conditions I have often observed on the south drive of the park. Tourist, runners, people walking dogs, e-bikes, and horse carriages all converge in this area, where I have personally witness near collisions and accidents. The council must end the practice of horse drawn carriages in the park and prevent future accidents from happening. These conditions are not safe for residents, tourists, or the animals in the park.

I understand that many family's livelihoods depend on this industry. I commend the council for working to request the Department of Consumer and Worker protection to administer a workforce development program to facilitate a transition to another industry, and I would urge the city to support these workers and others affected to find gainful employment elsewhere in the tourism industry or beyond as they so choose.

The time to act is now. Further delay will only open the opportunity for more potential accidents, and expose these working animals to more extreme weather and challenging conditions. Please support sunseting the horse drawn cab industry in New York City. Thank you!

INTERNAL

To the Members of the New York City Council,

I'm begging you to please vote YES on Romanch's Law.

I honestly don't understand how we've reached a point where it's considered normal for horses to spend their lives pulling tourists through traffic and concrete in New York City. Every time I see one, I don't think "tradition." I think, "That horse deserves so much better."

They're living, feeling animals. They get tired. They get scared. They deserve sunshine, grass, room to run, and a peaceful retirement—not a lifetime of dodging cars, breathing exhaust, and standing on pavement.

We can't keep waiting until another horse collapses or another tragedy happens before we decide enough is enough.

Please choose compassion. Please vote YES on Romanch's Law.

Hello and thank you for your attention.

My name is Kala Pierson and I've lived in NYC for most of the last 25 years. I now own a modest home in 10025, so I'm permanently invested in the neighborhood and I walk in Central Park on more than 50% of days year-round.

I absolutely support Romanch's Law.

I am deeply grateful this legislation is moving forward. I ask you to advance this law both in the name of the horses and humans who've already suffered and for the park's safety, sanitation, modernization, and future.

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kanak Khan", with a stylized flourish underneath.

From: [Karen Granelli](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Support of Intro 943
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 5:41:37 PM

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To: Committee on Health (July 15, 2026 10:00am Hearing on Intro 943)

TOPIC: SUPPORT FOR INTRO 943

Hi, my name is Karen Granelli and I am a lifelong New Yorker & have lived in Manhattan for the past 30 years. I've worked on the Upper West Side for most of that time & have always observed the carriage horse industry to be a brutal and extremely sad thing to witness. No regulations or spotty regulations that are not enforced. Horses with what I can only describe as "dead eyes" working in crazy traffic, with buses, taxis, scooters, bikes, construction, etc whizzing by them. Horses operating in extreme heat & cold (even when they're not supposed to be). Tragedies of horses spooking, leading to accidents & the deaths of horses and, now, most recently with poor Romanch's tragic & preventable death, the first human casualty of this out-dated industry. It is

time to finally end this “tradition”. It no longer has a place in our modern, chaotic city streets & needs to end before more unnecessary tragedy & loss of life.

I am urging the NY City Council to PLEASE pass Intro 943, aka Romanch’s Law, asap to finally put an end to the horse carriage industry, both sending the horses to sanctuaries where they can live out the rest of their lives & helping the drivers transition to new forms of employment. It is time. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Karen Granelli

[REDACTED]
New York, NY 10009
[REDACTED]

o

Sent from my iPhone

My name is Kasey Pak and I'm writing you today as someone who cares deeply about animal welfare. I urge you to pass Intro 943 and end the horse carriage industry in New York City immediately.

Horses working in NYC carriage industries endure significant hardship that cannot be ignored. They work long hours hauling heavy loads on hard pavement in all weather conditions - heat, cold, rain, and snow. These animals have limited access to adequate rest, hydration, and grazing, and face constant risk of injury from traffic, noise, and congested streets. Many develop joint problems, respiratory issues, and hoof disease from the concrete surfaces they're forced to traverse daily. Most troublingly, these horses have no choice in their labor - no autonomy or opportunity to express their natural behaviors. Horses are prey animals who naturally roam, graze, and move freely across open spaces. Confining them to urban environments for commercial purposes directly contradicts their fundamental biological and psychological needs.

The horse carriage industry is not essential to New York City's function or character. Modern alternatives already serve tourists and those seeking scenic rides without animal suffering. Electric replica carriages provide the same nostalgic experience while employing workers who benefit from modern comfort and safety. Pedicabs and rickshaws are human-powered, increasingly popular, and create employment opportunities. Expanded trolley and vintage transit options also capture the charm of historic transportation without relying on animal exploitation. These alternatives prove that we can meet the demand for scenic experiences without requiring horses to labor in concrete jungles.

A just transition is crucial for the workers currently employed in this industry. The city should fund comprehensive retraining programs for carriage drivers to transition to electric vehicle operation or other employment sectors. Income support during the transition period, combined with investments in green jobs that align with NYC's sustainability goals, will ensure that no worker is left behind. This is not about punishing workers - it's about helping them move toward dignified, sustainable livelihoods.

Accredited equine sanctuaries stand ready to provide these horses with the care they deserve. After years of labor on city streets, these animals need spacious pastures where they can graze and move naturally, veterinary care tailored to their recovery, socialization with other horses in peaceful settings, and ultimately a dignified retirement. We have the resources and the facilities to make this a reality.

New York City prides itself on being progressive and humane. We've eliminated other archaic industries over time, and we should do the same with horse-drawn carriages. Continuing this practice when viable alternatives exist sends the wrong message to our residents - especially our children - about how we treat vulnerable beings in our care. This isn't about restricting anyone's freedom. It's about ensuring that animals in our city aren't subjected to unnecessary hardship for nostalgia or profit. I urge you to pass Intro 943, end this practice, transition the drivers to new employment, and sanctuary the horses. Show New York's true values. Thank you.

Hello,

My name is Kat and I'm from Charleston, SC and run a Facebook page called Charleston Carriage Industry Supporters. I do not work in the industry and am an outsider looking in. After speaking to horse professionals inside and outside the industry, listening to the advice of equine veterinarians, and meeting the wonderful people who get to work with these amazing animals, I fully support the carriage industry here and in other cities. Banning an entire industry due to mistakes from a few would be detrimental to the welfare of these horses. I encourage you to say No to Intro 943. I ask you instead to put your support behind Intro 937. Making needed changes in the industry will preserve a time-honored tradition in Central Park and will ensure these magnificent animals continue to have a place in modern society so future generations will know them.

Sincerely,

Kat Neal

Charleston, SC

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of Romanch's Law and the effort to end horse-drawn carriage rides in New York City.

While these carriage rides are often marketed as a cherished tradition, we cannot ignore the reality faced by the horses who are forced to work in one of the busiest cities in the world. They spend long hours standing on hard pavement, breathing traffic exhaust, pulling heavy loads through congested streets, and working in extreme heat and cold. These are not conditions that allow horses to thrive or express their natural behaviors.

There are also significant public safety concerns. Horses are prey animals and can be startled by sirens, honking vehicles, construction, or crowds. When a frightened horse bolts in city traffic, the consequences can be devastating—not only for the horse, but also for passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Numerous incidents over the years have demonstrated that these risks are real and cannot be eliminated in such a complex urban environment.

New York City can honor its history while embracing more humane and modern alternatives. Passing Romanch's Law would protect horses from unnecessary suffering, improve public safety, and reflect the compassion that so many New Yorkers value.

I respectfully urge you to support Romanch's Law. Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: [Katerina Trabazo](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Romanch's Law
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 10:00:01 PM

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Greetings and thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the horses. I'd like to also extend my condolences to Romanch's family.

Just yesterday, footage of a horse around Eighth Avenue forced to work was seen in the middle of traffic in 92 degree weather maybe returning or leaving the stables.

It's time to end this cruel industry. This is about the respect and dignity these sentient beings deserve. The industry knows these animals cannot speak for themselves. Anyone who excuses this industry clearly discriminates anyone who not physically appears different from the rest of us, but also unable to communicate in the same way we do.

STOP defending this with the excuse that horses like to work! First of all, we don't know that. At least I've never had a horse tell me s/he wants to work. Also, stop claiming they are well treated.

A typical horse-drawn carriage can weigh several hundred pounds before anyone even climbs aboard. Once the weight of the driver and multiple passengers is added, a horse may be required to pull well over 1,000 pounds through crowded city streets. The constant stopping, starting, and pulling place significant physical demands on the horses, especially during hot summers and freezing winters.

These horses also spend much of their time in an urban environment that was never designed for large animals. They're forced to navigate through traffic, exposed to loud noises, construction, sirens, and pavement, all of which can create stress and increase the risk of accidents. Keeping large animals in enclosed urban facilities is far from their natural environment. Horses are social, grazing animals that thrive in open pastures where they can roam, interact with other horses, and express natural behaviors. They are not able to do this while being forced to work.

Furthermore, how insulting to New Yorkers to think that the only thing NYC has to offer is a ride through Central Park on an ABUSED horse drawn carriage. New York has so much to offer to visitors; and, we would love to show tourists that we don't support animal abuse.

New York City has long been a leader in innovation and compassion. Replacing horse-drawn carriages with animal-free alternatives would reflect those values while protecting both horses and the public. It is time to retire this outdated attraction and give these hardworking animals the peaceful retirement they deserve

Katerina Trabazo

Dear honorable council members,

We must immediately ban the use of horse drawn carriages. It is 2026. I watch horse drawn carriages in *The Gilded Age* and *Bridgerton*, why on earth are these animals being subject to this. Animals, pedestrians, and riders have not been safe from injuries and fatalities and for what? An obnoxious gimmick? I urge you to ban horse drawn carriages. Let's make it safer for pedestrians to enjoy the park. I sympathize with the people who make a living as carriage drivers, but surely we can offer them an alternative that is safe for the public and will keep the roadways free of horse excrement. Please pass the carriage ban. Let's make NYC a healthier and safer place for all of us.

Thank you,
Katherine Connors
Astoria Resident

Romanch's Law Intro 943

Written Testimony by Katherine Sperling, [REDACTED], New York, NY 10025

July 17, 2026

I was unable to attend the hearing on July 15 in person but would like to voice my hearty support for Romanch's Law. I have opposed horse drawn carriages in Central Park for years, and have been frustrated at the lack of action by our politicians. The carriages are dangerous (and inhuman in many cases) for horses, dangerous for pedestrians, and dangerous for car drivers. Any potential benefit for the owners of these horses and the drivers of the carriages is far outweighed by the costs. We have seen horses die, horses run loose and terrorize pedestrians, and now, an accident that led to the tragic death of a young man visiting NYC.

Now is the time to pass Romanch's Law and remove this danger from our city.

Please, please vote to pass this law.

Sincerely,

Katherine Sperling

I am disappointed in Council Speaker Menin and I am her constituent.

Why is the City Council prioritizing carriage horses over those of us who have been BEGGING for years for action to be taken about e-bikes. In addition to side-swiping pedestrians on crosswalks and sidewalks, they have driven many of us from Central Park. A friend of mine lost her two front teeth to a cyclist in Central Park.

Just last week, there were two very serious crashes in Central Park that we know of, caused by e-vehicles. One was a female jogger hit and knocked unconscious with a serious head injury on West Drive at 64th who is currently comatose! The other was on East Drive at 72nd in which a female pedestrian was hit and had a serious head injury. Both were written up in the press (West Side Rag and Upper East Site) only because the press got a 'real- time' heads up about these accidents. Most of these never make the press.

E-Pedicabs are 100% illegal in NYC, yet they are all over Central Park creating havoc and crashes regularly, while ripping off tourists financially. The NYC City Council is silent on this fact too.

This is total hypocrisy around safety in the park and denial about the e-vehicle crisis that is occurring in the park daily.

Get your priorities straight! Stand up to the tech bros who make money from Door Dash and such firms that urge fast, dangerous e-bike deliveries.

From: [New York City Council](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: Wed, Jul 15 2026 @ 10:00 AM - Committee on Health
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 7:57:05 PM

Attendee will be: Submitting written testimony

[REDACTED]

Attendee name (Zoom name): Kathleen Cromwell

[REDACTED]

Hearing: Wed, Jul 15 2026 @ 10:00 AM - Committee on Health

Subject of testimony: PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE BAN HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGES IN NYC, ALREADY!!!
ENOUGH WITH THIS RIDICULOUS, BARBARIC, OUTDATED, INHUMANE INDUSTRY TO AMUSE
TOURISTS!? SICKENING TO SEE THESE AMAZING ANIMALS EXPLOITED. PLEASE MAKE IT STOP.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER.

Organization: Self

Organization if "Other":

If a testimony was uploaded, it will be in the attachments.

From: [Kathy Flier](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Riders law . ..#stopthecarriagerides
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 11:26:34 AM

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My name is Kathleen Flier.. my phone # is [REDACTED]my email address is [REDACTED]

I live in Minnesota and even though I don't live in New York ..I feel we should ban these carriage rides ...I was on Facebook all day yesterday watching the hearings and the protests on this ..for one these horses don't have a voice ..they are trained to do this ...that's all they know ...we as people have a voice we can make the decision to go to work if we don't feel good we call in and stay home ..if we don't like our job we can say I quit ...they horses can't ..if they get sick they can tell us ...they have to lie down and die to tell ustoo many slaughter houses to many posts on Facebook with animal cruelty ..we need prison sentences for these people ... people are starting sanctuaries for these animals and people are donating to these places to take care of these animals ...we as people of the United States fly the American flag proudly ...so we the people can make this a better place for humans and mankind if we all have a heart ...and this is to the family that lost their son in an accident with a horse carriage ...you came to New York for an experience and it ended in a tragedy .. my heart goes out to you ...

I pray that someone has read this letter and takes this to heart ...

Sincerely Kathleen Flier

July 16th 2026

To the NYC council members,

I love ❤️ the Central Park Horse Carriages and do not support this I'll advised ban which greedy NYC developers have been pushing for over a decade to steal the valuable Clinton stables land overlooking the Hudson River for which they had an architect draw plans for a multi-million high-rise. Don't be mislead by ignorance about horses. They love to work and can carry up to 12 000 pounds, six times their weight. Most are descended from Arabian horses and can withstand much higher heat than humans. Try visiting the stables, then visit Assateague Wild horse preserve and see horses thst are sometimes maimed, starving or blind, vist a race track, show horses, take a horse back riding lesson before doing such a terrible thing and destroying our cherished NyC tradition of Central Park Horse Carriage rides, far safer than cars, e bikes, motorcycles and bicycles. Go visit an Amish farm or see the Amish riding the Carriage Horses on Lincoln Highway in Lancaster pa. Please don't take away our beloved Central Park Carriage rides. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathleen K Springer

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Astoria NY 11102

It is unconscionable that this still exists in a place that is supposed to be one of the most progressive in the world. Horses are sentient beings and it's appalling to still be using them in this way.

Here in Kelowna we have carriages drawn by people and the tourists absolutely love it, it's so much more fun.

This, to me - is a matter of a completely outdated practice that simply needs to be let go of. I do not think New York wants to be known as the state that had the choice, in this day and age to abolish this and chooses not to. It's horrible press and would be a factor in me choosing to travel there or not.

Anyone I've spoken to is flabbergasted the practice is still in existence.

I fully support completely dismantling it and letting these horses live the lives they deserve to lead instead of living under these, quite frankly disgusting conditions of oppression so some tourists can have an experience that shouldn't even be in existence anymore. It's an embarrassment this is still in existence and I truly hope the people of New York choose to be on the right side of history.

I urge the New York City Council to pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, retire the horses to loving sanctuaries. As someone who works in veterinary medicine, I believe we have a responsibility to advocate for the welfare of animals, and I respectfully ask you to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Sanders

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

From: [Keanu Arpels-Josiah](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony on behalf of Fridays For Future NYC & Sunrise Movement NYC
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 5:36:47 PM

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Dear Members of the New York City Council,

On behalf of youth groups Fridays For Future NYC and Sunrise Movement NYC, we urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

This is critical for our environmental and animal justice priorities, and we have long supported this bill.

Sincerely,
Keanu Arpels-Josiah
New York, NY
CD-01

Keanu Arpels-Josiah (He/Him/His)
Fridays For Future NYC & USA | <http://fridaysforfutureusa.org/>
Sunrise Movement NYC | <https://sunrisenyc.org/>
Swarthmore College '28
[Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Bluesky](#)

[REDACTED]

End Horse Carriages in NYC

I am respectfully requesting that the practice of horse drawn carriage rides be stopped immediately in NYC.

Horses are a species that should be respected and protected in this country for the contributions they have made to the survival and expansion of our species. Humans would not have survived the harshness of the frontier, the dangers of the battlefield or even sown the seeds of prosperity through literal farming that we have if he didn't have horses by our side to do it all.

And now the horses need us to stand up and protect them!! The way the carriage horses are treated and housed is unacceptable! Imagine you being one of them. Would you trade places with the horse?! Horses are not meant to live in crowded walk-ups!!

Stop this practice TODAY and let the horses live in harmony with nature the way they deserve to live.

Testimony in Support of Ryder's Law (Intro 967) and Romanch's Law (Intro. 943)

July 17, 2026

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I am writing as a concerned New Yorker to urge you to support Ryder's Law (Intro 967) and finally end the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City.

Many New Yorkers were deeply disappointed that some Council Members chose to vote against, or abstain from voting on this legislation earlier on, designed to improve the welfare of carriage horses. As elected officials entrusted with protecting the well-being of our city, I hope you will reconsider your position and recognize that compassion, progress, and public safety should extend to all living beings under our care.

For decades, carriage horses have been forced to work long hours on crowded city streets, exposed to extreme heat, bitter cold, heavy traffic, loud noises, and concrete surfaces that are entirely unnatural to them. Horses are prey animals with highly sensitive nervous systems. They are not suited to spending their lives in one of the busiest urban environments in the world.

The consequences are evident. New Yorkers have repeatedly witnessed horses becoming frightened, bolting into traffic, collapsing from exhaustion, or being involved in accidents that endanger both the animals and the public. These incidents are heartbreaking reminders that this is not an environment in which horses can safely or humanely live and work.

Beyond the public safety concerns, this is fundamentally an animal welfare issue. Horses are intelligent, social, and majestic animals that deserve lives free from unnecessary suffering. They cannot advocate for themselves, which is why it is our responsibility to do so on their behalf.

New York has long been recognized as a leader in advancing humane policies and embracing progress. Continuing to preserve an industry rooted in practices from another era is inconsistent with the values of a modern city rooted in ethics and equality. Progress often requires the courage to rethink longstanding traditions when they no longer reflect our shared commitment to ethics, safety, and humane treatment.

I respectfully ask every Council Member to place compassion above politics and tradition, and to support Ryder's Law. This legislation represents an opportunity to modernize our city while protecting both animals and the public.

As your constituent, I will remember how my elected representatives responded to this issue. I hope you will choose to stand on the side of compassion, public safety, and responsible leadership.

The recent death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan, who was killed after a carriage horse bolted in Central Park while he was visiting New York with his family, underscores the urgency of this legislation. A family came to our city to create happy memories and instead left with unimaginable grief after a preventable tragedy. His death is a devastating reminder that this issue extends beyond animal welfare – it is also about public safety. No family should ever lose a loved one because we failed to modernize an industry that has repeatedly demonstrated inherent risks to both horses and people.

We now have an opportunity - and a responsibility - to ensure that no horse and no family suffers another preventable tragedy. Future generations will judge whether we had the courage to act when

the evidence was before us. I urge you to support Ryder's Law and now, Romanach's Law, and demonstrate that New York City is willing to lead with compassion, reason, and the courage to embrace meaningful change.

And we want this change to happen today, not in 2027, not in 2028. Now.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kelly Liyakasa

New York City resident

Testimony to the New York City Council

Honorable Members of the Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

A society is often judged by how it treats those with the least power. Few beings have less power than the horses pulling carriages through the streets of New York City.

These are intelligent, sensitive animals who evolved to roam, graze, socialize, and move across open landscapes—not spend their lives navigating traffic, breathing exhaust, standing for hours on pavement, and returning to stalls where they have little room to simply be horses. No amount of regulation can change the fundamental reality that the streets of Manhattan are not a suitable environment for these animals.

This conversation does not have to be about choosing between people and horses. We can care deeply about the drivers and stable workers whose livelihoods are affected. We can honor those who have dedicated years to this profession. We can grieve every human tragedy that has touched this industry. And at the same time, we can recognize that compassion must extend to the animals who have no voice in the matter.

Progress has always required us to rethink traditions that no longer reflect our values. The question before you is not whether carriage horses are part of New York's history. They are. The question is whether they should be part of New York's future.

I believe New York can lead with both compassion and creativity by supporting workers through a thoughtful transition while finally ending an industry that depends on animals enduring conditions they did not choose and cannot escape.

The greatness of a city is measured not only by its skyline, but by its conscience.

Please choose a future that reflects the kindness, humanity, and leadership New Yorkers aspire to. Please vote to end horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Thank you.

Testimony of Ken Coughlin re: Int. 943

Committee on Health

July 15, 2026

I write in strong opposition to Int. 943, which would phase out horse carriages in Central Park. If a horse were able to testify, there is no doubt that he or she would dismiss the bill with a resounding “Neigh!” Anyone who claims to be concerned about animal welfare should oppose this bill. That’s because pulling happy tourists on the Central Park drives is a second career for many, if not most, of these horses, which otherwise would be headed for the slaughterhouse. The bill’s provisions to protect horses currently working in the park will not save the lives of thousands of future horses, including those yet to be born. If this ban goes into effect, they will all lose their opportunity for this second career doing something that horses have been bred for millennia to do.

Further, stately horse carriages add to the park’s charm. For decades the marketplace has agreed and voted to keep them. It’s a thriving industry that offers a good living for many workers. And how often do we urban dwellers have the opportunity to see these marvelous beasts up close?

A carriage driver made a serious mistake, violating a cardinal rule that resulted in Romanch’s tragic death. But this is not a reason to kill a thriving and popular industry. If you want to ban an industry from the city to save lives, start with helicopters, which are the number one source of noise complaints and add no value. This long-running effort to ban the carriages is really about developers eager to get their hands on the valuable Midtown real estate where the horse stables now sit. Council members, please do not fall for this. Do what is right for the horses and for the city.

To: The Committee on Health
Re: Support for Intro 943
July 15, 2026

Dear Committee Members,

I respectfully urge you to support Intro 943 and carefully consider the long-term welfare of carriage horses, as well as the public safety concerns that accompany their use on New York City's streets.

Throughout history, horses have served people with extraordinary strength, intelligence, and willingness to work. They remain indispensable partners in agriculture, law enforcement, sport, therapy, and countless communities around the world. But the welfare of any working equine depends on appropriate working conditions, routine veterinary oversight, proper farrier care, adequate rest, and an environment that supports both physical and behavioral health.

Busy urban streets are fundamentally different from the environments in which horses can safely and humanely perform their work.

Modern cities expose horses to constant traffic, unpredictable noises, congestion, air pollution, extreme heat, and hard pavement that places repetitive stress on joints, tendons, ligaments, and hooves. Even with experienced handlers and existing regulations, these factors cannot be entirely eliminated. Horses are flight animals whose instinct is to react to perceived danger. When startled, even a well-trained horse may respond in ways that are impossible to predict or fully control, placing both the animal and the public at risk.

While regulations have been developed to improve conditions for carriage horses, regulations are only meaningful if they are comprehensive, consistently enforced, and supported by independent veterinary oversight. Protecting working equines requires more than compliance with minimum standards. It requires continuous monitoring of their health, body condition, soundness, respiratory function, hydration, hoof quality, workload, and overall well-being throughout their working lives.

Veterinary science has long recognized that chronic exposure to physically demanding environments can contribute to musculoskeletal injuries, respiratory concerns, heat stress, and cumulative wear that may not always be immediately visible. Horses often continue working despite pain or discomfort, making regular examinations and objective health assessments essential rather than optional.

This discussion should not be viewed as a criticism of every individual owner or driver. Many people who work with horses care deeply about them. However, good intentions alone cannot overcome the inherent challenges of asking horses to perform this type of work in one of the busiest metropolitan environments in the world. The issue before the Committee is whether this setting can reasonably meet the long-term physical and behavioral needs of these animals while ensuring public safety.

The recent tragic incident has once again reminded us that when something goes wrong involving a horse in a densely populated city, the consequences can be devastating for everyone involved. While such events may be infrequent, their impact can be life-altering, and they reinforce the need to evaluate whether this practice remains appropriate in today's urban landscape.

Communities continually reassess long-standing practices as our understanding of animal welfare evolves. Traditions deserve respect, but they must also be measured against current knowledge, scientific evidence, and our responsibility to protect both animals and people.

Working equines deserve environments that prioritize their health, welfare, and dignity. As policymakers, you have the opportunity to ensure that New York continues to advance standards that reflect modern animal welfare principles while protecting residents and visitors alike.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of Intro 943 and for your commitment to safeguarding both public safety and the welfare of working horses.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kendall A. Bierer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Kendall Bierer

In Favor of Intro 943, Romanch's Law
Written testimony submitted 7/16/26
to New York City Council

Dear Council Members:

How many more horses and people will die before our city ends barbaric horse drawn carriages?

Horses, many of whom have been subjected to years of neglect and abuse in the horse racing industry, are then forced to pull carriages of tourists in the noise, traffic, pollution, and heat of New York city, literally until they die. Many are lame or sick, but still forced to work.

No amount of reform will make this practice safe or humane.

Please end horse drawn carriages in New York City. It is shameful that we have not ended this horror years ago.

These kind and gentle horses deserve to live in a sanctuary where they can roam on grass freely and peacefully.

Thank you,

Kenneth Colosky

As constituents in ZIP code 10023 for many years, we urgently ask you to pass Romanch's Law (Intro 943). The majority of New Yorkers do not want horse-drawn carriages on New York City streets. Recently, Philadelphia permanently ended its horse carriage industry, and we urge New York City to do the same.

This is an issue of both animal welfare and public safety. Horses are forced to navigate congested traffic, loud noise, extreme weather, and unpredictable conditions that place them at constant risk. At the same time, accidents involving horse-drawn carriages can endanger drivers, passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. No one (human or horse) should be put in harm's way for entertainment.

Residents are tired of witnessing horses suffer and of seeing preventable injuries and tragic deaths involving both horses and people. It is time to leave horse-drawn carriages in the past, where they belong.

Please pass Romanch's Law (Intro 943). Thank you for your consideration.

Good Morning.

My name is Kiirstin Calister-Kuhi, and I have been a New York City resident for 26 years... which I believe at this point makes me a New Yorker.

For about 17 of those years I have been tormented by the existence of the horrifically cruel horse carriage industry. I have spent countless hours over these years calling constituents to vote for "anybody but Quinn," handing out fliers with information about the dangers of taking a carriage ride and the inherent animal abuse, driving around in an electric horseless carriage picking up fares to show there is a better way, protesting at the hack line and at the stables, and rallying right here on the steps of city hall.

4 years ago we all watched in disgust and horror as the images of Ryder, an elderly horse made to suffer day in and day out, went viral as he collapsed in the August heat and his "owner" attempted to beat him into getting up. The world watched. The world cried for something to be done, and then the world moved onto the next tragedy as Ryder's law languished in limbo, as Ryder's abuser, Ian McKeever, was acquitted, and as more horses were spooked into traffic or collided with other carriages, more horses collapsed, and more horses died, putting both horses and humans in grave danger.

And now, 17 years after I decided to take a closer look at a horse tied to a carriage and determine that, no, that horse did not "want to work," and, in fact, that horse looked to be miserable, **a child has died.**

Please do not mistake my calling out of this tragedy as a chance to capitalize on a child's death for **THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE BEEN WARNING YOU ABOUT.**

Romanch Mahajan was only 18 years old, and because of the inaction of the New York City Council for the past 17+ years, his life was cut short. Because of the inaction of the New York City Council, Romanch will not get to go to college. He will never have a family of his own. He will never watch his parents grow old, and his parents will not get to see him achieve all that he was meant to. **THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE BEEN WARNING YOU ABOUT.**

And TWU will suspend the driver and retire the horse and say all is well and wash their hands of the whole thing attempting to go on with business as usual, but this *will* happen again. The driver in this horrific incident was not doing anything differently from what any of the other drivers do. I have seen countless drivers on their phones not paying attention to the horse strapped to their carriage. I have seen countless carriages completely unmanned. Near-death accidents happen all the time because callousness, arrogance, and laziness are built into the culture of the horse carriage industry. **THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE BEEN WARNING YOU ABOUT.**

And for anyone who was not already aware, **horses are prey animals.** This is why they spook easily, and when a horse perceives danger, its primary defense mechanism is to **run away**, except these horses run while attached to a 1000 pound carriage, sometimes, with people inside. Which is why advocates for the horses and general public safety have been saying for years, horses do not belong a bustling city. **THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE BEEN WARNING YOU ABOUT.**

If *this* city council does not act and pass Romanch's Law, we *will* see more collapses, more deaths, and more accidents that will lead to more human injury and loss. If *this* city council does not choose safety for everyone over an industry of liars and bullies, I'm not sure it can call

itself progressive at all. If *this* city council once again chooses business and profit over people, the blood will be on your hands. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.**

Kim Salvo

New York, NY 10016

July 17, 2026

Dear City Councilmembers –

The accidental death of young Romanch Mahajan is tragic. It was a horrible accident. However, I ask all of you, where is the outrage over the **preventable deaths** of more than 18 people who lived on our streets this winter? The people who froze to death. The people who live in filthy and inhumane conditions. The people who do not have public showers. Who get pushed out of public spaces because others do not like the way they look. Do you even know any of their names?.....Exactly.

Now from this one accident, you think you can completely ban NYC's 150-year-old horse-drawn carriage industry? For those councilmembers who chose to stay at Wednesday's public hearing, you heard heart felt testimony from the professionals in this industry. Hard working people who do not deserve to have their livelihood obliterated by you. If you apply this tactic driven by the extreme animal activists, then all of you in turn should have your positions terminated from causing the deaths of the 18 people whose names you do not know.

And yet, our City Council is once again influenced by the animal activists and yet you turn a blind eye as to how their anti-animal usage agenda only results in dead animals. You banned puppies and that got us dead animals. You banned foie gros and that got us dead geese. You banned circus animals and that got us dead animals. You banned dog racing and that got us dead dogs – to the point where in 3 years' time there will be no more greyhound dogs anywhere – at all. If you ban our horse carriages you know what you are going to get?.....dead horses. You must realize that all anti-animal usage bills kill animals. Plain and simple.

Oppose this bill. Listen to the people who know what they are doing and not to those who have an agenda. There is a solution to keep both the horses and people safe and this is not it.

Thank you for your consideration. Now please work on at least having public showers for our brothers and sisters on the streets.

Regards,
Kim Salvo

Dear NYC Council,

My name is Kimberly Conon and I am submitting this testimony in favor of passing Romanch's Law (Intro.967)

As a prior resident and member of the workforce in New York City, I have seen firsthand the unacceptable conditions these horses are forced to work in - namely inhumanely hot pavement, crowded streets, and loud noises that frighten and put both equine and human safety at risk. Operating carriage ride services is not in the best interest of these horses nor is it necessary for tourists and residents alike to enjoy the ambience of the city of New York.

Furthermore, I own a horse (pony) myself, and understand first hand how such environmental stressors can not only harm horses, but can literally kill them. These are animals who are genetically programmed to avoid predators - or any situation that causes fear for safety. As a result, they will continue to run / attempt escape when they sense danger and unfortunately humans and horses will continue to suffer injuries or even death in the process.

I would like to remind you there is a coalition of qualified horse rescue organizations ready to rehome every single one of NYC's carriage horses. In fact, I am personally acquainted with one of them (Maddy & Sven's Sanctuary) through my prior and ongoing donor relationship, and pledge continued financial support to assist with providing safe and permanent homes and ongoing care for these deserving animals. I can attest to the exceptional quality of care they will receive - they will have all they need, from veterinary consultations to customized feed programs to optimal exercise

plans. They will want for nothing and will be allowed to live out their lives with dignity, in safety, and at peace.

The city of New York cannot afford the blood on its hands that comes with prioritizing tourism over equine welfare and quite literally, the lives of horses. I respectfully ask that you PASS Romanch's law - for the ethics of the city, for the safety of its residents and visitors, and for the emergent protection of these gentle animals.

Best,
Kimberly Conon

Testimony to the New York City Council on Horse-Drawn Carriages

Good afternoon, Speaker and Members of the Council.

My name is Kimberly Harris, and I am here today to ask you to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Every day these horses are expected to work in conditions no animal should have to endure. They spend hours standing on hard pavement that pounds their joints and hooves. They navigate a maze of buses, trucks, taxis, sirens, jackhammers, crowds, and constant traffic—an environment that is the opposite of what horses evolved to live in. Horses are prey animals. Their instinct is to flee danger, yet in Manhattan they have nowhere to run.

When a horse collapses in the street, it makes headlines. What we don't see are the countless days of physical strain, the chronic stress, the confinement in stalls when they are not working, and the lives spent serving as tourist attractions instead of simply being horses.

This is not about blaming individual carriage drivers. Many care deeply about their horses. It is about recognizing that no amount of care can change the reality that New York City itself is an unsuitable workplace for these animals.

As a society, we no longer accept entertainment or tradition as justification for unnecessary animal suffering. We have evolved before, and we can evolve again.

Imagine spending your entire life pulling thousands of pounds through deafening traffic, breathing exhaust fumes, surrounded by blaring horns and flashing lights, with every day dictated by human profit instead of your own needs. That is not freedom. That is not dignity. That is exploitation.

History will remember whether we chose convenience over compassion or courage over complacency.

Please be the Council that finally says enough. Replace this outdated industry with humane alternatives that protect both workers and animals. New York should be known not only as a world-class city, but as a city that refuses to profit from the suffering of living beings.

The horses cannot stand before you today.

We can.

Thank you.

Thank you, members of the Council for holding this hearing today, to Councilmember Marte, who brought the legislation, and to former Councilmember Holden, who introduced a similar bill last year. Thank you Speaker Menin for your leadership in taking up the issue of ending New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.

I also want to express my deepest condolences to the Mahajan family, who are represented here today. The tragic loss of your son, Romanch, is heartbreaking, and my thoughts are with you. No family should have to endure such an unimaginable loss.

I urge every Council Member who has not yet done so to please sign on to Intro 943 and to move swiftly to pass this legislation. The truth is, horses are prey animals, and you cannot stop a horse from spooking, as we have all witnessed.

Still, the very day after the industry resumed operation after a brief recess following Romanch's death, pledging to take extraordinary measures to re-train their drivers, horse-drawn carriages were once again documented standing untethered and unattended, with no driver in sight. Since the industry cannot uphold its commitments for even a single day, it is critical that the phase out be swift, not dragged on for years for another tragedy to happen.

This legislation is not about punishing the drivers. It is about recognizing that horse-drawn carriages don't belong in New York City. We owe it to the Mahajan family and the horses to finally bring this chapter to a close.

I also respectfully ask that the Council do everything within its power to ensure the horses are retired to sanctuaries, where they can live out the rest of their lives in peace, with the care and dignity they deserve. It is the very least we can offer them.

Other cities have already moved on. Do we really want Philadelphia or Chicago to beat us to doing the right thing?

I say... neigh.

Thank you.



CENTRAL PARK CARRIAGE INITIATIVE

A Just Transition for New York City's
Horse-Drawn Carriage Industry

Presented by Kirk Skodis
June 2026

The Moment



A Century of Debate. A Month That Changed Everything.

For decades, the future of horse-drawn carriages in New York City has been caught in a political standoff — animal rights advocates on one side, labor protections on the other. No one moved.

Then, in the span of ten days in June 2026:

- A carriage horse died after eating a toxic shrub in Central Park
- A runaway horse killed 18-year-old tourist Romanch Mahajan near Tavern on the Green — the first tourist death from a carriage incident in over a century

Council Member Christopher Marte reintroduced Romanch's Law within days as Romanch's Law. Speaker Julie Menin and Health Committee Chair Lynn Schulman have scheduled a City Council hearing for July 2026.

The window is open. The question is whether anyone shows up with **a real plan**.

The Problem Nobody's Solved



Animal rights advocates want the industry ended but have **no transition plan for the 68** licensed operators whose livelihoods depend on it.

Why this has stalled for 30 years?

The horse-drawn carriage debate has never lacked passion. It has lacked a practical path forward that works for everyone.

Carriage operators are caught in the middle, facing rising controversy, unpredictable seasons, and **no viable alternative** being offered to them.

The TWU wants to protect its members and has actively opposed ban legislation because Romanch's Law contains **no costed economic transition plan** for workers.

The result: every side has a reason to stall, and no one has filled the gap.

The Solution



The Solution: An Affordable Alternative



Electric Victorian Carriages: The Technology Already Exists

Electric carriages modeled on the Victorian style — the same aesthetic New Yorkers and tourists expect on Central Park South — are commercially available today. They are not a prototype or a concept. They are in production, in use, and already making their public debut in American cities.

In Philadelphia, animal welfare advocates introduced Caroline, an electric carriage that debuted in a July 4th parade. She has since toured other cities as a proof of concept, drawing press and political attention without a single protest.



The Two-Track Program



One Goal. Two Paths. Every Operator Covered.

CPCI is designed to meet operators where they are — whether the city funds the transition or individual operators move first.

	City-Subsidized Track	Operator-Paid Track*
Who it's for	All 68 licensed operators	Early movers, pre-program
Per-operator cost	~\$25–29K (includes income bridge)	~\$20K out of pocket
Total program cost	~\$1.7M	N/A — individual spend
City funding required	~\$2M	None
Income protection	Yes — stipend during transition	No — operators self-fund
Timeline	Pending city program approval	Available now

**The Operator-Paid track is not a permanent parallel option — it's designed for operators who want to act before a city program exists, and who effectively de-risk the policy for everyone who follows.*

Program Economics



Where the Money Goes

City-Subsidized Track — per operator:

- Carriage unit: \$10–12K
- Operator training: \$1–2K
- Storage, permits, infrastructure: \$2–3K
- Program administration: \$2–4K
- Income bridge stipend: \$3–5K
- **Total: ~\$25–29K × 68 operators**
= ~\$1.7M program cost
- City funding request: \$2M
- Program administration (CPCI): ~\$300K

Operator-Paid Track — per operator:

- Carriage unit + training + permits: ~\$15K
- Program administration fee: \$5K
- **Total operator spend: ~\$20K**

CPCI operates as a transition facilitator — not a carriage operator, not a city contractor (yet), and not an advocacy organization. The role is to connect operators to equipment, coordinate training, navigate permitting, and manage the transition process end-to-end.

The Industry



68 Operators. 4 Stables. One Opportunity.

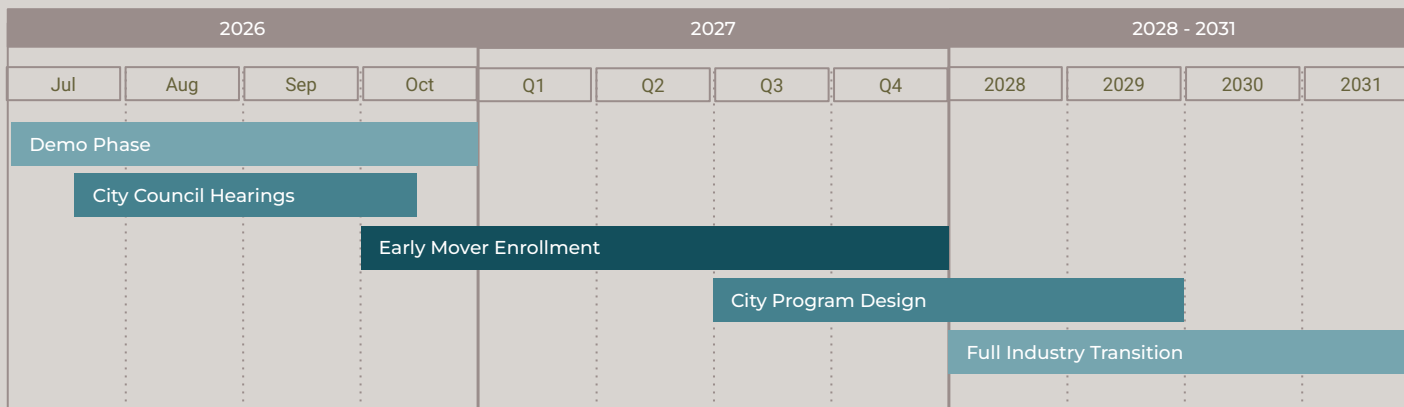
New York City licenses 68 horse-drawn carriage operators. The industry operates out of four privately-owned stables in Hell's Kitchen, the largest of which — Clinton Park Stables — is owned by a co-op of the operators themselves.

This matters for two reasons:

1. There is no absentee landlord class to negotiate around. The operators are the stakeholders.
2. A **stable-to-charging-hub** conversion pitch turns a liability into an asset for operators who own their building.

CPCI targets early movers who are looking for a dignified exit ramp that keeps them working.

Timeline



Summer 2026

Order prototype electric carriage. Conduct live demonstrations near Central Park South and outside stables. Show operators first — before press.

Build credibility with the people whose buy-in matters most.

City Council Hearing

Use the hearing as a visibility moment. CPCI fills the "no transition plan" gap that TWU VP Kemp flagged publicly.

Position as the practical, worker-protective option already in motion.

2026 - 2027

Recruit first cohort of self-funded operators on the Operator-Paid track. Document the transition.

Build the case for city funding.

2027 - 2028

Engage city agencies to formalize the City-Subsidized track.

Use early mover data to cost the program accurately and demonstrate demand.

2028 - 2031

Scale to all 68 operators under the city-funded program. 5-year horizon from launch to full transition.

Live Demonstration



No one has shown operators, drivers and tourists what an alternative looks like.

CPCI will tour an electric Victorian carriage (as pictured in this document) in September, 2026.



The Ask



What We're Looking for From This Meeting

CPCI is not asking for a check today. We're asking for three things:

1. Introductions.

Who in city government should be part of this conversation — DOT, DCWP, the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, Council? Help us find the right rooms.

2. Signal on city appetite.

Is a \$2M just-transition program for 68 workers a realistic city funding conversation given the current political moment? We don't need a commitment — we need a read.

3. Alignment on framing.

Mayor Mamdani has publicly championed "just transition" language. CPCI is designed to be the practical implementation of exactly that framing. We'd like to understand how the Deputy Mayor's office wants to tell this story.

Thank you.



**CENTRAL PARK
CARRIAGE INITIATIVE**

Appendix



Supporting Materials

A. Vendor Specifications Estimate

Xuchang Zhenda Machinery (xczdmach.com) — Victorian-style electric carriage, \$1,980–2,300 base / ~\$10–12K landed NYC cost, solid rubber tires, 6-passenger, 24-month warranty.

YUDINIS/Dinis — US office, recent US delivery at \$7,700 DDP.

B. The Caroline Precedent

Philadelphia — Janet White / Carriage Horse Freedom introduced an electric carriage (Caroline) with UnTours Foundation funding. Debuted July 4th parade before full PennDOT approval. Now touring other cities. Note: Philly's horse industry had already declined before Caroline launched — NYC conversion will require a more structured labor engagement approach.

C. Romanch's Law

Reintroduced June 2026 by Council Member Christopher Marte. July 2026 hearing scheduled by Speaker Julie Menin and Health Committee Chair Lynn Schulman. TWU backing competing Intro 937 (hitching posts + driver training).

D. Open Regulatory Questions

Legal/regulatory classification of an electric carriage operating without a horse in NYC is unresolved. DOT and TLC engagement required early in the program timeline.

E. About Kirk Skodis

Kirk Skodis is a New York City-based civic entrepreneur and media strategist with experience spanning public education, digital creative production, and entertainment. He is the founder of the Department of Public Education (D.O.P.E.), a civics content studio that uses attention-economy-first storytelling to make civic participation legible to audiences who've been left out of the conversation. His work sits at the intersection of institutions and culture — finding practical solutions to problems that politics has made too convenient to ignore. CPCI is his first foray into direct civic infrastructure, applying the same principle: if the gap is obvious and nobody's filling it, that's the opportunity.

From: [Klara Tavakoli Goesche](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943, Romanch's Law
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 8:39:17 PM

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Dear New York City Council,

I gave my testimony in favor of Intro 943 on July 15th, but wanted to send a letter, as well.

Please pass Romanch's Law swiftly for the sake of the astounding and lengthy amount of devastation and trauma this industry has caused to horses, New York City residents past and present, and tourists.

I am a multi-species ethicist, with a master's from Harvard University; my work involves addressing the dominance of the anthropocentric worldview with respect for all species. I spent several years living in New York in my twenties, when I first saw and have been since haunted by the suffering of the horses trapped there in the carriage industry. Being from the west coast, I hadn't seen horse-drawn carriages until then. Years later, my husband and I moved from San Francisco to Berlin with our two cats for a few years; there, I was haunted, again, by the NYC carriage horses when I saw the Berlin carriage horses. I immediately started a group called Berliners for Banning Horse-Drawn Carriages with the suffering of NYC horses front of mind.

My longtime concern for horses trapped in the NYC carriage industry was a main catalyst for the multi-species ethics field of thought and work that I do today. If these horses were truly cared for and respected, they would not be in this industry. Lack of oversight and transparency for the well-being of horses in the carriage industry is not surprising, but it was truly devastating to hear the extent of it in the New York City Council meeting for Intro 943, Romanch's Law.

Whenever we see videos of a horse attached to a carriage collapsing in the street, there are countless horrified passersby who gather around; New Yorkers who happen to be on their way somewhere stop to try and help the horse who has been harmed to the point of laying on the ground in deadly pain and anguish; some of the passersby are crying, some are filming, and time and again, we see the carriage driver simply looking on with an expression of annoyance, without any semblance of concern for the precious, suffering horse. This is neglect, in plain sight, a public display of cruelty. There is no evidence of "care for horses" that the drivers and owners consistently claim.

I'd like to point out that every sad passerby is not an animal rights activist; those who exploit horses suggest to minimize how many people care. Yes, most New Yorkers care and are saddened by the continual displays of cruelty to horses being forced to work. Most people are saddened when they see any nonhuman animal in distress. This is trauma that so many New Yorkers must deal with every single day, and so many have dealt with this trauma for decades. It was devastating to hear testimonies from so many New Yorkers in the council meeting who have hoped to see an end to this industry over and over again, only to be disappointed repeatedly.

Tourists, too, expect NYC "attractions" to be fun and safe. How has this ever been fun? Who truly enjoys this? Not the horses, not the residents, not the tourists, not even the drivers. Wasn't this supposed to be a pleasant, nostalgic experience? The way nostalgia works is that we recall something from a bygone time in our lives, often from childhood. No one alive today remembers the 1800's. Instead, we can imagine and create new attractions that could enable real nostalgia, such as unique, museum-like spaces designed for immersion and photographs, featuring styles and music from different eras of NYC, providing a historical experience that is actually fun and cruelty-free. There are endless possibilities.

The horses must be freed finally, to live at sanctuaries and have a chance to feel relief, no longer forced to work until they collapse and die from pain and exhaustion.

Having been haunted and traumatized by the deep sadness and pain these majestic creatures have had to endure for so long, I very much look forward to this ban on horse-drawn carriages in NYC finally being made official. Thank you, and please follow through and do the right thing this time.

Sincerely,
Klara Tavakoli Goesche

July 15, 2026

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I am writing in strong support of ****Romanch's Law (Intro. 967)**** and urge you to vote ****YES**** to finally end the carriage horse industry in New York City.

As an animal advocate and someone who lived in New York City for 12 years, I have personally witnessed the conditions these beautiful, sentient beings are forced to endure. I have seen carriage horses navigating the constant noise, congestion, pollution, and unforgiving concrete streets of New York City—an environment that is not suitable for animals who are naturally meant to live in open spaces, with freedom to move and socialize.

The reality is that many of these horses have not appeared to be thriving in this environment. They are expected to work through extreme city conditions, surrounded by traffic, loud noises, and endless stimulation, while being denied the quality of life they deserve. Horses are intelligent, sensitive animals who experience stress, fear, and discomfort. They are not machines or tourist attractions—they deserve compassion, dignity, and the ability to live out their lives in a safe and peaceful setting.

Ending this industry does not mean abandoning these horses. There is an entire community of compassionate people ready to help—rescue organizations, sanctuaries, veterinarians, equine professionals, and advocates who have been waiting for the opportunity to provide these horses with the retirement they deserve. You have an army of people willing to support a responsible and humane transition.

New York City can continue to offer visitors unforgettable experiences without exploiting animals. There are many humane alternatives that allow people to enjoy a carriage ride through Central Park without forcing horses to endure a life and working environment that is completely contrary to their natural needs.

The question is no longer where these horses will go—the solutions exist, and the people willing to help are here. The question is whether New York City will choose compassion, progress, and responsibility.

These horses have carried this burden long enough. Please stand on the side of kindness and meaningful change. Vote ****YES on Romanch's Law (Intro. 967) **** and give these horses the retirement and life they deserve.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kris Mesner

Testimony in Support of Amending Intro. No. 0943-2026 to Reinstate the Ban on E-Bikes in New York City Parks

Bill Information: Int. 0943-2026 -- Prohibiting the operation of horse drawn cabs in New York City

Written Testimony

I submit this testimony in relation to Intro. No. 0943-2026, the proposal to ban the operation of horse drawn carriages in Central Park. I support amendment of this bill to reinstitute the ban on e-bikes in city parks.

While the Council is concentrating on horse drawn carriages in Intro. No. 0943-2026 for purposes of public safety, this bill ignores the dangers of e-bikes in Central Park and the other city parks.

Prior to 2023, e-bikes were banned in all New York City parks. However, after a short pilot program, in 2025 the city lifted the ban and now permits Class 1, 2, and 3 e-bikes in all city parks, including on all Central Park drives.

This has been a disaster. Serious injuries to pedestrians and other cyclists from e-bike collisions have multiplied dramatically in Central Park since the ban was lifted.

At the very moment that I write this testimony, a woman is in a coma after being hit by an e-bike in Central Park at E. 64th Street on July 7, 2026. She was jogging in the pedestrian lane when she was struck by an e-bike. A portion of the jogger's skull has had to be removed during emergency cranial surgery.

The same week of July 7th, a female pedestrian was hit in Central Park at 72nd Street and Park Drive West. She is now suffering a serious head injury.

And on June 18, 2025, after the e-bike ban was lifted, an e-bike rider was killed when his e-bike collided with a pedestrian who was crossing inside the crosswalk on East Drive at 97th Street.

Traumatic brain and other grave injuries like these are common in Central Park now that the city has lifted the ban on e-bikes. Hundreds of park users have been seriously injured, as evidenced by actual emergency room statistics, news reports, photos, and videos. E-bike accidents are grossly underreported because NYPD often does not respond to them, or responds after the victim is taken away by ambulance.

For the Council to concentrate only on the horse carriage ban in Intro. No. 0943-2026 on the grounds of public safety is a hypocrisy, given the crisis now occurring in Central Park with e-bikes. Many other cities in America have banned e-bikes in city parks.

I urge the Council to amend Intro. No. 0943-2026 to reinstate the ban on e-bikes in Central Park and all city parks.

Kris Saylor
July 17, 2026

Romanch's Law (Intro 943) Testimony

It is time to close this dangerous and inhumane chapter of NYC's history by passing Romanch's Law (Intro 943). Crowded city streets are no place for large animals, and this bill ensures a humane path forward. It protects public safety, guarantees the horses retire peacefully to ethical sanctuaries, and secures a fair economic future for workers through job training.

Kristin Juelson

[REDACTED]

Brooklyn, NY 11215

[REDACTED]

July 14th, 2026

RE: Written Testimony in Support of a Ban on Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. My name is Kristina Belotskaya and I am a resident of the Upper East Side. I am writing to strongly urge the passage of Intro 943 to ban horse carriages in New York City.

We, as New Yorkers, should be better than this. Our city is known around the world for progress, compassion, and leadership. Horse-drawn carriages belong to an earlier era, before modern transportation systems existed and before we understood the responsibilities we have toward animals who live alongside us.

Progress means recognizing when an industry has reached the end of its time and making responsible choices for the next generation. Today, continuing this practice is not a tradition worth preserving, it is an outdated industry with no meaningful future. Tourism is changing, transportation is changing, and cities around the world have already recognized that using horses for entertainment rides in dense urban environments is no longer appropriate. New York should not preserve a declining industry simply because it has existed for decades.

Let this be the year we end the use of horse-drawn carriages in Central Park and move toward a future that reflects our values as a city. The greatest park in the world deserves a humane and modern approach. **Council Members, you have the opportunity to make history.** Please choose compassion and leadership.

Thank you for your service to our community,
Kristina Belotskaya

I'm writing to urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and even help drivers transition to new employment, (for example, as drivers of electric carriage rides).

I've lived on the UWS of NYC for more than two decades. For all of this time, I've made a point of avoiding Central Park when riding my bike because I feel so devastated when I see the horses. It's absolutely heartbreaking and sickening to see this abuse and neglect that can so easily be stopped.

Please, please stop the horse carriage rides immediately and let all of us enjoy the park.

Dear Chair Schulman and Members of the City Council,

My name is Kristina, and I am writing to you today with a heavy heart. I am writing as a witness to a city that is losing its soul to a relic of a broken, cruel past. We are New Yorkers—we pride ourselves on paving the way for the future, on innovation, on compassion, and on the relentless pursuit of modern, civilized living. Yet, we allow the carriage industry to persist, a haunting shadow on our streets that stands in direct opposition to everything we claim to be.

The death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan is a tragedy - It was a life full of promise, extinguished in a moment of avoidable chaos. It is a sorrow that lingers, a painful reminder that we have prioritized a fading, hollow tradition over the sanctity of human life and the welfare of defenseless creatures.

How can we call ourselves a world-class city when we continue to force 1,500-pound animals to navigate the suffocating, hazardous congestion of our modern streets? It is heartbreaking to watch them labor in an environment that offers them no peace, no dignity, and no safety. We are better than this. We must be better than this.

I implore you to act with the urgency this tragedy demands and pass Romanch's Law for the following reasons:

- **Public Safety:** Our streets are no longer what they were in the past; they are dense, high-speed, and unforgiving. Mixing massive animals with heavy, aggressive traffic and unsuspecting pedestrians is a volatile recipe for devastation. We have already seen the fatal consequences of this gamble, and to continue it is to invite further tragedy upon our own neighbors.
- **Animal Welfare:** To claim we are a city of progress while forcing animals to exist in a state of constant, loud, and polluted exhaustion is a hypocrisy we can no longer afford. It is a quiet, daily cruelty that stains the reputation of our city.
- **A Modern Path Forward:** This legislation offers us a way to finally heal. It provides a structured, humane phase-out period, ensuring workforce support for those in the industry while finally granting these horses the sanctuary and grace they have been denied for far too long.

We have a profound moral obligation to learn from the tears that have been shed and the lives that have been lost. We must end this outdated, dangerous practice and stop clinging to a past that belongs in history books, not on our avenues.

Please, for the sake of our city's honor and the future we are trying to build, **pass Romanch's Law.** Choose compassion over apathy, and safety over a broken status quo.

With profound sadness and urgent hope,

Kristina

My name is Kristina Sydir, and I am working in midtown. Thank you to the City Council for the opportunity to accept my written testimony today in support of banning horse-drawn carriages in our city.

I believe horses should not be required to work in busy urban environments. They are exposed to heavy traffic, loud noises, extreme weather, air pollution, and hard pavement, all of which can affect their health and well-being. Even with regulations in place, accidents involving horse-drawn carriages can and do occur, putting horses, passengers, pedestrians, and drivers at risk.

Our city has the opportunity to adopt a more humane and modern approach to tourism and transportation. Many cities have successfully replaced horse-drawn carriages with alternatives such as electric vehicles or other sustainable options that provide visitors with a similar experience without relying on animals.

As a resident, I want our community to reflect values of compassion, public safety, and responsible innovation. Banning horse-drawn carriages would demonstrate our commitment to treating animals humanely while also creating a safer environment for everyone who uses our streets.

I would like to mention by citing local facts, such as:

- Recent carriage-related accidents or safety incidents in your city. (Most recent June 2026)
- Local weather conditions (e.g., extreme heat or cold).
- Veterinary or animal welfare concerns documented by credible organizations.
- Economic evidence that alternative attractions could replace carriage rides.

I respectfully urge the City Council to support legislation that phases out and ultimately bans horse-drawn carriage operations in our city. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kristina Sydir



I urge the New York City Council to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in and around Central Park. In recent years, several carriage horses, including Ryder (2022), Aisha (2023), and Silver (2024), have died, underscoring the risks these animals face while working on busy city streets. Rising summer temperatures further increase the danger of heat stress, even with existing regulations. Beyond animal welfare, horse-drawn carriages leave manure and urine on public streets, creating sanitation concerns for residents and visitors. New York can honor its history while embracing humane, modern alternatives that protect animals, improve public cleanliness, and reflect the values of a compassionate city. I respectfully ask the Council to support legislation ending this practice.

Testimony in Support of Intro 943 ("Romanch's Law")

My name is L.S., and I live in Manhattan. I'm submitting this testimony in strong support of Intro 943, which would end the horse carriage industry in New York City.

I'm asking the Committee to pass this bill because the status quo has proven dangerous — for horses and for people. Ryder, a carriage horse, collapsed on a crowded Hell's Kitchen street in the summer heat and could not get up for nearly an hour while bystanders watched in horror. Last month, a carriage horse named Deniz died. Just days later, an 18-year-old visitor to New York, Romanch Mahajan, was killed after being thrown from a carriage in Central Park — on his very first trip to the city.

These are not isolated incidents. They are the predictable result of asking large animals to pull carriages through dense city traffic, on hot pavement, alongside cars, trucks, and pedestrians. No amount of regulation has prevented horses from collapsing or bolting, and no amount of regulation can guarantee it won't happen again.

Intro 943 offers a humane path forward: it ends the industry, provides for the horses' care in sanctuaries, and supports drivers in transitioning to new work. I urge the Committee to advance this bill without delay, so that no other horse suffers as Ryder did, and no other family loses someone the way Romanch's did.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

As an equestrian, the first question people usually ask me is, “When did you start riding?”

What most people expect to be a simple answer is actually much more complicated. I can’t remember a time in my childhood when horses weren’t a part of my life. I grew up beside them—caring for them, learning from them, and building a relationship rooted in trust.

Horses taught me patience. They taught me compassion. Most importantly, they taught me what true partnership looks like. They are sensitive, intelligent animals whose well-being depends entirely on the people entrusted with their care.

Because of that, I want to make something clear: this isn’t an argument against horses working alongside people. For thousands of years, horses and humans have shared an extraordinary partnership. This is an argument against asking horses to perform work in an environment fundamentally incompatible with who they are.

That’s why moving to New York City changed me.

Like so many people, I believed carriage rides were romantic—a charming New York tradition. But the reality was nothing like the fantasy.

I saw swollen legs. Horses eating with bits still in their mouths. Animals standing for hours surrounded by traffic, sirens, heat, and constant noise.

But what disturbed me most wasn’t what tourists saw in the park.

It was what happened after the rides were over.

These horses return to stalls inside a converted apartment building. Horses are prey animals whose needs are to move, graze, socialize with other horses, and spend much of their lives outdoors. Domestication changed their relationship with humans, but it never changed the biology that makes them horses.

Animal welfare cannot be measured by survival alone. It must be measured by whether an animal is able to live in conditions that respect its physical and behavioral needs.

I’ve learned through advocacy that meaningful change begins when we stop accepting harm simply because it has become tradition.

That’s why today isn’t about ending a tradition. It’s about choosing compassion over convenience and progress over complacency.

Supporting this legislation isn’t about vilifying carriage drivers. It’s about creating solutions that protect both people and animals. Sanctuaries and rescue organizations are ready to help these horses transition into lives that better meet their needs.

Passing this legislation should be the beginning, not the end, of our responsibility. We must ensure every horse is safely retired and given the opportunity to simply be a horse again.

Because the question isn't whether these horses have served New York.

They have.

The question is whether New York is finally ready to return that loyalty with the compassion they have always deserved.

From: [Lateef Ferguson](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Cc: [Hannah Wood](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Horse carriage ban Support
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 10:39:40 AM

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Hi, my name is Lateef Ferguson. I am a third generation educator that works as a teacher in the New York City Dept. education I am also a Vegan. I've been a Vegan since 2009. I'm submitting my support for banning horse carriages within New York City.

As a leader i aspire to be, I am in New York native. I love my city; I've seen many horrific instances with horses that have not been on television, unfortunately. Growing up here, Sadly, the last three instances I saw as of recent really hurt my heart. I know that there can be a way where both parties can have other opportunities for employment exist, but there needs to be people that advocate for these animals who cannot advocate for themselves. Horses are beautiful, precious animals that naturally need places to roam and graze and stretch their legs.. and are very social animals.. working tirelessly in horse carriages is a detriment to their health both physically, mentally and emotionally and those examples that we have seen recently and all throughout the years of having horses have shown that we need to step up as a city once again to ban for carriages within New York.. Many other cities and states have done so! I look forward to hearing the good news about the ban and that is something that I will talk to my students (about as I teach currently) thank you very much peace and blessings.

Lateef Ferguson
Teacher D75 P369k
NYC Dept. Of Education
Sent from my iPhone

Testimony in Support of Intro 943, Romanch's Law

My name is Laura, and I am testifying in strong support of Intro 943, Romanch's Law.

I grew up with horses, and anyone who has spent real time with them knows they are not machines. They are highly sensitive, intelligent, social animals with powerful awareness of the world around them. Horses read body language, tone of voice, facial expression, movement, pressure, and threat with extraordinary precision. Their nervous systems evolved for vigilance. They are acutely responsive to fear, stress, confinement, noise, pain, and the emotional states of the humans around them.

That makes what New York City continues to allow all the more indefensible.

I live in this city. I love this city. And I am ashamed that in one of the most modern, influential cities in the world, we still force horses to pull carriages through traffic, sirens, crowds, exhaust, summer heat, and hard pavement for entertainment and profit. This is a backward and abusive practice, and it has no place in New York.

A horse's suffering should not have to become a public spectacle before we take it seriously. Ryder collapsed in the street and could not get up while people watched in horror. Deniz died. Romanch Mahajan, an 18-year-old visiting New York for the first time, lost his life after being thrown from a carriage.

How many lives will it take, including human lives, for this city to admit the horror of what it has allowed to continue? How many horses have to collapse, suffer, or die in the street? How many people have to be injured or killed before we stop treating these tragedies as accidents and recognize them as the predictable result of a cruel and dangerous industry?

Horses are sentient beings. They experience fear, stress, discomfort, social bonds, anticipation, and distress. They are animals with memory, preference, sensitivity, and awareness. To place them in chaotic urban environments, surrounded by traffic and noise, and demand that they keep working for human amusement is a failure of compassion and of common sense.

New York City should be leading with science, safety, and decency. Instead, we are allowing an outdated industry to continue at the expense of vulnerable animals, workers, pedestrians, tourists, and the public.

Intro 943 gives the city a responsible path forward: end the carriage horse industry, send the horses to sanctuary, and support drivers as they transition to new employment.

This bill is humane. It is practical. It is long overdue.

I urge the Committee and the City Council to pass Intro 943 and finally end this disgraceful practice.

My name is Laura Leopardo, and I live in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn. I urge the Committee to pass Romanch's Law, Intro 943. I grew up in Chicago, which ended horse-drawn carriage rides as well as many major cities around the world have done, because they recognized this industry is no longer viable in dense urban environments.

I appreciate that Intro 943 recognizes the livelihoods of carriage workers by providing workforce transition assistance. That makes this legislation both compassionate and reasonable.

I had originally planned to present every documented carriage accident from the past two decades to illustrate the continual dangers of this industry, but there are simply way too many to fit into two minutes. The record includes runaway horses, collisions with taxis, buses, bicycles, pedestrians, parked cars, and other vehicles. No amount of regulation can eliminate the inherent risk in the middle of NYC. As prey animals, horses can easily panic and bolt unpredictably.

Here are just a few of the overall incidents since 2023 alone:

- Horses have bolted into Midtown traffic on numerous occasions.
- Passengers have had to jump from run-away moving carriages on several occasions.
- Horses have crashed into signs and parked vehicles on numerous occasions.
- Carriages have overturned on several occasions.
- Drivers have been hospitalized on several occasions.

Then, as we know, on June 17th, 18-year-old Romanch was killed after a horse bolted. After years of warnings and repeated accidents, the tragedy many feared finally occurred. We cannot say this tragedy was unforeseeable. The warning signs have been there for years. It was the culmination of years of increasingly serious incidents to which the city has turned a blind's eye.

Supporting Intro 943 is, to me, a statement that New York City continues to evolve and lead with compassion. Passing Intro 943 will protect horses, protect workers through a fair transition, and most importantly, protect the public.

I respectfully urge the Council to vote in favor of this legislation.

From: [Laura Villanueva](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Carriage Horse Bill
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 4:16:32 PM

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I am writing to express my position on the Carriage Horse industry in New York City. There has been no shortage of videos and stories of the mistreatment of these animals and the injuries to humans due to this antiquated industry. We shouldn't have to subject humans and animals to this level of abuse for a pastime that should have gone away years ago. No amount of nostalgia or tourism is worth it. Please consider winding down this practice, or better yet, getting rid of it altogether.

Lauren Chagnon
7/16/26

A written testimony against horse carriages in NYC. After learning of the gruesome details of the death of a horse and seeing videos of the ways they are kept, I am convinced without a doubt, that somewhere along the line, there has been massive public deception.

Animal cruelty by way of minimal stall space and no open area for roaming and galloping. Horses do not belong in a city, period. It is distasteful, disgusting, behaviour of soulless people, to do this to an animal, to a horse, in the name of a luxury public service. Absolutely horrendous, I will furthermore boycott NYC and make sure to inform all of everyone I know how disgusting this city is to find this acceptable.

The conditions these horse are kept in and expectations of them is absolutely animal a use and exploitation, I thought New York was supposed to be a great city, it is a mockery. It is a disgrace, to share the east coast with such a deplorable city who will torture these horses.

The horses must be released! And brought to an open field farm, out of the cities exploits, and into a appropriate natural environment!

From: [LF](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 6:00:52 PM

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As a NYC resident, I urge the NY council to swiftly pass 943 and ban horse carriages, provide support for horses going into sanctuaries and help drivers find new employment.

Thank you

Lauren Festine

[REDACTED] NY New York 10014

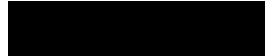
To City Council Committee on Health — July 15th, 2026, 10am Hearing — re:
banning horses in Central Park:

Danger to pedestrians and others

Whatever you decide about horses in Central Park, you must ban motorized bikes from the parks. It is shameful that you have allowed e-bikes to terrorize pedestrians in this park and in this city which is supposed to be walkable.

Emergency rooms in NYC have the data: e-bikes are the biggest, most frequent cause of injury to pedestrians and the riders themselves. City Council members must know this because EVSA has been telling you the facts for several years now. I know it in my 70-year-old bones because every day I have frightening close calls with e-bikes while I traverse the city on foot. I follow all the safety precautions but they do not. They make an outing in Central Park a harrowing experience.

Lauren Helf



New York, NY

July 16, 2026

17 July 2026

Dear Council Members,

I wish to request your support for Romanch's Law/Ryder's Law (Intro 943) to prohibit horse carriages in New York City. I have compassion for the industry workers who rely on horse carriages for their livelihood, but there are other alternatives to horse carriages in the 21st century, and it is time to phase them out. Not only are they dangerous for animals, having killed multiple horses over the years - Deniz, Ryder, Lady, to name but a few - but they are also dangerous and even deadly for the many people who visit the park and indeed, the city. The recent tragic death of Romanch Mahajan is an example, as are the many instances when the horses, spooked and responding to their nature, have run into oncoming traffic within or outside of the park.

One does not have to be an animal lover to be a concerned citizen wishing to protect our public spaces and keep them safe; but if one is also concerned for animal welfare: the horses live in unnatural, heartbreaking conditions within buildings that do not offer them the rest they so deserve. What's more, the carriages have frequently been documented while operating outside of legal operation boundaries, such as in heat over 90 degrees, or in freezing temperatures. The horses have also been documented being worked beyond the legal age limit for working in such a demanding industry, and in such cases, the owners or operators are violating the laws already on the books. It is hard to enjoy the park when one is constantly confronted with the animals' suffering - horses holding up a hoof because of an injury, or clearly dreadfully thirsty while struggling up a big hill, or working in extreme heat or cold.

In requesting your support for Intro 943, I would like to ask that you also support:

- requiring that the horses who are currently working be sent to rescues or sanctuaries, and a livelihood report to ensure their well-being in the years to come
- a sensible transition plan from horse carriages to pedicabs for the workers who rely on them

Thank you for your attention to this very urgent and important matter. I am not a radical, and supporting animal welfare is not my job - I am a teacher, a concerned citizen of Washington Heights who wishes to enjoy Central Park without fear for my safety or the safety of anyone else, and a person who loves animals enough to use the "free" time I currently have during my summer break from work to support this important legislation. I am also a volunteer in the ACC shelters at Queens and Manhattan, and as such, I care deeply for animals and people. I urge you to pass this important legislation as soon as possible, for all New Yorkers and for all those who visit our beautiful city.

With kind regards,

Lauren Upadhyay
Washington Heights, 10033

I sympathize with the push to ban horse-drawn cabs following the death of Romanch Mahajan, but I think regulation, not banning, is the answer. Horse-drawn cabs pre-date cars by centuries. We ought to know how to properly handle them by now. Obviously, this incident proves that we need to rethink regulations around the issue to ensure that this does not happen again. But banning is not the answer. The horse-drawn cabs are part of the culture of Central Park, they employ people, and they give an experience not possible to replicate elsewhere in the city. Getting rid of something with so much cultural value is not something that should be done carelessly, and ideally shouldn't be done at all. So let's fix the many problems with the industry, and let's do it without destroying a valuable piece of Manhattan culture.

I am writing in opposition to Intro 943 to ban the horse drawn carriage industry in NYC. As a student of both SUNY Morrisville and Centenary University's equine studies programs, I can attest with the backing of both scientific and industry leading sources that there is no welfare issue in relating to horses pulling carriages. Horses solely operate as the motor to begin propelling the wheels of the carriage to being turning, and once in motion the carriage remains in motion with the movement of the carriage. This is biomechanically an easier job for a horse to perform than that of being ridden. When describing the many rules and regulations that NYC horse owners are required to follow, my professors and classmates are often shocked, as there is more regulation here for the care and operation of horses than anywhere else in the world. Yet the industry asks for more, and has even presented a diligent piece of legislation (Intro 937) with the backing of Councilman Jim Gennaro that has yet to even be considered for a hearing.

Intro 943 is the first step in severing the human-animal bond that has been carefully curated over thousands of years. Domesticated horses, especially draft and standardbred breeds that were created to pull plows and carriages, do not exist naturally in the wild. Without the purpose of these breeds being allowed to continue, a rippling effect will cause the extinction of these breeds, and the painful demise of the current horses of this already very small industry. This bill is painfully vague, promising sanctuaries to those who want these horses out of sight and out of mind. Animal rights activist groups and the council people backing this bill have not spent time taking care of a horse, and do not understand that horses are social animals and thrive having relationships with species other than themselves. These are partnerships between horse and driver, and horses much like humans thrive off having a purpose and enjoy learning new skills. When good welfare takes place it is all the better for them. These horses are seen by professional veterinarians, farriers and many experienced caretakers, and if the city was willing to help the industry rather than dismantle it, that welfare would only improve tenfold. Once these horses leave city borders, there is no more accountability and the City of New York no longer has jurisdiction over their daily nor their long-term care and welfare.

This past semester I conducted an independent study for my degree program on the social license to operate an urban stable. I was tasked to lay out every detail of not only how to ensure good welfare for the horses, but how to connect with and be an integral part of the surrounding community. I found in this study that not only are horses able to survive healthily in urban conditions, but they can thrive when protected by enforcement and create a unique community where they can coexist with humans, who mutually benefit from their company. Accidents, while tragic and lessened with increased oversight, cannot be completely prevented. Hitching posts, turnout space and greater consideration by Central Park not to allow toxic plants to horses to be planted next to the areas frequented by the horses would all be much more well-received and responsible than an outright ban. The City of New York can ensure that the few and rare bad actors are held accountable, and set a higher standard for horse care and surrounding infrastructure, as it already has in past revisions of the working horse provisions.

It is Olmstead and Vaux's landmarked vision for central park (among the other city parks of their design such as Forest Park and Prospect Park, which also have thriving horse and human

coexistence) to maintain the presence of horses and allow them to thrive there. New York City being a city of many diverse interests has a responsibility to make it work to ensure all can be allowed to exist cohesively. Doing away with this industry will only bring us further from the natural world, and how are we to remember that we share it with other species? In a time where the city's current administration wants to increase green space and the citizens look for more offline activities, this ban seems even more arbitrary. The human civilization was shaped by the horse, and banning this industry would be not only a great shame to future New Yorkers who would now never get the opportunity to see or touch a horse without the privilege of being able to drive outside the city, but also to our ancestors who stood side by side in partnership with horses for thousands of years. I strongly caution the city council to carefully consider their stance on this bill. Do we want to be a city of followers that bend to the uninformed interests that take place outside our looking to do more harm than good, or do we want to be one of leaders who find a way to maintain its diversity that has always made it so special to begin with?

New York City council I am writing to you in support of passing Romanch law intro 967 the idea of having an animal amongst the elements in the city should be immediately disband horses are flight animals and do not thrive amongst the elements in New York city especially living quarters in multiple story parking garages. This needs to end for these beautiful souls. Retire them to peace and safety so that they can live out their lives in an proper environment they deserve.

Would you tie your dog up to sled and go sledding in New York, why are horses being subject to pulling a carriage we are no longer in the 1800 and this should be banned immediately.

Every year we hear of more tragedies involving horses dying of being overworked, heat exhaustion and being frightened by New York congestion.

New Tork city is no place for horses, please pass this bill. It's absolutely appalling that New York continues to support this abuse.

VOTE yes to pass Romachs law

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the continued use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

These horses are living, feeling animals, not tourist attractions. Every day they are expected to navigate crowded streets filled with heavy traffic, blaring horns, construction noise, pollution, extreme temperatures, and unpredictable situations that no prey animal is naturally equipped to handle. While regulations exist, they do not change the reality that these horses spend long hours working on hard pavement in one of the busiest urban environments in the world.

Equally concerning are the conditions in which many carriage horses live. Rather than spending their lives in open pastures where they can graze, socialize, and move freely, they are often housed in stalls for much of their time when they are not working. Horses are highly social, athletic animals that evolved to travel miles each day. Confining them to stalls for extended periods while using them for commercial entertainment does not provide the quality of life they deserve.

There have also been numerous documented incidents over the years involving carriage horses collapsing from exhaustion or illness, becoming frightened and bolting into traffic, or being injured in collisions with vehicles. Even if these incidents are relatively infrequent compared to the total number of rides, they highlight the inherent risks of placing horses in an environment that was designed for cars, buses, bicycles, and millions of pedestrians, not large prey animals.

Most importantly, we should ask ourselves whether this practice reflects the values we want to uphold. Horses have served humanity for centuries in agriculture, transportation, and war because there were no alternatives. Today, there are countless ways to experience New York City that do not require animals to work in stressful urban conditions for commercial entertainment. Continuing this industry is no longer a necessity; it is a choice.

A truly compassionate society recognizes when traditions have outlived their ethical justification. We have the opportunity to replace horse-drawn carriages with humane alternatives that preserve jobs, maintain the city's charm, and prioritize animal welfare.

I urge policymakers to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City and ensure these horses are retired to environments where they can live as horses should: with space to roam, access to pasture, companionship, and lives free from unnecessary stress and exploitation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Liana Russo

From: [Lily S.](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2026 8:43:07 AM

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Good morning,

I'm writing to urge you to support Romanch's Law (Intro 943).

The tragic death of Romanch Mahajan was a heartbreaking reminder that horse-drawn carriages are not only an animal welfare issue, but a public safety issue. Asking horses to navigate busy city streets filled with traffic, sirens, crowds, and unpredictable noise creates risks that no amount of regulation can fully eliminate. When a horse becomes frightened, the consequences can be devastating for passengers, pedestrians, drivers, and the horses themselves.

I believe New York can honor its history while embracing safer, more humane alternatives. Romanch's Law provides a thoughtful path forward by phasing out horse-drawn carriages over time, protecting carriage horses from being sold for slaughter or returned to carriage work, and including workforce transition support for those whose livelihoods are affected.

Please vote in favor of Intro 943 and help make New York City safer and more compassionate for both people and animals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

~Lily

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Lily S.

From: [Linda Haney](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hearing for Intro 943
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 4:39:15 PM

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Hello:

I have been a NYC resident since 2000, and have been aware of the terrible conditions these horses have had to work in for much of these years. Through oppressive heat, icy streets, heavy traffic, these poor horses have had to pull carriages stuffed with multiple passengers and a driver, and maintain composure. This is too much for these poor animals to bear, and their deaths are the result.

I urge you to pass Romanch's Law (aka Intro 943) as soon as possible, saving horses, and people, from the travesty that is foisted upon us every day from this archaic practice in a major metropolitan City!

Sincerely,
Linda Haney
[REDACTED]

It's been 3 years since the e-vehicle pilot program began in 2023.

Most of the CityCouncil members completely disregard the statistics from the Hospital ER rolls, ignoring the victims who have been maimed, killed or succumbed by out-of-control, lawless behavior of those wielding e-vehicles which the Conservancy permits to use the park roadways. The citizens of NYC, visitors and pets are being kept from the park as it is too dangerous to enter.

This pilot program with accompanying statistic should have every member of the Conservancy and the Council removing e-vehicles from our parks

-and now you want to permit e-carriages and eliminate horse-drawn carriages which can only attain 3mph . E-Pedicabs are 100% illegal in NYC, yet they are permitted to do business in the Park. It's an outrage!

Please do not support Intro 0943-2026 which will prohibit horse-drawn carriages in Central Park.

Horse carriages have no place on the streets of New York City. These horses are forced to spend their days surrounded by traffic, noise, exhaust, and concrete, all for the sake of entertainment. They deserve lives where they can move freely, graze, socialize with other horses, and simply be horses, not tourist attractions.

Horses have completely changed my life. They have taught me patience, resilience, and compassion, and I know firsthand how gentle, intelligent, and sensitive they are. They form deep bonds with people and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

Many cities around the world have already recognized that horse-drawn carriages are outdated and have chosen more humane alternatives. It's time for New York City to do the same. We can celebrate the city's history without sacrificing the welfare of these incredible animals. Please help end horse-drawn carriage rides in NYC and give these horses the life they deserve.

Signed: Lindsey Pivarnik

From: [Lisa Anselmo](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ban on Horse Drawn Carriages
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 11:33:45 AM

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It is long past time that the archaic and cruel industry of horse drawn carriages is banned in New York. The city streets and suffocating stables are no place for these animals. Humane, modern alternatives exist. Every year horses die tragically and unnecessarily to perpetuate this outdated tourist attraction. So many people who participate have no idea the suffering that goes on within the industry just so they can have a short ride around the park. Worsening climate conditions make the suffering of these animals even worse, year after year. It is no life for the animals forced to perform. Recently a tourist was tragically killed when a horse was spooked and bolted, and every day these horses are forced into city streets we risk another tourist injury or death. I have lived in NYC for over 30 years, and my husband is a lifelong (70 yrs) resident. We never go to Central Park, ever, because we cannot bear to witness the suffering of these animals. It is a shame and an embarrassment that New York continues with this obviously inhumane industry. Please support the ban on horse drawn carriages, the effort to get these horses into sanctuary, and the training of the drives to use other modes of transport that do not involve animal abuse. We are a family that votes in every election, and we pay close attention to who represents our beliefs in a more just world. The time is now. We are tired of waiting for action.

Sincerely,

Lisa and Ben Anselmo

[REDACTED]
NY NY 10012

I must away and tend my pigeons.

From: [Lisa Botwinick](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Horse drawn carriages in Central Park
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 8:32:48 PM

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I love animals and it is cruel to treat the horses and make them very hard until they get injured or die! Many horses are elderly and it's not right for them. Horses have feelings too!

I have never taken a ride with any of the horse carriages.

Please listen to the people and the horses!

Thank you for listening.

Lisa from NYC
Sent from my iPhone

Testimonial in Support of Int. No. 943-2026

To: The New York City Council, Committee on Health

From: Lisa, Resident of New York City

Subject: Strong Support for Int 0943-2026 (Prohibiting the operation of horse-drawn cabs)

Distinguished Members of the Committee on Health,

I am writing to express my strong support for [Int 0943-2026](#), a crucial and long-overdue measure to wind down the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City. My support for this legislation is rooted in a fundamental concern for both animal welfare and public safety on our city's streets.

As a resident of Hell's Kitchen, I regularly witness these horses traipsing through our dense, high-traffic neighborhood. The reality of modern New York City is one of congested streets, unpredictable construction, and constant noise. Forcing large, sensitive herd animals to navigate this hyper-urbanized environment is inherently unsafe.

Furthermore, I frequently observe these horses standing on the hard pavement in Central Park, waiting for hours at a time. Watching them constantly shuffle their legs—clearly out of discomfort, strain, and sheer boredom—is a stark reminder of the physical toll this work takes on them. It places immense physical and psychological stress on the horses, and it poses a recurring safety hazard to motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and tourists. Opposing this bill means defending an archaic practice that is structurally incompatible with a 21st-century transit landscape.

The argument that this legislation would leave carriage drivers and industry workers without a viable livelihood is entirely without merit. It severely underestimates the adaptability and skills of these workers. More importantly, this bill directly addresses employment transition by requiring the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to establish and administer a workforce development program. This proactive support ensures that workers are not left behind, but are instead empowered to transition into safer, more stable, and sustainable careers.

Transitioning away from horse-drawn carriages is a compassionate and practical step that prioritizes public safety, protects animals from urban hazards, and respects the future of the industry's workforce. I urge the Committee on Health to vote in favor of Int 0943-2026 and bring New York City into alignment with modern standards of safety and humane treatment.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration of this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa DiStefano

Resident of Hell's Kitchen, NYC

Dear Council Members,

As a lifelong New Yorker, I'm asking the Council to please pass Intro 943, the legislation that would prohibit the operation of horse drawn cabs. As a city that's supposed to be one of the most progressive in the country, we are far lacking behind others when it comes to our treatment of animals. For decades now, thousands of horses have been forced to suffer day in and day out because of the cruel carriage horse industry. As someone who loves green space, I have long refused to go to Central Park because I can't bear to see horses there in captivity that have no ability to rest, who are forced to stand on concrete and carry extremely heavy weight through blaring heat, freezing cold, rain and snow for hours and hours every day lest they'll be whipped by the person who gets to completely exploit them. Also for decades now this has been an issue that activists and many members of the general public have been pleading for NYC leadership to end, and now that it has tragically taken the life of a young person at the prime of their life, I ask you to no longer wait for someone else to die, whether it be a horse or human, because of the greed of this horrific industry. Please take the example of cities like Chicago and Philadelphia and do the right thing!

Thank you,

Lisa Drapkin
Brooklyn, NY

Esteemed Councilmembers: while I attended most of the hearing on July 15 hoping to testify before you in support of Intro 943, I unfortunately had to depart before being called to speak. I thank you and respect your dedication to making sure all voices are heard, and I am grateful for the opportunity to submit my testimony today on behalf of those who can't speak for themselves. My name is Lisa Reddy and I was born and raised in this city. I spent a lot of time in Central Park as a child where I often watched the carriage horses with a sense of pity and compassion. 50 years later, nothing has changed. If you look at these magnificent animals not only with your eyes but with your heart, you see not just their poor physical condition and the visible scars on their bodies, but their deep sadness, their weariness, and their broken spirits. There is no way to improve their situation because they live a life that is completely unnatural and inherently cruel, trapped in concrete and chaos, both on the streets and in the stifling, decrepit building where they are stored like commodities rather than sentient beings. They have no quality of life. It's of little wonder that they often spook and bolt and run when they get to their mental and physical breaking points.

The answer to this dilemma is not more driver training or further restricting what little movement they have by binding them tightly to curbside posts, in addition to the thousand pound carts they are already forced to pull for many hours a day, through the sweltering summers and the frigid winters. The answer is to free them from their suffering and free us from the shame of letting it happen. The many horses that have publicly and painfully died on our streets have apparently not been horrific enough for the industry or the city to put an end to it for reasons I can't understand. However, the heartbreaking death of Romanch Mahajan now brings us to a moment in time where it's clear that the greed, selfishness and exploitation under the guise of tradition should no longer be tolerated. Please do the right thing for the horses and for people by banning all horse drawn carriages today. At this point, the horses should not have to endure any more years of suffering and dying, mentally and physically, on our

streets. We must act urgently and with momentum to prevent more tragedies and to save lives now.

Having heard much of the testimony at the hearing on July 15, I would also like to address some of the issues that were raised. Horse carriage tourism should not ever be compared to cars or buses or Ubers or pedicabs or helicopters because people can make a choice to participate that horses cannot. Horses are enslaved in a business and housed in a prison they never chose, trapped in a life they never deserved. In regard to efforts to lay blame on a plant for the death of a horse, that is merely a deflection of the real problem, a horse doing horse things in a place where that is forbidden. Tragically being denied the simplest and most basic of needs for physical and mental well-being only reinforces the fact there is nothing natural about the way these horses live, and doing anything that comes natural to them can literally cost them their lives.

Finally, I do wish to mention that carriage drivers are not the first group of individuals to have their professions become obsolete due to the progression of time and the changing landscape of the city. Many types of jobs that were done in the past simply have no place in today's society for various reasons, ethically and technically. The terms of Intro 943 actually bend over backwards to accommodate and assist former drivers to implement the changes that will need to be made in career and lifestyle. While I heard ample testimony from drivers about what they need and want for themselves in life, little was said about the actual well-being of the horses other than in terms of allegedly being cared for enough to provide the driver with the livelihood of their choice. Frankly, no one needs to be an expert to know animals also want the same basic things human beings do: freedom, access to nature, and a respectful, nurturing environment free from abuse and exploitation. The bottom line: no horse would ever choose to live the life of a NYC carriage horse. Anyone who says otherwise should try pulling the cart themselves for few weeks in July and then let us know.

I thank you all for your time and consideration of my testimony.

From: [Lori Carlino](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Horse drawn carriage rides
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2026 10:49:25 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a lifelong New York resident I strongly encourage this abuse of beautiful bourses to cease immediately. NYC has so much to offer and does not need to treat animals cruelty to welcome people to our lovely park.

It is inhumane and it is time to stop. People have been trying for years to shut this down. The time has come to listen to the residents of this great city.

Thank you.
Lori Carlino

From: [Lorna Bennett](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for intro 043
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 6:14:06 PM

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Dear Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to support Romanch's Law and vote to end horse-drawn carriages in New York City ASAP.

This disgusting business should have been eradicated decades ago. The suffering and mistreatment of these sentient intelligent creatures is not only cruel; but entirely unnecessary and utterly exploitative - surely we are better than that in this great city? Additionally, as residents local to Central Park, we are forced to witness this horrific violence on a daily basis, and why? For a handful of greedy and exploitative people to profit off abuse and neglect.

As you're aware, a horse and a tourist died last month due to this industry. This is heinous enough, but still us New Yorkers regularly have to witness:

- * horses left lined up alone on baking hot concrete whilst their AWOL handlers are out of sight until they sniff a chance at \$\$\$

- * horses in visible physical and mental pain

- * horses dragging themselves through dangerous rush hour traffic whilst their handler IS PAYING ATTENTION ONLY TO THEIR CELLPHONE - a danger not just to the horses (some of who have died on this "commute") but to pedestrians, bikers and vehicle operators too, as the distracted handler does not oversee the horses as they are forced to traverse across major perilous junctions. The human relaxing in the cab, relying on the horse to handle the safety whilst they... play candy crush? Update their insta?? Pay in all the \$\$\$ they've leeches out of the horses suffering?

This must stop.

Why not retire them to a paddock where New Yorkers can enjoy watching free and wild horses reclaim Central Park? Safely distanced from the evil humans. Instead of ruining every visit to the park, as we are forced to witness these manically depressed beauties being abused for human profit. Gross.

Horses should not be working in the traffic, noise, and congestion of our city. New York can protect animal welfare while embracing safer, more modern alternatives. Please do so now.

I support assistance for finding new work for the few affected horse whippers, and would like to suggest these people are employed to look after these horses for the rest of their peaceful, joyful, spoilt rotten lives. A fair vice versa for what the horses have been through to line these people's pockets for decades.

I would also like to encourage a much earlier implementation than 2028! Tomorrow, yesterday, PLEASE.

Thank you for your time and your service to the City.

Sincerely,

Lorna Bennett

Parks are no place for electric vehicles. Parks are places for leisurely enjoyment of pedestrians and people wanting to get exercise and fresh air without the risk of being killed by bikes, whether they are motorized or electric. I used to enjoy being in Central Park and now I fear for my life when I try to even cross the street never mind go on a walk whether I am on the path or in the pedestrian part of the road. The situation has become absolutely out of control and dangerous, and there's no enforcement whatsoever of any rules.

This incredibly dangerous situation needs to be corrected and resolved, and the bikes need to get out of the park!!!!

I am here in support of Intro 943, which would ban NYC horse carriages once and for all. Since 1982, over 128 REPORTED accidents and 30 horse deaths that have occurred, including, also tragically, the first human death on record of 18yr old Romanch Mahajan on June 17, 2026.

I speak as an eyewitness. I used to work near the central park subway exit at 5th and 59th st back when the hack lines were still outside of the park. It was tremendously sad to constantly pass by these magnificent creatures being used and abused and witness them battling extreme weather conditions, constant traffic, honking horns, exhaust fumes and street construction. Though the horses were moved inside the park in 2019 - the suffering and deaths have not stopped.

Indeed the Central Park Conservancy cited this past June that in just 13 months -- spanning May 18, 2025 to June 9, 2026 -- there were none other than 7 horse deaths. Little did they know that just seven days after they published their statement Romanch would die in yet another spooked horse carriage incident.

In case you haven't read it, I would like to share their statement from June 10, 2026.

"The Central Park Conservancy has long believed that horse carriages pose a public safety risk in the increasingly crowded Park. In the past year, New Yorkers have witnessed at least seven separate incidents in which horses became spooked and either broke free—posing danger to passengers, park-goers, and others—or caused injury to their drivers, or, now, collapsed and died on Central Park's Drives. It's time to end this practice. You cannot watch these videos or read these stories and believe that the New York City government should allow this practice to continue. Let's pass Ryder's Law and join the rest of the world in banning horse carriages from our busy urban streetscape." Of course this was a week before Romanach died so the bill's name has since been updated.

On July 9, 2026 they also issued a press release showing a "NEW POLL: More than Two-Thirds of New Yorkers Support Ending Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City".

Council-Members It's time to move on from this antiquated practice.

I would like to end my testimony by sharing an anecdote. On Fri Nov 10, 2025 I attended a meeting by Council's Committee on Health that was not to hear testimony on Ryder's Law, but simply to decide whether the bill deserved a hearing at all. They ultimately voted it did not. I have 2 experiences to share 1) I was appalled at the ignorance of many that the majority of council members shared as to why they were and exactly what they were voting on. That was an inexcusable display of disorganization and misinformation from our elected leaders and their staff. And 2) after the meeting, I was making my way out of the (overflow) room that had us in and was entirely surrounded by the many horse-carriage workers who had shown up. One of them, addressing everyone within ears range, was saying over and over, "it's not about the horses, it's about our jobs". This sentiment really stuck with me. Blatantly admitting they don't

care about the horses. In which case why not finally accept the electric carriages that have been suggested and offered over and over?

Thank you for your time,

Luca Benedetti
Brooklyn NY 11231

Dear Council Members,

As a participant and scholar of the equine industry in the United States, and local resident to the area, I feel I have insights that must be heard in the interests of the future of the carriage industry in New York City.

Concerns of the wellbeing and safety of carriage horses, drivers, and the public is an important matter regardless of whether one favors intro 943 or intro 937. Change is necessary, maintaining the status quo is not reasonable in light of recent events and ongoing concerns. However, I must state that from my perspective intro 943 is heavy with gray areas regarding the future of the horses as well as the rights of owners, and employees.

The intro reads as follows:

“This bill would wind down the horse drawn cab industry by prohibiting the issuance of new licenses used in the operation of horse drawn cabs. The operation of such cabs would be prohibited beginning June 1, 2028. This bill would require humane disposition of carriage horses, prohibiting their sale or transfer for the purposes of slaughter or use in another horse drawn cab business. This bill would require the department of consumer and worker protection to administer a workforce development program for drivers and other workers engaged in the horse drawn cab industry in order to facilitate their transition to other fields of employment.”

As pleasant as this bill may sound at first glance, I don't see any of its promises being able to be realistically enforced. Horses are livestock, therefore there is no constitutional way to prohibit the sale or use of these horses for other carriage businesses, or even prevent them from falling into the slaughter pipeline, especially not in the long term. The future for those employed by the industry is even murkier. As an educator and advocate for equine welfare I can see where certain concerns regarding factors such as living situations may be highlighted, but that said most of the issues that the carriage industry holds are no different from what has become industry standard outside of the city. I am optimistic that intro 973 will open the door to help further mediate a lot of these issues as we look into ways to improve infrastructure for working horses in the city.

With the number of regulations in place, carriage horses in New York City are one of the most protected horse populations in the country. With horses being livestock, welfare regulations tend to be very loose by the standards of most, enforcing only that the absolute bare bones necessities are met.

It is this reality that brings upon a hard truth that pulling horses out of New York City doesn't guarantee a better quality of life.

The state of the equine industry has been hit especially hard in the past several years with operations of a horse business of any kind being grueling and expensive, causing many farms and practices to shut down. The pool of places to house horses is ever shrinking but the number of horses is not. This is why the buying of horses for slaughter has become a big business as simply euthanizing an unwanted horse can be a costly endeavor.

The carriage horses of New York City get mandatory time outside of the city to rest and act as horses would naturally. The standard for carriage horse owners is saving up for their horses to eventually retire and be able to live in this same manner for the rest of their days once the work is no longer a reasonable ask. Unfortunately, a sudden halt in revenue for carriage operators and their horses will put them in a compromising position. To have to essentially retire every horse for the rest of their days with no secure

income to fund that is unrealistic. To provide a horse with necessary care costs on average \$30k per year per horse. Many will be forced to sell what horses they can, once this happens any oversight that might be in place will fall away once the horse is in new hands. The carriage industry largely pulls from pools of horses that would otherwise fall to the slaughter pipeline. Ex racing standardbreds, drafts and draft crosses, and Amish bred horses are very popular picks for buyers looking for horses to slaughter if not taken in by carriage businesses. Unlike facets such as the performance horse industry, the carriage industry is not adding more animals to the already excess population through breeding and imports. If anything the presence of horse carriages help to lighten the load.

In regards to the safety of the carriage industry's participants, accidents when compared to the rest of the industry are extremely rare. Every state in the United States has an acknowledgement of the liability risks inherent to horses, it is a well established fact that being around a large prey animal comes with some amount of chance of bodily harm. Risk mediation is always an important thing to address, and once again Intro 937 intends to touch upon ways to minimize the chance of accidents related to bolting horses.

Intro 937 reads as follows:

“This bill would require the Rental Horse Advisory Board to study and make recommendations on conditions related to the operation of horse-drawn carriages. The bill would amend the source of information about air temperature and relative humidity to rely on measurements provided by the National Weather Service. The bill would establish an annual survey concerning hitching posts and require installation of hitching posts in response to the survey. The bill would establish criteria for practical examinations and the granting of probationary licenses to operate a horse-drawn carriage under limited circumstances. The bill would amend the morning hours of operation to allow horse-drawn carriages to operated as early as 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday in the borough of Manhattan.”

To me, this bill reads in a much more promising manner not simply because of personal creed but due to its specificity and enforceable policies as well as opportunities to expand welfare and safety policies in the future.

There is a widespread misconception that working horses are outdated and New York City is behind the times compared to the rest of the world, but this simply isn't the case. Major cities such as Paris, Vienna, Venice, and London still host carriage operations to this day with policies similar to those already regulating the carriage industry in New York. And simply put, the horses pulling carriages in New York are working breeds. Pulling carts comes naturally to them, more so than other jobs like riding would. Pulling is notably easier on a horse's body overall than carrying a rider. Just about any breed from mighty Clydesdales to short and squat Shetlands can do it and last many years doing so.

The presence of horses in the city will not disappear once carriage horses are gone. Metro area equestrian centers with privately owned lesson programs and horses will still be present as well as the working horses of the NYPD. It's important to note that equine operations tend to thrive in the presence of other equine operations with factors such as the access to vets, farriers, and resource suppliers, which are more affordable and available when serving multiple operations in an area.

With this in mind, I do hope that we can build practices that help to improve and preserve the presence of horses in communities. Horses serve as a productive mental outlet and learning experience for many people across all walks of life. This is why equine-based programs for the underprivileged, and disabled are widespread and proven. To see fewer and fewer people even able to see a horse from a distance is a sad testament to how displaced society is becoming from our roots. Horses serve as a symbol for our

history and agricultural dependence, which has been and will continue to be felt if we continue to displace horses in a world that is growing seemingly more hostile toward them. Even under the guise of good intentions, the lack of insight causes many to forget what happens once the horses are out of sight. To keep a horse is a true labor of love and not very many people are cut out for it. It's a hard business to run or be employed in regardless of what facet of the industry you are in. If there's no passionate people, there is no horse industry, and for many who stick around it's all they have. Whether they drive a horse carriage in Central Park, groom performance horses, run a riding school, or operate a rescue, they rejoice in every small victory, and feel every loss deeply. If one were to ask anyone who works with horses, this is one thing we can all agree on.

While encouraging change in the industry for the improved quality of life for all horses is my ultimate goal, it is necessary to keep the fire going so there is room for said changes to be made. Extinguishing this flame only makes that mission more difficult as it treats horses as collateral in casting them aside rather than working to build a softer landing for them and many more going forward.

From: [Luis Esteban Cruz](#)
To: [NYC Council Hearings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Horse Drawn Carriage Reimagined
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2026 11:28:06 AM
Attachments: [ChatGPT 2.pdf](#)
[ChatGPT.pdf](#)
[Screenshot 2026-07-04 at 10.59.28 AM.pdf](#)
[Unique Animal Adaptations 2.pdf](#)
[Screenshot 2026-07-04 at 11.01.42 AM.pdf](#)
[Unique Animal Adaptations 4.pdf](#)
[Screenshot 2026-07-04 at 11.02.19 AM.pdf](#)
[Screenshot 2026-07-04 at 11.01.14 AM.pdf](#)
[Unique Animal Adaptations.pdf](#)
[Screenshot 2026-07-04 at 10.58.14 AM.pdf](#)
[Unique Animal Adaptations 3.pdf](#)
[Screenshot 2026-07-04 at 10.56.54 AM.pdf](#)
[06AEED56-38F1-4D26-8AAE-A4E284818156.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to [REDACTED] as an attachment.

Dear Correspondence Unit,

Thank you for your invitation to participate in the public hearing regarding the proposed legislation concerning New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.

I would like to confirm my participation and respectfully request to testify during the hearing on Wednesday, July 15, 2026.

I plan to present a proposal titled DeVivisection™, which outlines a practical transition from traditional horse-drawn carriages to a new generation of electric heritage carriages. The proposal focuses on preserving New York City's iconic carriage experience while improving animal welfare, creating local manufacturing opportunities, promoting sustainability, and supporting current carriage operators through a thoughtful transition.

In addition to my oral testimony, I will provide written testimony and supporting presentation boards for the Committee's consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important discussion. I appreciate the Committee's willingness to hear ideas from members of the public, and I look forward to contributing to the conversation.

Respectfully,

Luis Esteban Cruz



INVENTOR:
LUIS ESTEBAN CRUZ

DeVivisection™

CUT FROM THE CITY. REBUILT FOR MOVEMENT.

DeVivisection™ is NYC's circular mobility initiative that recovers retired storefront gates and horse carriage materials to build the next generation of clean, inclusive, heritage electric vehicles—honoring our past while moving our city forward humanely and sustainably.

A RESPONSE TO REAL CHALLENGES. A SOLUTION FOR THE FUTURE.

STORE FRONT GATE LAW ENFORCEMENT STARTS JULY 1

NYC law requires most commercial roll-down gates to be at least 70% transparent.

CBS NEW YORK – MAY 15, 2026



HORSE CARRIAGE SAFETY CONCERNS

Carriage overturns and accidents continue to raise concerns about safety and the future of horse-drawn rides.

ABC7NY – MAY 19, 2026



TWO AGING SYSTEMS. ONE OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSFORM NYC.



RECLAIM
Divert waste.
Recover value.
Reduce landfill.



REBUILD
Reimagine materials.
Engineer new life.



REDEPLOY
Clean mobility.
Strong communities.
Greener NYC.



RESPECT
Honor heritage.
Protect animals.
Elevate the experience.



HERITAGE LUXE
Timeless craftsmanship.
Reborn for today.

PREMIER TOUR
Elevated comfort.
Premium experience.

ALL-SEASON SHUTTLE
Enclosed. Heated. Ready
for every season.

ADA / FAMILY ACCESS
Accessible. Inclusive.
Everyone rides.

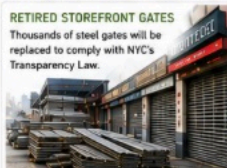
ART & CULTURE CARRIAGE
NYC creativity on wheels.
Mobile culture.

AUTONOMOUS POD
Smart. Silent. Sustainable.
The future moves itself.

RECOVERING WHAT THE CITY RETIRES.

RETIRED STOREFRONT GATES

Thousands of steel gates will be replaced to comply with NYC's Transparency Law.



RETIRED HORSE CARRIAGE FLEET

A long tradition in transition. Materials preserved. Animals protected. Future respected.



MATERIALS RECOVERED

- Galvanized Steel Slats
- Tubular Reinforcement
- Side Rails & Tracks
- Springs & Torsion Systems
- Perforated Mesh
- Hardware & Fasteners



MATERIALS RECOVERED

- Steel Frames & Axles
- Wheel Rims & Hubs
- Suspension Components
- Brass & Decorative Hardware
- Wood Trim & Flooring
- Leather & Upholstery



DEVIVISECTION™ PROCESS



1. RECOVER
Collect retired gates and carriage materials across the 5 boroughs.



2. DISSECT
Cut, sort, clean and separate materials for upcycling.



3. REFABRICATE
Engineer, restore and reimagine parts with precision and purpose.



4. REDEPLOY
Deploy a clean, inclusive, iconic electric fleet built for NYC.

UPCYCLED STEEL FRAME
From deconstructed gate materials

MODULAR DESIGN
Easy to service.
Easy to adapt.

RECLAIMED PANELS
Powder-coated upcycled steel



HERITAGE INTEGRATION
Restored wood, brass and leather details

ZERO EMISSION
All-electric powertrain for a cleaner city

BUILT FOR NYC
Engineered for streets, parks and people.

THE IMPACT

- ♻️ Diverts waste from landfills
- 🌱 Reduces carbon emissions
- 🏗️ Creates green manufacturing jobs
- 🚶 Strengthens NYC tourism
- ♿ Promotes accessible mobility
- 🐾 Honors heritage. Protects animals. Builds the future.



NOT JUST RECYCLING.
REBUILDING NYC.



FROM OBSTRUCTION
TO CONNECTION



FROM WASTE
TO VALUE



FROM THE PAST
TO THE FUTURE

THE GATES THAT ONCE CLOSED NEIGHBORHOODS,
WILL NOW CARRY THEM FORWARD.

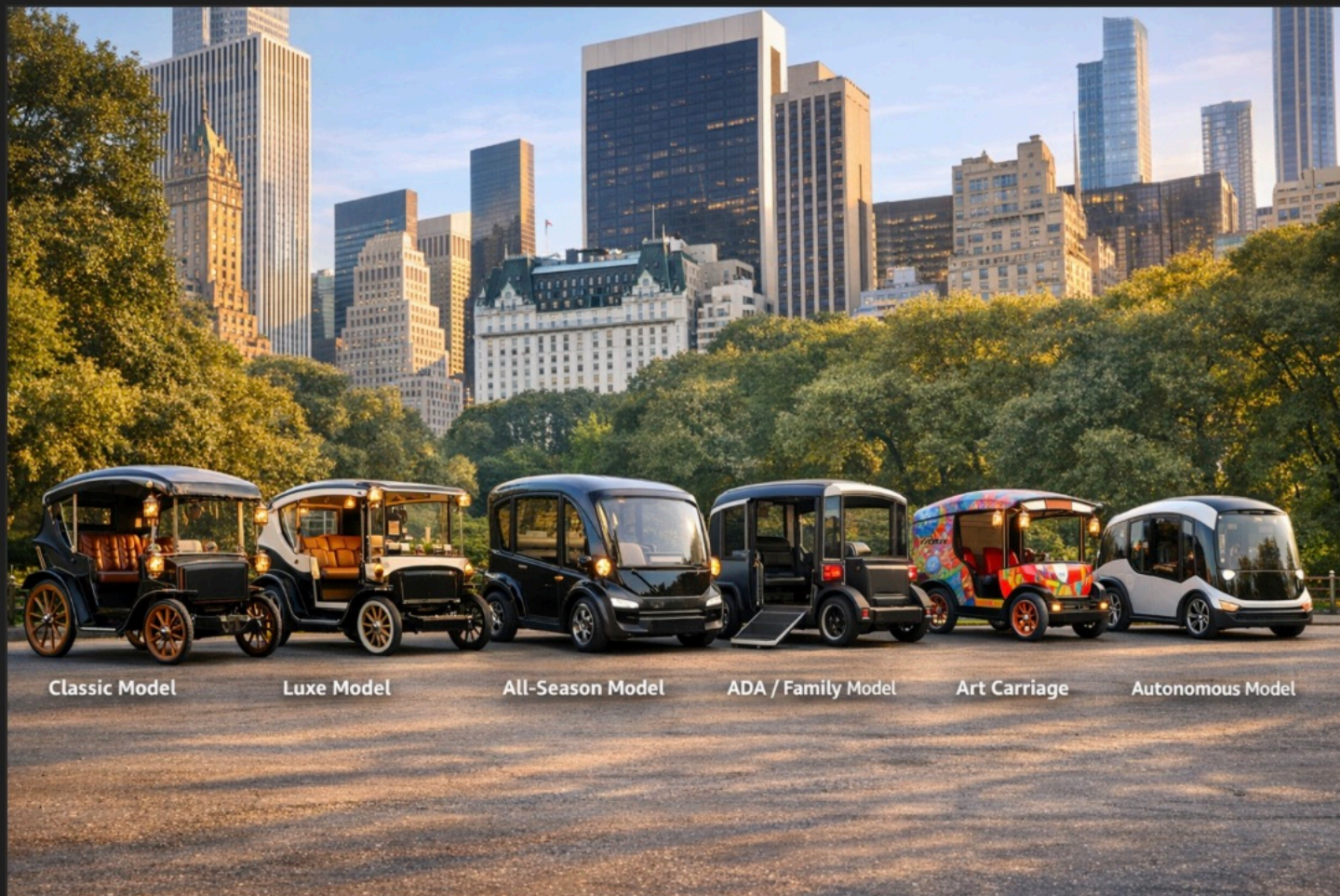


INTELLIGENCE 2026



DEVIVISECTION™

— SYSTEMS —



Classic Model

Luxe Model

All-Season Model

ADA / Family Model

Art Carriage

Autonomous Model





Luxe Model



Classic Model





INVENTOR:
LUIS ESTEBAN CRUZ

HONORING TRADITION.
DRIVING INNOVATION.

DeVivisection™ reimagines the horse carriage experience with 100% electric power, protecting our horses, our environment, and our heritage for future generations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DeVivisection™

TRANSFORMING NEW YORK'S HERITAGE
THROUGH CIRCULAR DESIGN

A PROPOSAL TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

A NEW TRADITION.
A CLEANER FUTURE.
BUILT IN NEW YORK.



THE CHALLENGE



HORSE WELFARE

Long hours, extreme weather, traffic stress, and health risks.



AIR QUALITY & NOISE

Emissions and noise impact public health and quality of life.



TRAFFIC & SAFETY

Congestion and safety concerns for pedestrians, vehicles, and horses.



RISING COSTS

High maintenance, operating costs, and insurance create financial strain.



CLIMATE IMPACT

We must reduce emissions and move toward a zero-emission future.

THE SOLUTION: DeVivisection™



KINDER TO HORSES

Improved comfort, health, and working conditions.



ZERO EMISSIONS

Clean, all-electric power for a cleaner city.



QUIETER STREETS

Reduced noise for a more peaceful experience.



SAFER FOR ALL

Modern safety features for riders, pedestrians, and operators.



LOWER OPERATING COSTS

Lower energy and maintenance costs over time.

A BOLD STEP TODAY.
A LEGACY FOR TOMORROW.

“ We honor our heritage by evolving it.
We protect what matters most—our horses, our parks,
our people, and our planet. ”

WHY NOW?



THE TECHNOLOGY IS READY

Proven electric platforms, fast charging, and smart operations.



THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS CHANGE

New Yorkers want cleaner air, kinder treatment of animals, and smarter mobility.



THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT IS RIGHT

NYC's climate goals, green economy plans, and humane standards align perfectly.



THE ECONOMIC CASE IS STRONG

Lower operating costs, new jobs, and tourism benefits drive real value.



THE TIME TO LEAD IS NOW

New York can set the global standard for sustainable heritage transportation.

KEY BENEFITS



Cleaner air and quieter streets



Healthier horses and happier visitors



Stronger local economy and jobs



Sustainable tourism and global leadership



Equitable access and community pride

PILOT PROGRAM PROPOSAL



LOCATION: CENTRAL PARK



FLEET: 10 ELECTRIC HERITAGE CARRIAGES



PHASE 1 DURATION: 6 MONTHS

GOALS:

- ✓ Prove performance and reliability
- ✓ Gather data and community feedback
- ✓ Demonstrate environmental and economic impact
- ✓ Build a scalable model for citywide adoption

ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT*



17

TONS OF CO₂
SAVED PER CARRIAGE
ANNUALLY



391

TREES PLANTED
EACH YEAR



\$25,500+
TOTAL SAVINGS
PER CARRIAGE
OVER 10 YEARS



LOCAL JOBS
COMMUNITY GROWTH
TOURISM BOOST

*Projections based on pilot data and industry studies.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS



NYC Mayor's Office of Climate
& Environmental Justice



Department of Transportation



Private Carriage Operators



Community Boards &
Local Stakeholders

NEXT STEPS

- 1 Approve pilot program in Central Park
- 2 Launch Phase 1 and collect data
- 3 Review results and refine operations
- 4 Scale citywide and set a global example

NEW YORK CAN LEAD.
THE WORLD WILL FOLLOW.





INVENTOR:
LUIS ESTEBAN CRUZ

HONORING TRADITION.
DRIVING INNOVATION.

DeVivisection™ is the future
of heritage transportation—
built in New York, for
New York, and the world.

WHY NEW YORK? WHY NOW?™

A CITY OF LEGACY. A LEADER IN THE FUTURE.

New York has the history, the innovation, and the vision to lead the world
in sustainable heritage transportation.

A NEW TRADITION. A CLEANER FUTURE.
BUILT IN NEW YORK.



NEW YORK IS THE IDEAL HOME FOR DeVivisection™

- ✓ Iconic global stage
- ✓ Commitment to sustainability
- ✓ Culture of innovation
- ✓ Diverse communities
- ✓ Strong tourism economy
- ✓ Leadership in clean mobility
- ✓ Built for scale and impact

NEW YORK. BUILT TO LEAD.



A GLOBAL STAGE
New York is one of the
most visited cities in
the world. Leading here
means leading everywhere.



A SUSTAINABLE CITY
NYC has bold climate
goals and a clear path
to a cleaner, more
resilient future.



A HISTORY OF INNOVATION
From the first streetcar
to today's smart city
initiatives, New York
has always led the way.



A CITY FOR EVERYONE
Serving residents, visitors,
workers, and future
generations with
equitable solutions.



TOURISM POWERHOUSE
A better experience for
millions of visitors—while
protecting our parks,
horses, and heritage.



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Local jobs, green
manufacturing, and
long-term savings for
the city and operators.



READY TO SCALE
Proven in Central Park.
Designed to expand
borough by borough,
citywide and beyond.



A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE
Honoring tradition while
building a cleaner, smarter,
more compassionate
New York.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE



HORSE WELFARE
Hard work, stress, and health risks for horses in
urban traffic and extreme weather.



AIR QUALITY & NOISE
Emissions and noise impact public health
and quality of life.



TRAFFIC & SAFETY
Congestion and safety concerns affect
pedestrians, vehicles, and horses.



RIISING COSTS
High maintenance, operating costs, and
insurance create financial strain.



CLIMATE IMPACT
We must reduce emissions and move toward
a zero-emission future.

OUR SOLUTION: DeVivisection™



KINDER TO HORSES



ZERO EMISSIONS



QUETER STREETS



SAFER FOR ALL



LOWER OPERATING
COSTS

A BETTER EXPERIENCE. A BETTER FUTURE. FOR EVERYONE.

“ We honor our heritage by evolving it.
We protect what matters most—our horses, our parks,
our people, and our planet. ”

WHY NOW?



THE TECHNOLOGY IS READY
Proven electric platforms, fast charging,
and smart operations.



THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS CHANGE
New Yorkers want cleaner air, kinder
treatment of animals, and smarter mobility.



THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT IS RIGHT
NYC's climate goals, green economy plans,
and humane standards align perfectly.



THE ECONOMIC CASE IS STRONG
Lower operating costs, new jobs, and
tourism benefits drive real value.



THE TIME TO LEAD IS NOW
New York can set the global standard
for sustainable heritage transportation.

THE VISION

A city where tradition and innovation move
forward together—where heritage carriage
rides are a source of pride, not pollution;
where horses are treated with the respect
they deserve; and where New York leads
the world in clean, humane, and intelligent
urban mobility.



NEW YORK CAN LEAD.
THE WORLD WILL FOLLOW.

“ A BOLD STEP TODAY. A LEGACY FOR TOMORROW.” Cleaner Streets. Stronger Economy. Kinder Future.

AI INTELLIGENCE 2026

4

OBSIDIÁN
—SYSTEMS—

INVENTOR:

LUIS ESTEBAN CRUZ

HONORING TRADITION.
DRIVING INNOVATION.

The DeVivisection™ Pilot Program proves that heritage, sustainability, and economic opportunity can advance together—right here in New York City.

PILOT PROGRAM PROPOSAL™

A SMART, PHASED APPROACH TO REAL-WORLD IMPLEMENTATION.

We start in Central Park. We prove it works. We scale across the city.

A NEW TRADITION. A CLEANER FUTURE.
BUILT IN NEW YORK.



PILOT LOCATION
**CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK, NY**

- ✓ Iconic global destination
- ✓ High visitor traffic
- ✓ Existing carriage routes
- ✓ Strong tourism impact
- ✓ Manageable deployment
- ✓ Direct economic benefit
- ✓ Ideal testing environment

OUR GOAL
DEPLOY. MEASURE.
REFINE. EXPAND.

- ZERO EMISSIONS
- QUIETER STREETS
- KINDER TO HORSES
- STRONGER ECONOMY

PHASED ROLLOUT PLAN

PHASE 1 PILOT	PHASE 2 EVALUATE	PHASE 3 EXPAND	PHASE 4 CITYWIDE SCALE
0-6 MONTHS	6-12 MONTHS	12-24 MONTHS	24+ MONTHS
• Deploy 10 electric carriages in Central Park • Build charging infrastructure • Train operators • Collect baseline data • Community outreach	• Performance evaluation • Operator & tourist feedback • Horse welfare assessment • Economic impact study • Infrastructure review	• Increase fleet to 50+ carriages • Expand to additional high-traffic routes • Optimize operations & routes • Strengthen partnerships	• Citywide adoption • Standardize electric heritage fleet • Integrate with clean transportation goals & routes • Replicate success across boroughs



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Data-driven decisions. Community guided. Results focused.



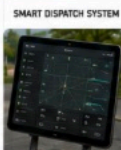
INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS



Clean energy. Fast charging.
Battery storage for reliability.



Local jobs. Training center.
Sustainable operations.



Real-time routing, battery
monitoring, and scheduling.



Same iconic look.
Zero tailpipe emissions.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS



LOCAL JOBS & TRAINING
Creates skilled jobs in operations, maintenance, and clean technology.



HEALTHIER NEIGHBORHOODS
Cleaner air, quieter streets, and better quality of life.



SUPPORTS SMALL BUSINESSES
More foot traffic, tourism, and economic activity.



ANIMAL WELFARE LEADERSHIP
Sets a global example for humane and modern city standards.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS



Mayor's Office of Climate
& Environmental Justice



Department of
Transportation



Private Carriage Operators

COMMUNITY BOARDS
& LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

Community input,
support, and feedback.

SUCCESS METRICS



EMISSIONS REDUCTION
Target: 17 TONS OF CO₂ saved per carriage annually*



NOISE REDUCTION
Target: 50% QUIETER OPERATION in busy areas



ECONOMIC IMPACT
Target: \$300K+ in local economic activity per carriage annually*



HORSE WELFARE
Target: Improved health, reduced stress, better working conditions



PUBLIC SATISFACTION
Target: 90%+ positive feedback from residents and visitors

*Projections based on pilot data and industry studies.

SUPPORTING OUR OPERATORS



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
Grants & low-interest financing for transition.



TRAINING & CERTIFICATION
Technical training for operation & maintenance.



LONG-TERM STABILITY
Stronger business model. Sustainable livelihoods.



PARTNERSHIP, NOT REPLACEMENT
Operators are our partners in a better future.

PILOT FLEET

10 ELECTRIC HERITAGE CARRIAGES



RANGE
80-100
MILES

TOP SPEED
12
MPH

PASSENGERS
UP TO
6

CHARGE TIME
2-3
HOURS

BATTERY LIFE
5,000+
CYCLES

INVESTMENT SUMMARY (PILOT PHASE)

PILOT INVESTMENT

\$1.85 MILLION
(10 CARRIAGES)

Electric Carriages (10)	\$1,250,000
Charging Infrastructure	\$300,000
Training & Outreach	\$150,000
Operations & Data Systems	\$150,000
TOTAL	\$1,850,000

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- NYC Green Economy Fund
- Federal Clean Transportation Grants
- Corporate Sustainability Partnerships
- Private Investors
- Carbon Credit Revenue



“A BOLD STEP TODAY. A LEGACY FOR TOMORROW.” Cleaner Streets. Stronger Economy. Kinder Future.



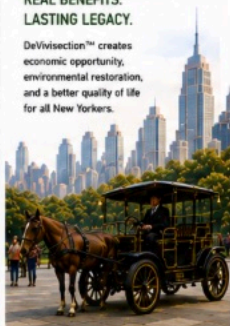
INTELLIGENCE 2026



INVENTOR:
LUIS ESTEBAN CRUZ

A CIRCULAR SOLUTION.
REAL BENEFITS.
LASTING LEGACY.

DeVivisection™ creates economic opportunity, environmental restoration, and a better quality of life for all New Yorkers.



ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT™ BUILDING VALUE FOR NEW YORK CITY

A CIRCULAR SOLUTION THAT DRIVES JOBS, PROTECTS ANIMALS,
RESTORES THE ENVIRONMENT, AND STRENGTHENS NYC'S FUTURE.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

JOBS CREATED	LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH	TOURISM REVENUE	OPERATOR TRANSITION	COST EFFECTIVE
1,000+	\$50M+	\$100M+	100%	-30%
Green manufacturing, maintenance, operations, and support jobs.	Annual boost to local suppliers, tourism, and small businesses.	Projected annual increase through unique, iconic NYC experiences.	Support for carriage drivers to transition to electric, modern, profitable careers.	Lower operating costs compared to traditional horse carriage.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

CARBON EMISSIONS	CLEANER AIR	NOISE REDUCTION	WASTE DIVERTED	SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
Reduces CO ₂ emissions by an estimated 1,500+ tons per year.	Zero tailpipe emissions improve air quality and public health.	Quiet electric operation for a more peaceful city environment.	Tons of steel, wood, and leather kept out of landfills.	Powered by clean, renewable energy sources.

THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN ACTION



INVESTING IN A GREENER NYC

LONG-TERM SAVINGS	INFRASTRUCTURE FIT	SCALABLE SOLUTION	GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
Reduced maintenance and fuel costs save taxpayer dollars.	Leverages existing infrastructure with minimal impact.	Designed to grow with NYC's needs and vision.	Positions NYC as the world leader in animal-friendly innovation.

MATERIALS RECOVERY

Turning yesterday's assets into tomorrow's solutions.



STEEL & IRON
Recovered gates, railings, axles.
200+ TONS/YEAR



HARDWOOD
Carriage wood, flooring, trim.
50+ TONS/YEAR



LEATHER & FABRIC
Seats, canopies, upholstery.
10,000+ SQ FT/YEAR



BRASS & METALS
Decorative hardware, fittings, accents.
5+ TONS/YEAR

ZERO WASTE. 100% PURPOSE.
BUILT FOR NYC. BUILT TO LAST.

LOCAL MANUFACTURING. LOCAL PRIDE.

Building a new generation of high-quality, American-made electric vehicles.



SKILLED JOBS	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNITY BENEFIT
Training and employment for New Yorkers.	Apprenticeships and green tech education.	Stronger neighborhoods. Stronger future.

A BETTER FUTURE FOR HORSES.

From hard work to healthy lives.



BEFORE Hard labor. Stress. Health risks.	AFTER Rest. Freedom. Better lives.
REDUCED STRESS No more long hours in traffic and heat.	BETTER HEALTH Healthier horses live longer, happier lives.
	HUMANE FUTURE A kinder, more compassionate NYC.

STRONG RETURN. STRONGER CITY.

A wise investment with measurable returns.

ESTIMATED ROI	ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT	PUBLIC SUPPORT	FUTURE READY
3-5 YEARS	\$150M+	80%+	
Through savings, tourism revenue, and efficiency.	Combined direct and indirect economic benefit.	New Yorkers support animal-friendly solutions.	Built for a carbon-neutral, equitable, world-class New York City.



CLEANER STREETS. STRONGER ECONOMY. KINDER FUTURE. | DEVIVISECTION™ IS MORE THAN A VEHICLE — IT'S A MOVEMENT FOR NEW YORK CITY.

AI INTELLIGENCE 2026



INVENTOR:
LUIS ESTEBAN CRUZ

HONORING TRADITION.
DRIVING INNOVATION.

The Electric Heritage Carriage blends classic elegance with cutting-edge technology—delivering a cleaner, quieter, safer experience for horses, drivers, and guests.

BUILT ON HERITAGE.
ENGINEERED FOR TOMORROW.

- ✓ Classic silhouette. Timeless design.
- ✓ Whisper-quiet electric power.
- ✓ Zero emissions. Zero compromise.
- ✓ Advanced safety for all.
- ✓ Proudly built for New York City.

ELECTRIC HERITAGE CARRIAGE™

THE FUTURE OF A NYC ICON

PRESERVING HISTORY. PROTECTING ANIMALS. EMPOWERING PEOPLE.



ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE

SOLAR ASSIST ROOF
Onboard solar helps extend range.

MODULAR BATTERY PACK
High-capacity LFP batteries. Easy swap, easy service.

INDEPENDENT SUSPENSION
A smoother ride for passengers and horses.



REGENERATIVE BRAKING
Captures energy, extends range. Reduces wear.

ELECTRIC POWERTRAIN
High-efficiency motor. Instant torque. Zero emissions.

REINFORCED CHASSIS
Built for durability. Built for NYC streets.

OPERATOR EXPERIENCE

Supporting the drivers who keep tradition alive.

- ✓ Ergonomic driver station for all-day comfort.
- ✓ Digital dashboard with real-time vehicle status.
- ✓ Easy charging. Low operating costs.
- ✓ Training & transition support for all drivers.
- ✓ Stronger future. Stronger community.



FLEET LINEUP



HERITAGE LUXE
2-4 Passengers



PREMIER TOUR
4-6 Passengers



FAMILY ACCESS
Up to 6 Passengers
Wheelchair Accessible



ART & CULTURE
Up to 6 Passengers



AUTONOMOUS POD
Up to 6 Passengers

ACCESSIBLE BY DESIGN

We believe everyone deserves the ride.



LOW ENTRY RAMP
Easy access for wheelchairs and strollers.



WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT
Integrated tie-downs for a safe and secure experience.



SPACIOUS INTERIOR
Comfortable seating for all guests.



INCLUSIVE DESIGN
Designed with input from accessibility advocates.

HORSE FIRST. ALWAYS.

A better environment for the horses we love.

- ✓ Reduced stress from noise and vibration.
- ✓ Cleaner air for healthier lungs.
- ✓ Safer streets mean safer rides.
- ✓ A tradition we protect together.



SPECIFICATIONS



COLORS & FINISHES

Classic elegance. Your style.



MADE FOR NYC. BUILT FOR THE FUTURE.

The Electric Heritage Carriage is more than a vehicle—it's a movement toward a more compassionate, sustainable, and beautiful New York City.



SAME TRADITION. NEW PURPOSE. STRONGER TOGETHER.

AI INTELLIGENCE 2026



INVENTOR:
LUIS ESTEBAN CRUZ

DeVivisection™

CUT FROM THE CITY. REBUILT FOR MOVEMENT.

DeVivisection™ is NYC's circular mobility initiative that recovers retired storefront gates and horse carriage materials to build the next generation of clean, inclusive, heritage electric vehicles—honoring our past while moving our city forward humanely and sustainably.

TWO AGING SYSTEMS.
ONE OPPORTUNITY
TO TRANSFORM NYC.

STORE FRONT GATE LAW ENFORCEMENT STARTS JULY 1

NYC law requires most commercial roll-down gates to be at least 70% transparent.

CBS NEW YORK – MAY 15, 2026



HORSE CARRIAGE SAFETY CONCERNS

Carriage overturns and accidents continue to raise concerns about safety and the future of horse-drawn rides.

ABC7NY – MAY 19, 2026



RECLAIM
Divert waste.
Recover value.
Reduce landfill.



REBUILD
Reimagine materials.
Engineer new life.



REDEPLOY
Clean mobility.
Strong communities.
Greener NYC.



RESPECT
Honor heritage.
Protect animals.
Elevate the experience.



HERITAGE LUXE
Timeless craftsmanship.
Reborn for today.



PREMIER TOUR
Elevated comfort.
Premium experience.



ALL-SEASON SHUTTLE
Enclosed. Heated. Ready
for every season.



ADA / FAMILY ACCESS
Accessible. Inclusive.
Everyone rides.



ART & CULTURE CARRIAGE
NYC creativity on wheels.
Mobile culture.

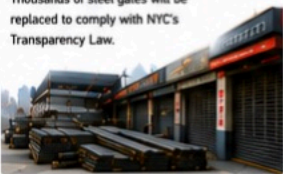


AUTONOMOUS POD
Smart. Silent. Sustainable.
The future moves itself.

RECOVERING WHAT THE CITY RETIRES.

RETIRED STOREFRONT GATES

Thousands of steel gates will be replaced to comply with NYC's Transparency Law.



MATERIALS RECOVERED

- Galvanized Steel Slats
- Tubular Reinforcement
- Side Rails & Tracks
- Springs & Torsion Systems
- Perforated Mesh
- Hardware & Fasteners



RETIRING HORSE CARRIAGE FLEET

A long tradition in transition.
Materials preserved. Animals protected.
Future respected.



MATERIALS RECOVERED

- Steel Frames & Axles
- Wheel Rims & Hubs
- Suspension Components
- Brass & Decorative Hardware
- Wood Trim & Flooring
- Leather & Upholstery



DEVIVISECTION™ PROCESS



1. RECOVER
Collect retired gates and carriage materials across the 5 boroughs.



2. DISSECT
Cut, sort, clean and separate materials for upcycling.



3. REFABRICATE
Engineer, restore and reimagine parts with precision and purpose.



4. REDEPLOY
Deploy a clean, inclusive, iconic electric fleet built for NYC.

UPCYCLED STEEL FRAME
From deconstructed gate materials

MODULAR DESIGN
Easy to service.
Easy to adapt.

RECLAIMED PANELS
Powder-coated upcycled steel



HERITAGE INTEGRATION
Restored wood, brass and leather details

ZERO EMISSION
All-electric powertrain for a cleaner city

BUILT FOR NYC
Engineered for streets, parks and people.

THE IMPACT

- ♻️ Diverts waste from landfills
- 🌱 Reduces carbon emissions
- 👥 Creates green manufacturing jobs
- 🚶 Strengthens NYC tourism
- ♿ Promotes accessible mobility
- 🐾 Honors heritage. Protects animals. Builds the future.



NOT JUST RECYCLING.
REBUILDING NYC.



FROM DESTRUCTION
TO CONNECTION



FROM WASTE
TO VALUE



FROM THE PAST
TO THE FUTURE

THE GATES THAT ONCE CLOSED NEIGHBORHOODS,
WILL NOW CARRY THEM FORWARD.



INTELLIGENCE 2026



Luxe Model



Classic Model

From: [Lynn Tondrick](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Cc: [District38](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for into 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 8:28:54 PM

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Dear NYC City Council members,

As a 20+ year Brooklyn home owner and 44 year NYC citizen I strongly urge the City Council to end the horse drawn carriage industry in NYC. It is abusive to the horses and perhaps more importantly dangerous to the public. Lets rehome these animals and retrain the workers. Come on NYC let's do this ! We can be better. We can do better.

Sincerely

Lynn Tondrick
526 47th street
Brooklyn NY 11220
718-208-3928

From: [Lynn Tondrick](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Cc: [District38](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for into 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 8:28:54 PM

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Dear NYC City Council members,

As a 20+ year Brooklyn home owner and 44 year NYC citizen I strongly urge the City Council to end the horse drawn carriage industry in NYC. It is abusive to the horses and perhaps more importantly dangerous to the public. Lets rehome these animals and retrain the workers. Come on NYC let's do this ! We can be better. We can do better.

Sincerely

Lynn Tondrick

[REDACTED]

Brooklyn NY 11220

[REDACTED]

I'm Maddy S Johnson - a long time animal welfare advocate and run my own rescue group. I am also a triracial multilingual New Yorker, a legal immigrant-citizen like our mayor, and professionally - an architect, landscape architect and urban planner who has lived and worked in several countries across the world. Due to the threatening tactics the pro-horse-carriage lobby engages in, I have been afraid to give my full name and during my in-person testimony I kept my face covered by a hat.

I mention the fact that I am an immigrant, as during the testimony, the TWU Local 100 members pulled no stops to bring certain carriage drivers to claim this was their "American Dream" and play the immigrant card. Well, I am an immigrant TOO, and my "dream" does not consist of torturing animals to their death, so, give me a break.

For those who say horse carriages are a part of some old tradition, well, there was a time when flaying & beheading, drawing & quartering, and several methods of torture were also "tradition." So do we then keep those and bring the guillotine back too? And chamber pots in lieu of indoor plumbing? How about doing away with HVAC systems, elevators and cell phones too, while we're at it?

People who still think carriage horses have a place in this century need to EVOLVE!

It's 2026... there are far more ecological, sustainable, humane alternatives of than this outdated "tourist" trap.

This is for the promising young man who lost his life due to this archaic, outdated "industry" which has no place in this time and age, in this busy city - when so many other cities in Europe, in the USA, in Asia have banned this.

It is beyond cruel to the horses as several other panelists pointed out. There is too much evidence to cite that this industry is exceptionally cruel. The horses are not taken care of well, worked to death or sent to slaughter when they can no longer work. And only people with no empathy-connection in their brains (ie sociopaths) would be okay with such an inhumane practice.

But if not even for compassion, merely from a safety perspective this practice must be banned.

For the ones defending this practice, it means the loss of life of a young man, DOES NOT matter to them.

Would they have felt the same if the victim was one of their own kin and not a young man from South Asia, Romanch Mahajan?

Would the proponents feel the same if this was the son of someone who represents their kind of "immigrant?" I certainly noticed quite a few proponents wearing hats with MAGA written on them. I'm guessing that's the camp then.

The Whataboutisms comparing the deaths to car accidents, even a poisonous plant - were ridiculous. I saw a display of gaslighting, lies, full on projection, machiavellian manipulation, sociopathy & a lot of DARVO - ie Deny Attack Reverse role of victim & offender - from the defenders of this OBSOLETE vicious practice. I even overheard during a break two proponents discussing how they would pretend to be activists and send threatening messages to the councilpeople, so that the latter would think it was coming from passionate animal activists, when in reality it was the pro-carriage industry folks sockpuppeting.

The proponents of horse-abuse, must get off their high horses. They should evolve, speak the TRUTH, not lies. Just like hoarders of cats and dogs living in miserable conditions claim they "love" animals while abusing them, riding horses to death and then sending them off to slaughter is selfish Narcissism, not LOVE for the horses, like the proponents claim they do.

This city has several jobs with way better benefits that can absorb those who leave this industry.

If Romanch's law does not get passed I AM still going to hope that SOME DAY - NYC will truly ban this barbaric industry

Many thanks to the Animal Welfare Caucus and to the councilpeople who will choose logic, compassion and COMMON SENSE on this issue. I am so glad my own District rep Councilwoman Shahana Hanif was also on the committee. Huge thanks to Speaker Julie Menin, Lynn Rosenthal, Christopher Marte, Lynn Schuman, and so many others who were on the committee on the right side of history. However that thanks DOES NOT extend to councilman Gennaro who practiced classic obfuscation of facts and DARVO. Shame on him.

Once again I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help the drivers transition to new employment which is quite easy. This cruel practice MUST end ASAP.

Thank you, Dhanyavad, Merci!

Maddy Samaddar-Johnson

Brooklyn, NYC 11215

From: [AOL](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ban the horse drawn carriages
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 8:52:12 PM

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They are cruel and inhuman.

Madeline Greenberg

[REDACTED]

NYC 10003

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

From: [Madison Jarreau](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 10:56:57 AM

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Good Morning,

I am writing to encourage New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943 to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to reputable sanctuaries, and help transition the drivers to new employment.

While tourists tend to enjoy a horse carriage in Central Park and the history behind it, it is time for it to come to an end. This is pure animal abuse. How many horses and people have to die?

Sincerely,
Madison Jarreau

Sent from my iPhone

Dear City Council Members,

I hope you have a wonderful morning. Please pass the [Romanch's Law](#) (formally known as Ryder's Law). It is time to retire these over worked horses; there are other ways to do carriage rides like using bikes.

With much gratitude,

Maizy Rose Greenberg

Dear Members of the Health Committee,

My name is Malavika Chander and I am a New York City resident. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of Intro 943, Romanch's Law.

New York City is a city that prides itself on progress. We are a global leader when it comes to technology, medicine and innovation. Yet in the middle of Central Park, we continue a practice from the 1800s.

We must ask ourselves: why are we preserving this practice? Is it because it serves the needs of a modern NYC or is it out of nostalgia? A tradition alone cannot be a reason to continue a practice when it conflicts with the realities of our city, the safety of our residents and visitors, and the humane treatment of horses.

We are using living, sentient beings to play into a tourist attraction in one of the busiest cities in the world. Horses are being forced to parade around millions of visitors through crowded streets, traffic, noise, pollution and the extremes in the weather. And for what? Horses are not here to be a backdrop for a photo; they are LIVING animals with their own needs and limitations.

After their workday, they return to cramped urban facilities before starting the cycle again. What kind of life is this? How could anyone justify this? I recognize that working animals have played an important role throughout history and there can be a meaningful bond between people and the animals they care for. But there is also a limit. A horse working in a rural environment is VERY different than a horse "working" through traffic, crowds and constant noise. At what point do we draw a line? When will humans realize that animals are not there for their entertainment, but they are sentient beings who deserve quality of life too?

And if animal welfare is not enough, we now have an 18 year old who is dead because of negligence. A horse spooked and bolted (not the first or last one we will see) and the teenager died in front of his family on a vacation. If that is not enough to make you see how dangerous this industry is, I don't know what will.

Lastly, there are environmental and sanitation concerns to be brought up. Central Park is one of the most loved places in New York, and visitors should be able to enjoy it without routinely encountering the odor, waste and sanitation issues associated with the horse drawn carriages. The horse owners do not always clean up after them, and it affects the cleanliness of a shared public space.

New York City has an opportunity to evolve and set an example by leading with compassion and responsibility. We can protect public safety, ensure the humane treatment of horses and support a fair transition plan for workers affected by this change.

We should be able to respect our history while recognizing when a practice no longer aligns with the values and realities of the city we are now. The death of Romanch Mahajan and the mistreatment of carriage horses demonstrate that action cannot be delayed any longer. PASS ROMANCH'S LAW!

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

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Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

From: [MARGARET LEONARD](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Carriage horse ban hearing testimony
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2026 2:16:18 PM

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Dear New York Council members:

Many people outside of New York care deeply about this issue and I am one of them. Though I live in North Carolina, I want to be able to take pride in our most important cities in America. I hope to visit New York soon but right now I don't feel I could as this issue keeps me from wanting to support the city.

The Horse drawn carriage industry needs to be banned or at least totally changed in how it functions. The horses care and health should be considered first above the entertainment of people. In my opinion, the only areas that should offer rides should be in Central Park and these services should be run by parks and rec. or NY city police horse division. Horses should not be driven through noisy, traffic on foot. Horses should be trailered to the park safely and have stables in the park for housing and rest and water during the day. All the horses should be stabled otherwise at a city run stable instead of independent operators who can fall short of doing all the horse needs over making a profit.

Those that have been making their living this way could be offered driver jobs through the city or as stable workers.

If the city cannot take over this service through parks and rec. or some other division that would ensure standards and care wellbeing of these animals then it should definitely ban this outright.

I want to visit and be proud of what New York City does, please do the right thing for these animals.

Missy Leonard
Lexington
North Carolina
Sent from my iPhone

Written Testimony in Opposition to Int. 943 and Support of Int. 937

To the New York City Council Committee on Health

My name is **Mario Angelucci**, a licensed New York City carriage driver. I respectfully oppose **Int. 943** and support giving **Int. 937** a full and fair hearing.

Before the City eliminates this lawful industry, it should answer three questions: **What happens to the horses? What happens to the workers? What happens to the small businesses that relied on New York City's licensing system?** Int. 943 does not provide meaningful answers.

I own the two carriage horses I work with while operating for a medallion owner. Their health, safety, care, and future are my responsibility every day. This bill provides no guaranteed funding for lifelong care, no comprehensive retirement program, and no assurance that future homes can support them. **A ban is not a retirement plan.**

The legislation would also eliminate the livelihoods of hundreds of working New Yorkers, including drivers, stable workers, carriage owners, medallion holders, farriers, veterinarians, feed suppliers, and other small businesses. I also invested in **Top Hat NY Horse & Carriage**, an online booking business built in reliance on this lawful industry. Int. 943 would destroy both my livelihood and years of investment while offering no fair compensation for those losses.

New York City's carriage industry is already extensively regulated. If improvements are needed, they should come through stronger enforcement, inspections, safety measures, and horse-welfare protections—not by eliminating the industry. That is why Int. 937 deserves a full and fair hearing.

Horse-drawn carriages have been part of New York City for more than 150 years and remain an iconic experience enjoyed by millions of residents and visitors. We can strengthen horse welfare while preserving jobs, protecting small businesses, and ensuring a responsible future for the horses themselves.

I respectfully urge the Council to reject Int. 943 and give full consideration to Int. 937.

Respectfully submitted,
Mario Angelucci
New York City Carriage Driver
License No. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [maria jose montoya](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please abolish horse-drawn carriages. Let these horses live the life they deserve.
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 9:25:07 PM

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Every time I walk past the horse-drawn carriages in New York, I don't see a charming tourist attraction. I see living beings carrying the weight of human greed.

I see exhaustion in their eyes. I see sadness. I see animals forced to spend hour after hour pulling heavy carriages over hard concrete, surrounded by blaring traffic, pollution, extreme heat, freezing winters, and endless crowds. They don't get to choose. They don't get to say, "I'm tired," "I'm in pain," or "I can't do this anymore."

We have convinced ourselves that this is tradition, but tradition should never come before compassion.

It breaks my heart that in one of the most advanced cities in the world, we still profit from the suffering of animals for the sake of entertainment. No vacation photo or tourist experience is worth another living creature's freedom and well-being.

We already have the technology to replace horse-drawn carriages with beautiful electric carriages that could preserve the experience without exploiting innocent animals. If we can choose kindness, why wouldn't we?

These horses are not machines. They have hearts that race under stress, muscles that become exhausted, and bodies that feel pain just like ours. They deserve fields instead of traffic, peace instead of honking horns, and freedom instead of a harness.

The way we treat the most vulnerable says everything about who we are. It's time to end this outdated practice and choose compassion over profit.

Abolish horse-drawn carriages. Let these horses live the life they deserve.

Testimony for Intro 943

I'm writing as an avid horse person, experienced in working in barns, caring for horses, riding, experiencing many barns from humble facilities to olympic level, and visiting and supporting sanctuaries. My interest and work also brings me in contact with many other horse people; veterinarians, farriers, dentists, massage practitioners, saddlers, trainers, riders, barn owners, mounted law enforcement, and horse enthusiasts. I learn from them all. I am writing to strongly oppose Intro 943, and support Intro 937. I will address, safety, the work, the conditions, the welfare and the citizens.

Safety

We all know that the use of automobiles in the city is responsible for fatalities and hospitalizations, including going up on the sidewalk and killing children; that motorcycles have a terrible safety record in NYC and that pedicabs (including a fatality), motorized scooters, and e-bikes also have their share of accidents, many of which don't get reported. Yet, we don't choose to ban any of these. Horse carriages have a good record for safety over the years, certainly far better than motorized vehicles. The suggestion that this is a safety issue doesn't hold up to scrutiny. There has been one fatality. I will add that Intro 943 was proposed before the recent accident that resulted in the death of a young man. As a mental health professional, I was disgusted by the use of that family's grief and tragic loss to inflame this matter.

The Task

Pulling a carriage is an easy job for a horse. Period. The harnesses and carriages are made for comfort and safety for the horse. In this case, their job is literally a walk in the park. Sometimes they trot. They are not always working. They have breaks in between and periods where they are resting.

The Conditions

Temperature

Carriage horses are subject to the same rules as all other horses working in the city when it comes to in what weather conditions they are permitted to work. I assume those temps have been established with veterinary consultation. If that's determined to be an issue, then the temperature should be changed (I would think that affects all horses in the city), not the carriages banned. Keep in mind, horses tolerate hot days and cold days. Horses live in locations that have hot days and freezing temperatures. In NYC we have rules that make sure that no horses have to work when it's too hot or too cold for them.

Traffic

Driving horses can tolerate and work around traffic but I understand that we would rather they did not have to deal with NYC midtown traffic. Again, work the problem folks. Don't eliminate the industry. IMO, the carriages should have times of the day when a designated route is quiet, e.g. early in the morning, or vehicular traffic is not allowed for a short period of time to allow them to travel to the park in peace. NYC shuts traffic down routinely. It's nothing new. There are some streets that have been permanently closed to traffic. I believe New Yorkers and tourists alike would enjoy seeing the parade of carriages and horses on their way to the park.

Resting

Horses should have a place to rest that allows them to drink, eat and be comfortable and secure. In the best world, shade in the summer. Although, even horses in turnout and pasture don't always have shade available in the summer. Again, it's not a reason to ban the carriages, but the city should try to make that happen because it would be improving their conditions.

There needs to be hitching at rest stops to keep horses secure. I understand the carriage drivers made this request in the past but it was ignored. The recent tragedy could have been avoided if the carriage driver had a place to hitch the horse while he took a photo for the family.

The Barn

I know some have compared the stables for the carriage horses to those for NYPD in Hell's Kitchen, implying the carriage horse facility is inadequate for the horses because it's not as nice. Let me remind you that NYPD owns a **state-of-the-art \$30 million facility** located on the ground floor of the **luxury Mercedes House building** (553 West 53rd St). It is a ridiculous comparison and unfair to all stables and barns in NYC [and elsewhere].

The barn should be inspected regularly. Stalls large enough for the horse to lay down (usually 10x12, depends on the horse). They don't need to be bigger. Rubber mats in the stall, sufficient shavings, hay, two water buckets, feed bucket, fans placed for air circulation, e.g. one large fan in the aisle. Many barns put box fans in the stall but some prefer to use fans that don't require electric cords. Rubber mats where horses might have to stand for a while, e.g. if they're groomed in the aisle. A lot of barns groom in the stall and have dental work etc done in the stall so that might not be necessary. There should be access to a wash stall(s). Daylight is nice for people. Some barns rely on electric light. There should be sufficient light so owners can see well to take care of their horse. Horses should be able to see their friends while in their stall. The barn should be kept neat and clean for the most part. There is always a time when stalls are being mucked, hay distributed, water buckets filled etc when it's a mess. After that work is done is when the aisle is swept clean. Many barns like to use a leaf blower to blow the aisle clear. Food/grain should be kept clean and in a secure spot to avoid flies and rodents. Mice and rats are a problem everywhere in the city, but especially in barns. If they are a particular problem, the structure should be examined and repaired to reduce that problem.

I understand the stable is made primarily of stone. Some people don't like that, but I am comforted by the fact that it is cooler in the summer, easier to maintain, and much less vulnerable to fire. Nothing wrong with that. Horses don't care.

Again, the stable should be inspected regularly by knowledgeable experts and if the barn is not what it should be, then something needs to change with the barn. We solve problems. We don't eliminate everything.

Welfare

I have seen many, many carriage horses. They are on full display. Their body scores are healthy, ie. they are well cared for. They are loved. They are partners and family. They receive food and water and treats throughout the day. They are obviously groomed. Their job is not difficult. They enjoy the purpose and routine. They go on vacation several weeks a year. I would like them to have some time in turnout and that is, again a subject to address. Not all horses have that every day when they work. How can we do that? Let's consider what can be done. Do the NYPD horses get turnout? Where? When? Can we learn something from that? Can we make their lives here better? I bet we could.

But the idea that these horses are abused is a lie. Horses get sick and die. They don't always tell us what is wrong before it too late, but the horses don't die from driving a carriage through the park. Anecdotaly, the elder father of a friend of mine was active and enjoyed living on his own. One day he drove to the grocery store, did his shopping and dropped dead unexpectedly while he was in the checkout. I assure you he did not die from grocery shopping. I believe the accusation of abuse is made to galvanize hysteria among people who don't know any better so that they protest to eliminate the industry making the real estate available for developers.

I heard the Speaker say “they are not ours,” implying we have no right to put them to work on our behalf. That’s the way I understand the remark. By that logic, we will eliminate ALL horses from the city, including all lesson barns. We will shut down the Central Park Zoo and the Bronx zoo, do away with “seeing eye” dogs, and eliminate all working canines in NYC. After all, they have to stand in the subway and train stations instead of running in the sun with their pack and having fun on the farm etc. We don’t own them. They are not ours.

I’ve read remarks that say, oh we have no right to use them for our entertainment and own purpose. Does that include one’s need for companionship? Do we have the right to put a dog in an apartment just to keep us company and entertain our need for their attention? They have no choice but to be satisfied with walks and a trip to the dog run? Maybe we need to eliminate pets as well by that logic. It’s a slippery slope to a ridiculous idea.

The Working People

The devastation to the carriage drivers and their livelihood is obvious. Many of those people chose that work because of the joy and satisfaction they get from working with horses. I know people who work with horses that, if removed from that work, would suffer emotionally and psychologically. It may not be the case for all, but to imagine that you can just plug them into some other work and all would be okay, is to be ignorant.

Lastly, the idea that you’re just going to retire the horses to green pastures to run with their herd in perpetual care until the end of their days is a fantasy. No sanctuary is going to make room for and use their limited resources for healthy, well-loved horses. They take in horses headed for slaughter or from life threatening abandonment and neglect. There are so many. It is likely that many of the carriage horses would already be bound for auction were it not for a place for them as a working partner trotting through Central Park.

In sum, the horses are not abused at all. Fact. Any complaints about vet check ups, stable conditions, air temperature etc can and should be addressed by problem solving and adopting Intro 937. That is the positive, logical step to addressing the concerns. The only concern it will not answer is the availability of the real estate to developers. And that is what this is truly about.

This issue is no less than a point of decision for the soul of our city. Which direction are we going to choose?

Thank you.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

New York, NY 10032

From: [maria](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Cc: [District26](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony: July 15, 2026 - Committee on Health Hearing on Intro 943 (Romanch's Law).
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 1:19:53 PM

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Testimony of: Maria Loyola
Rego Park, Queens

STRONGLY IN SUPPORT of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)

Dear Chair Schulman and Members of the Committee on Health,

I am writing today to urge the City Council to pass Intro 943 immediately to phase out the horse-drawn carriage industry.

While the carriage drivers' union claims that horses are safely retired and protected under current guidelines, the 2024 case of BERNARD proves there is a lethal slaughter pipeline loophole. Bernard was an active NYC carriage horse who was quietly dumped at a notorious Pennsylvania LIVESTOCK AUCTION—one bid away from being shipped to a foreign slaughterhouse.

He was only saved because an independent rescue group recognized the ID number carved into his hoof and intervened. "Good intentions" and unverified union paperwork DO NOT protect these animals in the real world. Once a horse leaves NYC jurisdiction, the city completely loses track of them.

We need Intro 943 because it does not just phase out this dangerous, outdated industry—it explicitly bans the sale or transfer of carriage horses for slaughter. The INDUSTRY IS LYING about their retirement safety net. Please protect both New Yorkers and these animals by passing Romanch's Law.

Thank you

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Maria Loyola](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Cc: [Speaker Menin](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Support of Intro 0943
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 3:02:58 PM

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Dear Chair and Members of the Committee on Health,

My name is Maria Loyola, and I am a resident of **Rego Park, Queens**. I am writing to submit my strong testimony in support of Intro [0943-2026](#), Romanch's Law, to phase out horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

The heartbreaking reality of this industry is perfectly illustrated by the story of Bernard. After spending his life pulling heavy carriages on brutal concrete streets, Bernard became lame at age 13. Instead of being given a peaceful retirement by the industry, he was discarded and sent to a slaughter auction. It was only thanks to the rescue efforts of NYCLASS and animal advocates that he was saved and given a second chance at The Gentle Barn. No animal deserves to be worked to the point of injury and then thrown away.

Furthermore, we cannot forget the horrific video footage of Ryder, the carriage horse who collapsed on a scorching hot pavement in August 2022. The video showing Ryder being repeatedly beaten, whipped, and having his chains aggressively pulled while he was down and unable to stand is a permanent stain on our city. It proved beyond doubt that this industry cannot be regulated safely.

Horses do not belong in congested city traffic, breathing exhaust fumes, and dodging cars. Intro [0943-2026](#) provides a compassionate, common-sense transition that protects these animals while securing green job training for the workers.

I urge the Committee on Health and the entire City Council to vote YES on Intro [0943-2026](#).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Maria Loyola](#)
To: [Schulman, Lynn](#)
Cc: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Support of Intro 0943-2026 (Romanch's Law)
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 3:16:44 PM
Attachments: [Video.mov](#)

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July 15, 2026 Hearing
Committee on Health

After yanking and pulling the chains from Ryder's injured mouth—stretching his neck in agonizing pain—bystanders yelled, "Stop!" and others cried out, "You're hurting him!" Instead of helping, the handler went to sit down and look at his phone while the horse suffered, laying flat on the hard street. While compassionate police officers sprayed water on Ryder and one officer gently touched him to offer comfort, the handler simply sat in his carriage with his legs up, staring at his phone without a care in the world. The fact that this blatant animal cruelty was ultimately dismissed makes New York City look incredibly cruel.



< Video



the life of a carriage horse.



2



Linda Sana



Posted @withregram • @thedodo W... more



Dear Members of the Council,

I am writing to urge you to pass Intro 943 (Romanch's Law), supporting a full ban on horse-drawn carriages in and around Central Park. This practice is both inhumane to the horses and unsafe for the public.

Horses are forced to operate in dense urban traffic, surrounded by noise, congestion, and unpredictable hazards that are entirely unnatural to them. Even under regulated conditions, these animals remain vulnerable to stress, injury, and exhaustion. No amount of oversight can eliminate the risks of placing these animals in a high-pressure city environment. Even if limited to within the park, the travel to and from the stables presents the risk of accidents, which we've seen numerous examples in the past.

At the same time, carriage operations create avoidable safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Incidents involving spooked horses or carriage collisions carry serious consequences when they occur in crowded areas like Central Park and Midtown. We've already seen the deaths of horses, and now we've seen the death of a young, innocent tourist visiting NYC. Who is responsible for this? What else needs to happen? Clearly horse drawn carriages are unsafe and a thing of the past. They don't belong in NYC.

New York City should reflect modern, humane standards and prioritize public safety. Safer, cruelty-free alternatives—such as electric carriages—can preserve the character of this attraction without compromising animal welfare or putting residents and visitors at risk. And would also present a new employment opportunity for the drivers.

I respectfully ask that you take action to end this outdated and abusive practice. I am a resident of the upper west side, and am in the Park on a daily basis, but never around or below 72nd street since I just cannot stand to see this animal cruelty. Please please do the right thing and ban the horse carriages!

Sincerely,
Maria Tsogias

As a native New Yorker, I am truly disturbed, disgusted and heartbroken over the abusive and dangerous horse carriage industry. How many more deaths do we need to have in this city for the NYC Council to finally make the only HUMANE decision : BAN HORSE CARRIAGES IN NYC.

Please help these poor horses to be brought to sanctuary, and please stop the deaths of both people and horses that continue to occur. It makes no sense AT ALL for this industry to continue and it is WAY PAST DUE for this to end. Please finally do the right thing here and ban horse carriages, the people of NYC are waiting for you to FINALLY do the right thing.

I can't even imagine the SUFFERING that these horses endure, and not only that, this industry puts people in severe danger. I have witnessed MANY horse carriage drivers texting, running red lights, almost running people over in Central Park, it is a completely reckless, pointless, abusive and dangerous industry. BAN HORSE CARRIAGES NOW (before more tragedy occurs).

Thank you,

Marie Rose Baramo

From: [Marie Rose](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BAN HORSE CARRIAGES IN NYC
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 10:24:38 PM

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Hi,

As anative New Yorker I urge the New York City Council to PLEASE swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to LOVING SANCTUARIES and help the drivers transition to new employment.

PLEASE FINALLY DO THE RIGHT THING HERE AND BAN HORSE CARRIAGES
HERE IN NYC!

Marie Rose

Marilyn Galfin -Voices for Shelter Animals
Testimony for Intro 0943 - Romanch's Law
July 15, 2026

Good afternoon. Marilyn Galfin, Voices for Shelter Animals in support of intro 943, Romanch's Law. The tragic loss of Romanch Mahajan is a devastating reminder that the carriage horse industry is not only inhumane but is inherently dangerous to the public.

We can no longer look away as horses collapse in our streets, traumatizing and horrifying the public; as spooked horses run wild, and as drivers continue to violate laws—including operating in brutal weather conditions. My attempts to get help to remove a carriage from the streets during a blizzard were met with total inaction, leaving me feeling completely helpless as I couldn't protect this horse. There were eight reported horse-related incidents in thirteen months and a recent poll shows a majority of New Yorkers support a ban. Allowing this industry to continue is playing Russian roulette with the lives of New Yorkers, tourists, carriage horses, and carriage drivers and would be negligent especially in today's chaotic and unsafe environment. We are way past the time for band-aids. No amount of regulation can make this so-called 'iconic' practice acceptable anymore. Tradition should no longer be an excuse for an outdated, inhumane industry. It has been already banned in so many places across the world and it is long overdue here. These horses deserve retirement and a peaceful and flourishing life in sanctuaries, not another day in traffic living a miserable life they are forced into. Furthermore, this bill provides a structured transition for workers, establishing a modern standard for navigating industry change while supporting the livelihoods of the drivers. Not every industry receives such support.

While the carriage horse trade is in plain sight, we cannot ignore the fact that we have a hidden tragedy: the adoptable, treatable animals being needlessly killed in our city's shelters. This Committee must address this crisis next. This tragedy will not end without immediate, coordinated effort. The current status quo is neither acceptable nor a solution. Shelter animals have no rights; and receive lack of humane treatment. It is time to replace DOH oversight of the NYC Animal Care Centers and put an end to an antiquated model that advocates have been fighting to change for 30 years. It is difficult to fathom that a shelter like the Manhattan ACC is legally allowed to stand as it cannot house animals humanely and no one is addressing this. With 1,555 dogs and cats euthanized in 2025 according to ACC (though we do not know the accuracy of that data), 64 dogs in June, and over 20 in the beginning of July, this should be a sober reminder that if the administration and Council Members continue to dismiss this as of low or no importance, animals will continue to lose their lives. There is a moral and ethical obligation to care for those who cannot care for themselves. Their fate remains in the hands of you, our decision-makers. It is 2026: it's time to pass Romanch's Law, show compassion and end the carriage horse industry which is long overdue. And recognize, once and for all, that all life is sacred and everything possible must be done by this city government to protect it, including our shelter animals.

You can actually buy the equipment they use for carriage horses online. I did. And I show it to everyone.

Nobody can believe how heavy and thick the metal bit is. That's the apparatus that sits in the back of the horse's mouth all day, pressing on her lips, gums, and tongue. There's no wonder why the horses' mouths are always twitching in discomfort and pain.

The headstall is the large leather contraption the horse is forced to wear over her head and face. It attaches to the bit and reins, with blinders to reduce her vision. It's got to be maddening to wear all day.

As for the horsewhips, everyone shudders when they hold them.

I would have brought everything with me, but I knew it would be confiscated.

I also researched the carriages. Empty, they weigh between 1,000-1,500 pounds; Full, between 2-3,000. The average horse weighs between 12 and 1800 pounds. The industry claims the horses can comfortably pull the weight at their size and build.

According to research and math, that's the equivalent of me, or any of you, pulling between 400-600 lbs., for nine hours at a stretch. Sure, we COULD. But why SHOULD we? Why should THEY?

What is the Benefit - Cost Ratio? The benefit is satisfying the greed of a handful of horse owners. The cost is cruelty to animals, the disapproval of NYC residents, and danger to everyone.

An overwhelming majority of New Yorkers want the carriages banned. Horse carriages serve NO BENEFIT to the city or its residents. It's time to pass Romanch's Law and put an end to this nonsense.

In Support of Intro 943, Romanch's Law

Marion Hoffman Koenig
Public Hearing Jul 15, 2026, 10 AM
City Council Chambers, City Hall

My name is Marion Hoffman Koenig. I live in District 11.

I stand with our Mayor Mamdani in support of **NYC Intro 943**:

The horse-drawn carriage industry is no longer compatible with the realities of modern, heavily trafficked city streets and public spaces.

Today, I know we will hear the hard truths about why the horse carriage industry must be closed down. There is no doubt this is the only decision.

I choose to share core facts about the sentient being the horse.

Horses are prey animals. To survive, their primary defense is the "fight-or-flight" response. They are instinctively startled by sudden movements, loud noises, and new objects (e.g., plastic bags, blowing paper, or umbrellas).

Horses possess an extraordinary ability to hear a human heartbeat from several feet away. **They are capable of hearing sounds at much higher frequencies than humans. Horses can feel vibrations through their ears and also deep in their hooves. In the wild they can hear grass crushing.**

Their highly developed sense of smell dictates a lot of their behavior. Horses can literally smell human fear. When horses sniff adrenaline-induced "fear sweat," their heart rates spike, and they become easily startled**.

Horses have great long-term memory (**especially of places where they were spooked**).

Their vision is specialized but distorted. It cannot process depth and shadows the way human eyes do. Harmless things like dark shadows, puddles, or changes in pavement color can look like gaping holes or predators to a horse.

Please see my paper online to view more facts about horses.

Thank you for listening and banning horse carriages.

End

Extra Facts about these magnificent sentients:

Body/Skin: The superficial pain-sensitive epidermal layer of horse skin is as richly innervated and is only as thick as human skin.

Touch: Hooves: Horse hooves are made from the same protein as human hair and fingernails. Roads are hard on hooves. The feet of horses that do a lot of work on hard surfaces lose the ability to rebound and come back. It's even worse for horses who when not working, spend their "off time" strictly in stalls.

Vocalization: Horses use different sounds to communicate greetings, departures, mating calls, and danger.

Horses are intelligent and can solve advanced cognitive challenges involving categorization learning and even concept formation.

They possess subjective experiences, feel a range of complex emotions (such as joy, fear, and grief), and can form deep social bonds.

Horses are Vegan. Have you ever noticed how muscular they look? And you don't see them asking each other where they get their protein.

Horses are herd animals and can feel stressed and lonely if forced to live alone, and they mourn each other's deaths.

Marion Hoffman Koenig organized the Bronx Animal Shelter Endeavor (B.A.S.E.) which lobbied NYC Council Members and Animal Care Centers to build the first state-of-the-art animal shelter in the Bronx. This shelter is expected to open in late 2026. Koenig has created an after-school program to share knowledge about Urban Wildlife.

From: [Marissa Giglio Halatyn](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In support of NYC - Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 2:38:14 PM

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Good afternoon,

I'd like to share testimony in support of Intro 943, also known as Romanch's or Ryder's Law.

Our city has so much to offer tourists without putting these horses through inhumane conditions. It is brutal and unfair to the animals, and it's our job to protect them.

I am a Brooklyn resident and fully support this bill. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Marissa Halatyn

[REDACTED]
Brooklyn, NY 11201

I am a voter who cares deeply about both animal welfare and public safety. I urge the City Council to pass Intro 943. The animals cannot speak for themselves, so the humane among us must. The bill also provides a sensible phase-out of this dangerous and anachronistic tourist attraction.

From: [mark turner](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Upcoming Hearing on Carriage Horse Bill
Date: Friday, July 3, 2026 4:41:28 PM

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I'm a long time resident living in the city for 30 years and even as a child when I would come into the city I was horrified by seeing those horses lugging around hundreds or thousands of pounds in extreme heat and extreme cold

I cannot believe this has been allowed to continue for so many decades, despite the clear agony and horrifying conditions the horses are kept in. Not to mention the obvious deaths and injuries the animals face year after year. I assure you getting rid of the horse carriages will not in any way have a negative impact on tourism, which is why I'm sure mayor after mayor keeps the horse carriages going. There's plenty of amazing things about New York City that bring in the tourist and we do not need the torture of the poor animals.

For once and for all ban the horse carriages forever

Mark Turner

[REDACTED]

NYC 10023

----- Forwarded message -----

From: NYCC Correspondence Unit <[REDACTED]>
Date: Thu, Jul 2, 2026 at 1:37 PM
Subject: Upcoming Hearing on Carriage Horse Bill
To: <[REDACTED]>

Dear Concerned New Yorker/Citizen:

Thank you for your recent message to Speaker Menin regarding the future of New York City's carriage horse industry.

Our office is responsible for processing the mail that Speaker Menin receives as the leader of the New York City Council.

On Wednesday, July 15, 2026, beginning at 10 AM in the Council Chambers at [New York City Hall](#), the Committee on Health, chaired by Council Member Lynn Schulman, will be holding a public hearing on [proposed legislation](#) to begin winding down the horse drawn cab industry in

New York City.

On behalf of Speaker Menin, we invite you to attend and to weigh in further on this topic.

Members of the public can sign up [HERE](#) to testify via Zoom Web, Zoom Phone, or in person.

Public testimony will begin immediately following the testimony of any invited experts and will be limited to two minutes per person to allow as many people as possible to present their views.

Individuals may also submit written testimony by uploading it at <https://council.nyc.gov/testify> or emailing it directly to testimony@council.nyc.gov. **Written testimony will be accepted up to 72 hours after the hearing has been adjourned.**

Finally, the hearing will be webcast live at <https://council.nyc.gov/livestream>. (Select stream "City Hall, Council Chambers".)

Thanks again for letting Speaker Menin know where you stand on this matter.

Sincerely,

Correspondence Unit

Community Engagement Division

Office of New York City Council Speaker Julie Menin

NYC Council



From: [Mary Ford](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony Submission - July 15th Health Hearing, Prohibiting Horse Drawn Cabs
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 5:32:56 PM

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Submitted to the New York City Council Committee on Health
Prohibiting the Operation of Horse-Drawn Cabs
July 15th, 2025

Dear Speaker Menin, Councilmember Schulman, and Members of the Health Committee:

I'm writing in support of the opportunity for your leadership to ensure City Council passes Ryders/Romanch Law ([Int 0943-2026](#)) and end the operation of carriage horses in New York City.

The issue at hand is both about animal welfare and public safety. **Horse drawn carriages are not an essential form of transportation, nor do they serve a public need that cannot be met through humane alternatives.** As the recent deaths of horses time and time again and, more recently, a young man, prove the dangers and cruelty of continued operations.

New York City Council has long supported policies that have ensured New York is a national leader in advancing public health, safety, and humane policies. It should not remain a leader in a practice that most residents and visitors believe is cruel and unnecessary. Cities evolve, and policies should evolve with them. Nationally, many cities and jurisdictions, including our neighbor Philadelphia, have acted to phase out or immediately prohibit horse drawn carriage operations, recognizing that public safety and animal welfare outweigh a waning tourist attraction. Please do not let New York continue to lag behind.

Some argue that the industry should be preserved to protect jobs, but public policy and city work should serve the public interest and not preserve a business model that the City can no longer ethically justify. **The Council should not allow interests of a single industry or union to outweigh the welfare of animals, the safety of New Yorkers, and the City's responsibility to modernize outdated practices.** As New York has done many times in history, the City can support affected workers through a thoughtful transition while ending an industry that does not reflect our values.

I respectfully urge you and the Council to take the opportunity to pass Ryder/Romanch's Law and demonstrate New York City's commitment to acting compassionately. A city that prides itself on innovation, leadership, health, and humane treatment should not continue to use horse drawn carriages as entertainment.

Sincerely,

Mary M. Ford, MSc
New York, NY 10228

NYC Council Speaker Menin
NYC Council Members
Committee on Health
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

M. Petretti
25 Cornelia St
New York, NY 10014

Wednesday, 15 July, 2026

Re: Please support Intro 0943-2026 Romanch's Law

Dear Speaker Menin, NYC Council Committee on Health Members, and all Council Members, Staff,

I wholeheartedly reinforce Council Member Carl Wilson in his support of Intro 943. It is the logical and kind way to stand with, and behind, the city, the workers, and the horses all. For years and decades my friends, neighbors, and I supported this issue fully. We are New Yorkers who love, know, and care for all humane decency throughout our fair and just municipality. We are from all walks of life, industry, and age coming together to stand up for this legislation.

I myself have worked in entertainment (theatre), in finance (on Wall St.), and in restaurants (downtown, in the theatre district). Every colleague has and still is in full favor of this legislation. My Mom is originally from the Bronx and remembers horses on the street. Up until her dying day, four years ago January, had been a staunch supporter of no more work horses (except police) of any stripe. This is the right step at the right time.

Please join us and co-sponsor Intro 0943-2026!

Yours Sincerely,
Mary Petretti
Central Village Block Assoc. member
Former Village Independent Democratic member

cc Council Member Carl Wilson, District no. 3

July 15, 2026

Dear Council Members of New York City,

Thank you all for making time and bringing forward Romanch's Law Int 0943-2026 for open discussion today.

I was present this morning and very moved by all the speakers that spoke about the need to end the carriage horses in Central Park. I had hoped to be able to speak in person, but because of the overwhelming attendance by your constituents from all sides, I was not able to stay, so I am sending my written statement to you. I will try to be brief.

I grew up with horses, so I know firsthand a bit about them. I cannot imagine that anyone who truly loves and cares about their horse would subject them to working on the streets of New York City. It does not make sense. I listened to the carriage horse people speak of caring about their horse, but then asking their horse to stand for 8 hours on asphalt, cement or cobbles, in all kinds of weather. That does not show care or concern for their horse but concern for their livelihood.

Any animal that is used for profit for humans unfortunately is subject to abuse.

Edie Falco and Edita Birnkrant spoke beautifully and honestly, as did other qualified vets and gentlemen from the Conservancy.

I listened to the union person speak but he vacillated off topic. I didn't believe the vet they had on their panel. I was shocked that there was not a vet *on sight* for the horses - that's a real violation to me for if there is an emergency, you can't load a horse into a trailer and drive to wherever the vet is, that's crazy.

It was brought up that there are other tourist attractions that need regulation - but we were here today to talk about the horses. Tourists hire pedi-cabs, ride in helicopters, airplanes, and rent cars on their vacations, and may take a carriage ride - but the pedi-cabs, helicopters, planes and cars are all *inanimate objects*. Horses are real living, sentient beings and respond much differently than any mechanical object. An object can be replaced - a horse cannot.

Hitching posts were mentioned as a solution for the drivers. A startled frightened horse can pull up and bust their bridle or worse yet, pull the post out of the ground. That would be an even worse scenario to have a carriage horse running dragging a post through the park. Again, a real horse person would never consider that as an option.

Finally, times have changed and so must we. The park is more crowded than ever. There's scooters, bikes, skateboarders, electric bikes and other weird things that the horses have to contend with that they never had to before. Not to mention the crushing traffic and pollution. We need to let them go be real horses, in fresh air, out in pasture. Thank you.

From: [Matheli Mahajan](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Romanch's Law (Intro 943)
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 1:20:04 AM

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Good afternoon, Chair and Members of the New York City Council.

My name is Matheli Mahajan, and I am speaking from India. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my testimony.

I am here because Romanch Mahajan lost his life in the tragic horse carriage accident in New York City.

Romanch came to New York to experience your beautiful city. Like millions of tourists every year, he was there to make memories, enjoy his trip, and return home safely.

Instead, he never came home.

He had his whole life ahead of him. He was about to begin college. He had dreams, goals, and plans for his future. His family was looking forward to watching him grow into the person he wanted to become. In a matter of moments, all of that was taken away.

As a visitor, Romanch placed his trust in New York City. He was a guest in your country. Visitors should be able to enjoy your city's attractions without their families fearing that a recreational activity could end in tragedy.

Nothing can bring Romanch back. Nothing can erase the grief that his family, friends, and everyone who cared about him now carries every day. But I hope his death is not remembered as just another news story. I hope it becomes the reason meaningful

action is taken to prevent another family from suffering the same unimaginable loss. I respectfully ask you to consider the human cost as you make your decision. Behind this legislation is not just a policy debate—it is the life of a young man whose future was cut short and the countless lives forever changed by his absence.

Please let Romanch's story remind us that every preventable tragedy is one too many.

If stronger protections can save even one life, then this is a step worth taking.

Thank you for your time.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY SUBMISSION

New York City Council Committee on Health

Regarding: **Intro 943 — Romanch’s Law** (Phasing out horse-drawn carriages)

Submitted By: Matt Ising, Former NYC Resident

Date: July 17, 2026

To Chairperson Schulman and Members of the Committee on Health:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit official testimony. My name is Matt Ising. As a former resident who lived in New York City for five years, I am writing to express my firm, unwavering support for Intro 943, widely known as Romanch’s Law, which seeks to phase out and permanently transition the city's horse-drawn carriage industry.

During my five years living and working in the city, I walked past the horse carriages in Central Park and Midtown countless times. Never once did I consider taking a ride, nor did anyone in my circle of friends, family, or colleagues. The stark reality of modern New York is that this industry provides absolutely no service, utility, or benefit to the daily lives of everyday New Yorkers. It is an archaic vestige of a bygone era that has been artificially sustained, completely out of step with the high-density infrastructure, severe traffic demands, and fast-paced environment of today's city streets.

Municipal policy and public regulations should fundamentally serve the greater community, prioritize the public good, and protect citizen safety. The carriage industry fails on all counts. Instead of contributing to our neighborhoods, it operates as a continuous burden—congesting heavily mixed-use public spaces, creating ongoing public health and sanitation issues, and introducing highly unpredictable, dangerous variables into dense, vehicle-heavy transit corridors.

The heartbreaking and entirely preventable tragedy involving 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan is the ultimate, devastating proof of this structural mismatch. A horse bolting in a crowded metropolitan space is not an unpredictable act of nature; it is the inherent, inevitable risk of forcing large, easily startled animals to navigate hyper-dense urban streets. When an industry's basic operation puts pedestrians, local families, and visitors at immediate risk of severe injury or loss of life, it can no longer be justified or tolerated as a quaint novelty.

If we fail to act, the current system guarantees that tragedy will strike again. We cannot afford to wait for the next collapse, the next runaway carriage, or the next grieving family to tell us what common sense already dictates: horses simply do not belong on modern Manhattan asphalt. Romanch’s Law provides a sensible, compassionate, and structured path forward—including necessary workforce transition support for drivers—while returning our public spaces to the community safely.

I strongly urge the City Council to pass Intro 943 without further delay. Let us prioritize the safety, mobility, and well-being of the greater community over an outdated, private luxury industry that has already cost our city far too much.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Ising

Chair Schulman and Members of the New York City Council,

My name is Matthew Horgan, and I respectfully urge you to vote **YES** on Intro 943, known as **Romanch's Law**, to prohibit the operation of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

The tragic death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan serves as a heartbreaking reminder that horse-drawn carriages are not only an animal welfare issue but also a public safety issue. While no single incident should determine public policy on its own, this tragedy underscores the inherent risks of operating horse-drawn carriages in one of the busiest and most congested urban environments in the world.

Horse-drawn carriages require large prey animals to work amidst constant traffic, emergency vehicles, construction, loud noises, crowds, and unpredictable conditions. Even with regulations and experienced drivers, horses are living animals capable of becoming frightened or reacting unexpectedly. When a horse pulling a heavy carriage bolts, the consequences can be catastrophic for passengers, pedestrians, drivers, and the horse itself.

For decades, New York City has attempted to regulate this industry through licensing, work-hour limits, inspections, and operational rules. Despite these efforts, serious accidents, horse collapses, and safety incidents have continued to occur. Regulation alone cannot eliminate the fundamental risks associated with placing horses in dense urban traffic.

Importantly, Intro 943 does not simply eliminate an industry; it creates a responsible transition. The legislation would phase out horse-drawn carriages over time, require the humane retirement of carriage horses by prohibiting their sale for slaughter or continued carriage work elsewhere, and establish workforce development programs to help drivers and other employees transition into new employment. This balanced approach recognizes both animal welfare and the livelihoods of the people who have worked in the industry.

Traditions are meaningful, but traditions can and should evolve when safer, more humane alternatives become available. New York City has repeatedly demonstrated leadership by modernizing practices that no longer reflect contemporary standards for public safety and animal welfare.

Passing Romanch's Law would honor the memory of Romanch Mahajan by helping prevent future tragedies while ensuring a humane future for the horses that continue to serve this industry.

I respectfully ask the Council to advance Intro 943 and vote in favor of its passage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Matthew Horgan



Testimony in Opposition to NYC Intro 943 – Proposed Ban on Horse-Drawn Carriages

To the Members of the New York City Council,

My name is Maura McGuckin. I am an Animal Control Officer and a professional horseman with more than 25 years of hands-on experience caring for, training, rehabilitating, and managing horses. I am writing in strong opposition to Intro 943, the proposal to ban New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.

Throughout my career, I have worked with horses in a variety of settings and have devoted much of my life to understanding equine behavior, health, welfare, nutrition, and husbandry. Because of this experience, I believe it is important that decisions affecting horses be based on facts, veterinary science, and actual welfare outcomes rather than public perception alone.

The New York City carriage horse industry is one of the most highly regulated horse industries in the United States. Carriage horses are subject to regular veterinary examinations, inspections, licensing requirements, work restrictions, mandatory rest periods, and housing standards. These horses receive a level of oversight that many privately owned horses across the country never experience.

As both an Animal Control Officer and lifelong horse professional, I have seen cases of neglect and poor care. The conditions that constitute animal welfare concerns are very clear. The carriage horses working in New York City are not representative of those situations. These horses are routinely monitored and cared for by individuals whose livelihoods depend upon maintaining their health and wellbeing.

A common misconception is that horses are happiest when they are simply turned out and left without purpose. In reality, horses are intelligent working animals that often thrive with routine, consistent handling, exercise, and meaningful activity. Many carriage horses develop strong bonds with their handlers and live structured lives with excellent veterinary care, nutrition, and management.

The proposal to ban carriage horses raises serious concerns regarding the future of the horses currently working in the industry. Removing these horses from their established homes and careers does not automatically improve their welfare. Finding appropriate long-term placements for a large number of horses can be challenging, and there is no guarantee that every horse would receive the same level of care they currently enjoy.

Beyond animal welfare considerations, the carriage horse industry supports hardworking

families and preserves a historic New York City tradition that has existed for generations. Horse-drawn carriages are an iconic part of the city's culture and tourism economy. Thousands of visitors seek out carriage rides each year because they offer a unique and memorable way to experience the city.

While no industry is perfect, the appropriate response to concerns is continued oversight, education, and evidence-based improvements—not elimination. If specific welfare issues arise, they should be addressed through targeted regulations and enforcement. A complete ban is an extreme solution that is not supported by the overall condition and care of the horses currently working in the industry.

I respectfully urge the Council to reject Intro 943. Decisions affecting animals should be guided by veterinary expertise, practical horse experience, and objective welfare standards. Based on my 25-plus years working with horses and my professional experience in animal welfare, I believe that preserving the carriage horse industry while maintaining strong oversight is the best path forward for both the horses and the people who care for them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Maura McGuckin
Animal Control Officer
Professional Horseman – 25+ Years of Equine Experience

From: [Maureen Benedict](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elimination of the horse carriages
Date: Monday, July 6, 2026 4:47:36 PM

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I wrote the email below to you on May 19 - little did I know that someone would be killed riding in a horse carriage less than a month later!!

“Just a quick question for the city council.

How many more accidents will you allow to happen with the carriage horses before someone is permanently injured or killed!! Can you imagine the negative publicity for the city and for the council for allowing these accidents to continue.

Carriage horses do not belong on the city streets. “

Thank you,

It is bad enough that the treatment of these carriage horses are inhumane. Years ago I toured a stable where the horses were kept - a small stall with some hay thrown on the bottom - a true fire trap. I'm not sure whether or not any of the council members have visited these stables to observe the horrible conditions.

In addition, the horses are driven in terrible weather - extreme heat and cold with little or no regard for their condition!

We just came back from Paris - no horse carriages- but specialty cars and motorcycles with side cars that are used to take tourists around the city. Why does New York continue this outdated and cruel tourist industry?

We feel so sorry for the Romanch Mahajan and his family who lost their son while visiting New York.

The negative publicity for the horse carriages continues to grow. Please step up and do what is right - it's time to eliminate the horse carriages now!

Thank you,

Maureen Benedict

My name is Maureen Flanagan, and I strongly support Romanch's Law to end horse-drawn carriage rides in New York City.

These horses are asked to work in an environment that was never designed for them. They spend long hours on busy streets surrounded by traffic, noise, exhaust fumes, extreme weather, and hard pavement. Even with regulations in place, these conditions cannot provide the kind of life that horses need to truly thrive.

This is also a public safety issue. Horses are powerful prey animals that can be startled by sudden noises, vehicles, or unexpected events. When that happens, both the horses and the people around them—including passengers, drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists—can be placed at serious risk.

New York City has evolved, and our laws should evolve with it. We can honor the history of horse-drawn carriages while recognizing that this practice no longer reflects our understanding of animal welfare or public safety.

I urge you to support Romanch's Law and choose a future that is safer, more humane, and more compassionate for both horses and people.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Maxime Bourdeau

[REDACTED]
New York City, 10028 NY
[REDACTED]

July 17, 2026

New York City Council

Support for Intro 943

Dear councils members,

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Ryder's or Romanch's Law, to end the incredibly inhumane horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment that respects animal welfare and public safety.

Please, use this opportunity to finally make New York City synonymous with compassion and care, rather than cruelty.

Sincerely,

Maxime Bourdeau

From: [Mayumi Kasuga](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for intro 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 12:12:18 PM

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Regards,

Mayumi Kasuga

[REDACTED]

New York, NY 10044

From: Meaghan Boyle meajuliab11@gmail.com
Subject: Dear Members of the New York City Council,
Date: Jul 18, 2026 at 3:59:07 PM
To: Meaghan Boyle meajuliab11@gmail.com

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

Our father has been a horse and carriage driver in New York City since before we were born. From a young age, we called the horses our "pets." Some of our favorite childhood memories were trips into the city to visit them, as well as visits to upstate farms where our father's retired horses enjoyed their well-earned retirement. Horses like Sally, Lucky, Betty, and August—to name just a few—have been part of our family for more than 30 years.

Our father is an Irish immigrant who has worked long hours throughout his entire career, caring for these horses to support our family, never once complaining. Through his work, we learned the value of a strong work ethic, compassion, and a deep love and respect for animals. As a horse and carriage driver, our father taught us to work hard, persevere through challenges, and care for others with kindness and dedication.

Today, I am a teacher in New York State, and the way my father cared for both his horses and our family has profoundly influenced the way I care for my special education students. His example taught all of us that how we treat animals reflects how we treat people. Through his love for his horses, he taught us empathy, responsibility, and compassion that continue to guide our lives.

It is heartbreaking for our family to watch the media and others continually harass our father and our uncles' businesses. The horse and carriage drivers of New York City have endured years of criticism and hostility despite being hardworking people who genuinely love their profession and their horses. They care for these animals every day with the utmost respect and dedication.

We respectfully ask that you not judge an entire profession based on misconceptions or the actions of a few individuals. For our father, this is far more

than a job—it is a way of life. It has allowed him to support our immigrant family with dignity, preserve a cherished New York City tradition, and build lifelong bonds with the horses he has devoted his life to caring for.

We respectfully ask that you stand with the hardworking men and women of this industry, recognize the high standard of care they provide their horses, and oppose legislation that would eliminate a profession that has given so much to our family and to countless others.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Meaghan, Ellen, Martin, and Aidan Boyle

Children of Robert Boyle- horse and carriage driver

Sent from my iPhone

I urge the New York City Council to pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry in New York City. The horses deserve better. I hope they can live out their lives in homes or sanctuaries. Otherwise, humane euthanasia would be a better alternative to the cruelty they experience daily. As a veterinarian working in New York City for the past 12 years, it is terrible to see the suffering they endure. I support helping employees transition to new employment that does not exploit animals and put people at risk.

To the City Council and Speaker Menin:

I am writing to oppose the ban on carriage horses. You all have fallen under the spell of the hysterics who see this industry as exploiting horses and making them live cruel, abusive lives. Wrong! If they were abused, the veterinarian who checks on them regularly would know it, but I've not seen any testimony to that effect.

The animal rights activists have always been extremists, and using the family of the teen who was killed in the carriage horse accident is the height of insensitivity. More people are injured by e-bikes in the park than by carriage horses. You know that, and I know it (as a member of EVSA). Yet the Council refuses to do anything about the e-bike menace.

Keep the carriage horses. Most will go to slaughter if the ban passes. Clueless supporters of the ban think they'll go to sanctuaries. Sanctuaries, like animal shelters, are overwhelmed and just can't take in new animals.

I urge you ... do NOT ban the carriage horses.

Sincerely yours,

Melanie Coronetz

 NYC 10128

From: [Melissa](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in support of passing a ban on NYC horse drawn carriages
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2026 5:20:31 PM

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Below you will find my testimony on my support of passing a ban on NYC horse drawn carriages.

My name is Melissa Chestara. My phone number is [REDACTED]. My address is [REDACTED], Carlsbad, CA 92008. I am a former and native New York resident.

Hello, I am writing to urge your support in passing the ban on horse drawn carriages in NYC. Horse drawn carriages are clearly a public safety issue and animal cruelty. Please support the safety of those who live in, work in, and visit New York and encourage the proper treatment of horses as well.

Horses do not belong on crowded urban streets and cannot be expected to behave safely in this unnatural setting for them. The existence of carriage horses in NYC is simply bad for humans and bad for horses. In this day and age there are surely other more appropriate, ethical and acceptable ways to support this method of tourism without putting both humans and animals in harms way.

NYC is better than this and does not want to be known for the support of this sad display of the mistreatment and abuse of these beautiful animals who deserve better. It has been proven that these horses are often not properly cared for, overworked, and abused while they are serving the city as carriage horses. They are known to be worked to the point of exhaustion and injury...At which point in time they can no longer work as carriage horses, it has been discovered that they are often disposed of by any means including illegally being sent to slaughter...

The treatment of NYC carriage horses in both life and death is currently disgraceful. They are not treated as living beings, but disposable items or objects. This display of animal cruelty and the dangerous impact on humans is unacceptable, immoral and archaic in this day and age where horses are no longer a necessary form of transportation. This is 2026 and citizens of NYC love their pets and are animal lovers. Animals have earned a special place in our human hearts and lives and have the right to be treated humanely. NYC carriage horses should be no exception to the same laws which protect other domestic animals. They have the right to be properly cared for and to be safe from abuse, neglect and mistreatment. How the NYC carriage horses are currently treated is quite frankly a violation of such laws that protect our animals and this needs to be recognized. No one wants to see these sad carriage horses on the streets of NYC anymore and no one deserves to be put at risk of the potential danger they present to the public safety of humans.

Please support the end of the disgraceful and dangerous presence of carriage horses in NYC, ban NYC carriage horses and ensure the horses are liberated in retirement to new appropriate homes. I encourage that if and when this hopefully passes that the proper and safe retirement of the current NYC carriage horses be ensured by having them rehomed and/ or retired to sanctuaries where they might have the opportunity to live out the remainder of their lives with dignity and proper care. If left to the decision of the people who currently run the carriages and own these horses, if they were no longer to be able to operate their businesses, it seems very likely they would seek to dispose of these horses by euthanizing or selling for slaughter as they place no value on these horses are living breathing beautiful creatures. Please also take this into consideration and be sure that the so far sad and miserable lives of these poor horses will not end in a similar way.... Please ensure that the horses will have some hope for a possible happier ending after all they have given.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,
Melissa Chestara

Sent from my iPhone

Subject: Written Testimony in Support of Intro 0943

Written by Melissa Faulkner - Hell's Kitchen Resident

363 W 46th Street, Apt 3A

New York City, NY 10036

925-786-8604

Sent Friday July 17, 2026

Dear Chair Schulman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of Intro 0943 and the phaseout of horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City.

While horse-drawn carriages have long been associated with New York City's history, tradition alone is not a sufficient reason to continue a practice if it no longer reflects modern standards of animal welfare.

Horses are large prey animals that evolved to live in open environments, not to spend their working lives navigating dense urban traffic, pavement, noise, heat, exhaust, and crowds. Even with regulations governing work hours, veterinary care, and inspections, these conditions cannot fully eliminate the physical and psychological stress of working in one of the busiest cities in the world.

The recent incidents involving carriage horses, including collapses in traffic and other highly publicized welfare concerns, have reinforced for many New Yorkers that this industry is fundamentally incompatible with the city's environment. Rather than continuing to modify regulations in an attempt to make urban carriage work acceptable, I believe it is time to transition to alternatives that do not depend on the use of live animals.

I also recognize that carriage drivers and stable workers have built careers in this industry. Any transition should include meaningful support, workforce assistance, and reasonable timelines to help affected workers move into new opportunities.

New York City has evolved in many ways over the years, and I believe ending the use of horse-drawn carriages is another step toward a city that reflects contemporary values regarding animal welfare.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to support Intro 0943.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Melissa Faulkner

Greetings,

When I first came to New York City for graduate school, the thing I fell in love with right away was the number of horses in this urban setting--carriage horses, police horses, pleasure horses. There was still a stable at Chelsea Piers. I took riding lessons at Claremont Riding Academy near Central Park. I live near the stable in Windsor Terrace in part because I love having horses nearby. So it's understandable that I support carriage horses in Central Park, and urge you to vote to keep them.

There are big problems with the proposed ban on carriage horses. First and foremost is the fact that it is not a kindness to the horses to take away their reason for existence. The legislation includes language prohibiting them from being carriage horses anymore. Only somebody who knows nothing of horses could have written that. These are draft horses. They exist because of their ability to pull things. They are not saddle horses. They can't become therapy horses. They could be put out to pasture at a rescue, but frankly I have no trust in the city to do that. They will end up as glue and cat food.

Second, the blithe manner in which people, be it AI executives or government officials, are willing to destroy peoples livelihoods, their identities, their vocations, is callous. We watched jobs get lost to globalization, to the Internet, and to automation for decades. At least the tech executives were honest about it. They said "your job's gone? Tough. Adapt or die." (And a couple of livery drivers here in NYC did take their lives as a result of Uber). Politicians lie to us. They say they will retrain people, find them new jobs, and they never do. But what job could possibly replace working with horses, other than working with horses? When plumber can no longer be a plumber, or a steel worker no longer a steel worker, they suffer a great mental trauma. Their identity and purpose in life, the thing that makes them proud, their sense of self, is stolen from them. How much worse it must be when that sense of self comes from bonding with another creature -- and a horse? What Raymond Lull called "the noblest of all the beasts?" This legislation not only eliminates good union jobs, it destroys people's souls.

Please don't don't take out horse drawn carriages away from us. Please don't take these good union jobs away. Please don't take the livelihoods and investment of these business owners away. Please don't destroy this beautiful part of living in New York City.

Michael A. Cramer
Brooklyn, New York

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF INT 0943-2026 (“RYDER’S LAW”)

Before the Committee on Health, New York City Council

Hon. Lynn Schulman, Chair · Hearing of Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Submitted by Michael W. Magee, PhD

Chair Schulman and members of the Committee:

My name is Michael Magee. I am an experimental social psychologist and Professor of Psychology at St. Joseph’s University New York, where my research examines compassion — including how and when people extend it to animals — and I am the founder of Animal Compassion NYC. My affiliation is provided for identification only; I submit this testimony as a New York City resident, and the views are my own. I write in strong support of Int 0943-2026 and urge the Committee to advance it.

The immediate case for this bill is already before you. On June 17, eighteen-year-old Romanch Mahajan, visiting Central Park with his family, was thrown from a carriage and killed when the horse bolted — the first known human death in a New York carriage incident, and by public count the eighth horse-related incident in the park in roughly thirteen months. That toll is not a run of bad luck. Horses are prey animals, and a startle-and-flight response is wired into them; no amount of training or licensing removes it. Midtown traffic — sirens, jackhammers, crowds, horns — is very nearly a laboratory for triggering that response. To the extent that the industry’s safety record depends on half-ton prey animals never being startled in the most startling environment in America, these incidents are not accidents in any meaningful sense. They are the expected output of the system, arriving on schedule.

As a psychologist, I can also offer the Committee a candid answer to a fair question: if the hazard is this predictable, why has the industry survived every prior incident? Because human beings are remarkably good at not looking. The carriage trade sells a story — romance, tradition, old New York — and the story does exactly what such stories do: it directs our attention away from the animal and toward the postcard. Research on moral disengagement suggests that most people do not approve of what happens to these horses; they simply never quite see it. It took a young man’s death to make the city look. Now that we are looking, the question is only whether we act on what we see.

I would note, finally, that this is a humane bill for people and not just for horses. It does not fire anyone overnight; it winds the trade down in an orderly way and funds a workforce program to move drivers into new jobs. The choice before the Committee is not jobs versus animals. It is an orderly transition versus another thirteen months of incidents — and, eventually, another family.

New York should not need a second fatality to conclude what the first one made plain. I respectfully urge the Committee to vote Int 0943-2026 out of committee and to pass it.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael W. Magee, PhD

Professor of Psychology, St. Joseph's University New York (for identification only)

Founder, Animal Compassion NYC · animalcompassionnyc.com

Brooklyn, New York · [REDACTED]

Testimony Before the New York City Council

In Support of Legislation to End Horse-Drawn Carriage Operations in New York City

Chairperson and Members of the Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of legislation to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

As someone who spends a significant amount of time in and around Central Park, I have personally witnessed numerous situations that have left me deeply concerned about both the welfare of the horses and the safety of the public. These ongoing observations have led me to conclude that horse-drawn carriage operations can no longer be conducted in a manner that adequately protects the welfare of the horses or the safety of the public.

My support for this legislation is rooted in the following urgent concerns and first-hand observations:

- **Tragic Fatalities and Severe Safety Failures:** Most alarmingly, the apparent lack of meaningful regulation has resulted in tragic and preventable deaths. We have seen far too many horses die under these operating conditions. Tragically, this fundamental lack of safety has now escalated to the loss of human life, with the recent death of a passenger. These devastating outcomes make it undeniably clear that the industry poses an unacceptable level of risk and that the current system is broken beyond repair.
- **Compromised Animal Welfare and Heat Exposure:** On multiple occasions, I have observed horses standing in direct sunlight for extended periods with little or no available shade during hot summer days. While I understand that the City regulates when horses may work based on temperature, I was disappointed to see that the allowable working temperature was recently increased. Even when operating within the law, standing on asphalt and concrete in the summer heat for hours at a time does not provide an acceptable quality of life for these animals.

- **Public Safety and Traffic Violations:** I have repeatedly witnessed carriage operators ignoring pedestrian safety. I have seen handlers proceed through intersections while pedestrians had the walk signal, creating unsafe situations for people crossing the street. Furthermore, I have observed carriage operators leaving their horses unattended while they stepped away to take photographs of paying customers, and I have witnessed operators disregarding traffic signals both inside Central Park and on surrounding streets. Regardless of how common these incidents may be, they should not occur when large animals are sharing crowded streets with pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles.
- **Inadequate Housing and a Lack of Natural Environment:** Beyond the safety concerns, I question whether New York City's carriage horses are able to experience the quality of life they deserve. My understanding is that these horses spend much of their lives housed in urban stables constructed primarily of concrete and are brought outside primarily to work. Horses are naturally social, grazing animals that thrive with regular turnout, open pasture, and the freedom to move about. Living in a dense urban environment without meaningful opportunities to roam freely is fundamentally inconsistent with their natural needs.
- **A Lack of Mandated Equine Training:** I am also concerned that, to my knowledge, there is no requirement that carriage operators possess formal education or certification in equine behavior, welfare, or husbandry. Given the responsibility of caring for large animals in one of the busiest cities in the world, I believe minimum standards of equine knowledge should be expected.

This issue is not about criticizing every carriage operator. It is about ensuring that horses are treated humanely and that the public is kept safe. At a minimum, carriage operators should be required to complete standardized training in equine behavior, husbandry, and the safe operation of horse-drawn carriages in an urban environment, and stronger welfare standards should be established and rigorously enforced.

Given how long this industry has operated without such basic regulations, I have no confidence that mandated training would ever become a standard, be properly enforced, or resolve the fundamental welfare and safety concerns. Furthermore, even if oversight were enhanced, I do not believe New York City is an appropriate environment for horse-drawn carriage operations. The combination of dense traffic, extreme weather, noise, pavement, pollution, and the inability for horses to engage in their natural behaviors creates conditions that cannot adequately meet their physical and psychological needs.

Horses deserve access to pasture, freedom of movement, companionship with other horses, and an environment where they can simply be horses—not spend their lives working on city streets.

New York City has long been viewed as a leader in advancing animal welfare. I believe we have an opportunity to continue that legacy by recognizing that horse-drawn carriage operations no longer reflect modern standards of humane animal care. We can honor the history of this industry while acknowledging that there are more compassionate and sustainable alternatives available today.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to support legislation ending horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City and to pursue humane alternatives that protect both animals and the public.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your consideration of this important issue.

Respectfully,



Michael Wittich



New York NY, 10019



To the voting members of the council,

It is long past overdue that we end the inhumane and dangerous horse-drawn carriage rides in New York City. The animals are overworked and mistreated in a loud and scary environment. It is dangerous for them and for the humans enjoying the park as well.

Thank you for finally making this matter a priority, if only it didn't take a young man's death to make it so.

Sincerely,

Michal Pasternak

Support for Romanch's Law!

My name is Michelle Mahana. I'm a New Yorker. I haven't gone to the protests over the years and this is my first city council meeting. However, I'd hear about the horses dropping dead in the heat, at least 2 every summer and rumors that the mayor would end carriage horse rides and it never happened. I live on the UES and Central Park is my haven. Except. Every time I'd see the carriage horses standing with their blinders, fake carnations in their bridles, the weight of the carriages on their backs, or walking in traffic, my heart hurt. I felt so powerless. All I could do was say a prayer for them. Also painful was my anger at the drivers. Didn't they care about the horses having to work in the heat and traffic and live in small stalls? Whose lives were put at risk every day? I wanted to shout out to the tourists, please don't ride the horse carriages—they don't have good lives—take a bicycle instead.

Sadly, over the years, the attempts by caring politicians to ban the horse carriages were unsuccessful. There never would have been a chance against the powerful carriage horse industry until the recent death of Romanch Manajin, who died jumping out of the moving carriage to save his mother's life.

Even after this tragedy, at the hearing, the drivers called the carriage rides, 'historic' and "iconic." No amount of drivers donning top hats and flower adornments, with their lip service to 'legacy' can cover up the bloodshed of the horses who collapsed under the weight of the greed, selfishness, and negligence of the carriage industry—who defend their trade at ANY cost, human or animal.

At the council meeting what was glaringly absent from their testimony was any regard or regret for the deaths of their own horses, whom they insisted they loved and cared for well. The data—of unattended horses, drivers leaving carriages to take photos of tourists, and riding the horses in extreme heat—says the opposite. A chilling image:

at the hearing, a young driver with purple hair and a top hat, scrolling on her iPhone while the names of the deceased horses were read. Equally, if not more disturbing: the carriage horse veterinarian, cynically saying the retired horses would not go to a sanctuary but be slaughtered.

What if the drivers and support staff helped to place the horses and support one another to find new jobs with horses where they can work with them in a way that's mutually sustaining?

I got all choked up when a man read all the names of the horses who died. He was honest, admitting that this industry is no longer safe and can't be propped up by more regulations. More lives will be lost. And he said, 'Do no harm.' I'd been thinking about this idea when I'd first arrived at the courthouse. An oath doctor's must take. First. Do No Harm. Einstein said that the measure of a society's morals can be judged by how it treats its animals.

He said:

"If a man aspired towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals."

Because animals can't speak up for themselves and always fight for themselves. So we have to.

I wish Romanch didn't have to die for this bill to finally get the support it should have had from the start. Let's hope he didn't die in vain and pass the bill to ban horse carriage rides saving countless future lives of horses and people.

From: [michelle marlowe](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bill to ban horse-drawn carriages in NYC-Intro 943
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 7:12:04 PM

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Hello. I am an animal rescuer who has been living in Nyc since 1985. I am the former Executive Director of Mighty Mutts and now volunteer with an organization named Positive Tails. I urge you to pass Intro 943. For decades I have watched the unbearable suffering and deaths of innocent horses used to pull carriages. It is time for the city to finally do the right thing and end this cruelty. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Michelle Marlowe

July 14, 2026

Testimony in Support of Legislation to Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City

Submitted to the New York City Council

Sadly I cannot be there in person but I wish to express my **STRONG** support for banning horse carriages. The City Council has been warned for years and unfortunately, you cannot go back in time to save that tourist's life, but you can finally do the right thing. Your constituents want this – 70% of New York City residents favor a ban. Why?

These animals are working in conditions the city would never tolerate for any other job.

Carriage horses spend their shifts standing and pulling loads on asphalt, surrounded by buses, trucks, and taxis, often in extreme heat or cold. Horses are prey animals with a flight instinct built into their nervous systems. A siren, a plastic bag, a car backfiring: any of it can trigger a bolt. When that happens on a crowded street, the horse has nowhere to go and neither does anyone near it.

They live in multi-story stables built for a different era of the city, with little turnout space and no pasture access. New York's traffic, pavement, and density are simply not a humane environment for a 1,000-pound prey animal, no matter how well an individual driver cares for their horse.

This is a public safety issue, not only an animal welfare one.

New York has seen carriage horses spook and bolt into traffic, injuring drivers, pedestrians, and the horses themselves. Each incident is treated as an isolated accident, but this is a pattern. It's what happens when you keep putting large animals with a fear-based flight response into one of the most stimulus-dense environments in the country. The city does not need another news cycle about a runaway horse on to know how this ends.

New York City should be a leader, not an embarrassment

Several cities including most recently, Philadelphia, have already banned these carriages. Why can't we? As a resident, I consider this embarrassing and an indication that NYC is somehow behind the times and on the wrong side of this issue.

Job loss concerns should not trump safety and morality

There wasn't a lot of handwringing over the many people who lost their jobs when the Times Square porn theaters, live shows and shops were shuttered in the 90s. That was a

question of safety and morality. So is this. With so many New Yorkers certain to lose jobs to AI and automation (including cab/Uber drivers), the concern over lost carriage driver jobs falls quite flat. And it's not like these drivers won't have jobs. They have simply so far rejected the offer to drive electric carriages. Animal welfare and public safety have to come first.

I urge the Committee to at long last pass this legislation. New York does not need horse-drawn carriages to remain a world-class tourist destination.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony in Support of Romanch's Law (Ryder's Law)

Michelle Ung



Brooklyn, NY 11229

July 17, 2026

To: The Honorable Members of New York Council Committee on Health
250 Broadway, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Council Member Lynn Schulman,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Michelle Ung and I am a resident of Sheepshead Bay. I am writing to you today in support of Romanch's Law— vital legislation to protect carriage horses and ensure accountability for their care.

Growing up, I developed a deep love and respect for animals, recognizing them as sentient beings that deserve kindness and dignity. It has always pained me to see animals forced into lives of labor, confinement, or suffering. New York City, a place built for vehicles and modern life, feels like the perfect place to start this change. The use of horse-drawn carriages here, where horses endure long hours on crowded, noisy streets, feels out of place in a society that values progress and empathy. It's time we prioritize their well-being and recognize that compassion should extend to every living being.

Romanch's Law represents a critical opportunity to align our city's values with actionable change. For too long, outdated practices like horse-drawn carriages have persisted in a city that thrives on innovation and progress, despite the harm they cause to animals who deserve better. This law isn't just about regulation—it's about affirming our commitment to a future where compassion guides our policies. By passing Romanch's Law, the City Council can take a meaningful step toward protecting the most vulnerable among us, ensuring that our laws reflect the dignity and respect every living being deserves.

Thank you so much for your help.

Sincerely,
Michelle Ung

We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

NYC Carriage Horse Hearing: 2 minute talk

FOR THE RECORD

The vision: Central Park designers; Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux wanted the Park to be a respite from urban life.

The park was to be a beautiful open green space, in which quiet carriage drives, horseback riding, and strolls may be had.

The paths were built for three types of traffic:

pedestrians

horseback riders

horse-drawn carriages

To keep everyone safe, the designers built a system of tunnels, arches, and bridges.

This allowed the paths to cross without crashes.

Central Park's carriage and driving paths have changed drastically since they opened in the 1860s .

The original dirt roads for horses and carriages are now asphalt paved roads.

Here is how the carriage paths have changed over time:

- 1912: The unpaved carriage paths were paved with asphalt to handle cars and bicycles.
- 1932: Traffic lights for cars were added to the park .
- 1938: Parks Commissioner Robert Moses widened the roads to make them better for cars, which led to the destruction of the historic Marble Arch .
- 1941: The first official bike path was built to separate bicycles from cars.

- 1950s–1980s: Cars took over the park, and many areas became dangerous for pedestrians and horseback riders .
- 2007: Horseback riding mostly stopped in the park as riding stables closed .
- 2018: The city made the Central Park Drive completely car-free, turning the main carriage and driving loops back into a space for walking, running, and biking.

David Saltonstall, vice president for government relations at the Central Park Conservancy, said the nonprofit took a position against the carriages last year after a series of "scary incidents in the park." But Saltonstall said "nostalgia cannot trump public safety."

"We have a public safety threat that needs to be mitigated," he said.

Elizabeth "Betsy" W. Smith is the current President and CEO of the Central Park Conservancy. She has led the organization since 2018, overseeing strategic planning, park operations, and capital programming.

2 points Regarding the Central Park Conservancy lack of stewardship, mis management and negligence:

1. taking away the exclusivity of the carriage paths from the carriage horses
2. Incidents that have occurred are due to this negligence.
3. Although numerous videos have surfaced, they have clearly been edited/ doctored, because not one of them shows abuse of the carriage horses.
4. Not useful (Irrelevant): If the video doesn't reveal who or what caused the crash/ incident. In a court of law the judge would likely throw it out as inadmissible.
5. The Intent to do harm: Planting toxic Yew plants along the carriage drives.

As America industrialized during the second half of the 19th century, something unexpected began to happen.

FOR THE RECORD

The horse gradually acquired a second identity; a working partner, also became a symbol of recreation, and sport. Nowhere was this transition more evident than here in the Northeast.

Today, the horse-drawn carriages have been limited by the Park Conservancy to just the southern areas of the Park and are FORCED to share the paved paths with pedestrians and cyclists this is exactly opposite of the vision of the Park's designers.

Shouldn't the people who know horses best help plan how to protect these horses and give them back the carriage paths!

Mindy Pless

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I am writing to support passage of Intro 943, phasing out carriage horses in New York City. I have often seen these poor horses trotting through streets surrounded by all sorts of vehicles and their noxious emissions. Horses were pulling carriages when there was no other means of traveling through the city. That time is long past. Now, it is just cruel to have them doing this kind of involuntary activity.

Please stop this cruelty and pass Intro 943.

Committee on Health in Hell's Kitchen,

I strongly believe that horse carriage business should be banned. This is an inhumane way to treat animals for public spectacle – forcing them way outside their needs and capacities as a species. This has had devastating effects of both public death of horses and humans from this industry. Even beyond these very visible tragedies is the tragedy of the daily life of a carriage horse attempting to navigate modern traffic, pollution, and living conditions. There is no independent body to monitor the health and wellbeing of these animals and thus unhealthy animals are worked to their death – when they're disappeared to slaughter. This is not how we should celebrate the greatest city in the world. Let's show another way. And help the carriage industry humans transition into careers that offer more stability as well.

Sincerely,

Molly Hajkova

Thank you for considering my testimony in opposition of Intro 943 to ban NYC horse carriages.

The carriage horses are privately owned, and their owners have not been found guilty of animal abuse. Yet activists continue to insist otherwise based on their personal beliefs—not legal facts.

They want to eliminate the owners' livelihoods. What gives them that right?

They want owners to find new careers. What gives them that right?

They want privately owned horses surrendered to rescues. What gives them that right?

When owners refuse, they're publicly criticized and shamed. What gives them that right?

At what point do personal opinions override the rights of others?

This isn't just about carriage horses. It's about whether a small group should be able to decide how others earn a living and care for their legally owned animals simply because they disagree with a lawful profession.

Respectfully,

Molly Malone

Horse Owner, Advocate and NYC Visitor

In favor of Intro 943, Romanch's Law

The tragic death of Romanch was not a freak accident. It was part of a lengthy pattern and it will happen again if we don't stop it. Please protect the city and the people and animals who live here.

Nobody wants the small group of drivers to lose their jobs, but this is for the greater good of everybody who sets foot in the park and the horses who must suffer every day in an environment that is stressful and dangerous for them.

To see animals suffering and people in danger, every day, in one of the most famous parks in the world, is unbelievable. I am so happy we have a chance to stop this absurd and hurtful practice. Locals do not support the carriage horse industry. It relies on tourists who don't know better. We are all at risk.

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

You need to pass Romanch's law. These horses are constantly suffering and it's truly awful what they experience every day. It's honestly disgusting how we're treating these creatures and New York is better than that.

Be a good government and a good city.

From: [New York City Council](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: Wed, Jul 15 2026 @ 10:00 AM - Committee on Health
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 3:44:58 PM

Attendee will be: Submitting written testimony

[REDACTED]

Attendee name (Zoom name): Morrissey Perfetti

[REDACTED]

Hearing: Wed, Jul 15 2026 @ 10:00 AM - Committee on Health

Subject of testimony: Support for Intro 943 As a resident of Manhattan I'm asking that the New York City Council swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send teh horses to loving sanctuaries , and help drivers transition to new employment."

Organization: Self

Organization if "Other":

If a testimony was uploaded, it will be in the attachments.

From: [Mufide Yildirim](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Carriage Driver Testimony
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 11:34:06 AM

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Dear Members of the New York City Council,

My name is Mufide, and I am a horse-drawn carriage driver in Central Park.

I came to New York City from Turkey when I was 23 years old. I only planned on staying for a few years to experience life in this incredible city. But somewhere along the way, New York became home.

More importantly, I fell in love with the horse-drawn carriage industry.

Growing up in Turkey, I rode horses, so when I found this job, it felt like I had discovered a piece of my hometown right here in the middle of Manhattan. Working alongside these beautiful animals while sharing the history and beauty of Central Park with visitors from all over the world has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life.

Every day I come to work with one goal above all else: safety. The safety of my horse, my passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and everyone around me is always my number one priority. My horse is my partner, and I have a responsibility to care for and protect him every single day.

Over the years, I have given countless rides to visitors from around the world. Time and time again, they tell me that their carriage ride was the highlight of their trip to New York City. Seeing families make lifelong memories, watching couples celebrate engagements, anniversaries, and birthdays, and introducing children to horses for the very first time reminds me why I chose this profession.

The tragic death of the young man in the recent accident is heartbreaking. My heart goes out to his family and loved ones. It is every carriage driver's worst nightmare to be involved in an accident that results in the loss of a life.

As an industry, we must acknowledge this tragedy and continue looking for ways to improve safety. We owe that to the victim, his family, and the public.

But banning our industry is not the answer.

Thousands of safe rides are given every year by drivers who care deeply about their horses and take their responsibilities seriously. One tragic incident should not erase the livelihoods of

hardworking families or the history of an industry that has been part of New York City for generations.

Instead of eliminating our profession, I respectfully ask that you support Gennaro's bill to strengthen safety measures, improve our industry, and help ensure that a tragedy like this never happens again.

We are not asking to avoid change. We are asking for the opportunity to become better while preserving an industry that means so much to so many people.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my story and consider my perspective.

Respectfully,

Mufide Yildirim
Horse-Drawn Carriage Driver

I am writing to urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment. It is far beyond time to end the horse carriage industry. These majestic creatures deserve a life of freedom and joy, not to be treated like capitalist tools. I hope to see a NYC that embraces animal welfare soon. Thank you for your time.

The Central Park carriage horses are creatures who deserve respect and care. They are social, curious, engaged, and fawned over daily by not only their partners, whom some call owners in error, but by customers and passersby alike. For some people, this is their only connection to a creature larger than a dog, and being close or even touching one creates an emotional connection that can shape their future behaviors toward animals in the most positive of ways. They are not the carriage horses as a single unit; they are individuals, cared for and loved, working in an industry that provides them enrichment and socialization that is paramount to their health. Horses are not meant to be idle; it is detrimental to their well-being. You cannot liken them to a cat or dog, yes, they are a companion, but a working one, and animals like people who lose their purpose can become depressed, listless, and self-destructive in extreme cases.

The wickering you hear as you pass is joyous, as are the bright, healthy, soulful eyes. Playful tossing of the mane and neck stretched out to greet people when at the park is a sign of friendship. These are beautiful things and indicative of happy animals. For years, I worked as a wildlife educator among the public, and I know how much a true connection can do to promote brighter futures for all species. Please keep our horses here among the people where they belong.

I oppose Intro #0943 The NYC Carriage Horse Ban, and hope that with sensible consideration, council members can see why the time is right to support Intro #0937 The NYC Carriage Horse Welfare bill.

Thank you for your consideration,
Nancy Lee Bommer

From: [Nancy Saavedra](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Save the Horses, Help the people
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 2:06:21 PM

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We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment. Help the Horses and the People.

Naomi Pearson
Resident of Brooklyn, NY



July 12, 2026

Dear New York City Council,

As a more than 20 year resident of Brooklyn NY, I urge you to please, please take immediate action to stop allowing horses to be forced to pull people in carriages on the congested, and at times brutally hot, streets of New York City.

Please also take action to make sure that these horse are transfered to a horse sanctuary where the horses are able to live out the rest of their natural lives well cared for, and in a natural setting with trees and grass where they can graze peacefully.

I urge you to vote in support of Romanch's Law (Intro 953) - formerly known as Ryder's Law. New York City streets, congested with the toxic fumes of cars, and a place of increasingly stifling summer heat due to climate change, are no place for horses. Seeing reports of where these horses are forced to live while they are not working - in a multi-story building - is truly heartbreaking. We are witnessing blatant animal abuse in plain site. The horses are suffering and dying. New York residents are deeply upset and disturbed that this has been allowed to continue year after year, after year, after year.

Once and for all, the cruel treatment of these horses needs to stop. Horse carriage drivers can ride electric pedicabs, as one of many options available for making money without abusing sentient animals who feel heat, pain and sadness, just as humans do.

Please do the right thing and vote in support of Romanch's Law .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naomi'.



July 18, 2026

Dear New York City Council,

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries and help drivers transition to new employment.

Horses have no need to live and be used amongst modern machinery, vehicles, traffic. There have been lives lost and lives in danger to maintain this archaic form of "entertainment." Please implement an end to the horse carriage industry. Let the horses live out their lives in sanctuaries and keep the streets safe for humans and horses.

Thank you,

Natalie Eakin
NYC Resident

Written Testimony in Support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)

To the Members of the New York City Council:

I am writing to express my strongest support for Intro 943 (Romanch's Law) and to urge the City Council to pass this critical legislation immediately. New York City must support the complete phase-out and end of the cruel horse-drawn carriage industry.

Horses do not belong in New York City. Forcing these large, sensitive animals to navigate congested streets, inhale toxic exhaust fumes, and labor on hard asphalt in extreme weather is an archaic and inhumane practice. The everyday conditions of this industry are inherently exploitative, subjecting animals to an environment that contradicts their basic biological needs.

How we treat animals is a direct reflection of our collective character. It tells us everything we need to know about ourselves, and the continued commercial exploitation of these horses is deeply disheartening. Allowing this cruelty to persist for entertainment is a stain on our city. It is time for New York City to lead with true compassion and put an end to this outdated practice by passing Intro 943.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this urgent matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalie Lynn Puletti, Esq.

Dear Honorable Members of the New York City Council:

It is with passion and anticipation that I submit my testimony as a New York City resident urging you to pass legislation that will put an end to the outdated practice of horse carriages in New York City. The animal abuse is apparent and no amount of reforms in the practice can fix an inherently inhumane business model. This was my sentiment when I moved here in 2014 as a freshman at NYU, and it remains my sentiment 12 years later as someone who calls New York City home. Enough is enough, and my peers agree. The sentiment among my age group (young millennials and Gen Z) is consistent and we demand an end to the suffering.

Sincerely,
Natalie Torn
Resident of Hell's Kitchen

What happened was an absolute tragedy. There is no denying that. The only one like this in carriage history but still one too many. As a friend of the carriage industry, I know they don't take this lightly. Also, as their friend, I know how seriously they are taking this and how horrible they feel for the loss. The truth is they are some of the best people I know. I used to work in the industry and my mom still does, and I can say these people truly have your back and they care. The epitome of true New Yorkers; hard workers, always looking for a way to lend a hand, they love their community, and they love their horses. I understand the world is changing, as is the city, but this is such a special group of people and community that is dwindling in our world of AI and tech. Perhaps the focus should be on how we can preserve horses and livelihoods such as these rather than making more room for more concrete and steel? Maybe the social justice warriors should be focused on the greed that is bringing businesses like this down rather than harassing hard working, caring people? We have AI farms chugging down all our clean water and we're ingesting toxins that cause diseases we cannot even have access to cure without starting gofundmes and yet this is the topic of discussion? Perhaps a more reasonable solution is water stations, tie posts, perhaps a paddock on a green lawn? These are not the bad guys. Countless vets defend them. The horses are shiny and plump. Unfortunately, the reality of the horse world is accidents happen- but I can tell you this for sure- they are a lot more common in every other part of the horse world. Jumping, barrel racing, and any other kind of riding. Accidents also happen when you ride a bike and don't see a car coming. Or go swimming and happen to run into a shark. It doesn't mean we stop living or doing things. But we can always educate and readjust HOW we do things. And so I am asking you to help us with the how and stand up for the little guys and their beloved horses.

Testimony in favor of Intro 943

My name is Nathan Semmel. My wife, Meredith, and I are District 7 residents in Manhattan. Our representative is Majority Leader Shaun Abreu.

When we saw the video that Leader Abreu posted of his goddaughter Jada asking the council to ban horse carriages, we were thrilled. I immediately texted him to thank him. He responded right away.

He wrote, “My man, took me some time (explanation point).”

That phrase, “took me some time” got me thinking.

CM Abreu is a good man and a wonderful CM, and I suspect from our conversations over the years that he’s never been comfortable with horse carriages.

However, the conviction just wasn’t quite there to stick his neck out.

I suspect there are many members of this Committee and Council who have felt the same way: Good people, uncomfortable with horse carriages in a modern urban environment; but for various reasons not quite uncomfortable enough to do something about it, to do the right thing.

I responded to the council member, “that’s ok, the arc of progress bends towards justice.” And he immediately wrote back, “yes sir.”

I’m not here to litigate the past or ask anyone what took them so long or sit in judgment.

I’m here to celebrate being on the precipice of justice.

But I do so with a message to those members who still find themselves not ready or unwilling:

There are now flashing red lights with conspicuous warning signs screaming two things:

“Horses in NYC parks and streets are unpredictable” and “Horse carriages can kill people.”

“Took me some time” will never be an acceptable response or explanation in the future.

To those members who for years have been willing to protect the horses, thank you.

And to those who it “took some time,” I am equally grateful.

And to the gentleman who earlier said that advocates are exploiting Romanch’s death: you don’t get to tell people who have warned of this tragedy happening for years that they are exploiting it when it does.

As a NYC resident, I plead with the NYC City Council to please PASS Intro 943. The carriage horse industry kills horses and people. This can not keep happening, and many cities in the US, such as Philly, have recently banned this outdated, vile practice, and I urge you to do the same. Please send the horses to loving sanctuaries and help the drivers transition to other forms of employment. The people of NYC thank you!

Dear City Council,

Please support Romanch's Law, which would phase out the carriage horse industry in New York City.

Horses are worked in sweltering heat and freezing cold.

These animals are easily spooked and are working next to loud, unpredictable vehicles and machinery.

This exploitative and dangerous industry has gone on long enough.

Please retire the horses to a caring sanctuary.

Thank you and Sincerely,

Nell Marie McKay

[REDACTED]

NYC, NY

10011

[REDACTED]

From: [Nicole Arnold](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Support of Intro 0943: Ending Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides and Transitioning Carriage Horses Out of New York City
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2026 2:12:40 PM

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Chair Schulman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Nicole Arnold, and I am here in strong support of legislation to end horse-drawn carriage rides in New York City.

This issue is about both public safety and animal welfare. We have already seen the heartbreaking consequences when something goes wrong. No family should have to experience the unimaginable loss that the Mahajan family has endured, and no horse should be placed in circumstances where tragedies like this remain possible.

Horses are intelligent, sensitive prey animals. They are not designed to spend their lives pulling heavy carriages through one of the busiest cities in the world, surrounded by traffic, horns, sirens, construction, crowds, extreme heat, bitter cold, and pavement. No amount of training can eliminate a horse's natural instinct to flee when frightened or overwhelmed.

When carriage horses bolt, they are not being "bad" horses. They are reacting exactly as prey animals do. These incidents are not anomalies—they are reminders that New York City is simply not an appropriate environment for horses.

The welfare concerns are just as troubling. A recent city-commissioned veterinary inspection documented horses housed in cramped stalls, scars consistent with improperly fitting harnesses, skin lesions, dental disease, and other physical abnormalities. One horse was also found to have significant lameness requiring further evaluation. These were not allegations from an advocacy group. They were findings documented by a veterinarian hired by New York City. If those conditions are considered

acceptable, then we need to seriously rethink what we believe humane treatment looks like.

Horses deserve more than simply surviving. They deserve room to move freely, graze, socialize with other horses, and express the natural behaviors that are essential to their physical and mental well-being. An urban carriage stable and New York City's streets cannot provide that.

As our understanding of animal welfare has evolved, our laws should evolve with it. Just because this industry has existed for generations does not mean it should continue. Today, we know better, and when we know better, we have a responsibility to do better.

Ending the carriage horse industry does not mean abandoning these horses. It means giving them the chance to live safer, healthier lives. As someone who has spent years volunteering with horses, I am personally willing to volunteer my time to help care for these horses during the transition, assist with rehabilitation where needed, and help make calls, coordinate placements, and support finding them loving homes, reputable sanctuaries, or therapeutic riding programs where they can live with the dignity they deserve.

New York City has an opportunity to lead with compassion, common sense, and modern standards of animal welfare. We can protect the public, honor the memory of those who have been harmed, and finally give these horses the future they deserve.

I respectfully urge you to support and pass this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Nicole Arnold

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Nicole C Lee](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943 (Committee on Health 7/15 @ 10am)
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 10:43:12 PM

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Dear New York City Council,

I urge you to swiftly pass Intro 943 AKA Romanch's Law to end the archaic horse-drawn carriage industry in our City. Please send the horses to sanctuaries that actually care about horses and will adequately tend to their health and safety. Help drivers transition away from this occupation, which serves no one but a few hundred people.

Former City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams was either too corrupt or too much of a coward to stand up to TWU Local 100 and should have put Ryder's Law to a vote years ago. Because of her actions, Romanch needlessly lost his life.

The carriage drivers don't care about their horses and the corrupt veterinarians who have falsely attested to how well cared for the horses are have masked the truth for too long. Please stop believing their lies and stop giving in to the demands of a few when the calls by the majority of the City's residents are asking for the end of this industry.

This is not a tradition that should be upheld. It is incompatible with our modern life. If carriages are truly desired by tourists, the drivers can transition to electric ones like other cities have. There is no need to enable persistent animal abuse and suffering for the profit of a few.

We are better than this. Horses deserve better than this.

Thank you.

--

Nicole C. Lee

"You make the world a better place by making yourself a better person." - Scott Sorrell

June 15, 2026

Dear honorable members of the NYC Council Health Committee,

In June, the NYC carriage trade claimed two lives in a week. City Council can stop it from happening again. On behalf of Friends of Animals and our more than 11,000 New York members, please pass Intro 943 quickly.

Because the New York City Council Health Committee scheduled the official public hearing on Intro 943, the carriage industry is now trying to get a leg up. Pun intended.

So, it has pivoted from talking about increasing so-called safety measures like hitching posts to spreading the narrative that all the horses are going to end up in the slaughter pipeline if Intro 943 gets signed into law. It's a desperate move to deflect from the danger and cruelty inherent in the brutal horse-drawn carriage trade.

Oh, the irony.

Currently there is absolutely no accountability for when a horse leaves the trade, if they don't drop dead on the street first. Existing antiquated regulations simply require carriage horse operators to notify the Office of Veterinary Public Health Services when a horse leaves service within 10 days. Such notice shall include the date of disposition and if sold in New York city, the name and address of the buyer or other transferee and such other information as the commissioner may prescribe. Horses sold or transferred outside of New York are not tracked, and no records are kept.

The truth is carriage horses have ended up at kill pens. Our friends at Equine Advocates, a national non-profit equine protection organization located in Chatham, N.Y., has had as many as four carriage horses there at one time—three from NYC and one from Philadelphia—after they rescued them from kills pens.

The industry has never had to show the public where all the horses are now who were registered in NYC and who have quietly disappeared.

Show us where all the horses from say the last five years are now living since they stopped being useful. (Friends of Animals has filed a Freedom of Information Law request to find out where all the horses from the last three years are now living since they stopped being useful to the trade.)

And where is the 7-year-old horse, named Sampson, who was yanked from carriage service following the tragic accident that claimed the life of Romanch Mahajan, just seven days after a 16-year-old carriage horse named Deniz died after eating a Japanese yew—a highly toxic plant for horses. Yet another dangerous part of NYC streets.

According to media reports, “Sampson’s exact current location is not specified, but retired carriage horses in New York City are typically sent to sanctuaries or farms upstate or in neighboring state.”

If that’s where they are “typically sent,” why all the buzz now about how the 150 horses left in the industry will go to slaughter if Intro 943 is signed into law?

Rest assured, when Intro 943 becomes law, there is no question where the horses will go. Since the bill can be amended after the hearing, we support adding language that creates a fund to enable the city to facilitate a buyout of the horses from the owners and help with placement fees at the sanctuaries who need them. FoA can contribute \$25,000 to start. Clearly that is not enough to support 150 horses...it’s just a start. We invite the TWU to engage with legislators and us on this. And we expect other groups to step up too.

At our own primate sanctuary in Texas, Primarily Primates, we have three rescued wild horses, so we understand the costs involved in providing lifelong care for equines. We also have enough space to accommodate some of the NYC’s carriage horses.

The carriage horse trade being deadly is not the only reason it needs to be banned—on a day-to-day basis it robs equines of their basic needs—adequate turnout for roaming free and socialization.

Simply put, while confined in NYC stables, horses are not allowed to be horses. If you are a horse person, you know why this matters. But if you're not, here's why.

Research shows that horses with regular turnout exhibit lower stress-related behaviors compared to those confined to stalls, contributing to a calmer mind and body.

Not only does the carriage horse industry take away the very things these animals need to decompress, relax, or in other words, "get back to grazing," they are then hitching a carriage to them and forcing them to pull it—along with unassuming tourists—into the loud, unpredictable environment of NYC.

Talk about a perfect storm.

The fact is, no matter what you teach the drivers, you can never teach a horse to unlearn the prey response. They are hardwired for survival. As an equestrian of 42 years, I know that even in the safest, calmest environments, horses may still freeze, bolt, or react defensively to sudden changes.

FoA understands why the industry sprang into action by shutting down briefly so the horse carriage drivers could undergo safety training after the teen was killed. And while that may have made the public and tourists feel safer, they aren't.

And neither are the horses.

Sincerely,

Nicole Rivard

Media/Government Relations Manager

Friends of Animals

Resources

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4810043/>

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To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Nicole Sciacca. I am writing in support of Romanch's Law (Ryder's Law) Intro 943. Horse drawn carriages are a cruel and inhumane industry and must be banned. Horses suffer on a regular basis due to the people in the industry refusing to move on.

Horses who pull these carriages are often left outside with no shelter from all weather. Horses do not do good in high heat and often experience heat stress or stroke. Conversely, while horses are ok in just cold weather, wind can be equally bad for them. These horses are left to stand or pull a carriage around in all weather and have no break from it.

Asphalt hurts horses hooves and legs. Asphalt is a hard surface that doesn't yield when horses walk, run or trot on it. This can cause chock wages to go up through the horse's legs and cause joint pain and damage. Asphalt is also bad for horse's hooves. Asphalt avoids heat and that heat is transferred to the metal shoes, which can lead to a painful condition called road founder.

Bits being in horses mouth for long period of time also causes them pain and damage. The bit is pushed against a very thin layer of skin all day. With bits in their mouths for long periods, horses can develop sores and even bone damage. Bits can also make it hard for horse to breathe and swallow properly.

Blinders are meant to be used to keep horses calm however they are prey animals, they scan and look around all day, and without being able to look around all day, horses tend to get more anxious and stressed. They can't see what's making the loud noises, they can't tell what's happening around them.

Then there are the conditions in which the horses are kept once their grueling long hours are done. There have been multiple investigations into the stables the horses are kept in. Official bet records have shown massive health risks. Horses are kept in cramped area so small they can barley turn if at all.

Horses drawn carriages are archaic. Most people do not approve of them and because nothing has been done for so long to ban this inhumane and cruel industry a teen has lost his life. Romanch Mahajan Would still be alive if not for this cruel industry. He had his whole life ahead of him and because some people are so unwilling to move forward, he is gone.

Please do not let Romanch Mahajan death, along with the death of horses who die because of the inhumanity of this industry, be in vain. I implore you to support Romanch's law and ban horse drawn carriages.

Thank you,
Nicole Sciacca
[REDACTED]
Brooklyn NY 11214
[REDACTED]

From: [Nicolette Hoffman](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony / Intro 943
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 7:13:26 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Early this spring during the first heatwave I was walking near Bethesda fountain and noticed a horse that was quite obviously thirsty, with white dryness around its mouth, and mentioned the horse looked thirsty to the conductor. It quickly escalated to a gang of five or six other drivers surrounding me, yelling about how I knew nothing about horses and thirst. This altercation had me stunned and had me burst into tears - which sent me down the rabbit hole of the cruel reality that is horse carriage enslavement. It ignited a passion in me to see to it that we overcome this issue today.

Central park is supposed to be the city's sanctuary, a place we go for peace and tranquility away from the chaos of the streets. Instead we're confronted with animal abuse and neglect, death and tragedy, and hostility from the conductors.

We can do better.

Horses are herd animals by nature. They have the instinct and desire to run and play, socialize, as well as hide when they feel spooked. They deserve to be free from our callous desire to turn them into something they are not, and be in a place that is safe, enjoying their lives as nature intended.

2026 is the year of the horse - let's do right by them and free the horses once and for all.

Thank you,

Nicolette Hoffman

15 July 2026

Testimony in Support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law, formerly Ryder's Law)

Nicoline von Finck, NYC resident and lifelong equestrian

Good morning. My name is Nicoline, and I am a New York City resident and a lifelong equestrian. I'm here today to urge you to pass Intro 943, Romanch's Law, and end the horse carriage industry in this city.

When I was four years old, my mom signed me up to learn how to horseback ride. My first memories in life are all of horses. I remember learning to groom my horse, brushing the dust off his coat, comb his tail gently so as not to hurt him. I remember braiding his mane before lessons, saving my allowance for new halters and lead ropes, and my quickening joyful heartbeat of finding him grazing in his field.

Today I have a horse named Amigo. He was given to me after sitting unriden for two years while his previous owner was ill. I spent months retraining him, slowly and gently. Now we ride out into the forest together, cross rivers, gallop past soy fields. When we come back to the barn, I still brush the dust from his coat, still comb his tail, still put a little braid in his forelock while I distract him with apple chunks.

I tell you this because I need you to understand: I am not here as someone who dislikes horses, or the idea of horses in this city. I am here as someone who has spent 25 years learning how to read them, care for them, and love them. That is exactly why I cannot stay silent about what I have seen on our streets.

I have two memories I want to share with you today. They are painful, which is why I've kept them buried. But I believe the pain in them might do more good spoken aloud than left where I've kept them.

The first is from several years ago, a hot summer afternoon in Midtown West. I was walking toward the ferry stop when, amid the ordinary noise of honking horns, I heard a scream — the kind I had only heard before in films depicting torture, a sound with no words left in it, only horror. A carriage had collapsed onto the back legs of the horse pulling it. The horse fought to stand using his front legs while several men tried, chaotically and at cross purposes, to pull him forward and push him down at the same time. The horse kept screaming. More men tried to lift the carriage off him, but couldn't, because he was still harnessed to it. I stood there and watched the horse cry while the men yelled at him and at each other. When the carriage was finally lifted, his hind legs were badly injured, and still he could not stand.

I want to be clear about why this happened the way it did: not because horses are fragile or carriages are inherently unsafe, but because a horse harnessed to a heavy carriage in dense Midtown traffic has no way to escape a bad situation, no way to protect itself, and no way for the people around it to help quickly when something goes wrong. That is not a freak accident. That is what happens when you put a 1,000-pound prey animal in city traffic and physically bind it to the danger.

The second memory is from only two years ago, walking into Central Park near 59th Street and 7th Avenue. Horses were lined up as usual along the hackline — heads sunk low, tails caked in feces, hooves cracked, backs hollowed out. One horse caught my attention. I walked up and touched his neck. He didn't react. His ears hung slack to either side. He barely seemed to register that I was there. Only his front hooves moved, faintly, one and then the other, again and again, both cracked and unkept.

I need to explain why that detail — the ears — matters so much. A horse's ears are one of its primary ways of engaging with the world. As a prey animal, a horse is always listening, always scanning. When horses stand together, the ones in front angle their ears forward while the ones behind angle theirs back, so the herd can listen in every direction at once and protect itself. Ears are also how horses tell you what they feel — forward means alert or curious, pinned back can mean angry or afraid. But ears slumped loosely to either side, doing nothing at all — in 25 years around horses, I had never seen that in person until that day. It is a sign of complete dissociation. It is what a horse's body does when it has been driven past fear into shutdown, a trauma response to sustained physical, emotional, and spiritual distress.

I am not describing an isolated incident. Just over a month ago, on June 9th, a carriage horse named Deniz collapsed and died in Central Park while pulling a carriage with two passengers. He was 16 years old. For a healthy horse, this is a half life. He is one name in a pattern that stretches back decades — horses collapsing in traffic, on hackline stands, on the way to and from their stables — because the basic conditions of this industry have not changed: pavement instead of pasture, exhaust instead of open air, hours of standing and pulling day after day instead of the turnout every horse needs to be physically and psychologically sound.

There are different realities I've described to you today: Amigo's, and the horse whose ears I will never forget. Please ask yourself — if you had a horse, which reality would you choose for it?

I urge you to vote yes on Intro 943, Romanch's Law, end the licensing of horse-drawn carriages in New York City, and give these horses the chance at the other reality.

Thank you.

15 July 2026

Testimony in Support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law, formerly Ryder's Law)

Nicoline von Finck, NYC resident and lifelong equestrian

Good morning. My name is Nicoline, I'm a resident of New York, and I am a lifelong equestrian.

I strongly support Intro 943, Romanch's Law, to end horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Several years ago in Midtown West, I watched a carriage collapse onto a horse's hind legs. The horse screamed in a way I'd only ever heard in films depicting torture while men chaotically tried to free him, unable to lift the carriage because he was still harnessed to it. That is what happens when you put a half-ton prey animal in city traffic with no way to escape.

Two years ago in Central Park, I pet a carriage horse's neck. He didn't react at all. His ears — a horse's primary way of engaging with the world — hung completely slack to either side. In 25 years around horses, I had never seen that before. It's a trauma response: total dissociation from sustained physical and emotional distress.

This isn't rare. Just over a month ago, a carriage horse named Deniz collapsed and died in Central Park pulling two passengers. And New York isn't being asked to do something untested — Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Key West, Camden, and Biloxi have already banned this industry outright. New York calls itself the most modern city in America. We should be leading, not trailing. I urge the Committee on Health to vote yes and move Intro 943 out of committee to a full Council vote.

Thank you.

Testifying my support for Intro 943,
Romanich's law to ban deadly horse carriages
in NYC. The time is now to listen to your
constituents who want this abusive practice
to end once and for all!

From: [Niket Mahajan](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pass Romanch's Law
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 8:12:16 AM
Attachments: [Pass Romanch's Law.pdf](#)

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Greetings to the members of the council

I am requesting to *ban the whole carriage* and *pass the "Romanch's law"* because of accidents and safety concerns. After and before this incident there have been injuries and death of the horse, stop cruelty on the horse, free those horses who are pulling so much of weight in this kind of weather and traffic. I want this law passed so no one else gets hurt.

Thank you
Niket Mahajan

From: [Nikita Mahajan](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pass Romanch's Law
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 12:04:13 AM

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Respected Council,

Losing our Kid , the future of our family in New York Central Park has devastated us back in India . Family on vacation losing the kid where horse bolted is not safe for the community and even for the welfare of horses is not right . There should be BAN of HORSES n Romanch's should be passed.

Regards
Nikita

Statement from Niko R. Nieves

Cars average lifespan is 12-16 years.

Ryder was 26 when he died because of this industry. The very tail end of the life expectancy of a horse.

In India, men live on average 71.2 years.

Romansch Mahajan died in Central Park at 18 years old.

A tourist trap isn't supposed to be one that can actually kill them.

New York City sends our deepest condolences to the Mahajan, and we do not care about this industry nor would we mind if this whole thing was ended tonight. These carriages should be off the street now.

I urge anyone who comes to visit our city to steer clear of the horse drawn cabs and I hope the testimony of these citizens and victims as well as the callousness of the industry.

Testimony for Committee on Health, July 15th, 2026 at 10:00AM

Please pass Romanch's Law- intro 943 in order to end the dangerous horse carriage industry and prevent any more needless suffering and death.

Please also ensure the horses retire in safe sanctuaries.

Thank you,

Nikola Vrhovec

Good afternoon, Chair and Members of the Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is [Your Name], and I urge you to support legislation that ends the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Horses are intelligent, social animals whose needs are fundamentally incompatible with the realities of one of the busiest cities in the world. Every day they are expected to navigate congested streets, loud traffic, extreme weather, and hard pavement. While regulations exist to protect them, no set of rules can change the fact that these horses spend their working lives in an environment that was built for cars and people—not for animals.

This is not about criticizing individual carriage drivers. Many care deeply about their horses and have dedicated years to this profession. But good intentions cannot eliminate the inherent risks of urban traffic, nor can they provide horses with the freedom to graze, roam, and live in more natural conditions.

Cities evolve. We have replaced outdated practices before when we recognized that they no longer reflected our values. New York has the opportunity to show leadership by embracing humane alternatives that preserve the city's character without relying on live animals for entertainment.

Ending the carriage horse industry is not anti-tradition—it is a recognition that our understanding of animal welfare has advanced. We can honor the history of New York while choosing a future that prioritizes compassion, public safety, and responsible tourism.

I respectfully ask the Council to support legislation that phases out horse-drawn carriages and helps affected workers transition to alternative livelihoods. This is an opportunity to make a thoughtful, humane decision that future generations will look back on with pride.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Olga Humphrey – District 5 constituent – my testimony since Council Speaker Menin was not present. Did not read bracketed copy while giving statement due to time limits.

First, I want to offer my deepest sympathy to the Mahajan family. When I was in college, I wanted to free the carriage horses. I became a journalist and was obsessed with the Truth, Facts, and Context. I learned to research everything. My view of the carriage horses changed.

When I first heard about NYCLASS, I researched. I wondered why they posted a picture of an emaciated horse, claiming it was a NYC carriage horse when it was a starving horse in India. I was appalled by their hatred of the “fat tourists” who the “poor horses” had to struggle to pull around. Even NYCLASS’s veterinarian consultant was a small-animal vet. Why was anyone listening to them? Their entire history is littered with manipulating context and flat-out lying.

I have been greatly disappointed that many Council members are not doing independent research on this issue. They are using NYCLASS talking points instead. They have called the conditions the horses work under abusive. But here’s the Truth: the horses work under protective laws the Council established: rules about temperatures, hours, stall sizes and much more. The horses are also monitored by the Police and Mounted Patrol.

RYDER’S LAW. Ryder did not die on the streets of NY as Linda Rosenthal said. He was humanely euthanized at his new home outside of the city when he was found to have cancer. Ryder’s owner was found NOT GUILTY of cruelty by a NY jury. Why was it called Ryder’s Law for so long? Because the Truth was not convenient for NYCLASS.

Now the false claims are that the carriage horses are a public safety hazard. Carriage rides started over 150 years ago. The recent death was the first of its kind. So if my math is right, that means that century after century, the carriage horses have had a better safety record than the vehicles that they share the park roads with. I’m in the park all the time. I’d rather step in front of a carriage horse than an e-bike anytime.

[The pollster for the Conservancy applauded the ban yesterday. According to the Brookings's Institute expressing bias "undermines the scientific value of the survey."]

A ban will create a horrible domino effect for horses in the US. **[More horses will become homeless. Some will wind up with horders. Many will go to slaughter.]** If you want to give a rare sanctuary spot to a carriage horse that already has a good home instead of to a horse who is going to slaughter, you don't really care about horses at all. And that's the TRUTH.

Written Testimony in Support of Intro. 943, Romanch's Law

Chair Schulman and members of the Committee on Health,

My name is Olga, and I am a resident of Council District 6. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of Intro. 943, Romanch's Law, and urging the Committee to advance it without delay.

I will never forget the first time I saw the horse-drawn carriages in Central Park. Until then, I had known them only through film and TV shows, as a living bridge to a romanticized, old New York. The reality was jarring.

The horses I saw appeared weary, physically strained, and visibly uncomfortable as they stood and worked amid traffic, exhaust, noise, and crowds. That impression only deepened each time I passed the places where they were stationed. Whatever romance the carriages may project from a distance fades when one looks closely at the animals required to sustain it.

I do not presume to know the medical condition of every horse or everything that occurs inside the stables, and I recognize that some carriage drivers may care deeply for the animals in their charge. But humane treatment cannot be judged solely by good intentions or by what happens behind stable doors. It must also be judged by the conditions in which animals are required to stand, travel, and work each day.

That is the heart of the problem: it is structural, not merely individual. Even conscientious care cannot eliminate the stressors and risks inherent in New York's dense, noisy, traffic-filled urban environment. The question is not whether every driver means well. It is whether horses should continue to be used as a tourist attraction in conditions so plainly at odds with their welfare.

The events of June brought those concerns into devastating focus. On June 9, Deniz, a carriage horse, collapsed and died while carrying passengers in Central Park. Eight days later, 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan died from injuries suffered in an incident involving a runaway horse-drawn carriage.

The circumstances of these deaths were different, but they were not isolated events. The Central Park Conservancy has reported eight horse-related incidents in the park over thirteen months and has called for horse-drawn carriages to be banned. We should not wait for another horse to collapse or bolt, another person to be seriously injured, or another life to be lost before acting.

I understand that Transport Workers Union Local 100 strongly opposes this legislation. The union argues that the industry provides good jobs, that the horses receive veterinary care and are subject to city regulation, and that improved safety management would be preferable to ending the industry. Those concerns deserve a direct and respectful response.

Veterinary care and regulation are important, but they do not answer the fundamental question of whether dense urban streets and an increasingly crowded public park are appropriate places for horses to spend their working lives. Regulation can establish minimum standards and reduce certain risks. It cannot transform the underlying environment or eliminate the inherent unpredictability of placing horses, passenger carriages, traffic, and crowds together in a confined public space.

The union is right about one essential point: workers' livelihoods matter. Carriage drivers are working New Yorkers who should not be vilified, dismissed, or abruptly deprived of their income. But concern for workers should determine how the transition is carried out, not whether the city is permitted to act at all.

Intro. 943 does not impose an overnight shutdown. It permits operations to continue until June 1, 2028, establishes workforce-development assistance for affected workers, and requires the humane disposition of the horses. The Council should ensure that these protections are meaningful, with real training, individualized employment support, and pathways into secure, well-paid work.

Protecting horses, protecting the public, and protecting workers are not opposing goals. The Council can - and should - do all three. New York City has debated this issue for years. Further delay is not a neutral or cautious choice. It is a decision to preserve the status quo and accept the continuing risk of another preventable tragedy.

Following this hearing, I respectfully urge the Committee to schedule a prompt vote and advance Intro. 943. I urge Council leadership to bring it before the full Council for passage without delay.

New York City should not cling to a romanticized image while ignoring the reality before us. It should lead with compassion, responsibility, fairness to workers, and the courage to move beyond a practice that no longer belongs in a modern urban environment.

Please pass Romanch's Law.

Thank you for your consideration.

Olga
Council District 6

Horse Carriages in Central Park

I write against replacing horse carriages in Central Park with electric carriages. All e-vehicles are dangerous to pedestrians, the aged, disabled, children and their caregivers. Just this week two pedestrians were struck and maimed by e-bikes in CP. One on the east side of the park, while the victim on the west side of CP remains in a coma! Replacing horse carriages with large heavy e-carriages will bring even more anti-pedestrian tyranny to a park whose mission is to provide sanctuary from urban disruption.

Good morning. My name is Paisley Ana Bailey, and I'm a New York City resident.

I moved to New York in January 2025 and joined NYCLASS later that year because I could no longer ignore what I was seeing in our parks. In the short amount of time I've been here, there have been an alarming number of carriage horse incidents, including runaway horses, crashes, injuries, **and 3 deaths including 2 horses and a human being, Romanch, that I am raw inside thinking about his family and the unimaginable trauma they are going through. To think this is even a discussion to continue after what they've been through is so disrespectful and sickening.**

If these tragedies are still not enough to end this industry, I don't know what will be. Continuing this practice sends the message that preventable suffering and death of horses and loss of human life are an acceptable cost of preserving a tourist attraction. We can, and we must, do better.

I have been harassed by carriage drivers simply for peacefully photographing them breaking the park's guidelines and the horses in clear distress in Central Park. I have video documenting these encounters. And I'm just one of many that have. These drivers have been repeatedly reported for harassment and that's an issue in itself.

No New Yorker should be verbally harassed for exercising their right to document what they witness.

I've seen children stop and cry seeing the horses in clear distress asking their mothers why the horses look so sad

Central Park should be a place where people come to experience the beauty of our city, not a place where people can witness horses work til their death, where the smell of their poop fills the air and where another family risks experiencing an unimaginable tragedy.

Enough is enough. Compassion should guide our decisions, not tradition. I urge the Council to vote yes on Intro 943 and give these horses the safe retirement they deserve while protecting everyone who visits and calls New York City home.

Thank you.

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

I was hit by a moped in 2022, I suffered a TBI that left me paralyzed on my right side.

I am scared to walk in the park. It's impossible now to cross park drive safely at 72nd due to the reckless e-vehicle riding. No lights, and safety crossing are covered in burlap.

The tragic accident of this young man killed by a horse is truly awful, but why does this tragedy get more attention than the woman who was struck by an e-vehicle in the park. She is in the hospital with a severe TBI, multiple breaks and lies in a coma.

She is one of hundreds and hundreds who have been seriously hit and maimed by e-vehicles and yet this one horse carriage incident gets more attention and politicians coming out fast as they can to get rid of horses. These carriages have been riding our park for years with no troubles.

The park is suppose to be a place for peaceful relaxation, it has become an e-vehicle nightmare. A nightmare that only gets more frightening each day.

We had no problems with the horse carriages in the park until the e-vehicle craziness. These vehicles are spooking the horses! They should be banned from the park.

Many council members agree, but seem to be stuck in 0 action.

Ban these egregious riding vehicles from the park and see. There will be 0 accidents from the horse carriages and 0 e-vehicles crashes.

Now the park wants to further this insanity by getting rid of horses that travel 2 mph in favor of e-vehicles that can go 40mph.

Please let's leave an old charm of NYC alone, let horse carriages stay, but let's get these e-vehicles out of our parks!!

Thank you



This is Charlie. I met him in August of 2019, when I was visiting NYC. I grew up in Woodside, Queens, but I moved to New Orleans in 2001. When I come home to visit family and friends, I always make it a point to go to Central Park and say Hi to the carriage horses.

It's incomprehensible to me that the city I love is even thinking of banishing Charlie and all his friends. I can't imagine a Central Park not only devoid of horses but a place that went out of its way to take the horses livelihood from them.

Yes, I read about the tragic death of Romanch Mahajan. I'm so sorry that young man lost his life. However, I also read that the carriage driver responsible for this accident was suspended indefinitely. That shows me the carriage companies and their union, Transport Workers Union Local 100, are committed to customer safety.

I also read about Intro 937, introduced by the carriage companies and TWUL 100, which promotes stronger safety regulations for drivers and safe, healthy working conditions for horses like Charlie. Intro 937 will introduce enhanced safety protocols for drivers. There will be mandatory safety classes for drivers. Hitching poles will be introduced to Central Park. Intro 937 urges city safety inspectors to enforce existing safety regulations and help the union and drivers work together to make Central Park carriage rides better for everyone; horses, customers, and drivers.

Please look at this photo of Charlie. How does he look unhealthy? Is he underweight? Do you see sores? He obviously isn't people shy. Look at that healthy, happy horse. Why would the city want to ban him and the 200 other working horses in NYC? Why would the city suddenly, and for no good reason, risk 200 horses going to slaughter if homes cannot be found for them? I urge the City Council not to fall for the dangerous fantasy that there are rescues and sanctuaries just waiting to add 200 horses to their pastures. Most sanctuaries are struggling to maintain the animals they currently have. I do urge every member of the City Council to donate to the equine sanctuary of their choice, as their operations are a day to day struggle and they need donations desperately.

Finally, how can a place that calls itself a Sanctuary City even consider putting 150 immigrant drivers out of work? Those immigrants came from all over—Turkey, Mexico, Brazil—with one thing in common and that was their love of horses. By working in stables, by driving carriages, New York immediately gave these immigrants excellent jobs at excellent pay. How can you even consider taking that away?

I urge every member of the City Council to support Intro 937 so immigrants, native New Yorkers, and horses can keep doing the work they enjoy so much. Don't turn Central Park into a place of failure, fear, lost hope, and the lost lives of horses that did absolutely nothing to deserve banishment and slaughter.

Patricia Baker

[REDACTED]

New Orleans, LA 70119

[REDACTED].

Patricia Glowinski

[REDACTED]

New York, NY 10025

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Subject: Submitting written testimony in support of Int 0943-2026 to prohibit the operation of horse drawn cabs in New York City

Dear Chairperson Schulman and Committee on Health members,

I am writing to you as a New Yorker, Central Park neighbor, animal advocate, and Union member (DC37/Loca 154) to show my support for the bill Int 0943-2026 that would amend the administrative code of the City of New York to prohibit the operation of horse drawn cabs (carriages) and would require humane treatment of the horses as well as help the carriage drivers transition to other fields of employment.

I have lived near Central Park for over 20 years. As a park lover and daily runner, I think that Central Park would benefit from the banning of horse carriages for these main reasons:

- It is a danger to the horses - <https://www.banhdc.org/ch-acc.shtml>
- It is a danger to people
- It is a danger to other animals
- It creates huge amounts of horse poop
- Horse urine is very stinky

As a member and shop steward at DC37, I support this bill because it will assist in retraining and/or facilitating the transition of the carriage drivers to other work. Even Union jobs can become obsolete, due to technology or ethics or other reasons, and this bill addresses that.

As a lover of animals and an animal rights advocate, I support this bill because it would finally address the fact that horses should not be standing and walking for hours, pulling heavy carriages and heave passengers in extreme weather conditions. Horses should not have to return every night to a concrete car park while traversing heavy, loud, and fast-moving cars, box trucks, trash trucks, and emergency vehicles. Horses are social and enjoy companionship with each other and need space to be active.

Sadly, it took the death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan to revisit a bill that would finally ban horse carriages in New York City. It is time to do what is best for everyone, pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Patricia Glowinski

As the City Council considers eliminating horse drawn carriages—a long-time and beloved feature of Central Park—from operating in the Park, it should also consider eliminating E-bikes. Just as an out-of-control horse injured a tourist recently, who died from the injuries, e-bikes injure pedestrians every day, including this recent accident involving a severe injury to a jogger who remains in a coma.

<https://www.westsiderag.com/2026/07/15/woman-remains-in-coma-after-being-struck-by-e-bike-in-central-park-she-didnt-see-him-coming>

I am a long time New Yorker who used to walk around the Reservoir every day. I've almost completely stopped using Central Park because e-bikes pose too high a risk, not just on the roadways, but in other areas where they are prohibited but still appear. A jogger, I know who runs all or part of the Central Park Loop daily, tells me that she sees some form of E-bike accident just about every day.

This is really an untenable situation that deprives New Yorkers of the quiet enjoyment, peace, and sense of refuge that Central Park used to provide. Long ago, there was a decision to eliminate vehicles from Central Park and today the cars are still gone without creating undue traffic problems around the Park. E-bikes are vehicles, too. They are heavy and dangerous, often operated recklessly and should be banned. People—both residents and tourists—deserve to be able to use Central Park without fear of injury, large or small, minor or fatal. It would be short-sighted for the City Council to deal with the risks posed by carriage horses while ignoring the at least equally significant risks posed by E-bikes.

From: [Patricia Miller](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Carriage Horse Testimony
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 1:09:33 PM

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Good Afternoon Chair, Members of the Committee and Members of the NYC City Council, My name is Patricia Miller, and I serve as Board Chair and Executive Director of American Wild Horse Conservation, the nation's leading nonprofit dedicated to protecting America's wild horses and burros.

Before I begin, I want to acknowledge the family of Romanch, whose unimaginable loss brought many of us here today. My heart is with you. No family should have to endure such a tragedy, and I hope today's discussion honors his memory through thoughtful action that protects both people and animals.

I am here today as a lifelong equestrian, as the mom of a rescued Ridgland beagle who taught me that meaningful change is possible, and as a business owner who deeply values entrepreneurship, the contributions businesses make to local economies, and the importance of protecting people's livelihoods.

As a child, I romanticized horse-drawn carriages. I even owned a painting of a horse and carriage standing in front of the historic Water Tower in Chicago because it represented history, beauty, and tradition.

But as I spent more of my life with horses, studying their behavior, their biology, and what allows them to truly thrive, my perspective changed.

Horses are herd animals. They are meant to spend the majority of their day moving, grazing, and interacting with one another. They are designed to forage almost continuously, to form deep social bonds, and to live in environments where they have freedom of movement and choice.

An urban carriage environment cannot provide those fundamental needs. Instead, these horses spend long periods standing and waiting for rides, working on hard pavement, surrounded by traffic, noise, exhaust, and the extremes of New York's summers and winters. Even with regulations intended to protect them, this is not the environment in which horses naturally flourish. As our understanding of animal welfare has evolved, so too should our expectations for how we care for these remarkable animals.

I believe our responsibility should not be to ask what horses can endure. It should be to ask what they deserve.

At the same time, this conversation should never lose sight of the people whose lives have been built around this industry. Carriage drivers, along with stable workers and support staff deserve respect and a thoughtful transition that protects their livelihoods as the city moves forward.

That is exactly why I support Romanch's Law.

This legislation recognizes that compassion is not a choice between horses and people. It creates a responsible transition for workers while providing retirement and dignified homes for the horses who have served this city for years. It also helps prevent future injuries and tragedies involving both horses and humans.

As a nation, our understanding of animal welfare continues to evolve. We no longer accept many practices that previous generations viewed as normal because we know better. This is another opportunity to lead with knowledge, compassion, and courage.

The world is watching New York. I respectfully urge you to pass Romanch's Law and demonstrate that we can honor tradition by choosing a more humane future—for the horses who have carried millions through this city, and for the people whose futures deserve thoughtful consideration as well.



Patricia Miller

Chair, Board of Directors & Executive Director

P: [REDACTED]

E: patricia@americanwildhorse.org

A: P.O. Box 1733, Davis, CA
95617

americanwildhorse.org



From: Brandy brandynyc@verizon.net
Subject:
Date: July 14, 2026 at 9:47 AM
To:

B

Statement in Support of the Carriage Horses

The poll funded by the Central Park Conservancy that shows a majority for a carriage horse ban is not accurate. It says 68% of 800 people are for the ban and they consider frequent use of the park to be just a few times a year! It's indicative of the Conservancy's drive to ban the horses. In addition, the public, is not informed about the issues and is being swayed by confusing press coverage with inaccurate statements from the animal lobbyists and some NY City Council members - all backed by real estate interests who long to develop the stable properties. For one thing, they rant on about the carriage horses Lady and Ryder dying but according to Cornell, they died natural deaths.

As to the Central Park Conservancy, why did they change the horses only lane in Central Park to include reckless motorized pedicabs and speeding e-bikers without first consulting the NYC Department of Health equine veterinarians, who never would have approved? Was the unfortunate accidental death of the tourist Romanch caused by a zooming e-biker heading right alongside the horse who spooked, Samson? And, why after Cornell determined that the lovely pinto horse, Deniz, died from eating poisonous yew plants at 90th St, plants that never should have been placed in the park, did the Central Park Conservancy not put up sign saying - yew plants, poisonous to some animals?

One last issue, why haven't the NYPD not enforced the horses only staging areas at 6th and 7th Avenues? Why haven't they policed the areas where the thuggish motorized pedicab drivers are assaulting and bullying the carriage drivers and bullying and scamming the tourists?

Patricia N. Saffran, Former US Editor, Politicalite.com UK

From: [Hi Hua](#)
To: [Speaker Menin](#)
Cc: [District29](#); [District6](#); [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Int. 0943-2026: operation of horse-drawn carriages. A Message from an Immigrant Who Calls New York Home
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 3:37:14 PM

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Dear Council Members,

Thank you for taking the time to listen to the many voices who care deeply about this issue.

I respectfully share my thoughts as someone who came to New York as a teenager from Ireland and who has been fortunate enough to call this incredible city home.

When I first arrived in New York, there were three things I remember most vividly about seeing the city for the first time: the towering buildings, the yellow taxis, and one scene that has stayed with me all these years — a horse-drawn carriage making its way through Central Park.

There was something truly special about that moment. In a city known for change, speed, and innovation, those horses represented a connection to New York's history, its traditions, and its character. It was a reminder that even the greatest cities in the world are shaped not only by what they become, but also by what they choose to preserve. Over the years, whenever family and friends have visited from Ireland, seeing the Central Park carriage horses has always been one of the experiences they remember. It is something uniquely New York — a tradition that connects generations of residents and visitors to the heart of this city.

I know everyone involved in this discussion shares the same goal: ensuring that animals are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect. That goal matters to all of us.

At the same time, I respectfully ask that any decision about the future of the carriage horses considers the facts, the existing regulations, and the care provided by the people who have dedicated their lives to these animals. These horses are not simply part of a business; they are part of a tradition, and the people who care for them have built their lives around their welfare.

Ending this tradition would mean losing more than a carriage ride. It would mean losing a living piece of New York's history, taking away livelihoods, and removing an experience that has brought joy to millions of people from around the world.

New York has always been a city that knows how to move forward while honoring the traditions that make it special. I believe we can protect these horses, ensure their continued welfare, and preserve this unique part of New York's identity.

I respectfully ask you to consider the voices of the workers, the horse owners, the families who depend on this industry, and the many New Yorkers and visitors who believe this tradition is worth protecting.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick O'Donovan

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

New York 10069

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Written Testimony in Support of Intro 943 – Romanch's Law

Submitted by: Pavneet Kaur

Good morning, Members of the New York City Council,

My name is **Pavneet Kaur**, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of **Intro 943 – Romanch's Law**, which would end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

The tragic loss of Romanch Mahajan is deeply heartbreaking. My heartfelt condolences go out to his family, friends, and everyone whose lives have been forever changed by this tragedy. While no legislation can erase their pain, we have an opportunity to honor his memory by taking meaningful action to help prevent another tragedy.

New York City's streets are among the busiest in the world. Sharing these crowded roads with horse-drawn carriages creates unnecessary risks for horses, carriage drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, tourists, and motorists alike. Public safety must always come first.

Horses are living, sentient animals that deserve care and environments suited to their well-being—not the stress of navigating heavy traffic, constant noise, extreme weather, and densely populated city streets.

Passing **Intro 943 – Romanch's Law** is a compassionate and forward-looking step that prioritizes both public safety and animal welfare. It represents the kind of leadership that learns from tragedy and works to prevent future loss.

I respectfully urge the Council to vote **YES** on Intro 943 and pass Romanch's Law.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your commitment to protecting both people and animals.

Respectfully submitted,

Pavneet Kaur

Testimony of Peter J. McKosky

In Support of Romanch's Law (Intro 943)

My name is Peter J. McKosky, and I am a resident of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, and have called New York City home for over sixteen years. I am writing in strong support of Romanch's Law (Intro 943), which would phase out and ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

The first time I came to New York City was in 1998, on a high school trip. I fell in love with the city immediately, and I knew even then that it would one day be my home. But one thing never felt like home to me — then or now — and that was seeing horses forced into city traffic, dodging cars and inhaling exhaust fumes for the sake of a novelty ride. I grew up around horses, and anyone who has spent real time with these animals can recognize what suffering and exhaustion look like on them. These horses were miserable.

Since then, we have watched this unnecessary industry claim the health and lives of horse after horse. Now it has cost a human being their life as well — 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan, for whom this bill is now named. This has to end.

New York is evolving. That much is clear from our recent elections and from what our elected officials are choosing to prioritize. But as we move forward, we cannot leave our most vulnerable behind — and that includes the animals who live in this city, and the animals who never should have been forced to. Horses belong in pastures, not gridlock. New Yorkers and visitors alike deserve a Central Park where we are not watching an animal suffer for a few minutes of entertainment.

The people who drive these carriages deserve work with dignity. Forcing an animal to suffer for a paycheck is not that.

I urge the Council to pass Romanch's Law (Intro 943) and finally bring this industry to an end.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter J. McKosky

Williamsburg, Brooklyn

From: Peter Wood
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I SUPPORT Romanch's Law (Intro 943)
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2026 6:53:23 PM

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In 1991, I discovered a dead carriage horse in Central Park. His name was Nickel. He was hidden under a tarp, awaiting disposal in a Long Island landfill. My photo of poor Nickel ran in the *Daily News* (please see below). Since that time, countless carriage horses have suffered and died. Just look at this list of incidents from 1983 to 2014: <https://www.banhdc.org/ch-acc.shtml>. Not on this list are more recent carriage horse deaths: Deniz (2026), Lady (2025), Black Jack (2023), Ryder (2022), Aisha (2020), Midnite (2018).

All of the rules and regulations that have been implemented over the years have failed to rein in the cruel, crooked, careless and corrupt NYC carriage horse industry. As a result, 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan is dead! Despite this horrific tragedy, it is business as usual for the NYC carriage horse industry: absolutely shameful and unconscionable.

No amount of new regulations or so-called "reforms" can prevent the next horse from spooking, bolting, and causing another tragedy. The only real solution is to permanently end NYC's deadly horse carriages by passing Romanch's Law. Please end the cruelty, suffering and death once and for all, by passing Romanch's Law. May his memory be a blessing.

Sincerely,

Peter Wood
[REDACTED]
New York, NY 10022



From: [REDACTED]
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 12:40:09 PM

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Dear New York City Council Members,

I am writing as a New York City resident to express my strong support for Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law.

I believe it is time to end the use of horse-drawn carriages on New York City's busy streets. Modern traffic, extreme summer heat, severe winter weather, noise, congestion, an apocalyptic air quality, and the constant risk of collisions create conditions that are not appropriate for working horses. While many drivers care deeply for the animals they work with, the realities of today's city are fundamentally different from those that existed when this industry began.

New York can honor its history while embracing more humane practices. Passing Intro 943 would allow carriage horses to retire to reputable sanctuaries where they can live safely and comfortably, while also providing support for carriage drivers as they transition to new employment.

As a city that strives to lead on animal welfare, New York has an opportunity to make a compassionate, forward-looking decision that reflects our values.

I respectfully urge the Council to pass Intro 943.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Phoebe Ballard
Brooklyn, NY 11215
New York City Resident

From: [Priya Gupta Jones](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pass bill 943 ban horse carriages
Date: Sunday, July 19, 2026 5:29:20 AM

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As we celebrate the Year of the Horse, please honor these magnificent animals by letting their spirit run free.

I care deeply about animal welfare. I urge you to support legislation ending horse-drawn carriage operations and replacing them with humane, sustainable alternatives such as electric or hybrid rickshaws that can preserve jobs while protecting horses.

NY has an opportunity to lead with both compassion

From: [Q Cotto](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 2:36:17 AM

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I urge the New York City Council to pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, retire the horses to loving sanctuaries. As someone who works in veterinary medicine, I believe we have a responsibility to advocate for the welfare of animals, and I respectfully ask you to support this legislation.

Horses like many other companion/working animals deserve respect and to be able to live without literally being worked to death.

My name is Rachel Hangley, and I am a New York City resident in Astoria writing in strong support of Int 0943-2026, the bill to move towards ending horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City.

This is, at its core, a public health and animal welfare issue. Horses are not built for the conditions they face in Manhattan—extreme heat radiating off asphalt, traffic fumes, nonstop noise, hard pavement, and up to long workdays. You cannot possibly look at one of these horses and argue that this life is good or humane for them. The health consequences are real and documented: respiratory illness from exhaust exposure, leg and hoof injuries from hard surfaces, chronic stress from living in urban stabling conditions, and even multiple deaths from ingesting poisonous plants and due to car accidents. They are the predictable result of forcing large working animals into an environment designed for cars and pedestrians.

There is also a public safety dimension. Horse-related incidents—spooked animals, collisions with vehicles, injuries to pedestrians and drivers—continue to occur on city streets. Each incident puts New Yorkers at risk alongside the animals themselves.

New York City is a global leader on so many fronts. We should not lag behind the dozens of cities and countries that have already moved away from horse-drawn carriage operations in dense urban environments. Int 0943-2026 offers a clear, humane path forward, and I urge this Committee to move it forward without delay.

Thank you for your time and your service to our city.

From: [Rachel Whitehead](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Heartbroken in Australia
Date: Saturday, July 4, 2026 5:02:38 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I'm an Australian who has visited your amazing city, and I loved everything about it...except for one thing. The poor carriage horses.

It is animal abuse in broad daylight! It boggles my mind that in this day and age this is going on, in such an amazing city too.

Horses are not meant to work full time. They're supposed to graze and roam and interact with other horses. Yes, they can work at times, but not like this. And they should not be working into old age, when their bodies deserve to rest.

They feel, they love, they hurt. The weight of pulling a carriage and people, in the bustling city on hard pavements...day in and day out is not okay.

Please make this stop. These horses deserve better and you can change it. So, please do. I actually beg of you. The world is watching.

Kind regards
Rachel
Sent from my iPhone

Good afternoon! I urge and beg the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943. The horse carriage industry has long been proven and backed by data to be abusive and harmful, as well as 100% unnecessary. Romanch's Law, aka Intro 943, will actively help to end the horse carriage industry by sending the horses to professional sanctuaries and helping drivers transition to new and humane employment.

This has gone on long enough. It's time to take a stand.

Thank you for your time.

Raine Reilly

Testimony re: Intro. No. 0943-2026 -- Prohibiting operation of horse drawn cabs in New York City
July 18, 2026

It is rank hypocrisy that 25 Council Members have signed onto and prioritized this Bill yet ignore the horrors occurring in Central Park caused by e-bikes. E-bikes used to be banned in all city parks. But after a short pilot period, in 2025 the e-bike ban was lifted.

This has been a disaster. It has resulted in hundreds of serious injuries and one death caused by e-bike collisions, none of which have been addressed by the City Council.

Two recent serious crashes occurred in the same week and highlight this problem. On July 7, 2026, a jogger was hit by an e-bike in the pedestrian lane in Central Park at E. 64th Street. She has been in a coma ever since and has had part of her skull removed during emergency cranial surgery. The same week, a female pedestrian was hit on West Drive at 72nd and has a serious head injury.

Injuries caused by e-bikes have increased dramatically since the ban was lifted. HUNDREDS upon HUNDREDS of pedestrians, joggers and cyclists have been seriously maimed by e-vehicles in Central Park with major life altering injuries and pets have also been killed. This is evident by photo and video proof and actual ER stats, NOT the very inaccurate NYPD reporting. NYPD are rarely on the scene prior to ambulance taking victim away. And, even when NYPD is on scene, they often don't report because "the rider fled" or they "didn't personally witness accident, or they say, 'it isn't a crime.'" There are accidents almost DAILY. Both crashes mentioned earlier were written up in the press (West Side Rag and Upper East Site) only because the press got a 'real- time' heads up about these accidents. Most of these never make the press.

Permitting heavy, fast E- vehicles in our park keeps people, especially older New Yorkers and those with disabilities, from going to the park at all. Our parks are for recreation and relaxation, NOT transportation. The park is our only oasis left to escape these motorized, heavy and dangerous vehicles.

This is total hypocrisy on the part of the City Council to fail to address the e-vehicle crisis that is occurring in Central Park daily.

Public safety is the most basic duty of the City Council. Stop the horror in Central Park and ban e-bikes in our city parks now.

Ralph Baker

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

From: [Rebecca Lindy](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for Carriage Horse Legislation – Opposition to Intro Bill 943 and Support of Intro Bill 937
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 10:51:34 PM

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Dear NYC Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding Intro 943 and Intro 937. I am writing to express my **strong opposition to Intro 943** and my **support for Intro 937**, which offers a more responsible, humane, and evidence-based path forward for New York City's carriage horses, their caretakers, and the public.

My testimony is organized into the core issues raised during recent hearings and public statements.

1. Equine Welfare Must Be Based on Evidence, Not Assumptions

Intro 943 is rooted in the belief that carriage horses are inherently unsafe or mistreated. However, expert testimony directly contradicts this narrative.

Dr. Cook's Testimony

During the hearing, **Dr. Cook**, a veterinarian who regularly examines NYC carriage horses, stated clearly that:

- These horses are **well cared for**
- He sees them **regularly**
- He comes out **whenever needed**
- He has **no concerns** about their welfare under current regulations

His professional assessment directly undermines the claim that the industry is inherently harmful.

Evidence-Based Pain Ethograms

Multiple Horse Pain Ethograms exist to determine whether a horse is in pain or not. One of these developed by Equine scientist **Dr. Sue Dyson**, "**24 Behaviors of the Ridden Horse in Pain**" provides an evidence-based framework for identifying actual welfare concerns. These behaviors are used globally by veterinarians, trainers, and welfare organizations. They offer a **scientific, objective method** for evaluating whether a horse is experiencing discomfort — far more reliable than subjective impressions from non-horse professionals.

NYC should adopt **science-based welfare monitoring**, not eliminate an entire industry based on misinterpretation of normal equine behavior.

2. The Original Intent of Central Park Supports Equine Access

Central Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux as a **pastoral, democratic refuge** where New Yorkers could experience nature, leisure, and recreation — including **horseback riding and carriage travel**. Horses were not an afterthought; they were part of the park's original purpose and design.

The park historically included:

- **Dedicated bridle paths**
- **Carriage routes**
- **Equine-friendly infrastructure**

These features ensured horses could move safely through the park, away from city traffic, while providing the public with a peaceful, scenic experience.

Today, the city should be **restoring and protecting dedicated equine paths**, not eliminating the very industry that keeps horses present in the park. Re-establishing and maintaining these routes would:

- Improve safety
- Reduce congestion
- Honor the park's historic design
- Support humane, structured equine activity
- Strengthen tourism and cultural heritage

Intro 937 aligns with this vision by regulating and improving the industry. Intro 943 erases it entirely.

3. Eliminating Carriage Horses Removes Public Access to Horses

One of the most overlooked consequences of Intro 943 is the **complete removal of horses from the daily lives of New Yorkers and visitors**.

Carriage horses are one of the **last remaining ways** for Children, Families, Seniors, Tourists and Everyday New Yorker to interact with horses in an urban environment.

Supporters of Intro 943 often speak as though horses should be reserved only for those with wealth, land, or private equestrian access. But horses have historically been part of **public life**, not a luxury item.

Eliminating the carriage industry:

- Removes horses from Central Park
- Removes horses from public view
- Removes horses from cultural heritage

- Removes horses from the reach of people who cannot afford private equestrian experiences

This deepens the divide between those who can access horses and those who cannot.

Intro 937 preserves public access to horses while improving welfare standards. Intro 943 eliminates it entirely.

4. Other Industries Have Multiple Documented Fatalities and Accidents

During hearings, supporters of Intro 943 repeatedly referenced “danger” and “risk,” yet **failed to acknowledge actual fatality data** from other industries operating in the same city.

Pedicabs

New York City has documented **pedicab-related fatalities**, including collisions resulting in passenger deaths.

Helicopter Sightseeing Tours

NYC has experienced **multiple helicopter tour fatalities**, including high-profile crashes resulting in loss of life.

Vehicle Hit-and-Runs

Hit-and-run fatalities involving motor vehicles occur **every year** in New York City — dozens annually.

Carriage Industry

By contrast, **there has been only a single documented human fatality involving a NYC carriage horse** in 167 years. This death was tragic, and the carriage driver and carriage horse have been removed from the NYC carriage industry, and concurrently, strengthened driver training was completed for the other workers.

Industries with actual fatalities continue to operate. The carriage industry, however, is the one targeted for elimination.

This is not evidence-based policymaking.

5. The Attitude Toward Workers in Intro 943 Is Deeply Concerning

One of the most troubling themes in testimony from supporters of Intro 943 was the **superior, paternalistic attitude** toward carriage industry workers.

Several supporters implied — or stated outright — that they believe they should determine:

- **What jobs carriage drivers should have**
- **What retraining they should undergo**
- **What industries they should move into**

This is not empowerment. It is condescension.

Carriage drivers are skilled professionals with deep equine knowledge, multi-generational experience, and a cultural heritage tied to this work. It is inappropriate and disrespectful for outside advocates to presume authority over their livelihoods or dictate their future employment.

Intro 937 respects workers by preserving their industry while improving safety and welfare standards. Intro 943 eliminates their jobs entirely — without a realistic retraining plan, without economic support, and without regard for the dignity of their profession.

6. Intro 937 Provides a Responsible, Collaborative Path Forward

Intro 937 strengthens:

- Welfare monitoring
- Veterinary oversight
- Heat and weather protections
- Stable and infrastructure requirements
- Transparency and accountability

It modernizes the industry rather than destroying it.

It also aligns with the recommendations of equine welfare experts who emphasize **science-based evaluation**, such as Dr. Sue Dyson's *24 Behaviors of the Ridden Horse in Pain*, which should be incorporated into future welfare assessments.

Intro 937 protects: Horses, Workers, Families, Tourism, Tradition and Evidence-based policy.

Intro 943 protects none of these.

7. Horse Rescues Are Already Overwhelmed — and Their Limited Capacity Should Be Focused on the 25,000 U.S. Horses Shipped to Slaughter Each Year

Another critical reality that must be acknowledged is the condition of equine rescues across the United States. Nearly every reputable rescue is **financially strained, at capacity, and struggling** to meet the needs of the horses they already care for. These organizations operate with limited land, limited funding, and limited staffing — and they are constantly triaging which horses they can save.

Supporters of Intro 943 repeatedly claim that rescues will “take the carriage horses” if the industry is eliminated. But this is simply not true. Rescues have testified for years that they **cannot absorb large numbers of healthy, working horses**, especially not dozens at once, and certainly not indefinitely.

If rescues *did* have the capacity to take in more horses, that capacity should be directed toward the **actual crisis** facing American equines:

More than 25,000 U.S. horses are shipped every year across the Canadian and Mexican borders for slaughter.

These include:

former racehorses

- show horses
- ranch horses
- family horses
- mustangs
- elderly horses
- injured horses
- horses sold at auction by owners who can no longer afford care

This is the population that rescues are desperately trying to save — the horses who are **actively at risk**, not the horses who are **already safe, stabled, regulated, and cared for** in New York City’s carriage industry.

Redirecting rescue resources away from slaughter-bound horses and toward healthy working horses would be irresponsible and harmful. It would also worsen the national crisis by diverting limited rescue capacity away from the animals who truly need intervention.

Eliminating the carriage industry would not “save” horses — it would **displace horses who are not in danger**, while leaving the 25,000 slaughter-bound horses with even fewer rescue options.

Intro 937 protects the carriage horses who are already safe. Rescues should be focused on the horses who are not.

8. Eliminating the Industry Without a Plan Is Not Humane Policy

A ban without:

- A sanctuary plan
- A funding plan
- A placement plan
- A veterinary transition plan
- A worker transition plan

...is not humane, responsible, or ethical.

Supporters of Intro 943 admitted in testimony that they **do not have a plan** for sanctuary placement or long-term care for displaced horses. This is a critical failure. Eliminating an entire industry without a concrete, funded, enforceable plan for the animals affected is not humane policy — it is reactive policymaking that creates new risks.

This alone should disqualify the bill.

8. A Vision for Central Park’s Future — Inspired by Vienna and other International Cities

that Celebrate the Horse-Human Bond

New York City has the opportunity to embrace a vision for Central Park that honors its history and elevates its global standing.

London, Paris, Rome, Prague, Copenhagen, Budapest and Vienna are just some of the major worldwide cities that support the Horsedrawn Carriage Industry and have dedicated sections of the city for this amazing tradition. Vienna's Spanish Riding School maintains a **public equine presence** in the city's central parkland, creating a cultural landmark admired worldwide.

NYC could do something similar, in it's own New York style.

Imagine:

- A beautifully maintained bridle path system
- Carriage routes designed for safety and scenic enjoyment
- Educational equine programs
- A heritage-based equine presence that celebrates NYC's history
- A Central Park experience that rivals Vienna's iconic equestrian tradition

This is a future that preserves horses, supports workers, enriches tourism, and honors the park's original design.

Intro 937 moves us toward that vision. Intro 943 destroys the possibility entirely.

Conclusion

For the welfare of the horses, the dignity of the workers, and the integrity of evidence-based policymaking, I urge the Council to:

- **Oppose Intro 943**
- **Support Intro 937**
- **Restore and protect dedicated equine paths in Central Park**
- **Preserve public access to horses for all New Yorkers**
- **Adopt science-based welfare monitoring**
- **Collaborate with equine experts, veterinarians, and industry professionals**
- **Embrace a long-term vision for Central Park that honors its equestrian heritage and rivals the beauty of Vienna's Spanish Riding School**

New York City can be a national leader in humane, responsible equine policy — but only if it chooses regulation and collaboration over elimination and uncertainty.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rebecca M. Lindy, CPA, MBA, CDFA®

Tourist, Lifelong Equine Advocate and Horse Owner since 1999

Carefree, Arizona

From: [Rebecca Podolsky](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] End horse carriage industry in NYC
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 8:44:30 PM

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Dear New York City Council,

I write as a concerned New York City resident, in support of banning horse-drawn carriages in New York City. Please pass Intro 943, send those horses to sanctuaries far away from cars and noise, and help the drivers transition to new employment. Since the drivers are all excellent tour guides and speakers, there must be roles for them in the NYC tourism industry. It is beyond time for this change.

I recall as a child growing up in the 1980s/90s in NYC that horse drawn carriages used to be allowed all over the city, in and out of traffic. Horses were injured by cars all the time, and after public outcry, they were limited to Central Park, but this was not enough to protect them.

The tide of public opinion has finally turned on this issue, it's time to act.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rebecca Podolsky

From: [Regina Burke](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Support of Romanch's Law
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 9:33:40 AM

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NYC City Council Speaker Menin and colleagues,

I am writing in support of Romanch's Law banning horse drawn carriages in New York City. It is long overdue and I rallied earlier and wrote many emails in support of Ryder's Law.

New York City is a densely populated urban environment; no place for a horse drawn buggy best viewed in photos and movies about historical New York circa 1900 or earlier.

Similar cities worldwide have outlawed the use of horse drawn buggies for some time. They also represent NYC's top competitors for tourism including, London, Paris, Toronto, Beijing, Brussels, Prague, Rome, and Barcelona which banned the practice in 2017 after one horse death.

Shame on New York.

In a dramatically overheating world there will only be more frequent horrific demonstrations of the inhumanity of allowing horse drawn carriages in New York City. We will all be witnesses of seeing in person, on the news and in the media, horses ill overheated and falling in the streets dying, sometimes foaming at the mouth and having seizures while little men expound on their concern for these horses.

We will see soon more human deaths and injuries.

What memories to bring back to your respective city, state, country, or to keep in mind about New York.

I heard the concerns expressed at the NYC Council hearing by representatives of the carriage operators that they will lose their livelihoods.

NYC already has a number of busy electric carriage operators and horse operators can join their numbers or like many others find a different livelihood or retire.

I am also quite sure there are horse sanctuaries and horse and animal rights and welfare groups eager to assist the remaining horses with healthy and happy accommodations especially suited for them.

Lastly, I strongly believe we should as a community be demonstrating kindness and compassion to these horses and to all living beings. It is well documented that those who abuse and mistreat animals are

also those who abuse women and children.

We are desperately in need of more respect, kindness and concern for each other, not indifference to suffering or being enriched by it.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Regina Burke, MSW, LCSW

I'm here to ask you that you please vote YES on Romanch's Law, Intro 943.

New York City is a leader of progress in so many ways, but we lag way behind on this issue. Several other large cities banned this industry years ago— some, even decades ago. This industry is inhumane, it is dangerous, and it is time for us to join these other cities and ban it.

I like go to Central Park to relax, but I also always dread seeing the poor horses there.

Horses are prey animals- they have a strong **Fight or Flight** response, *usually fleeing* when they are frightened. We have seen this countless times-- Horses running wild through or city streets or in the park, because they were spooked—everyone in their path, in danger. There is entirely too much stimuli in a big city for a horse to have to contend with.

Horses enjoy interacting and socializing with others horses, and horses are playful in the right environment. But these horses don't get to socialize, they don't get to be playful and they don't get to run freely. They spend their days with their bodies attached to a large, heavy, uncomfortable, clunky carriage that they're forced to pull around- and when the grueling day is finally over, they have to navigate the city streets and go back- where? to a tenement building—with ramps, that they must walk up to get to the higher floors—because horses of course, can't walk up stairs. And when they finally walk up however many flights they need to walk up, they spend the night in a small stall. No time out in pasture.-- When morning breaks, it's time to walk back down those ramps and have the heavy carriage attached to their bodies again- Starting the grueling day all over again, and sometimes, dying in the middle of their “work day.” And if it's true that they get five week vacation—so what. It doesn't justify any of this.. They should never be a slave attached to a carriage, hauling people around—not one single day. In addition to that, I don't know if this is true or not, but I've heard that that their vacation is really just being shipped up to amish farms where they are once again working hard labor; plowing fields. Anyone need only to look into the eyes of any of these horses to see that they are crushed, sad souls.

And here we are today— after all these many years of so many New Yorkers, like myself, who have been pleading for a ban- after those countless incidents of spooked horses--- now, a teenager has lost his life. Romanch lost his life as a consequence of a terrified horse in his natural horse “Flight Response”— A brave young man, a young man who loved his mother so much, that he risked his life for her. This tragedy should not have happened. But it did--- because this industry was not banned. (This is an added sentence; since I was at the hearing yesterday). Hearing his family speak at the hearing yesterday (7/15/26) was beyond heart wrenching.

We are pleading again.

Please protect the horses, please protect us New Yorkers, please protect visitors to our city.

PLEASE- VOTE- **YES ON ROMANCH'S LAW (INTRO 943)**

I am writing to urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment. This legislation is supported by an overwhelming majority of New York City residents.

From: [RHONDA ROSENTHAL](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Horse Carriages
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 3:06:06 PM

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It is not a rational state of mind to have horses pulling carriages in this day and age, if ever it were kind to harness them so. Wali

With all the deals that go on in this city and in politics you can make sure the drivers get new employment, true compensation, and that these dear beings who roamed the earth for centuries get the justice, the happy retirement they deserve in sanctuary's.

People are saying the horses will go to slaughter. Don't you think the existence of that is evil, never mind threatening that it could happen. MAKE SURE IT DOES NOT!!!

Sent from my iPhone

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

July 17, 2026

To whom it may concern,

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

This should have been enacted decades ago but here we are.

Please make it right and end this abusive and inhumane industry.

Thank you,

Rhys Rizzo

Testimony re: Banning Horse Drawn Carriages from Central Park

When our E Vehicle Safety Alliance approached the head of the Central Park Conservancy pleading for a ban on E-bikes and Petti Cabs in Central Park after a disastrous redoing of park walkways and including the removal of crosswalk redlights by DOT, Betsy Smith said we should take it up with DOT and that the use of these motorized vehicles in the park came under the jurisdiction of DOT not the Conservancy. Now after these tragic accidents she hypocritically comes out in support of the ban on horses. A recent study by NYC Langone Hospitals put a brighter spotlight on the true number of accidents caused by these electric vehicles including those in Central Park.

The statistics are far higher than injuries or deaths caused by Horse Drawn Carriages.

It is my opinion that if the City Council passes a bill to ban Horse Drawn Carriages in the City and specifically in Central Park they are acting with the same hypocrisy as the head of the Central Park Conservancy by not recognising the dangers of and banning all electrified vehicles in Central Park.

Richert Easley

From: [Rina Deych](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Favor of Intro 943 Romanch's Law.
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 11:40:15 PM

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To the City Council:

Please support Intro 943. This law should have been passed decades ago. With the Carriage Horse Action Committee in the 1980s, we tried to get some improvements for the horses, but it was not enough. These horses work up to 9 hours/day, 7 days/week, without any rest or turnout time in all weather extremes, without adequate water, pulling heavy carriages. Most of these horses are doing a second lifetime of work for man. They sustain injuries and develop illnesses that are not treated or monitored. Too many have dropped dead of exhaustion or illness in the streets of NY while dragging themselves through chaotic streets and unyielding traffic, back to their filthy stalls. When they are no longer useful to the industry, many of them are sold at auction to slaughterhouses. That is their reward for slaving their entire lives for man.

Horses are prey animals and are easily frightened. They are not meant to be in a loud, overpopulated city, with cars, trucks, and buses honking and speeding through the congested streets. That is why there have been so many accidents over the years. The tragic death of this poor young man should ignite efforts to follow the lead of so many cities in the US and throughout the world that have already banned this cruel, dangerous, archaic industry.

As a registered nurse of 47 years, humanitarian, and animal advocate, I implore you to please cast this abusive, outdated industry into the dustbin of history.

Rina Deych, RN

[REDACTED]

Brooklyn, NY 11219

[REDACTED]

Hello, I am a New Yorker of 5 years. Even as a tourist, I was against the horse carriage industry. The horses cannot consent to this “job” unlike a human pedi-cab driver. I urge the New York city Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also also known as Romanch’s Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving, safe, sanctuaries where they can live out their lives as free animals, and help the drivers transitions to new employment. Thank you.

Riva Brody, resident of 10031



From: [Robert Boyle](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Carriage owner testimony
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 11:58:28 AM

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Dear Members of the New York City Council,

My name is Robert Boyle, and I have been part of New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry since October 1985. For the past 41 years, this has been my profession, my livelihood, and one of the greatest blessings of my life. I have been an owner and operator for the last 35 years, but I have always continued to drive because being with the horses and meeting people is what I love most.

I came to New York from the west of Ireland when I was 20 years old. Shortly after arriving, I saw an advertisement in the newspaper for carriage drivers. Horses had always been a part of my life because I grew up on a farm where my father worked the fields with draft horses. I got my carriage driver's license, decided to give it a try, and I never looked back.

Working with horses has always felt natural to me. It reminds me of home and of the values I was raised with, hard work, patience, and respect for animals.

Not many people can honestly say they enjoy going to work every day. I can. In over four decades, there have been very few mornings where I didn't want to head to the stable. This profession has given me a life that I am incredibly proud of.

It has also allowed me to provide for my family. My wife and I raised four children, and thanks to this job, I was able to put all four of them through college. Every day, I went home with a smile on my face because I had earned an honest living doing work that I truly loved.

This industry has also given me something equally valuable time with my brother. We have both been owners and operators for many years, and working side by side has strengthened our relationship in ways I will always be grateful for. Our shared love of horses has kept us close throughout our lives.

The friendships I have made in this industry are just as meaningful. Many of the people I work with are more than coworkers, they are family. We have stood beside one another through weddings, funerals, illnesses, celebrations, and difficult times. That sense of community is something very few professions can offer.

Today, I have three retired horses that I continue to care for, along with one horse that is still working. If I didn't truly love these animals, I would not have spent years caring for horses long after they stopped working. We don't stop loving them when they retire. They remain part of our families for the rest of their lives.

Although I truly believe this is the best job in the world, it is not without its hardships.

The hardest part is not the long hours or working through heat, rain, or snow. The hardest part is the harassment. We are hardworking people who dedicate our lives to caring for our horses, yet we are constantly met with hostility. There have been countless times when people have come to the park to scream at us, curse at us, call us animal abusers, and harass us while we are simply trying to do our jobs. Some have even gone as far as calling ICE on our drivers, many of whom came to this country seeking the same opportunities that generations of immigrants before them found in New York City.

It is heartbreaking because anyone who takes an honest look at our horses can see they are healthy, well-fed, well cared for, and loved. Yet the ignorance never seems to end. So many people are willing to believe false narratives without ever speaking to the men and women who dedicate their lives to these animals.

Despite all of that, if I had the chance to do it all over again, I would choose this profession every single time.

The relationship I have with my horse is stronger than any negativity I face. The bond between a carriage driver and a horse is built on trust, patience, and mutual respect. You don't abuse your partner. You care for them because your success, their well-being, and your livelihood all depend on one another.

I understand that there are concerns about the future of our industry, and I believe we should always strive to improve. We all want the safest possible environment for our horses, our passengers, and the public.

I respectfully ask you not to judge an entire profession by misconceptions or by the actions of a few. For many of us, this is not simply a job. It is a way of life that has supported immigrant families, preserved a New York City tradition, and created lifelong bonds between people and the animals they care for.

After more than four decades, I can honestly say I would choose this profession all over again. I respectfully ask that you stand with the hardworking men and women of this industry, recognize the care we provide our horses, and oppose any legislation that would eliminate a profession that has given so much to so many families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Boyle
Horse-Drawn Carriage Driver & Owner

The NYC carriage horse industry must come to an end!

New York City's crowded streets, terrible traffic and extreme summer heat are unbearable for these poor over worked and mistreated horses. These horses deserve retirement now. They deserve a safe, peaceful, beautiful rest of their lives beyond the city streets of NY. There are plenty of safe retirement options that already exist for these beautiful, deserving creatures. I ask the council wholeheartedly to please vote YES on Romanch's Law.

Thank you very much

Re: Romanch's Law, Intro 943

Tradition and history are important and should not be lightly discarded. I moved to New York City in 1963, and attended PS 33, PS 199 and IS 44. I was often playing in Central Park and the horses and carriages were an important part of the landscape

In the 60 years since then I have probably only ridden in one of the carriages twice. But they are very much a memorable part of the cityscape. As such they are also important for tourism as well as something us New Yorkers enjoy. They are a memory of another era and one can even say they bring the smell of the barnyard into the urban environment.

The Romanch death is tragic. Sadly tragedies happen in many areas – car crashes, boating accidents, beach excursions. But the remedy for these things is not to ban the activities but to try and make them safer. In this case should there be a requirement that the drivers cannot leave their perch behind the horses? Or that the driver can only get off the carriage if he holds the reins in his hands?

I would urge you not to react to this one sad accident by banning a more than century old tradition.

I have no connection to anyone or any businesses involved in the horse and carriage trade. This is merely submitted as a long time New Yorker who would be disappointed to see a part of our city disappear

Testimony for Committee on Health, July 15th, 2026 at 10:00AM

Please pass intro 943- Romanch's Law and end the outdated and dangerous horse carriage industry. New Yorkers don't want this in our city.

Please ensure the horses go to sanctuaries or rescues.

Thank you,

Ronlee Vrhovec

Dear NYC Council,

HORSE drawn carriages stir nostalgia, are a great appeal for tourism, and the romantic. Almost nobody will go out of their way to visit a place to ride around in another motorized vehicle. Only those that stand to gain financially want to see more new buildings, parking lots or automobiles. I hope that amongst the people with power, someone is honorable and will NOT allow a ban of carriage horses.

This witch hunt, has been perpetrated by covetous puppeteers, and perpetuated through slander and libel by entities that claim to protect animals but really only exploit them for financial gain. It is reprehensible how those entities have shamefully tyrannized the carriage horse industry, and used the tragedy of Romanch Mahajan's fatal accident and a poisoned horse for free publicity and donations to their companies....

Had Romanch Mahajan perished in an automobile accident, or choked in a restaurant, or had the poisoned horse, Deniz, collapsed in a meadow, nobody would be pushing to ban cars, restaurants, food or meadows.

Decisions to ban an industry, especially where workers will lose their livelihoods, beloved horses, happiness and equanimity, and horses will experience uncertain futures should be made with integrity and based on logic and facts. Neither libelous and slanderous propaganda, nor the profiteering of a few wealthy and powerful should be a part of that decision....

If this ban goes through immediately, or by time-delayed non-renewal of licensure, it will be apparent that NYC administrators are corrupt and we will soon see who stands to gain financially by destroying the carriage horse industry....

Sincerely,

Anonymous Carriage Horse Supporter

I am writing to urge you all to pass Intro 943 Romanch's Law formally known as Ryder's Law we must ban horse carriages in NYC. How many more people must die before this law is passed one death is to many, all the horses who have died. They don't belong on the streets of NY it is cruel and inhumane. The drivers will not lose their jobs they will be driving electric carriages.

Roseanne Caleca

[REDACTED], Belle Harbor, NY 11694

Dear New York City Council,

I am writing to formally express my strong support for Intro 943 and the proposed transition away from horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City. As a professional working in the field of veterinary medicine, I witness daily the high standards of care required to keep animals healthy and resilient. It is from this perspective that I urge the Council to act in the interest of both public safety and animal welfare.

The current model of carriage horse operations in New York City is fundamentally at odds with the realities of modern urban infrastructure. My concerns regarding this industry are threefold:

- **Animal Welfare and Physiological Stress:** Horses are prey animals with highly sensitive physiological responses to stress. Navigating dense, chaotic traffic, inhaling exhaust fumes, and standing on unforgiving asphalt for extended shifts creates an environment that compromises their long-term health. These conditions are inherently incompatible with the biological needs of the species.
- **Public Safety and Extreme Weather:** During periods of extreme heat or inclement weather, city officials rightfully issue health advisories urging residents and visitors to limit outdoor activity. Yet, these animals remain on the streets, often working in conditions that would be considered hazardous for humans. The recurring, tragic incidents of horses collapsing in public thoroughfares are not merely unfortunate accidents; they are clear indicators that the current regulatory framework is insufficient to protect these animals.
- **Urban Modernization:** While carriage rides are often cited as a tourist tradition, they are increasingly viewed as an outdated practice that contributes to traffic congestion and places undue maintenance burdens on our city parks. We have the opportunity to replace this industry with humane, sustainable alternatives that support workers and maintain the city's charm without relying on animal exploitation.

We are a city that prides itself on progress and compassion. I am confident that New York can thrive without this practice and that these horses deserve a dignified retirement in sanctuaries where they are no longer subject to the physical rigors of city streets.

I respectfully urge the City Council to prioritize the passage of Intro 943. Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your commitment to a more humane New York City.

Sincerely,

Roselle Tolentino

Veterinary Emergency & Referral Group

I, Ross MacPhee, am Curator Emeritus of Mammalogy at the American Museum of Natural History, and an advisor to Rewilding America Now, a 501(3)(c) organization devoted to revitalizing American grasslands and their biotas. This statement is provided in support of the efforts of NYCLASS and the Central Park Conservancy to permanently ban horse-drawn carriages from the park.

Horses lost most of their major economic roles more than a century ago, but attitudes toward working horses seem still to be frozen in time. That is, they are still regarded as livestock, whose role is to serve our needs without much concern for theirs. Thus for some people it may not be particularly upsetting to see carriage horses standing for hours waiting for a fare, in all kinds of weather, because that is their job—whereas if that kind of negligence were practiced on companion animals like dogs there would be an outcry. But quite apart from considerations of animal welfare, horses are simply not suited behaviorally to serve as animated machines in modern cityscapes. To understand this it is important to consider a few aspects of horse evolution.

The earliest members of the family Equidae, living more than 50 million years ago, were actually forest dwellers that relied on leaves and fruits. The lineage that gave rise to the domestic horse *Equus caballus* appeared in North America about 5 million years ago, before populations began migrating to Eurasia about 1-2 million years ago. These horses and their close relatives, known as caballines, were altogether different from their distant forbears, being specifically adapted to living on the vast grasslands of temperate North America. Much like their relatives in the Old World, the zebras and asses, caballines were savanna/steppe dwellers, evolving long limbs, large body sizes, and jaws and teeth that could manage the tough grasses that they fed on.

Just like their Old World avatars, caballines had to develop or enhance behavioral adaptations which enabled them to survive in wide open spaces filled with competitors and predators. An example is the central role of panoramic vision, which enables horses to perceive motion over wide areas within their visual fields without moving their heads. That's an excellent adaptation for detecting predators, but less serviceable in chaotic cityscapes where everything is in motion at the same time (hence the need for blinkers). Add to this their acute hearing, evolved for the same reasons, and one can begin to dimly comprehend the enormous sensory overload that horses must deal with in big-city contexts. It is no wonder that spooking is an ever-present problem for carriage drivers and their clients, even when animals are trained to handle most kinds of disturbances and unexpected shocks. Nor is it any wonder that tragedy and even death may follow when large, frightened animals react badly to threatening conditions over which they have no control, as we have seen repeatedly in the last few years. It is simply unnecessarily dangerous to continue to allow horse-drawn traffic in Central Park, and I fully support the proposed ban.

S Goldberg
Resident of W 47th St
New York, NY 10036

In support of Romanch's Law

Dear Council Members,

As a resident of Hells Kitchen and frequent visitor to Central Park, I strongly encourage you to support the passage of Romanch's Law. One of the first things I noticed after moving to the area was the many issues caused by horse-drawn carriages. The carriages are an extreme detriment to the health, safety, and enjoyment of both Central Park and its surrounding neighborhoods. Biking through Central Park or along 11th Ave requires dodging mountains of smelly horse excrement and unaware carriage drivers who are operating far larger and more dangerous vehicles in pedestrian / bike paths than anyone else on the road. Their use of these paths causes not just a mess, but undue wear on the roads, and the horses look miserable.

This service benefits no one. The carriages create a deeply unpleasant neighborhood and park environment while providing no upside to the community or the tourists they claim to serve. Why do we think that lightening tourists of hundreds of dollars is a public good? Why do we prioritize the livelihood of a few dozen carriage drivers over the health and safety of thousands of park visitors and neighborhood residents?

There has been much talk and no movement on this issue. How many more people or horses need to die for the council to finally take action? I and other residents urge you to move forward with banning them. Soon, it will seem almost unbelievable that we allowed it to continue for this long.

S Goldberg

Dear Members of the Council,

I urge you to pass Romanch's Law formerly known as Ryder's Law. Growing up in NYC I remember the magic of seeing beautiful horses trotting through Central Park, but that majesty quickly turned ugly when I witnessed a near collision of a horse with a speeding taxi cab. I was about eight years old. I started asking about how these horses are treated, and whenever I saw a horse I wondered how NYC could support the torturous life they are put through.

All creatures experience sensory overload - aggressive drivers, construction, even petting while they are wearing blinders and cannot see the hand that is reaching out to touch them. They do not even have respite at night with their pathetic 'housing' conditions. Their lives are heartbreaking to think about.

In addition to the inhumanity towards these intelligent animals, we can also now see that the industry is unsafe for people. If the goal is a safe NYC for the 200 carriage drivers, NYC residents, and tourists please consider this law.

Please help these beings, and help implement a safer New York.

July 16th, 2026

Chair and Members of the Council:

I am here to ask one simple question: **What are your priorities?**

How can this Council seriously prioritize legislation to legitimize electric-powered pedicabs while refusing to confront the ongoing public safety disaster that has unfolded in Central Park for the past three years? Intro 0943-2026 insults the intelligence!

Regardless of where someone stands on the debate over horse-drawn carriages, the answer is **not** replacing one attraction with yet another class of motorized vehicles competing with pedestrians, joggers, cyclists, children, dog walkers, older adults, and people with disabilities in the very place that was intended to be an escape from traffic.

Context matters.

Rewarding scofflaw pedicab operators and aggressive, often unlicensed hustlers who routinely overcharge and exploit tourists by effectively legitimizing electric carriages makes no sense when the NYPD has been unable—or unwilling—to enforce the traffic laws already being violated every day by speeding e-bikes and other electric vehicles invading Central Park.

How dare the 25 Council Members who have signed onto and prioritized this legislation while refusing to ban e-bikes from Central Park and our other parks.

For three years, since the City's 2023 e-vehicle pilot program began, Central Park has become increasingly dangerous. During that time, there has been a documented fatality, hundreds upon hundreds of serious crashes, countless life-altering injuries to pedestrians, joggers, cyclists, and dogs, and an atmosphere of fear that now keeps many of us older New Yorkers and people with disabilities from entering the park at all.

Right now, a woman is lying in a coma after being struck by an e-bike in Central Park last week. Another woman suffered a serious head injury after being hit on East Drive. Those two incidents received media attention only because reporters happened to receive real-time notifications. Most crashes never appear in the news.

Those of us who visit the park safely every week continue to do so with fingers crossed that we won't be the next victim and often just skip going there at all. Is that what you wish to facilitate?

The public is repeatedly told there is little problem because official NYPD statistics do not reflect reality. But victims, witnesses, emergency responders, and families know why. Officers frequently arrive after EMS has transported victims. Riders flee the scene. Reports are often never completed because officers say they didn't witness the collision or conclude that "it isn't a

crime." As a result, the official numbers grossly understate the true scope of this public safety crisis.

The photographic evidence, video evidence, eyewitness accounts, emergency room admissions, and victim stories paint an entirely different picture.

Parks are not transportation corridors. They are places of recreation, healing, exercise, and refuge. For many elderly New Yorkers and people living with disabilities, Central Park is the last remaining sanctuary where they should be able to walk without fear of being struck by a fast, heavy motorized vehicle.

Instead of restoring that sanctuary, instead of passing Priscilla's Law to hold e-bike cyclists and e-scooter invaders, this Council is considering adding yet another category of electric vehicles into an environment that is already dangerously overburdened.

The hypocrisy is impossible to ignore.

E-pedicabs are already illegal in New York City, yet they routinely operate in and around Central Park, creating safety hazards while many operators financially exploit tourists with outrageous fares. Existing laws are not being enforced. Why would anyone believe that authorizing additional electric carriage operations will somehow improve compliance?

Before creating new motorized uses, enforce the laws already on the books.

Before rewarding chronic violators, protect the people who actually use the park.

Before expanding commercial electric traffic, restore Central Park as the peaceful refuge it was designed to be.

The Council's first responsibility is public safety—not expanding commercial opportunities while ignoring an escalating crisis that has already injured hundreds of New Yorkers.

Central Park should never become another motorized transportation corridor.

It is time for this Council to stop looking the other way, acknowledge the daily danger occurring in our parks, and finally put the safety of New Yorkers ahead of politics, special interests, and commercial convenience.

Enough is enough.

Respectfully,

S Rayburn

From: [Sage Snakechalker](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pass the law to end horse drawn carriages intro 953 law
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 1:42:38 AM

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To Whom it May Concern ,

I am a resident of NY living in Williamsburg Brooklyn . I am writing to you today to end the unbelievably cruel treatment of the working horses in Central Park .

I have on many occasions with my own experience of visiting the park ,seen these horses looking beleaguered and it is absolutely noticed , not just by the city dwellers like myself but from those visiting from other locations .

How do we expect to garner tourism when our visitors witness dangerous accidents and animal cruelty in our most iconic park ? The treatment of the horses in full view for the entire public to see has left a bad taste in so many tourists and locals alike for years .

New York is a city its people do not want associated with animal abuse and cruelty . We are reputed to be educated here . In that spirit and tradition please use your best judgement and discretion here and pass Intro 943 , also known as Romanch's Law and let's replace the existing system that is no longer serving this city with a program for the industry workers and most importantly , to give these poor horses a reprieve in appropriate and adequate sanctuary for their years of abuse and suffering for our whims .

I am a taxpayer here in the city who works in both animal care and my community feel strongly about these changes that must be made and we collectively BEG you to do right by these animals and end this antiquated practice that nobody wants to see .

If you have any further information or need my in person testimony I would make it top priority.

Kind regards ,
Sage Israel

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

TESTIMONY INTRO 943

My name is Salene Parnese, and I am writing in support of Intro 943, Romanch's Law.m hill

I am a born and raised native New Yorker. For more than thirty years, Central Park has been my backyard, and for the last twenty-five years, I have relied on my bicycle as my primary mode of transportation. I know this park intimately because I have experienced it nearly every day for decades.

And I can tell you with certainty: this is not the same park it was even 5 years ago.

Today, Central Park is filled with e-bikes, electric scooters, pedicabs, delivery workers, and tourists navigating the park in ways that simply didn't exist a decade ago. Even as an experienced cyclist, I feel the difference. The pace is faster, the traffic is denser, and the margin for error is much smaller.

I have also lived in Hell's Kitchen - along the route where the horses would walk everyday from stable to park - where I regularly saw carriage horses traveling along 9th and 10th Avenues in, or alongside the bike lane, often interacting with fast-moving bicycle traffic. As a cyclist, those moments always struck me as unsafe - for the horses and for everyone sharing the road.

Our city has evolved, but our laws have not.

For years, many New Yorkers have advocated for this legislation because of Ryder. Today, it bears the name of Romanch Mahajan, an 18-year-old visitor who tragically lost his life. Just one week earlier, New Yorkers mourned the death of the carriage horse Deniz after he collapsed while working in Central Park.

Different names. Different tragedies. The same urgent message.

This is no longer only an animal welfare issue. It is also a public safety issue.

I've watched this park evolve for more than three decades. I've watched transportation change. I've watched congestion increase. I've watched the pace of this city accelerate. What hasn't changed is that we continue asking horses to work in an environment that no longer resembles the one these laws were written for.

For Ryder. For Deniz. For Romanch Mahajan. And for every New Yorker and visitor who deserves to enjoy Central Park safely, I respectfully urge you to pass Intro 943.

Thank you.

Testimony Before the New York City Council Committee on Health
July 15, 2026
In Support of Legislation to Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages in New York City

Good morning, Chair and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

I urge New York City officials to finally end the abusive practice of horse-drawn carriages in New York City. While these carriage rides are promoted as a charming tourist attraction, they come at the expense of exhausted horses who are forced to work for our entertainment in the loudest, and most congested urban environment in the world.

As a resident near Central Park, I regularly witness aspects of this industry that deeply disturb me. I live off 8th Avenue, and I frequently hear the horses walking past my window late at night, some returning after 11:00 p.m. Regardless of the exact schedules permitted under city regulations, it is troubling to know that these animals can be working or returning from work so late into the evening after spending the day navigating crowded streets, abusive owners who whip and kick them, traffic, noise, extreme weather, and standing on concrete all day.

The conditions under which these horses work also deserve greater scrutiny. During the summer, temperatures in New York City can approach or exceed 100 degrees, with even higher temperatures at street level due to the heat radiating from asphalt and concrete. Forcing horses to pull heavy carriages under these conditions raises serious concerns about their welfare. While there are existing rules regarding heat and working conditions, these are routinely ignored by abusive owners.

Another concern is access to clean drinking water. I have observed water buckets that were extremely dirty, with filth, debris, and bird droppings inside. Horses deserve constant access to clean, fresh water, especially during hot weather. Even the appearance of unsanitary water undermines public confidence that these animals are receiving the level of care they deserve.

Beyond these welfare concerns, horse-drawn carriages present public safety risks. Horses become startled by honking cars, emergency vehicles, construction, bicycles, or unexpected noises. When a horse panics in Manhattan traffic, the consequences can be dangerous for the animal, passengers, drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. No amount of experience can eliminate the unpredictable nature of working animals in such an intense urban environment.

New York City has always been a leader in embracing progress and improving standards for both people and animals. There are now many alternatives that can preserve the city's tourism industry without relying on live animals. Electric or vintage-style replica carriages could provide visitors with a similar experience while eliminating the welfare concerns associated with keeping horses on city streets.

The continued use of horse-drawn carriages belongs to another era. Visitors come to New York to experience a modern, innovative city—not to see animals working long hours in traffic, exposed to extreme heat, noise, and pollution. We have the opportunity to demonstrate leadership by replacing this outdated, barbaric practice with humane alternatives that reflect the values of compassion.

I respectfully ask New York City leaders to prioritize animal welfare and public safety by passing legislation to phase out and ultimately ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City. It is time to move forward with a solution that is kinder, safer, and more consistent with the city's commitment to humane treatment of animals.

Sincerely,

Sally Mudie.

From: [Samantha Sloane](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Committee on Health Hearing July 15th, 2026: Int 0943-2026
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 8:24:12 PM

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Please stop ALL the horses drawn carriage. It is abusive to the horses. The humans can find other work.

Samantha Sloane
[REDACTED]

Subject: IN FAVOR OF Intro 943 (Romanch's Law) – Public Testimony

To: The New York City Council Committee on Health

From: Sandra M. Giraldo

Date: July 16, 2026

To Chair Schulman and Members of the Committee on Health,

As a New Yorker, I am writing to express my strong support for Intro 943, Romanch's Law. Our city is one of the most densely populated and heavily congested urban environments in the world. It is simply not an appropriate or safe place for horse-drawn carriages in service to entertain people.

Horses are herd animals that require vast, rural terrains to maintain their physical and mental health. Forcing them to navigate chaotic city traffic, inhale exhaust fumes, and walk on concrete is fundamentally inhumane. Furthermore, climate change has brought increasingly extreme weather to our city. Forcing these animals to work through freezing winters and increasingly scorching summers puts them at extreme risk. When their workday ends, these horses do not return to a pasture; they are confined to small, cramped stables in Manhattan with virtually no space for true leisure or rest.

Passing Romanch's Law is a clear win-win situation for our city. By transitioning to electronic carriages, which could be a viable solution to consider, we can modernize this industry just as other advanced global cities have done. Electronic carriages are smaller, more agile, and far better suited for NYC's congested streets. Crucially, this transition fully protects workers. Carriage drivers can keep their jobs and livelihoods by operating these modern electric vehicles, while the horses can finally be retired to the expansive sanctuaries they deserve.

The tragic loss of Romanch Mahajan and the many horse collapses throughout the years have already proven again and again how this current system is unsustainable. I urge the City Council to pass Intro 943 immediately to create a safer, more humane New York City.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Sincerely,

Sandra M. Giraldo, MD

Queens, NY



It is incomprehensible to me that our great city allows horses to die on our streets because a few visitors want to be driven around a park. And now, this outdated and harmful industry has resulted in the death of one of these visitors, a young man who had a full life ahead of him to lead. What is the purpose of this cruel industry? Why are we using animals in this way? For a few minutes of a park tour? It is hot, miserable, and cruel for these animals. It fills our park with feces, so that everyone else in Central Park can smell nothing but that. It fills me with rage and shame to witness this continue. Enough is enough. The New York City Council must immediately pass Intro 943 and end the horse carriage industry and send the horses to the many loving sanctuaries that have already lined up to receive them. Please do justice for the grieving family who did not understand the danger and animal abuse they were contributing to, and please prevent the rest of the visitors to New York City from being able to contribute to this abuse. Enough.

From: [Sara](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Constituent Support for Passing Ryder's/Romanch's Law
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 8:04:26 PM

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To my City Council,

As a Manhattan resident (and visitor to Central Park whenever I am in the neighborhood), I write to urge the City Council to pass Ryders/Romanch's Law and end the operations of carriage horses in New York City.

My position on this issue is the same as it is on any issue of public policy: if something cannot be done safely and humanely, it should not be done.

Years of reports of neglect of the animals involved in this practice make it clear that the horses drawing these carriages are not being treated humanely or cared for sufficiently, especially in a growing environmental crisis that subjects them to extreme heat and weather in already harsh urban conditions. The more than century-long history of this practice only demonstrates that the industry is not and has never been willing to make the changes that could have rendered this practice safe and humane, if such a thing is possible. Today, **horse-drawn carriages are not an essential form of transportation, nor do they serve a public need that cannot be met through humane alternatives.** The recent deaths of horses, and, more recently, a young man using one of these conveyances, only prove the dangers of continued operations. As the Animal Welfare Society articulates it, "[u]rban carriage horses are merely a tourist attraction, not a necessity." We should not want visitors around the world to see our city as one that compromises integrity and condones animal neglect and cruelty in the service of their entertainment. Instead, we should hold ourselves to the same standard of nations around the world which have allowed consciousness of animal cruelty to end even long-standing practices.

New York City Council has long supported policies that have ensured New York is a national leader in advancing public health, safety, and humane policies. Against that backdrop, the continued allowance of horse-drawn carriages in our city presents a sharp contrast. New York should not remain a leader in a practice that many residents and visitors believe is cruel and unnecessary. Cities evolve, and policies should evolve with them. Nationally, many cities and jurisdictions, including our neighbor Philadelphia, have acted to phase out or immediately prohibit horse drawn carriage operations, recognizing that public safety and animal welfare outweigh a waning tourist attraction. Please do not let New York continue to lag behind.

Some argue that the industry should be preserved to protect jobs, but public policy and city work should serve the public interest, not preserve a business model that the City can no longer ethically justify. The Council should not allow interests of a single industry or union to outweigh the welfare of animals, the safety of New Yorkers and visitors, and the City's

responsibility to modernize outdated practices. While I feel strongly that specific plans should be implemented to establish a clear path and transition for workers in this industry and a safe path forward for the horses involved, the urgent issue -- and the right thing to do -- is to finally end operations of an unsafe and inhumane industry in our city. No life, animal or human, should be valued below a mere entertainment. As New York has done many times in history, the City can support affected workers through a thoughtful transition while ending an industry that does not reflect our fundamental values.

I respectfully urge the Council to take the opportunity to pass Ryder/Romanch's Law and demonstrate New York City's commitment to compassionate action. A city that prides itself on innovation, leadership, health, and ethical treatment should not continue to use horse-drawn carriages as entertainment.

Sincerely,
Sara Swartzwelder
Tudor City Resident

Testimony to the New York City Council

Chair and members of the New York City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I'm here to ask you to support ending the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City and to create a humane transition for the horses and the people whose livelihoods depend on this industry.

No matter how well individual horses are cared for, city streets were never designed to meet the needs of horses. They are prey animals that thrive in open spaces, not amid constant traffic, honking horns, construction noise, heat reflected from pavement, and crowded intersections. These conditions create risks that cannot be completely eliminated through regulation alone.

Over the years, New Yorkers and visitors have witnessed accidents involving carriage horses, reminding us that these animals are vulnerable in an unpredictable urban environment. Even when such incidents are uncommon, the consequences can be devastating for the horses, drivers, pedestrians, and motorists.

This is not about blaming carriage drivers. Many care deeply for their horses and have devoted their lives to this work. As the city moves forward, we should ensure they receive meaningful support, retraining opportunities, and a fair economic transition.

Our understanding of animal welfare has evolved. Just as society has changed other long-standing practices when we recognized better alternatives, we can choose a future that reflects both compassion and common sense. New York is known for innovation and leadership. It can continue to welcome millions of visitors without relying on working horses in one of the busiest urban environments in the world.

I respectfully urge the Council to pass legislation that phases out horse-drawn carriages while protecting both the horses and the workers affected by this change. We have the opportunity to build a solution that is humane, practical, and worthy of the values New York City strives to represent.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: [S Fischer](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support banning the horse carriages in NYC
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 6:13:32 PM

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Hello,

We urge the New York City council to pass the proposed ban on horse carriages that includes requirements that the horses be sent to a sanctuary, and includes job training for the carriage drivers.

Citizens of New York City and across the country who visit New York City are horrified by the dangers to humans and to the horses that pull these carriages. This is an antiquated and cruel practice.

So many visitors to New York are disgusted by the continued use of these horse carriages and don't even like to pass by them in Central Park. Banning them will not stop tourists from visiting New York City! In fact, many of us don't even like to go to areas of cities that promote these cruelties. 100 years ago people probably couldn't imagine banning the "dancing bear shows" but now we can't imagine doing something so cruel.

Please ban these horse carriages and ensure the horses go to sanctuaries.

Thank you,
Sarah Fischer

[REDACTED]

Hello NYC Council,

My name is Sarah (Mindy) Freedman Kopf. As a proud NYC resident who spends a lot of time in Central Park and Hell's Kitchen, I urge the NYC Council to please pass Intro 943, Romanch's Law formerly known as Ryder's Law, to end the horse carriage industry in New York, send the horses to live a carriage-free life in a sanctuary, and find new employment for the drivers.

Best,
Sarah

From: [Sarah M](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF INTRO 943
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 11:37:39 PM

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My name is Sarah Myles-Lennox. I am from Gloucester, Massachusetts, just north of Boston.

Boston has every bit as much history, pride, and tradition as New York. Although horse-drawn carriages remain legal in Boston, they naturally faded from the tourism landscape. There was no identity crisis. There was no prolonged debate. And I promise, Boston is still as historic, vibrant, proud, and occasionally obnoxious as ever.

When my children were growing up, they received two birthday choices: a party and presents, or a long weekend in New York City with just Mom.

My daughter always chose the party. My son always chose New York.

We stayed in Times Square, went to Rangers and Knicks games, rode sightseeing buses, visited the Empire State Building, took the ferry around the Statue of Liberty, walked through Central Park, and crammed every tourist experience we could into those weekends.

Not once did we ride in a horse-drawn carriage. Not once did we feel as though we had missed the real New York experience.

If this industry did not already exist and someone proposed it today, you would scoff. You would recognize the enormous potential for disaster and how unsafe and inhumane it would be to place live horses among buses, horns, sirens, construction, crowds, extreme weather, and unpredictable Manhattan traffic for paid entertainment.

It would NEVER be approved today.

Allowing a cruel and outdated practice to continue under the guise of tradition is not preservation. **It is a moral failure disguised as nostalgia.**

For years, advocates warned this city. Horses suffered, collapsed, and died in public. Nothing changed.

Apparently, the suffering of the horses was not enough.

Now an eighteen-year-old visitor, Romanch Mahajan, is dead.

His family came to New York expecting memories, photographs, and stories they would tell for years. **They went home without their child.**

I look at Romanch and I am reminded of my son and our trips.

This was preventable.

After listening to hours of testimony, I was struck by several arguments used to defend this industry.

One speaker called horse-drawn carriages one of the safest forms of transportation. But these rides are not public transportation. Nobody is taking a carriage to work, school, or a medical appointment. They are optional amusement rides. Comparing them with ordinary automobile travel is misleading. The question is whether this entertainment is necessary enough to justify the risk it creates for horses, passengers, pedestrians, and drivers.

It is not.

Supporters also described the industry as a sanctuary for horses who might otherwise have faced slaughter. Even if every one of those

stories is true, rescuing an animal from one harmful fate does not create a permanent right to profit from its labor. A sanctuary does not require an animal to earn its safety by hauling tourists through Manhattan. Being saved once does not answer whether its present working conditions are humane or appropriate.

We also heard that these horses are bred to work, want to work, and live purposeful lives. This legislation is not an attack on all working horses, mounted police, farm horses, the Amish, or the relationship between humans and horses. It addresses one narrow commercial practice in one uniquely chaotic environment.

Ending carriage rides in Manhattan will not end a human-equine bond that has existed for centuries. That claim is theatrical, not serious.

Repeated assurances that the industry is heavily regulated do not settle the question either. Regulation does not automatically make an activity humane or safe. Concerns raised during the hearing about denied access for independent veterinary evaluations deserve direct investigation. If the horses' health and living conditions are as exemplary as claimed, full independent examination should be welcomed.

Finally, claims that this movement is secretly about a wealthy advocate acquiring stable property are a distraction. Even if one supporter has a financial motive, it would not erase decades of opposition, the risks of operating in Manhattan traffic, the suffering of horses, or the death of a young visitor. The legislation should be judged on its merits, not dismissed through speculation about every person who supports it.

The financial interests of this industry do not outweigh animal welfare, public safety, or human life. Workers deserve meaningful transition assistance, but no job can justify continuing a cruel, dangerous, and outdated practice indefinitely.

History does not look kindly on those in power who know what is wrong, have the authority to stop it, and choose what is easiest instead.

So I am asking every member of this Council: which side of this history do you plan to stand on?

Until New York ends this practice, I will not bring my family back or spend my tourism dollars in a city that protects an archaic attraction over the lives it knowingly places at risk.

Pass Intro 943.

End this now.

Thank you,

Sarah Myles-Lennox

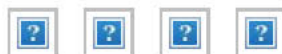
Sincerely,



Sarah Myles-Lennox

VICE PRESIDENT


sarah@merryfoxrealty.com
224 Derby St.
Salem, MA 01970



Dear City Council:

My name is Sarah Weber, and I live in Brooklyn's 44th Council District. I am writing to plead with you: please, once and for all, permanently ban carriage horses in New York City by passing Romanch's Law.

I have been a resident of New York City since 2002. I have seen multiple city administrations attempt to reform or even ban the abusive and often deadly carriage horse industry. Each time, I have seen them beaten back by the bullying, political intimidation tactics, and cronyism of TWU Local 100. Because of their twisting of our city government to their will, and because of their refusal time and again to entertain even the mildest of recommended horse-welfare reforms in the name of "protecting" their workers' jobs, approximately 30 horses have died gruesome deaths in our city streets, and more than a hundred more have suffered injuries. Now, they have an innocent young man's blood on their hands. It is time to tell them NO MORE.

You will hear expert and witness testimonies that can account for the ways in which horses are incredibly intelligent and sensitive animals; the abuse they have had to endure throughout these decades of city inaction; the negative impacts the carriage industry has to our environment, sanitation, and traffic, and more.

But what I want to express beyond all those truths is something incalculable: you finally have the political momentum on your side. You will not face the union's wrath at the polls as other administrations have done because they can no longer use their bully pulpit in the media to claim union jobs are at risk of being lost. The city overwhelmingly wants you to pass this bill. And it is a horrible truth that part of the sea change is because a young tourist lost their life in Central Park.

Romanch Mahajan's family came to our city to enjoy all its wonderful sights. They could not have known what we New Yorkers know: that for decades, those carriage horses have been driven - and often abused and killed - by inexperienced drivers harried to make fares against each other. Nor could they have known that this is a runaway industry without the necessary reform or oversight; or that they could be in danger. But now, their lives have been irrevocably shattered because our city failed in its duty time and time again to reform this industry.

The time for reform is now past.

Please, do not entertain Councilman Gennaro's proposal - one that, unsurprisingly, TWU Local 100 is all for. No amount of reform or halfway measures can change the fact that this is an abusive, dirty, and dangerous practice. I trust a union this strong and forceful can find its members other jobs - the Mahajan family cannot, however, replace their lost son. May this tragedy be the last death in Central Park caused by this horrible industry.

Please: Pass Romanch's Law NOW.

Sincerely,
Sarah Weber

I am writing to urge the Committee on Health to support Romanch's Law, Intro 943, and move it forward for a vote by the full City Council.

The deaths of both a horse and a tourist last month were a tragic reminder of the dangers associated with the horse-drawn carriage industry. Horses should not be forced to work amid New York City's traffic, noise, congestion, and extreme weather.

New York can protect animal welfare and public safety while transitioning to safer, more humane, and modern alternatives. This industry no longer belongs on our city streets.

Please vote to advance Romanch's Law and help bring horse-drawn carriages in New York City to an end.

Sincerely,
Saurabh

Dear New York City Council Members,

As a New York resident, I urge you to pass Intro 943, Romanch's Law, to end horse carriages in NYC, send the horses to sanctuaries, and support drivers transitioning to new work. Please vote yes.

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

As a horse owner, equestrian, and passionate advocate for animal welfare, I urge the New York City Council to pass **Romanch's Law** (formerly Ryder's Law).

For those of us who understand horses—not as attractions, but as intelligent, sensitive, social animals—the continued operation of New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry is heartbreaking. Horses were never meant to spend their lives navigating congested city streets, breathing exhaust fumes, standing on scorching pavement in summer, enduring freezing temperatures in winter, and working amidst the constant noise, traffic, and unpredictability of one of the busiest cities in the world.

A horse's physical and psychological well-being depends on freedom of movement, social interaction with other horses, turnout, and the ability to graze naturally. Yet carriage horses are denied the most fundamental aspects of equine life. They do not spend their days in green pastures. They do not enjoy the freedom of paddocks where they can roll, stretch, graze, and simply behave like horses. Instead, after long hours pulling heavy carriages, they return to concrete stables where they are confined to stalls that many equine professionals consider inadequate for animals of their size and natural needs. This is existence, not quality of life.

Over the years, countless New Yorkers and visitors have witnessed carriage horses working while visibly lame, exhausted, or appearing to struggle physically. Whether every incident results from injury or illness is beside the point. The public should never be left questioning whether an animal is fit to work. When there is doubt, the horse should not be working.

As horse owners, we know that even the best cared-for horse can be unpredictable when frightened. Horses are prey animals. Their instinct is to flee. No amount of training can eliminate millions of years of instinct when a horse is startled by blaring horns, emergency sirens, construction noise, motorcycles, crowds, or unexpected movement. That reality creates an inherent risk—not only for the horses themselves, but for drivers, passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike.

The recent tragedy that claimed the life of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan is a devastating reminder of those risks. A family visiting New York suffered the unimaginable after a carriage horse bolted, leading to an accident that took the life of a young man who was simply trying to protect his mother. No family should endure such a loss, and no city should accept that this is an unavoidable consequence of maintaining an outdated tourist attraction.

This legislation is not only about protecting horses. It is about protecting people.

New York is a city defined by innovation, compassion, and progress. We have evolved countless traditions when they no longer reflected our values or served the public interest. The horse-drawn carriage industry should be no exception. There are modern alternatives that can preserve the charm and history of Central Park while eliminating the risks and suffering associated with forcing horses to work in an environment fundamentally unsuited to their nature.

Passing Romanch's Law is not an attack on the hardworking men and women who have made their living in this industry. Any transition should include meaningful support and opportunities for those workers, while ensuring that the horses themselves are retired responsibly to safe homes, sanctuaries, or suitable environments where they can live as horses should.

We have reached a moment where the moral, ethical, and public safety arguments all point in the same direction. We know more about equine welfare today than we did decades ago. We know the limitations of regulations that attempt to make an inherently unsuitable environment acceptable for horses. We know the risks posed when large prey animals are required to work in dense urban traffic. And we have now witnessed a tragedy that should compel us to act.

The measure of a society is reflected in how it treats its most vulnerable—both human and animal. Passing Romanch's Law would demonstrate that New York chooses compassion over tradition, prevention over reaction, and humane progress over maintaining a practice whose time has passed.

For the horses. For public safety. And in memory of Romanch Mahajan, I respectfully urge you to pass Romanch's Law.

From: [Sheetal Mahajan](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ban Horse carriages
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 12:07:12 AM

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Testimony 7/15/26 NYCC

My name is Sheila Massey. I run Hard Hat Cats, a 501c3 cat rescue org based in Brookyn.

This is difficult to talk about and frankly I don't even want to know about it. Unfortunately, it's impossible to address NYC carriage horses without talking about horse slaughter. Altho horse slaughter for meat processing is not allowed in the US, about 30k horses pa. are transported to Canada and Mexico for slaughter. What does this have to do with carriage horses, especially when contrasted w our official NYC Tourism website featuring "enchanted carriage rides"?

- Fact: An 8-year study using the DOH registry to track carriage horse turnover found that, on average, about 70 horses per year were retired, meaning they either died or were sold.
- Fact: Altho' licensed by the city on one hand (In our name!), NYC carriage horse owners have no obligation to report how they dispose of horses if sold outside of NYC after retirement.
- Fact: We know that some are sold to "kill buyers" at auction and transported to Canada or Mexico for slaughter. Namely because one of the horses bought by a kill buyer still had the carriage number on his left hoof. Someone forgot to sand it off.

I invite carriage horse owners to provide verifiable evidence of sale of their horses to sanctuaries and horse lovers. Verifiable contact information we can check. They can't and they won't.

75% of New Yorkers who deplore the frequent carriage horse calamities, licensed IN OUR NAME, will REALLY hate knowing that the horse owners can operate in total secrecy when disposing of horses they consider no longer useful after working the streets.

We New Yorkers want no part of this.

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

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Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

With the passage of Romanch's Law, the New York City Council can represent the interests of their constituents who make the majority of New Yorkers that want the carriage horse industry to end in NYC once and for all.

It is time to end the dangerous, inhumane and thoroughly outdated institution of the carriage horse industry.

This must be the last life lost to this egregious practice which has no place in the greatest city in the world.

Sincerely,

Shona Mari Sapphire

From: [Simmi](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Romanch's Law and the Ban on Horse-Drawn Carriages
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 5:12:02 AM

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Respected members of the council,

I am writing to express my strong support for Romanch's Law and for a complete ban on horse-drawn carriages.

The tragic death of 18-year-old Romanch is a heartbreaking reminder that preventable accidents can have devastating consequences. A young man with his entire life ahead of him lost his life while reportedly protecting his mother during an incident involving a horse-drawn carriage. No family should ever have to endure such an unimaginable loss.

This tragedy has highlighted the urgent need to reconsider the continued operation of horse-drawn carriages in busy urban environments. Public safety must always come first. If stronger safety measures or a ban had already been implemented, incidents like this might have been prevented.

Supporting Romanch's Law is about more than remembering one young life. It is about creating meaningful change that protects countless others in the future. It is also about recognizing that horse-drawn carriages pose risks not only to people but also to the horses that operate in congested city streets.

I respectfully urge policymakers to support Romanch's Law and take decisive action to end horse-drawn carriage operations. Let Romanch's legacy be one that inspires safer streets and prevents future tragedies.

No family should have to experience the grief and heartbreak caused by a preventable incident.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Supporter

From: [Simona D'Onofrio](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Carriage Driver testimony
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 11:22:02 AM

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Dear Council Member,

My name is Simona D'Onofrio, and I am writing to ask you to oppose any legislation that would ban New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.

For many people, this is simply another political issue. For me, it is my family's entire life.

My father, Giuseppe D'Onofrio, came to New York City from Italy in 1985 when he was just 18 years old. The carriage industry gave him an opportunity to build a life for himself, and more than forty years later, it is still all he has ever known. Through hard work, he built a career he was proud of and raised our family around this industry.

Some of my earliest and happiest memories are of my siblings and me meeting my dad in Central Park after he finished work. At the time, he had three horses, and we would race to call dibs on which horse was ours. Those horses weren't just animals to us they were part of our childhood.

My older brother, Anthony D'Onofrio, inherited our father's love for this profession. At just 14 years old, he started working as a stable hand at a stable that has since closed. The day he turned 18, he became a carriage driver. He remained in this industry until he was tragically murdered in 2022.

Anthony absolutely loved this job. He loved the horses, he loved meeting people from all over the world, and he loved carrying on the tradition our father had started decades before him. Anyone who knew Anthony knew how much he adored the horses he worked with. He treated them with patience, kindness, and respect. They weren't just animals he worked with, they were his partners, and he loved them like they were his own.

When Anthony was taken from us, this industry stood beside my family in a way I will never forget. During one of the darkest times of our lives, the carriage community came together to support us. They attended his funeral, helped our family in countless ways, and reminded us that this profession is more than a job, it is a family. The love and support we received from this community carried us through an unimaginable loss, and I will always be grateful for that.

Two years ago, I decided to become a carriage driver myself. Now I have the privilege of driving horses that my father trained and that my brother once loved. Every day I climb onto that carriage, I feel like I am carrying on something much bigger than myself. I am continuing my family's tradition, and in many ways, I feel like I am keeping a part of Anthony alive.

That is why it is so painful to constantly hear people accuse us of abusing our horses.

I ask you to think about what it truly means to work alongside a horse every single day.

These horses are not machines. They are our partners. We depend on one another. We spend countless hours together every single day. We know their personalities, their habits, what they enjoy, and when something doesn't seem right. Why would anyone intentionally abuse the very animal they rely on every day? It simply doesn't make sense.

Like every profession, there may be individuals who fail to meet the standards expected of them. But it is unfair to condemn an entire industry made up of hardworking men and women who dedicate their lives to the care of these animals. The overwhelming majority of carriage drivers love their horses as if they were members of their own families.

Recently, I attended the City Council hearing regarding this issue. I watched carriage drivers stand before you and speak from the heart about their families, their livelihoods, and the horses they have devoted their lives to caring for. Many spoke through tears.

What hurt the most was watching council members walk in and out of the room while these stories were being told. It felt as though the people whose lives would be most affected by this decision were not truly being heard.

Meanwhile, activists repeated accusations of abuse without acknowledging the reality that so many of us live every single day.

Our voices deserve to matter too.

The truth is that these horses are healthy, well-trained, and receive exceptional care. They undergo routine veterinary examinations, regular inspections, and daily attention from people who know them better than anyone else. The picture that is often painted of this industry simply does not reflect the reality I witness every day.

I also worry about what happens if this industry is eliminated. Many people assume every carriage horse will simply be sent to a sanctuary, but that is not realistic. Sanctuaries have limited space and limited resources. If this industry disappears, many owners may be left with impossible decisions despite having devoted their lives to these animals.

This profession has provided honest work for immigrant families like mine for generations. It has allowed families to build lives, support their children, and preserve a tradition that has become part of New York City's identity.

I am not asking you to agree with every opinion surrounding this issue. I am simply asking you to truly listen to the people whose lives are intertwined with this profession. Listen to the families who have dedicated generations to caring for these horses. Listen to those of us who live this reality every single day.

Please do not allow misinformation to erase more than 160 years of history or destroy the livelihoods of hardworking families who genuinely love and care for these incredible animals.

I respectfully ask that you oppose any legislation that would ban New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Simona D'Onofrio

Written Testimony in Support of Ending Horse-Drawn Carriage Operations in New York City

Chairperson and Members of the New York City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of legislation to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Horses are highly intelligent, emotionally complex, social animals whose natural lives revolve around grazing, movement, companionship, and open spaces. They evolved to roam many miles each day, communicate within stable herds, and respond instinctively to their surroundings. These qualities make them remarkable partners with humans—but they also make them fundamentally unsuited to spending their working lives navigating one of the busiest urban environments in the world.

The recent death of 18-year-old tourist Romanch Mahajan has brought renewed attention to the risks posed by this industry. While this tragedy primarily claimed a human life, it also highlighted the unpredictable circumstances that both horses and people face when large prey animals are required to work amid taxis, buses, sirens, construction, crowds, bicycles, and constant traffic.

This is not an isolated concern. Another carriage horse collapsed and died on a Manhattan street in 2025, renewing public scrutiny of the industry. Even when regulations are followed, horses spend long hours on pavement, amid traffic and noise, with limited opportunity to express natural behaviours. Many animal welfare experts argue these conditions are fundamentally incompatible with modern standards of equine welfare.

This testimony is not intended to criticize drivers who care deeply for their horses. Rather, it recognizes that even excellent care cannot change the realities of an urban environment that was never designed for horses' physical and psychological needs.

I respectfully urge the Council to support legislation that phases out horse-drawn carriage operations while ensuring humane retirement for every horse and assistance for workers transitioning to new employment.

We owe these remarkable animals more than admiration—we owe them lives that allow them to live according to their nature rather than adapting to ours.

Thank you for your consideration.

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

Dear New York City Council Members,

The proposed bill to ban carriage horses is an upside down travesty of justice. The bill, far from protected carriages horses, will end in most of them being slaughtered. Even if it had the result intended, it would do no favors to the horses, and will put hundreds of family supporters out of work. The carriage drivers love their horses and treat them well. The underlying financial interests behind this legislation are all too well-known, and I am dismayed that the Council is even considering siding with real estate billionaires to ruin the lives of the carriage horse drivers and of their horses.

Sincerely,

Spence Porter

[REDACTED]

Bronx, NY 10463

[REDACTED]

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

From: [Stacey Gallagher](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943 - please pass
Date: Sunday, July 19, 2026 7:27:56 AM

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As someone trying to ban carriage horses since the 1990s, I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry.

I am personally committed to getting the horses to loving sanctuaries.

Regards,
Stacey Gallagher Escoffery
[REDACTED]

From: [staci-lee sherwood](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] INTRO 943 banning horse drawn carriages
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 2:12:47 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to [REDACTED] as an attachment.

As a life long New Yorker I implore you to FINALLY BAN THIS ABUSIVE INDUSTRY. We ALL know and see the weekly probably daily abuse and death. The new symbol for NYC is a dead horse being abused by their driver. NY should be better than that.

Once an icon of New York and former days it's time for what we know to be an abusive industry to be retired as many traditions have been once the cruelty as comes to light. As a lifelong New Yorker I did ride the carriages way back when I was a child and even then knew it was cruel. During a ride anyone could see the horrors for the horses if you looked closely. I grew up riding and training horses and have a lifelong love and understanding of them. In the 1960s and 70s traffic, noise and tourism was half what it is now and it was unbearable then.

While it's true the carriages are part of a tradition, that lacks credibility in continuing what is obvious abuse. The use of horses, or camels or donkeys, stems from a lack of modern transportation. Cruelty can no longer be ignored nor should it be allowed to be considered part of any legitimate job or industry. It's 2025 for god sake enough already.

The definition of slavery is the practice of forced labor and restricted liberty which clearly is defined by animals in research labs, circuses, and carriage horses. Since the 1900s we as a civilized society, have seen the errors of old traditions that held down people based on gender, race and age. Isn't it time we extended that to **all** living beings? In 2011 PETA filed a lawsuit on behalf of captive whales and dolphin. **Psychology Today** magazine published an article pondering the legal question of animal slavery. Laurence Tribe, a Harvard law professor who proposed extending legal standing to chimpanzees, said he thought it doubtful that courts are ready to apply the 13th Amendment to

animals but supported the PETA lawsuit "**as a potentially valuable catalyst for 'national reflection and deliberation' about humans' treatment of animals.**" Cruelty can't stand the spotlight.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/animal-emotions/201110/whales-in-captivity-are-they-legally-slaves>

In 2022 a horse collapsed on the street, his name was **RYDER**. His owner Ian McKeever lied to police about the horse's age claiming he was in his teens when he was 26. He had been forced to work in 84 degree heat during a week long heat wave when he collapsed. Ryder was swiftly removed from public view and only after public outcry did the union for horse carriage workers give a vague statement claiming Ryder was up state being treated.

Concerns arose immediately as details were shrouded in secrecy and because Dr Camilo Sierra was the veterinarian who responded to the emergency call. In 2018 Sierra was suspended from veterinary practice for three weeks and fined \$4500.00 by New York State Gaming Commission for improperly administering bronchodilator drug Albuterol (now banned) to a horse at Aqueduct Racetrack. He failed to do an exam first then used a fake name when reporting the incident. Sierra has several other violations going back years. Unfortunately for working horses this negligent vet is still practicing and getting \$750,000 to treat NYPD horses. Sounds like a sweetheart deal for the doc and a nightmare for his equine patients. Carriage horse are at the mercy of their owners and the vets they employ. Click here to read more

<https://gothamist.com/news/the-nypds-734k-horse-vet-has-a-history-of-violations-and-dishonesty-records-show>

McKeever made claims he cared for the horse but really just promoted himself as a businessman while trying to play on people's sympathy and guilt. He was acquitted at trial of animal abuse, due to union pressure. Click here to read about the negligent vet

<https://www.amny.com/news/nyc-carriage-horse-ryder-veterinary-care-abuse/>

Ryder collapsed on the street whisked away in secret and then died. No one will ever know what really happened other than his life should never have been about serving humans.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/nypd-seen-dousing-distressed-carriage-horse-water-collapse-hot-nyc-str-rcna42620>

In august 2025 **Lady** died on the street in extreme heat never knowing love or freedom. Her life was servitude for Transport Workers Union Local 100 who's tactic include lies and manipulating guilt from people about the poor blue collar workers when the truth is they get paid to abuse animals.

Between 1983 -2013 there have been over 66 documented cases of injured and killed horses and these are the ones reported. Click here to read

<https://www.banhdc.org/ch-acc.shtml>

Click here to learn about the cruelty involved

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_utwew_Z7M

Where do retired carriage horses go....well who knows. Some do get adopted or go to sanctuaries but not all. We know many winning racehorses and most of our rounded up wild horses end up killed in slaughterhouses for overseas menus so can we expect any different for carriage horses?

GREAT Alternative

The Ecarriage or horseless carriage is a fun option driven by a human. Many cities have chosen to go the cruelty free way while still maintaining the sense of olde time elegance and romance with carriages one might have ridden in a century ago. The only difference is no horse, no whips, no suffering. There's no safety concern of

accidents with cars, bikes or pedestrians which do happen when horses get spooked. There's no smell because animals do go to the bathroom while pulling a carriage and sweat on hot days.

I ventured up to Mt Dora, a charming town that's home to the first horseless carriages. Old Mount Dora Carriage Company is owned by Brian Strike and Brittany Poe. In 2021 they had a creative business idea for tourism. I spoke with Colleen who's a driver for the carriages about how and why they chose this venture. She said Brian and Brittany **"didn't want to do horses because you can't run them in the heat, you have to have watering stations every so often and you've got the expense of boarding and vet bills, food, and they really wanted to do something more economical and better for the environment."** After looking into Ecarriages they did a presentation for the Mayor of Mt Dora who loved the idea. The city council approved it and they were on their way. **"Our City Council was thrilled to approve the Ordinance allowing the Olde Mount Dora Carriage Company to operate electric carriages in Historic Mount Dora," says Mount Dora mayor, Crissy Stile. "Our city thrives on welcoming new business, and we never hesitated to welcome [co-owners] Brian and Brittany, making Mount Dora the first US City to allow electric carriage tours."** Colleen said that none of their customers had ever been on an electric carriage but **"they all loved it."** I did too it was a wonderful ride in a beautiful carriage.

THE SYMBOL OF NYC



NEW YORK DO THE RIGHT THING THIS WOULD CREATE JOBS



Staci-lee Sherwood

Staci-lee Sherwood

<http://www.realitycheckswithstacilee.com>

****ADOPT DON'T SHOP BECAUSE RESCUING AN ANIMAL IN NEED IS ITS OWN REWARD***

****PLEASE HELP STOP THE DEFORESTATION OF THE PLANET AND THINK TWICE BEFORE PRINTING THIS EMAIL. THANK YOU.***

****IF ANYONE FINDS AN INJURED ANIMAL OR SEA TURTLE HATCHLING YOU CAN CALL ME 24/7 AND SOMEONE WILL BE THERE TO HELP.*** [REDACTED]

Testimony of Stefan Clyne In Support of Intro. 943 (Romanch's Law) Before the New York City Council Submitted: July 17, 2026

Dear Speaker Menin, Chair Schulman, Council Member Marte, and Members of the New York City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding **Intro. 943 (Romanch's Law)**. I am writing to express my strong support for this critical legislation, which seeks to responsibly phase out New York City's horse-drawn tourist carriage industry while ensuring a fair, stable transition for the drivers and workers involved.

The current status quo of the carriage industry in New York City is no longer sustainable or safe. For years, residents and visitors alike have watched these majestic 1,500-pound animals forced to navigate nose-to-tailpipe through the congested, high-stress gridlock of Midtown traffic.

We have witnessed far too many preventable tragedies unfold on our streets, including the heartbreaking deaths of carriage horses like Ryder and Lady. Most devastatingly, the inherent dangers of mixing heavy traffic with horse-drawn carriages culminated in the tragic death of 18-year-old tourist Romanch Mahajan. Our city streets should be safe for both residents and visitors, and we cannot afford to wait for another tragedy to occur before taking action.

Beyond animal welfare and public safety, Romanch's Law represents the most responsible path forward for the carriage drivers themselves. The tourist carriage industry has been steadily shrinking for years. Rather than leaving these workers vulnerable to an inevitable market decline, this legislation proactively supports them.

By passing this bill, New York City can ensure a compassionate and fair transition, connecting drivers with new career opportunities that provide the long-term job stability, fair wages, and benefits that many currently lack. This is an opportunity to protect workers before they run out of options.

I want to commend State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal for his continued advocacy on this issue from the neighborhood level, as well as Council Member Marte for sponsoring this vital bill.

The time has come to bring this industry to a responsible, humane close. I strongly urge the New York City Council to pass Intro. 943 to protect our horses, safeguard our pedestrians, and support our workers.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Stefan Clyne

 New York, NY 10023

I am writing in strong support of Intro 943, known as Romach's Law, to end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

This legislation is long overdue. The tragic death of a tourist, along with the many documented injuries and collapses of carriage horses over the years, highlights the risks and inhumanity of forcing animals to operate in dense urban traffic. New York City streets are crowded, loud, and unpredictable—conditions that are fundamentally incompatible with the safety and well-being of horses. Even limiting the carriages to within the Park is not enough. There are too many people around, loud noises, and horses can spook at any time.

Beyond the danger to the animals, this issue is also one of public safety. When a horse becomes frightened or injured in traffic, it creates immediate and uncontrollable hazards for pedestrians, passengers, and drivers alike. The death of a visitor to our city underscores that these are not hypothetical risks—they are real and preventable tragedies.

I have been writing to 3 different Mayors, for years, asking that the carriages be banned. There are always promises, but it never happens - we always get close to the ban, but it never happens. Please help with this. Please support Romach's Law. We can help the carriage drivers find new/alternative employment opportunities.

I urge you to pass Intro 943 and ensure that no more animals—or people—are harmed by this outdated industry. It's a shame to see those photos of the numerous accidents on the news. It's such a shame that a young life was lost - for what? Who will be next? Accidents happen all the time, and it's not the horses' fault.

Thank you for your consideration. Please help.
Stephanie Nica

To the Committee discussing Horse carriages in Central Park,
I wish to voice my opposition to this bill banning an institution that has been here longer than Central Park. Yes Mr. Romanch's demise is exceptionally terrible, anybody's is. How about the family of 5 visiting New York from Spain and the Helicopter pilot that were horrifically killed last year over the Hudson? Shall we ban helicopters too, they are very much more a nuisance and deadlier than the Horses and their carriages. How about those two young men who were killed on the bicycle path on the Queensboro bridge? Here was a situation that was totally preventable and illegal, shall we finally ban these electric scooters for our city streets where everyday people are hurt or scared by the reckless drivers. Mr. Romanch's death was a great tragedy and an accident that has no precedent, but to blame and ban the horses or drivers for that is not an answer.

Trying to use the excuse of them being outdated is bizarre, that is their attraction. Saying that these poor 1500 pound animals are suffering is a real life indication of the fact that people have very little knowledge of horses and obviously never took care of one. They live to go out and do things,. Have people on their backs, pull carriages and to insinuate otherwise is accusing the owners or drivers of maltreatment of an animal I am sure they love. I agree that having the horses stabled in Hell's Kitchen is to be avoided and that instead of banning this problem we should be finding a solution. Like what about the stables that are there in Central Park? Improve and expand them. Central Park is the perfect place for them, there is a 4.8 mile Bridal Trail, which I am sure you are aware is for horses. Part of the NW corner of Central Park could also be made into a Horse Paddock where the horses could have some freedom and people could ride them. This is what we should be doing, not banning them, we should be accommodating an institution we will sorely miss if you make the mistake of taking away something that adds to the attraction of this wonderful city. I do not want to get emotional about this very emotional subject, but, where does our name, The Big Apple come from?

Sincerely yours,

Stephen Zaborowski

1 Columbus Place,

NYNY 10019

6463425891

Intro 943 "Romanch's Law"

My name is Steven Kupecz from Lenox Hill. I am so tired of seeing these horses being worked to death in Central Park. It makes me sick to my stomach every day I am in the park.

I am urging you to PLEASE pass Intro 943 also known as Romanch's Law. This young man should of never lost his life because of this outdated industry. We as New Yorkers should've taken the lead over this industry many years ago. Please do the right thing once and for all.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SK' or 'St', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Steven Kupecz

Subject: Testimony in Support of Intro. 943 (Romanch's Law) – Phasing Out New York City's Horse-Drawn Carriage Industry

To the Members of the New York City Council,

My name is Stuart Hobbie, and I am a resident of Hell's Kitchen in New York City. I am writing to express my strong support for Intro. 943, also known as Romanch's Law, which seeks to responsibly phase out the horse-drawn tourist carriage industry in our city.

As a resident, it has become increasingly clear that forcing 1,500-pound animals to navigate gridlock Midtown traffic, nose to tailpipe with cars and trucks, is neither safe nor humane. Central Park and its surrounding streets are packed with congestion, and the status quo has repeatedly led to avoidable tragedies—most recently and heartbreakingly resulting in the loss of 18-year-old visitor Romanch Mahajan.

New York City is a global capital of progress and innovation. We can honor our city's history without preserving practices that compromise public safety and animal welfare. Furthermore, I appreciate that Romanch's Law includes provisions to protect the carriage drivers themselves, offering them a fair and structured transition into new jobs that provide better long-term stability and benefits.

The time has come to bring this industry to a responsible close. I urge the City Council to pass Intro. 943 to ensure a safer, more compassionate future for both the animals and our community.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Stuart Hobbie

July 13, 2026

NYC Council
250 Broadway
New York City, NY 10007

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to respectfully ask that the Council votes in favor of Bill # 0943-2026, sponsored by Councilman Christopher Marte.

This important legislation will prohibit horse-drawn carriage operations in New York City effective June 1, 2028. Furthermore, the bill also mandates that the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection administer a workforce development program. This will ensure industry drivers and workers seamlessly transition into stable, safe alternative fields of employment.

My perspective comes from a lifetime of shared experience with these animals and our state. I owned, trained, drove, and rode horses for over 30 years, both in competition and on my 40-acre farm in Brunswick, New York. Additionally, I served our communities for 26 years as a New York State Trooper, working in regions ranging from Essex County to New York City. While stationed in Essex County, I frequently exercised Standardbreds at the local racetrack. Later, during my undercover narcotics work in New York City, I saw firsthand the harsh, dangerous, and chaotic conditions that urban carriage horses endure daily. It quickly became clear to me that driving horses at county fairs, rural towns, and spacious parks across the state is entirely different from forcing them to operate in the dense grid of Manhattan.

Horses are prey animals, biologically hardwired for flight. When startled, their immediate instinct is to bolt. The constant gridlock, sirens, motorcycles, and sudden horn blasts of New York City can easily trigger this panic response. Once a horse enters a panic-driven flight mode, a driver may not be able to control a terrified animal attached to a heavy carriage. In such a dense cityscape, there is simply no safe place for a panicked horse to go. **Furthermore**, forcing these animals to stand on blistering asphalt while inhaling toxic urban exhaust for hours at a time is structurally inhumane and biologically detrimental.

New York City has never been suitable for horse-drawn carriages. Tragically, this inherent danger was recently demonstrated on June 17, 2026, by the preventable death of Romanch Mahajan. Furthermore, official records confirm that dozens of carriage horses have died directly on city streets.

For the sake of both public safety and animal welfare, I sincerely hope that the Council will pass Bill # 0943-2026.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration regarding this matter.

Respectfully,

Sue McDonough

Sue McDonough [REDACTED]

NYSP Retired

Rensselaer, NY 12144

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

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Thank you!

Sunanda Bhalla

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Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

From: [Suriya Khan](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The World Is Watching
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 12:20:32 PM

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Honorable Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony ***in support of ending New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.***

My name is Suriya Khan. I am a lifelong advocate for animals. I hold a Master of Public Policy from Vermont Law and Graduate School. I have governance experience within organizations for those who have been justice-involved, unhoused communities, food insecurity, and I'm also a former pharmaceutical specialist. Currently, I'm a board member of Voters For Animal Rights (VFAR), and I work directly with **Fair Start Movement**, a global organization developing constitutive legal frameworks designed to reduce harm for both humans and nonhuman animals. Our work focuses on **institutional legitimacy**—asking whether our laws and policies adequately account for those who bear their burdens but have the least power to influence them.

I believe that is exactly the question before us today.

New York City is more than a city. It is one of the world's defining symbols of progress. Throughout its history, New York has helped shape the moral direction of our nation. The Stonewall uprising helped galvanize the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement. New York has led in public health, labor protections, environmental policy, and animal welfare. Millions of people from around the world visit this city every year, and what they see here shapes how they understand our values.

That is why the continued operation of horse-drawn carriages is so troubling.

This industry belongs to another era. It reflects a time when horses were a primary means of transportation rather than sentient beings whose interests deserve meaningful consideration. While many traditions deserve preservation, others should be retired when they no longer reflect who we are or who we aspire to become.

The question before us is not whether individual carriage drivers care about their horses. The question is whether asking horses to work in one of the busiest urban environments in the world—amid constant traffic, noise, congestion, extreme weather, and unpredictable hazards—is consistent with modern standards of animal welfare.

Recent veterinary inspections documenting concerns including harness-related scarring, skin lesions, dental disease, lameness, and cramped stable conditions reinforce what many New Yorkers have recognized for years: this is an outdated institution whose burdens are borne by the animals themselves. Whether every horse experiences each of these conditions is beside the point. The existence of these documented concerns demonstrates that this industry continues to expose horses to risks and conditions that no longer reflect the standards of care we expect in a modern city.

At Fair Start, we often ask a simple question: whose interests count when institutions make decisions?

Horses cannot vote. They cannot testify before this Council. They cannot advocate for themselves. Their welfare depends entirely on whether we choose to account for their interests honestly and fairly.

Institutional legitimacy is measured not only by how well we serve those with power, but by how faithfully we protect those without it. When our systems consistently discount the interests of those with the least ability to protect themselves—whether children, future generations, marginalized communities, or animals—we weaken public trust in those institutions. Compassion is not simply a virtue; it is a measure of legitimate governance.

New York has never been defined by preserving outdated practices simply because they are familiar. It has been defined by its willingness to evolve when evidence, ethics, and public values demand change.

Every day, visitors from around the world leave New York with an impression of what this city stands for. We should ask ourselves whether horse-drawn carriages remain the symbol we wish to present to the world, or whether New York is ready to lead once again by embracing humane alternatives that better reflect our values.

Ending the horse-drawn carriage industry is not about erasing history. It is about making history.

I respectfully urge the Council to support legislation that retires this antiquated industry and continues New York City's long tradition of moral leadership, compassion, and progress.

Thank you for your consideration.

Warmly,

Suriya Khan

Testimony in Support of Romanch's Law

Susan Palmer Marshall

President, Council of Chelsea Block Associations (testifying on my own behalf)

My name is Susan Palmer Marshall. Many of you know me as President of the Council of Chelsea Block Associations, but today I am testifying on my own behalf.

Horse-drawn carriages are woven into New York's history. But honoring our past does not mean we are bound by it.

We are not asked to erase history. We are asked to decide whether history should continue to define us after experience has taught us something different.

We have witnessed horses collapse and die on our streets. The impact extends beyond the horses. Romanch Mahajan's life was tragically cut short, reminding us that public safety is also at stake.

Once we have been shown these realities, we cannot look away.

With that knowledge comes responsibility.

When we know better, we are called to do better.

Nostalgia is not a substitute for responsibility.

Romanch's Law asks us to make a choice.

Will we allow nostalgia to define our future?

Or will we choose compassion, responsibility, and the courage to evolve?

Cities, like people, are defined by the choices they make.

I respectfully urge the Council to pass Romanch's Law.

Susan Palmer Marshall

[REDACTED]

New York, NY 10011

[REDACTED]

I am outraged that 25 Council Members have signed on and prioritized a bill banning horse-drawn carriages after one tragic incident and have been silent on banning e-bikes from Central Park in spite of the countless e-bike-related tragedies that occur all the time. City Council approved an e-vehicle “pilot program” in 2023, which continues to this day, and the only thing it seems to have proven is that e-bikes are a danger to everyone who uses the park – the e-bike riders, pedestrians, joggers, other cyclists, and especially senior citizens and those with handicaps. Last week alone, there were two very serious accidents with e-bikes in Central Park – one involving a female jogger hit and knocked unconscious on West Drive at 64th Street who is still in a coma and another on East Drive at 72nd Street involving a female pedestrian who was hit and has a serious head injury. Both of these incidents were covered in local press, but did not receive the wide-spread attention of the tragic horse-drawn carriage accident. I urge City Council to address the e-bike problem with the same velocity that e-bikes use on the roadways in Central Park and the speed with which the council has jumped into action on the horse-drawn carriage ban.

Sincerely,

Susan Schwartz

Former Co-Chair, Manhattan CB7 Parks & Environment Committee

Pedestrians killed by cyclists in Central Park include Jill Tarlov and Irving Schachter. Both died from severe head injuries within days of collisions during the fall of 2014. Additionally, cyclists themselves have died in the park, such as Charles Cheeseboro (2019) and Salvador Nico-Garcia (2025). Here are the details of the two pedestrians fatally struck by bikes:

Jill Tarlov: A 58-year-old mother who was struck on September 19, 2014, at 4:30 p.m. by a 31-year-old cyclist on West Drive near 63rd Street. She passed away three days later.

Irving Schachter: A 75-year-old marathon runner and teacher who was struck on August 3, 2014, by a 17-year-old bicyclist on West Drive near 72nd Street. He died two days later.

For more information on these historic incidents, read the full report on the *The New Yorker* and details in *The New York Times*.

Bicyclist who hit pedestrian in Central Park dies from injuries - ABC7 New York Aug 29, 2019 — By Eyewitness News. Thursday, August 29, 2019. A bicyclist who crashed into a pedestrian in Central Park earlier this week has died from his injuries. NEW YORK (ABC7 New York) A Bicycle Crash Kills Another Pedestrian in Central Park | *The New Yorker* Sep 23, 2014 — On September 19th, a thirty-one-year-old musician on a racing bike struck a fifty-eight-year-old mother in Central Park. The accident took place at 4:30 in the ... *The New Yorker* Bicyclist Killed in Central Park After Collision With Pedestrian Jun 20, 2025 — A bicyclist was killed in Central Park on Wednesday, June 18, after colliding with a pedestrian who was crossing East Drive at 97th Street.

From: [SUZANNE WHITE](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SUPPORT FOR INTRO 943
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 5:39:30 PM

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I implore you to pass Intro 943 and earlier than 2028 !! These animals are weighted down with heavy straps and equipment in extremely dangerous temperatures and have to stand in the heat as well in between pulling heavy carriages and people around for their enjoyment. It is cruel and would love to see a human be subject to that to understand how cruel and painful it is to these animals.

In islands and many tourist places there are people on bikes riding people around.

These horses have no enjoyment just cruel work.

I BEG YOU TO PASS THIS AND GIVE THESE HORSES THE FREEDOM TO LIVE AS THEY SHOULD.

I have seen people whipping them to keep them moving and not slow down or stop in this heat !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Thank you for listening and please please please take appropriate action.

There are plenty of other jobs out there not at the expense of animals !!!!!!!

Good afternoon, Chair and Members of the New York City Council.

My name is Sydney Valk, and I am here today to urge you to support Intro 943 and finally end the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City.

For generations, horse carriages have been presented as a charming tradition. But tradition alone is not a justification for continuing a practice when we know it places both animals and people at risk.

Horses are sensitive, powerful animals. They did not evolve to spend their days navigating traffic, sirens, exhaust fumes, crowded streets, extreme weather, and the constant unpredictability of one of the busiest cities in the world. Even with regulations and inspections, we continue to witness incidents involving frightened, injured, collapsed, or deceased horses, as well as accidents that put public safety at risk. ([NYC Government](#))

The recent death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan has brought renewed attention to the consequences of maintaining this outdated industry. His family's call for change is a heartbreaking reminder that this issue is not only about animal welfare, but also about human safety. ([New York Post](#))

Importantly, Intro 943 provides a responsible path forward. The legislation includes a transition period, protections for the horses, and workforce development support for those whose livelihoods are affected. This is not a sudden elimination of jobs—it is a thoughtful transition toward a safer and more humane future. ([New York City Council](#))

New York City has always evolved as our understanding of ethics, safety, and public welfare has evolved. We have an opportunity to honor both the horses and the workers involved by supporting a transition away from an industry that no longer belongs in a modern city.

I respectfully ask you to vote yes on Intro 943 and help bring an end to horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dear Council Members,

I am writing as a member of the public to express my concern regarding the ethical treatment of horses within New York City, specifically the continued operation of horse drawn carriage rides.

Sometimes, time outgrows the original intention behind a practice. Horse drawn carriages once served as a meaningful connection to the city's history and as a reminder of the important role horses played in the development of civilization. Today, however, asking large herd animals to work within the confined spaces of Central Park, surrounded by constant vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic, no longer reflects the environment they were naturally adapted to live in.

The noise, congestion, and constant competition for space create conditions that are not well suited for draft animals within a modern city. This arrangement is unfair to the horses, given their natural behavior and evolutionary history. It also presents challenges for pedestrians, who must navigate around the horses out of concern for the safety and well being of the animals, the passengers, the drivers, and themselves.

The recent and preventable loss of a horse's life should serve as a reminder that it is time to reconsider this practice. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding any individual incident, the risks associated with maintaining horse drawn carriage operations in one of the busiest cities in the world deserve careful review.

There are many modern alternatives that can preserve the charm and tradition of guided park tours without relying on large animals. Electric carriages, artisan e bike rickshaws, restored vintage automobiles that celebrate New York City's transportation history, Personal Rapid Transit systems using small modular vehicles such as NEXTS Vehicular Pods, and even future transit technologies could all provide memorable experiences while improving both public safety and animal welfare.

Thank you for your time and for your thoughtful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Talin Rowe

Testimony in Support of Ryder's Law (Intro 943)

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

My name is **Tamekia Wakefield**, and I am writing in support of Ryder's Law (Intro 943).

I love New York City, and I especially love spending time in Central Park. It has always been a place where I can relax, enjoy nature, and appreciate one of the city's greatest treasures. But over the years, seeing the horse-drawn carriages has changed that experience for me.

Whenever I pass the carriage stands, I feel sadness instead of joy. Watching horses working amid heavy traffic, crowded streets, extreme summer heat, and freezing winter weather makes me uncomfortable. Whether others see it differently or not, I can't shake the feeling that these animals deserve a life that doesn't require them to spend their days pulling carriages through one of the busiest cities in the world.

I've reached the point where I intentionally avoid the areas of Central Park where the carriages line up because it diminishes what should be a peaceful experience. That's heartbreaking to me, because no one should feel they have to avoid parts of our city's most beloved park.

Traditions can be meaningful, but they should evolve as our understanding of animal welfare evolves. I believe New York can honor its history while embracing more humane alternatives that don't rely on horses to entertain visitors.

I respectfully ask you to support Ryder's Law and help move our city toward a future that reflects compassion, progress, and respect for animals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tamekia Wakefield

From: [Tara Bottone](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Intro 943
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 5:35:24 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Sincerely,
The Bottone Family
Staten Island, NY
Tara Bottone™

From: [Tara Cronwall](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] • The bill name/number: "Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)" • The hearing date: "July 15, Transporter 2026" Transportation Department
Date: Tuesday, July 7, 2026 6:39:56 PM

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- The bill name/number: "Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)"
- The hearing date: "July 15, 2026"

Testimony in Support of Intro 943 ("Romanch's Law")

Submitted to the New York City Council, Hearing of July 15, 2026

My name is Tara [Last Name], and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of Intro 943, banning the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City.

I am not a New York City resident, but I am writing because this issue is not confined to one city or one park. I have personally witnessed the toll that carriage and pack-animal tourism takes on horses and other animals in multiple states over many years — from carriage horses working the streets of Annapolis and Baltimore, to the donkeys and mules used on the trails of the Grand Canyon, to carriage horses pulling pedestrians on the Holidays in traffic circles in Sarasota, Florida. What I have seen is consistent everywhere: animals forced to work in conditions no regulation fully controls, because the danger isn't just heat or bad drivers — it's the fundamental mismatch between a prey animal's nervous system and an urban street.

This is not a New York problem. It is a pattern, and New York now has the chance to be part of the solution rather than the exception.

The record here speaks for itself. In the past 13 months, Central Park has seen eight documented horse-related incidents, including horses collapsing and dying in harness, horses bolting into traffic and parked cars, and now the death of 18-year-old tourist Romanch Mahajan after the horse pulling his carriage bolted and the carriage overturned. This was the first known human death connected to carriage rides in the park's history — but it was not the first warning. Horses named Ryder, Dennis, Lady, and Deniz all collapsed or died in recent years under harness. These were not isolated tragedies. They were predictable outcomes of asking a 1,000-pound flight animal to work for hours a day in traffic, heat, and crowds it has no ability to reason its way through.

No amount of training eliminates a horse's instinct to bolt when frightened. Sirens, backfiring

engines, cyclists, umbrellas, dogs, and thunder are all ordinary parts of city life and all potential triggers. Hitching posts and refresher trainings — the alternatives currently being proposed by industry representatives — do not change the underlying fact that these animals did not choose this work and cannot be reasoned with in the moment fear takes over.

Cities do not need this to remain a tourist attraction. Many major global cities already offer pedicabs, electric carriages, or walking tours as their signature “old-world” tourist experience, without endangering an animal or a rider to do it. New York does not have to choose between charm and cruelty — it can modernize the experience while retaining the romance tourists are actually looking for.

The public agrees. A 2025 survey found that 78% of New York City voters support ending the horse-drawn carriage industry. This is not a fringe position. It is the clear will of the people this Council represents.

I urge the Council to pass Intro 943 without further delay, and to ensure that any transition plan provides real, meaningful support for the drivers and workers whose livelihoods will change — because a humane transition should protect people and animals both. Every month this bill is not passed is another month a horse can die in that park, or a family can lose someone the way Romanch Mahajan’s family did.

I ask the Council to act now, not after the next incident.

Respectfully submitted,

Tara Cronwall

July 15, 2026 - 9:00am
City Hall Hearing to Ban NYC Horse Carriages - Romanch's Law
Intro 943
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Good morning everyone. Thank you all for being here. My name is Tara Lorin Clini, and I stand here today as a voice for the voiceless.

When I was a little girl, I believed horses were magic. Not in a fairytale way; but in a quiet, sacred way. It was something magical in their eyes, their pretty long lashes; something pure, something honest. I truly believed they were too gentle for this world to ever harm them.

I didn't know yet what humans were capable of. **YET**

The first time I saw a carriage horse in New York City, something in me shifted. It wasn't a good feeling. It hurt my soul. The city was loud—cars, buses, horns, chaos everywhere—and right in the middle of it all stood this horse. Still. Silent. Working. Head hung low.

An animal so majestic and powerful, reduced to nothing more than an object for people to profit from. Everyone around me saw a ride. A photo opp. A moment. I saw a soul that didn't belong there. I saw misery and horror. His eyes weren't bright or curious. They were heavy... distant... tired. But I felt it. Every bit of it. And that feeling never left me.

As I got older, I began to understand how easily we normalize things that shouldn't be normal. But there is nothing humane about forcing an animal to spend its entire life pulling weight through traffic, breathing in exhaust, walking on concrete, and enduring constant stress.

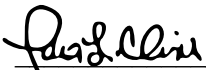
Just weeks ago, a 16-year-old carriage horse collapsed in Central Park and died—right there on the pavement. He died working. He never knew one day of peace. And now, we are mourning the loss of an 18-year-old young man. He never made it home.

So I ask you—what are we defending? This is not harmless. This is not compassionate. This is not romantic. This is suffering—repackaged as tradition.

How many more horses have to collapse? How many more lives have to be lost before we say Enough? Because we do have a choice.

I stand here today for the horses who suffer in silence... for the lives already lost... and for the ones we still have the power to save.

That little girl in me still believes horses deserve better.
And she's right.
Be their voice.
Please END THIS—NOW.
For the Horses - FOR HUMANITY
Thank you all for your time.



Tara Lorin Clini

Date: 7/15/2026

The NYC carriage horse industry must come to an end!

New York City's crowded streets, terrible traffic and extreme summer heat are unbearable for these poor over worked and mistreated horses. These horses deserve retirement now. They deserve a safe, peaceful, beautiful rest of their lives beyond the city streets of NY. There are plenty of safe retirement options that already exist for these beautiful, deserving creatures. I ask the council wholeheartedly to please vote YES on Romanch's Law.

Thank you very much

From: [Teresa D'amico](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943 (Prohibiting the operation of horse-drawn cabs) - July 15, 2026 Committee on Health
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 7:18:55 AM

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I am a founding member of the Coalition to Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages, formed in 2006 following the tragic traffic accident that resulted in the death of a horse named Spotty. You will be hearing from many people today so I want to focus on one aspect regarding the terrifying incident that resulted in the death of a young tourist. The carriage industry and their enablers threw their driver under the bus (or carriage I guess) by saying the drivers are never to step away from the carriages and relinquish control of the horse. They made it sound like this was a one-off incident. It is not! I spent many a weekend for years protesting and observing this business and drivers ROUTINELY walk away and leave the carriages unattended, and yes, sometimes with passengers. Even if the horses were tethered to a hitching post which they now seem to be claiming would remedy the situation, that is actually potentially very dangerous for a horse who may be spooked. Don't listen to their lame excuses. These poor horses deserve better. This relic of old New York needs to be banned immediately.

Teresa D'Amico
[REDACTED]

Dear Chair Lynn Schulman:

My name is Teresa Russo. I live in Bay Terrace, Staten Island, District 51.

I am testifying in support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law).

Some years back, I had given testimony at a City Council Hearing, calling for a ban on horse drawn carriages on New York City Streets. In my testimony, I mentioned that besides so many horses used in the business dying from accidents and neglect, it was just a matter of time before a human dies as the result of a horse drawn carriage accident. I said that when that happens, it would be the fault of City Council for not acting to ban this cruel and dangerous business. Well, City Council ignored this, and instead decided to back the industry, because they were told that the drivers

were a "union", and that their jobs were "good union jobs". This was not true. The drivers have no union contract, and no benefits. The ones benefitting are the stable owners, from ensuring that the industry continues by lobbying City Council to keep the horse drawn carriages on the streets and their business going.

Then it happened, on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, Romanch Mahajan, an 18-year-old tourist from India was killed when the horse pulling the carriage got loose, took off running and throwing Mahajan from the carriage causing his death.

Why City Council considers this outcome acceptable is hard to understand. I myself have seen drivers making illegal turns on the streets in and around Central Park, while looking at their phones and not at the traffic. The driver in this incident was not in

the carriage, but was taking pictures of the passengers outside the carriage. How many more human deaths will it take for City Council to act?

I was at another City Council meeting also some years ago, where after my testimony, I saw members of the Teamsters Union being lobbied by the stable owners. They saw me, knew I was there to testify for a ban, and I got a big smirk from them.

Since then the stable owners' enablers became the TWU. Nothing has changed, especially the fact that the drivers do not have any union benefits, and this false claim has intimidated the City Council members from "going against the unions".

Because of the deception, Romanch is dead. **SOMEONE WHO WAS A GUEST IN OUR COUNTRY IS DEAD!** All because City

Council had decided that it was more important to support the psuedo "union jobs" that the stable owners were pushing in order to keep their business going, then it was to protect the safety of passengers and pedestrians.

I'm strongly urging City Council Members to finally do the right thing and pass Intro 943 (Romanch's Law), and ban this cruel and dangerous business. You can't bring back Romanch Mahajan, but you can prevent future tragedies such as this from happening.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony in support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law).

Teresa Russo



Staten island, NY 10306

Dear Honorable Council,

Thank you for your time.

My family raised horses throughout my childhood and young adulthood. I have many years of personal experience with their well being and care.

As fight or flight animals, and having their capacity for choice in their days or the ability to fight for what they need, they are left with one defense - flight. This is a loud, crowded and intense city, not meant for a horse. They will "spook" (try to take flight) unpredictably. The streets that they must travel through daily to the park are loud, crowded and intense. We are here today, in large part, because a young man recently lost his life in a city not fit for horses. It was a tragedy that stacked on so many other tragedies, including the tragedy of horses who live their lives without freedom and quality of life. Please free these animals to a quality life.

Please give them back what gives life meaning to these herd animals; animals that are made to think, connect, make choices, run free, learn, be challenged, have meaningful work, belong to a herd, and act on their natural instincts.

July 13th, 2026

Dear Councilmember,

I am writing to urge the Council to take meaningful action on the issue of horse-drawn carriages in and around Central Park. While the tradition is often described as charming, the reality on the ground has become increasingly unsafe for the horses and the public. This is no longer a matter of sentiment- it is a matter of public safety, animal welfare, and responsible city governance.

This year alone, two carriage horses have died while on duty. One horse bolted southbound and collided with a vehicle on Sixth Avenue. Multiple traffic violations have been documented, including drivers running red lights, weaving horses through dense traffic, and operating their carriages while distracted on their phones. Most tragically, a rider lost their life less than a week after I wrote to your office on June 11 asking whether action would only be taken after a fatality. That question has now become a reality.

Beyond these incidents, the daily conditions for these horses are far below modern standards. They sleep in a dilapidated building far from the park, are routinely walked through chaotic Midtown traffic, and are managed by drivers who, in many cases, lack even basic equine-husbandry training. I personally witnessed a carriage nearly strike a stroller in a crosswalk; when confronted, the driver responded, "the horse does what he wants to." That level of disregard is unacceptable in any professional setting, let alone one involving live animals and public streets.

While there are measures that would modernize the program and significantly reduce risk, given the repeated incidents, preventable deaths, and ongoing safety hazards, a full ban on carriage horses in New York City must be implemented. Other major cities have already transitioned away from this practice, replacing it with electric carriages or alternative tourism experiences that protect both animals and pedestrians.

This is not a fringe issue: it is a clear opportunity for the Council to demonstrate leadership, compassion, and a commitment to public safety. The status quo is failing. We should not wait for another horse to collapse in traffic or another person to be injured before acknowledging that this system is no longer appropriate for the realities of New York City.

I respectfully ask that you take immediate action to review, reform, or retire the horse-drawn carriage program. The risks are well-documented, the consequences are mounting, and the path forward is entirely within the Council's power.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Thea Wittich



New York, New York 10019

To: The Committee on Health
Re: Support for Intro 943
July 15, 2026

Dear Committee Member,

Today you heard testimony in favor of and opposed to a ban on carriage horses in New York. Of first note is the fact that the pro carriage horse voices were predominantly individuals or companies standing to profit from this cash flow business. Those in favor are trying to continue the romantic notion that the industry nods to the legacy of Central Park. While they claim to care about their horses, no one who truly cared would subject their horse to the traffic, exhaust fumes, high temperatures, humidity, and reflective heat (some 10 to 20 degrees higher at the horse's chest from the black asphalt increasing the likelihood the horse will succumb to the combined heat and humidity index).

The pro argument attempts to make not owning a horse a reason to discredit someone's view that the industry must be banned. I have never owned a horse. However, I have worked on carriage horse regulation in Boston, spoken with owners nationwide and met with the police force in cities like San Antonio as well as the former head of Mounted Police in Boston, worked to ban them in Las Vegas and Paris and in myriad other ways have become expert on why carriage horses do not belong on any city street.

I have worked closely with and learned from two renowned veterinarians. Dr. Holly Cheever was first in her class at Cornell Vet school and Dr. Lorna Grande was educated at Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary medicine. Both had expertise in equine medicine. Both presented testimony on bans in major cities across the US. Dr Cheever, in fact, presented at an American Veterinary Medical Association meeting on the illnesses and injuries seen in carriage horses. Dr. Grande included focus on the problems with using horses in this manner teaching at the University of Massachusetts. I have hundreds of hours of work with them.

They quoted studies that pointed to the prevalence of lung disease as a result of the horses' "nose to tailpipe existence". We researched and documented hundreds of incidences of horses collapsing on the US and EU streets from heat exhaustion. We documented the fallacy of "mechanical" lameness and showed x ray evidence of leg injuries sustained through constant pounding on hard asphalt. We found horrifying examples of shoddy farrier work by owners, where nails were driven into the frog of the horse's hoof. They helped me identify scars resulting from improper harnessing and repeated rubbing on painful wounds. They pointed out how improperly used snaffle or curb bits can be used so severely as "Nazi" check bits to control otherwise uncontrollable horses and damage delicate mouth tissue causing extreme pain.

There is nothing about pulling a carriage on asphalt streets that can ever be seen by anyone except by those profiting from it as anything but cruel and neglectful of the horses well-being. In fact, when working on the issue in Boston, a carriage operator from Provincetown Mass...a

literal one lane low traffic street, came to Boston to testify AGAINST carriage horses on the streets of Boston as did the then head of the Boston Mounted Police.

No amount of rest or regulations can prevent the injuries and resulting illnesses that come with the carriage horses' lot. When the carriage horse is spent, (as I noted many from the Amish slaughter line come "cheap" and have only another season left in them), and used to the bone, he/she is sold to slaughter anyhow. That's how much a carriage horse company owner "cares."

The tragic death of a wonderful young man and the injuries of his mother are not unique. A carriage full of Boston visitors to New York were injured when a horse spooked over the clang of a sewer cover. All three were flung from the carriage—resulting in a broken shoulder and arm, and permanent blindness in one eye in another. Another horse who spooked in NY crashed up the front door of a bus, causing injury to several passengers. I could fill volumes of accidents.

Massachusetts has a law posted in stables, known as a 'Horse is a Horse' law. Essentially it says, a horse is a prey animal and as such is hypervigilant, easily spooked by sudden noises or unknown objects and prone to unpredictable behavior. You enter that stable at your own risk. A horse's only defense is to kick, rear and flee. A horse will do that with a carriage full of people even if the driver had not left his station. Once spooked, the driver is out of control for blocks while the carriage careens wildly behind the frightened horse. NY carriage drivers have gotten away with offering the lie of a "romantic" ride without full disclosure of the serious risks involved – including death. Wide eyed tourists who pay to be passengers had no idea they were putting themselves in harm's way or causing suffering to the horse.

If the Romanchs had understood a fraction of the danger they were putting their family in, they would have NOT included a carriage ride in their New York itinerary. The carriage owners and the city itself are guilty of not providing full disclosure of the risks given the history of human injuries and death associated with a supposed romantic experience.

As Councilors and guardians, you have an obligation to make certain New York provides safe experiences for millions of visitors each year. Given the nature of a horse, there is no way they can ever be predictably safe and horses are always the ones actually in charge of a carriage full of humans. Spooked "horsepower" cannot be contain by one human with reins.

All of this has not even noddod to the number of horses in NY and worldwide who suffer and die as a result of this "tradition"-- a tradition whose time has come. The power to end it is in your hands. Please do not let the Romanch loss be in vain. Ban the industry and protect all future humans and all the horses unwillingly used. Following in the footsteps of major cities in the US and other countries who have said enough and stopped the dangers to human visitors and the suffering of thousands of horses is the right thing to do.

Respectfully,

Theodora Capaldo, Ed.D. [REDACTED]. Georgetown Ma 01833 [REDACTED]

7/17/2026

New York City Council,

I am writing to urge you to pass Intro 943 and end the horse-drawn carriage industry in New York City. I strongly oppose the use of horse-drawn carriages and believe it is time for our city to move toward more humane alternatives.

My biggest reason is simple: animals are not ours to use. They are not here for our entertainment or to make money for us. Horses do not belong on busy New York City streets surrounded by constant traffic, blaring sirens, construction noise, crowds, and vehicle exhaust. This is not a natural or humane environment for any animal.

These horses are expected to pull heavy carriages for hours at a time, often in extreme heat and difficult conditions. We have seen horses collapse, become injured, or panic in traffic, and even one horse suffering under these circumstances is one too many. Just because something has been done for a long time does not mean it is right.

We are not living in the past anymore. We have modern alternatives that do not require the exploitation of animals for entertainment. There is no reason horses should continue to be forced to work in these conditions when humane options are available.

A compassionate city should do better. We should be moving forward, not holding on to outdated traditions that come at the expense of an animal's well-being. I urge you to support ending horse-drawn carriage rides in New York City and replacing them with humane alternatives.

Please ensure these horses are retired to loving sanctuaries where they can live out the rest of their lives in peace, comfort, and dignity, receiving the care they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Theresa Tepedino

Please vote against 0943-2026. Horse drawn carriages are far less dangerous than the e-pedicabs that are illegally in Central Park. These will increase in numbers if the horse drawn carriages are eliminated. E-bikes should be eliminated. They cause injuries every day. They are severely underreported. Last week alone there were two e-vehicle serious accidents that I know of. One on the West Drive at 64th Street. Another on the East Drive at 72nd Street. Horse drawn carriages very rarely have any problems. Please allow the horse drawn carriages to continue.

Good day, NYC Council.

I am submitting written testimony to urge the New York City Council to pass Intro 943, also known as “Romanch’s Law”, to end the horse carriage industry, and retire such horses to loving sanctuaries to peacefully live out the rest of the time they have left. As a veterinary assistant and student in veterinary technology, I believe we all have a responsibility to advocate for the welfare of animals residing within the city. Aside from the joint damage they often develop from their hooves hitting the harsh pavement, there is also the overtime exposure to exhaust fumes while they work. Horses in particular are also incredibly flighty animals, being easily startled. They can and have injured and unfortunately taken the lives of people in the process of bolting from a sudden noise. The constant high level of noise also contributes to deteriorating the cardiovascular health of the horse, and is also linked to hearing loss. There are many things within the boroughs of New York City that attract tourists daily, and horse carriage rides are not the most necessary to add to people’s itinerary, nor is it worth the risk to anyone’s life or the life of the horse. A horse pulling a carriage on a quiet farm is substantially different from a horse pulling a carriage full of people in the middle of New York City. As a born-and-raised New Yorker, I respectfully ask for you to support this legislation.

Thank you for your time,

Tiffany M.

Citations:

(<https://awionline.org/programs/equines/horse-drawn-carriages/> , Animal Welfare
Institute.)

Written Testimony in Support of Intro 943

New York City Council Committee Hearing

July 15, 2026

My name is **Tiffany Hernandez**, and I am writing in strong support of Intro 943.

If horses could speak, would they choose this?

Would they choose to spend their days surrounded by blaring horns, speeding vehicles, construction noise, exhaust fumes, and crowded streets? Would they choose to pull heavy carriages through one of the busiest cities in the world for the entertainment of others?

They cannot answer those questions.

They cannot stand before this Council and tell you when they are frightened, exhausted, or in pain. They cannot ask for a different life. That responsibility belongs to us.

Our voices are the only voices they have.

A city is often judged not by how it treats the powerful, but by how it treats those with no power at all. Horses do not vote. They do not lobby. They do not have attorneys or political influence. They depend entirely on human compassion and the decisions made in rooms like this one.

New York City has always prided itself on being a leader. Leaders do not wait for tragedy before taking action—they prevent it.

It should never take another horse collapsing on our streets, another emergency that captures headlines, or another heartbreaking image shared around the world before we decide enough is enough. Preventing suffering is always better than reacting after it has already occurred.

No animal should have to spend its life navigating the constant noise, congestion, and hazards of Manhattan traffic simply to provide entertainment. While many carriage drivers undoubtedly care about their horses, care alone cannot change the environment these animals are required to work in. New York City was built for cars, buses, bicycles, and millions of pedestrians—not for horses pulling carriages through dense traffic.

Supporting Intro 943 is not about choosing horses over people. It is about choosing compassion for both.

The carriage drivers who have built their livelihoods in this industry deserve dignity, respect, and support as they transition into other work. We can protect workers while ending an outdated practice that no longer reflects the values of a modern city. These goals are not in conflict—they can, and should, exist together.

The horses cannot tell us when enough is enough.

We can.

Every generation is remembered for the choices it makes when change is difficult. Years from now, New Yorkers will not ask why we chose compassion. They will ask why it took us so long.

A majority of New Yorkers support ending horse-drawn carriage rides. Our city has evolved in countless ways, and our treatment of animals should evolve as well. Progress means recognizing when traditions no longer serve the public interest or the welfare of living beings.

Today, you have the opportunity to make history—not because you reacted to the next tragedy, but because you prevented it.

When future generations look back, let them say that this Council listened to those without a voice. Let them say that New York chose compassion over complacency, prevention over regret, and courage over convenience.

The horses cannot ask you for mercy.

I am asking on their behalf.

For the horses who have no voice, for the workers who deserve a fair transition, and for the future of a city that strives to lead with compassion, I respectfully urge you to pass Intro 943.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: [Tiffany Stair](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony Intro 943
Date: Sunday, July 5, 2026 1:09:21 PM

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Hello,

The following is our testimony regarding Intro 943. The hearing is July 15th.

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

On behalf of Revolution Philadelphia, I urge you to pass Romanch's Law and finally bring an end to the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

Just weeks ago, Philadelphia made history by becoming one of the largest cities in the United States to permanently ban both commercial and noncommercial horse-drawn carriages. After years of advocacy, our City Council recognized what has become increasingly clear: horses do not belong in modern urban traffic, and no tradition justifies placing animals and the public at unnecessary risk.

Our campaign in Philadelphia was built on years of documenting the realities of carriage horses working in congested city streets. We witnessed frightened horses navigating traffic, enduring extreme weather, and living in environments that could never meet their physical or behavioral needs. We also saw overwhelming public support for a humane alternative.

The recent death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan in a runaway horse carriage incident is a heartbreaking reminder that this issue extends beyond animal welfare—it is also one of public safety. No family should have to experience such a preventable tragedy, and no city should wait for another life to be lost before taking action.

Philadelphia's decision demonstrates that change is possible. Ending horse-drawn carriage operations does not erase history or diminish tourism. Instead, it reflects a city's commitment to compassion, safety, and progress. Cities evolve, and traditions that rely on the exploitation of animals belong in the past.

I respectfully ask you to seize this opportunity and pass Romanch's Law. New York has long been a global leader. By ending horse-drawn carriages, you can once again lead by showing that public safety and humane treatment of animals are values worthy of protecting.

From all of us at Revolution Philadelphia, we stand with the people of New York, with Romanch's family, and with the countless advocates who have worked tirelessly toward this goal. We hope you will make history by voting yes on Romanch's Law.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Stair
Co-Founder, Revolution Philadelphia
[REDACTED]

Good morning, Chair and Members of the Council,

My name is Tiffany Thomas , and I am a lifelong New Yorker. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in strong support of Intro. 943 – Romanch's Law. As someone who has lived in New York (Clinton Hills & Bed-Stuy)my entire life, I have never supported the horse-drawn carriage industry.

I have always believed that New York can honor its history while embracing safer, more humane alternatives that protect both people and animals. Over the past several months, I have also witnessed another side of this industry that deeply concerns me. My partner, Helen, has been a licensed Central Park pedicab driver for 23 years. She has dedicated more than two decades to introducing millions of visitors to the beauty of our city.

Through her years in the park, she has shared countless stories about hostility surrounding the horse-drawn carriage industry, and after becoming involved myself, I experienced some of that hostility firsthand. After Helen publicly supported Ryder's Law, we experienced what we believe was a campaign of harassment. We filed a police harassment report after repeated incidents. We were the subject of negative social media posts, negative business reviews, and public attacks online. Posts about us appeared on the "Carriage Horse Facts NYC" Facebook page, and false and damaging statements about us circulated on social media, including on X. No one should be intimidated or publicly attacked simply because they choose to participate in the democratic process and advocate for legislation they believe will make New York safer.

We also experienced situations where we were taunted and provoked, only to later see a false narrative emerge suggesting that our reactions were meant to mock an injured carriage driver. That was never our intention. It was heartbreaking to see our character misrepresented because we chose to support Ryder's Law.

Support Ryder's Law.

Recent events continue to demonstrate why this must end for good. Even after the heat suspension took effect yesterday June 30th, 2026, a carriage driver was reportedly operating in Central Park. Whether enforcement action is ultimately taken is for the appropriate authorities to determine, but incidents like this reinforce why this ban necessary. As a native New Yorker, I want visitors to remember our city for its culture, its parks, its neighborhoods, and the kindness of its people—not for preventable tragedies or the controversy surrounding horse-drawn carriages. Ryder's Law is an opportunity for New York City to move forward like Philadelphia.

It is an opportunity to put public safety first, improve animal welfare, and transition to modern, humane alternatives while preserving jobs. Before I close, I ask every member of this Council to remember the words of Romanch Mahajan's father. The entire Mahajan family have repeatedly and courageously called for New York City to shut down the horse-drawn carriage industry so that no other family experiences the pain they now carry every single day. They have pleaded for meaningful action—not sympathy, but action. We owe them more than condolences.

We owe them leadership & swift action. He also said, "This incident should be taken very seriously. It took my son's dream away." Think about those words. A young man who had just been accepted to college came to New York City to celebrate with his family. Instead of returning home with memories of our city, his family returned home with his remains in the cargo part of the plane. His father also described the unimaginable final moments before his son died. He recalled hearing Romanch scream, "Mom!" as he fell from the moving carriage trying to save her.

No parent should ever have to relive those moments. No family should ever have to plead with elected officials to take the

death of their child seriously. The Mahajan family has already told this Council what they believe. Their statement said, "This is a profound insult to our family, and a direct threat to public safety of every tourist and resident of New York City." As a lifelong New Yorker, I don't want another family to experience what the Mahajans have endured. We cannot bring Romanch back, but we can honor his life by ensuring that no other family suffers the same preventable tragedy.

Please pass Intro. 943 – Romanch's Law. Today, you have the opportunity to ensure that Romanch Mahajan's legacy is not defined solely by tragedy, but by meaningful change that protects future visitors, New Yorkers, and the horses who continue to work on our streets. Thank you for your time, your service, and your thoughtful consideration of my testimony. I respectfully urge you to vote in favor of Intro. 943 – Romanch's Law

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I stand before you today as a drag entertainer in the greatest city in the world. I am a performer who benefits from the tourism that sustains our nightlife, and I am grateful for that. But there is a glaring, archaic contradiction in our city: while we pride ourselves on being a world-class destination, we are still clinging to the exploitation of horse-drawn carriages.

This is not a matter of commerce; it is a matter of biology. A 1,200-pound prey animal is not built to thrive in New York's overstimulating, concrete environment. Veterinary experts have consistently found that pulling heavy carriages on unforgiving concrete leads to arthritis, hoof deterioration, and chronic pain. These animals are biologically imprisoned; they are kept in cramped stables where restricted movement causes colic—a painful, often fatal condition. We are forcing them into a lifestyle that causes them internal agony.

We are gathered here today because of the tragic death of a human, Romanch. My heart goes out to his family and loved ones for their devastating loss. But we should not have waited for a human tragedy to act. This has been a systemic failure for over a decade. We have seen the evidence in our streets for years—from Ticks in 2015, who was euthanized after a fracture because he was no longer a profitable product, to the more recent collapse of Ryder, who died on the street. Even regarding Deniz, who died in the park, the industry may point to toxic plants as the cause, but the fact remains that these animals are being forced into urban environments where they are exposed to such dangers while working for this industry.

The current system is clearly broken, marked by an annual turnover rate of approximately 71 horses, with zero transparency regarding where these animals are sent once they are removed from the city rolls.

The union argues that we cannot phase out these horses, but a network of sanctuaries has already signed a letter of intent to take every single one of them. We have seen the city successfully partner with companies like Pop Wheels to provide battery-powered propulsion for food vendors to move away from diesel generators as a matter of public health. If we can innovate to protect our air quality, we can certainly innovate to end this cycle of animal abuse. We can transition to electric, battery-powered carriages—maintaining the tourist experience and keeping drivers employed—without the cruelty.

Cities across the globe—from Philadelphia, Chicago, and Salt Lake City to London, Beijing, Barcelona, and Montreal—have already moved on and banned this practice. Why is New York still fighting to keep this outdated abuse alive? Government should be for the people and the animals who live here, not for tourists who visit once a year. I urge you to vote to end this cycle of suffering. Let's make history and end this terrible chapter once and for all, without another loss of animal or human life.

From: [TONI KELLER](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Horse Carriages Hearing today
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 12:10:39 PM

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Good day Council Members,

The issue on the table today of banning horse carriages in NYC streets and parks has been a long term battle. Today I ask you to finally ban this dangerous and inhumane business once and for all. These horses are mistreated and live in substandard conditions. They have collapsed and died on the streets of NYC. People have been hurt when spooked horses take off. We just don't need this in NYC. Let's encourage Uber and taxi rides and not carriage rides.

These horses need retirement to a sanctuary or farm. They need treatment for their ailments and an end to lugging around heavy carriages in all weather conditions.

PLEASE, let's finally ban this industry for good. Please know I don't spend my money here in NYC because I do not like your inaction on this matter as well as the constant killing of adoptable animals at ACC in the 5 Boros. I would love to spend time in NYC and explore all it has to offer. Let's act and solve your animal care problems.

Thank you.
T Keller

Tony Avella
Retired New York State Senator

[REDACTED]
Whitestone, NY 11357
[REDACTED]

July 15, 2026

**Statement Submitted to the New York City Council
by Retired State Senator Tony Avella on Intro 943**

First let me thank the City Council for holding this hearing on Intro #943 and to Council Member Marte for introducing this important legislation.

The time has finally come to ban the operation of horse drawn cabs within the city of New York. In 2007, I introduced in the City Council Intro #658 to ban this archaic practice. I also introduced a similar bill while serving in the State Senate in 2011.

As I said in 2007 and still applicable today, it is simply no longer appropriate or safe for a horse drawn carriage to operate in congested, and often perilous midtown traffic. Society as a whole has come to realize that the mistreatment of animals is clearly wrong and should not be tolerated. We can no longer turn a blind eye to the mistreatment of these horses. It is time for this industry to be put out to pasture.

Pretend for a moment that horse-drawn carriages were not a staple of New York City – that they weren't a tradition (which is debatable), grandfathered into the new age. If today, someone suggested we place large horses on our chaotic city streets – horses that, if spooked, can cause immense injuries and fatalities to pedestrians, drivers, and themselves – that idea would be laughed at immediately. Instead, we accept the idea of exposing these horses to terrible conditions and treatment, only to excuse each predictable accident just because they are a familiar sight.

It was Mahatma Gandhi who said, "The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way it treats its animals." Let us finally take this step forward and ban this horrible archaic practice.

Thank you.

Tony Avella

Dear Councilmembers,

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Traci Pichette

Tracy Broxmeyer

[REDACTED]

East Hampton, NY 11937

07/14/2026

New York City Council

250 Broadway

New York, NY 10007

Dear Council Member,

I am writing as a New York City resident to urge you to support and vote in favor of the legislation to ban horse-drawn carriages in New York City, recently renamed in honor of Romanch Mahajan, the 18-year-old visitor who was killed after falling from a runaway carriage in Central Park.

This tragedy was not an isolated incident. Central Park has seen repeated safety incidents in recent months, including a horse that collapsed and died while pulling a carriage, another that bolted through the park without its driver, and one that ran into a busy intersection and struck parked cars. These events make clear that no amount of additional regulation can fully control a 2,000-pound animal working in city traffic. The only reliable way to prevent further injuries and deaths — to horses, tourists, and New Yorkers alike — is to end the industry.

Public support for this change is overwhelming. Recent polling commissioned by the Central Park Conservancy found that 68% of respondents favor a ban, and other surveys have put support above 70%. New Yorkers have made their views clear; I am asking you to act on them.

I recognize this legislation includes provisions to transition carriage drivers into new roles, including the option of horseless electric carriages already in use in cities like Brussels and Philadelphia. These alternatives preserve the charm and economic value of carriage rides in Central Park without endangering horses, drivers, or the public.

New York City has an opportunity to join Chicago, Key West, Las Vegas, and more than a dozen other cities that have already ended horse-drawn carriage operations. I urge you to co-sponsor and vote yes on this bill when it comes before the Council.

Thank you for your time and for representing the safety and values of your constituents.

Sincerely,

Tracy Broxmeyer

[REDACTED]

From: [Tristan Marra](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pass intro 943 into law
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 11:10:46 AM

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Hello,

Please swiftly pass Intro 943 into law, and put an end to the horse carriage industry in New York City. I have lived in NYC since 2007 and do not believe these horses should be subject to the conditions they are. Please end this cruel industry and send the horses to homes and pastures where they can thrive and be better cared for. They do not deserve this, we can have electric carriages or bikes to show tourists Central Park and New York City, and give the horse carriage operators another source of income.

We urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

Thank you,
Tristan Marra
[REDACTED]
NY, NY, 10022

Written Testimony in Support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)

I am a New York City resident, and I strongly support Intro 943 (Romanch's Law). I believe horses deserve to live free from pulling heavy carriages through crowded city streets. While I recognize that many carriage drivers care deeply about their horses, I do not believe busy urban traffic is an appropriate environment for these animals.

I support a solution that protects both the horses and the workers. The horses should be retired to reputable sanctuaries where they can live peacefully, and carriage drivers should receive meaningful assistance in finding new employment.

I respectfully ask the New York City Council to pass Intro 943. This legislation would help create a more humane future for these horses while ensuring that workers are not left behind. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dear Councilwomen and Councilmen,

I'm writing to express my opposition of Intro 0943. My name is Ummet Kirbiyik and I have been a carriage driver for over 20 years and a carriage owner for 10. Being a horse carriage driver is my entire life. I spent all my savings to become an owner to secure a better future for my kids. I paid for the carriage and the horses in installments for 7 years, putting all the extra money into this instead of my kids' college accounts trying to secure a future for them. Only to face it all being taken away. I have 3 kids one heading to college next year and 2 others following after. I am afraid that I won't be able to support my family and put my kids through college. This bill doesn't address what would happen to my horses and my livelihood. What's a 45-year-old without a college education and limited English to do? I cannot see an equivalent replacement for what I do. This bill disregards the future of all drivers, their families and their future generations. I love my horses dearly, I wouldn't say that it's an easy job, but it's an honest job and a job I'm proud to do. I know my horses and I know how they are feeling and what they need. My kids grew up around horses and love them as part of our family. This bill is threatening to take everything away from us and leave us in a position where we can't pay our rent or mortgage and support our families. It also doesn't have a clear plan for what will happen to my horses, it has no guarantees that my horses will be better off. Please consider voting against this bill and this injustice.

Thank you,

Ummet Kirbiyik

Written Submission

Re: In Favor of Intro 943, Romanch's Law.

Hi, my name is Una Rose, I'm from Toronto and I'm a long-time animal rights activist. I'm writing to you today on behalf of carriage horses and to give my support to the passing of Romanch's Law and to ban the use of carriage horses in NYC.

Its very important that this ban be passed and all these beautiful horses be retired to reputable sanctuaries and other non-working, loving forever homes. They deserve a nice retirement and that can be easily arranged, by the city working with aligned activist and welfare groups, for all of them.

For the drivers, the city could purchase electric carriages which other cities in the world have done. These are really cool and fun, and they reminds me of the 1900s when city carriage horses started to be replaced by electric and gas powered carriages. That was a big, wow, amazing moment and revolution in city life and travel. So I think it's a time for another of these revolutions. This time a humane based revolution.

Historically, passing this bill would be furthering the proud history of NYC as a leader in animal welfare. From ASPCA founder Henry Beugh in the late 1800 who would walk the streets of NYC berating drivers who abused, neglected or forced sick horses to work, to the present, this decision with confirm NYC is not only a great city for people but also a great and progressive ones for animals as well.

And finally, as a tourist, I long to visit New York City. I live in Toronto, so it's not too much of a journey, but I can't. I made a pledge to myself about 15 years ago that I wouldn't visit New York City until the carriage horse industry was banned. So it's been 15 years, and 4 mayors and I'm still waiting. For me, seeing these gentle horses being abused and forced to work in a city setting is just too depressing a spectacle. Seeing them standing there, looking miserable, bored, unwell, abused, eating inadequate food off the payment for hours would make me very sad and ruin my whole trip. Horses in a pasture or in the wild do not stand stationary for hours, on cement and pull huge heavy carriages. This is just abuse and you can tell all these horses are suffering, uncared for and would rather be elsewhere.

Kindness to animal is deeply human and animal cruelty is just wrong. And obviously the danger aspect, this recent tragedy, brings urgency to this issue. Activists have been warning that this is going to happen for years. Carriage horses spook and run all the time. This is not the 1800s. NYC is a noisy, chaotic, exhausting and unnatural environment for them.

So let's not let the heroism and tragedy of this young man's death be ignored or denied, and let's not let this bill be delayed or postponed any further. Let's get this bill passed and let's ban this cruelty because that is the right, smart and kind thing to do for the horses, for nycers, for tourists and for New York City. Thank you.

Good afternoon, Chair and Members of the New York City Council.

My name is Valentina Milosevic and I am here today to urge you to finally end the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City.

For decades, these horses have been expected to work in one of the busiest, loudest, and most congested cities in the world. They spend long hours on hard pavement, surrounded by traffic, construction, sirens, and extreme weather. No matter how well individual owners may care for them, city streets are simply not an environment where horses naturally belong.

This issue is not about tradition versus progress. It's about recognizing that our understanding of animal welfare has evolved. We no longer accept practices simply because they have existed for generations. We have a responsibility to make choices that reflect compassion and common sense.

There are humane alternatives that can preserve New York City's tourism industry while eliminating the risks and suffering associated with horse-drawn carriages. Modern, animal-free transportation can create jobs, attract visitors, and allow this iconic experience to evolve without relying on living animals.

Every year we delay, horses continue to face unnecessary risks from traffic accidents, heat, cold, and the daily stress of navigating crowded city streets. New York has long been a leader in advancing policies that reflect our shared values. This is another opportunity to lead.

I respectfully ask the Council to pass legislation ending the horse-drawn carriage industry and replace it with humane alternatives that honor both the city's history and our responsibility to protect animals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: [Valerie Barnes](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 7:02:04 AM

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Dear Council-members:

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment.

For too long they have been forced to live and work in a dangerous and unhealthy environment. It is now time for you to do the humane thing and pass this law.

Thank you.
valerie

valeriebarnesfilmllc.
[REDACTED]
New York City 10002
[REDACTED]

From: [Valerie Jahns](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] opposition to Intro 943, the carriage horse ban
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 1:21:24 PM

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To whom it may concern:

Please vote to oppose the carriage horse ban.

Carriage horses add unmeasurable value to a city experience. Where else can regular people witness the deep bond between horse and human, the gentle interactions, and strong nature of our working companions? Horses have long been partners in human activities and to ban the possibility of these interactions is to diminish the richness of a close human/horse (or human/animal) connections.

Strict working rules are already enforced and serve to assure non-horse people that our four-legged friends are well cared for. The notion that a horse is not meant to work alongside a human is a new and naive idea that is not based in the physical reality of our world.

The life of a carriage horse is one of dignity and worth. Many of these horses were already saved from the slaughter pipe-line. Yes, they've banned carriage horses in Europe, but in Europe, they also regularly eat horse meat.

Horses are so much more than a product to be managed. They are extensions of all the good that makes life worth living. They teach us how to be human.

Please, vote against the ban.

Sincerely,
Valerie Jahns,
Equestrian

I am Vance Lehmkuhl from Philadelphia, working here in the tourism industry.

I've had a front-row seat both for the clogging of our Old City streets with horses and their carriages and for the work Janet White has done to generate an alternative industry with Caroline the eCarriage.

While the safety of pedestrians and passersby is a crucial issue for New York's continued deployment of horses in the middle of the city, an even bigger issue is that horses are not things to be used but sentient beings such as I am and you are. We do not want to be used by others simply because someone else can profit off of it, and neither do the horses.

So as our own Councilmember Mark Squilla pointed out, you can play games drawing lines on the clock or the thermometer as to when use becomes "abuse," but if you look at the situation honestly, you will have to conclude that there is exactly one true solution: Stop making horses carry tourists around at all, any time. It's past time to end this industry.

Thank you.

Written Testimony of Vanessa Aronson
New York City Council Hearing on Intro. 943

Chair Schulman and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Intro. 943.

I want to begin by expressing my deepest condolences to the Mahajan family. The loss of Romanch Mahajan was a heartbreaking tragedy. It is also one that I believe could have been prevented. I commend his family for channeling their grief into advocacy that seeks to prevent another family from experiencing such an unimaginable loss.

I have been a supporter of ending the use of horse-drawn carriages in New York City for many years. My perspective on this legislation is informed by my professional experience in animal welfare, including seven years at the ASPCA, where I served as Senior Director of Strategy. Throughout my career, I have worked on evidence-based policies that improve both animal welfare and public safety. Those goals are deeply connected.

Horse-drawn carriages are an increasingly outdated form of transportation in one of the busiest and most congested urban environments in the world. Even under the best of circumstances, horses remain prey animals whose instinctive reactions cannot be eliminated through regulation alone. A startled horse in the middle of Manhattan traffic presents risks not only to the horse itself, but also to passengers, pedestrians, carriage drivers, cyclists, motorists, and bystanders. The tragic events that inspired this legislation demonstrate those risks in the most devastating way.

This legislation is also an important consumer protection measure. Every year, thousands of visitors and New Yorkers purchase horse-drawn carriage rides expecting a charming, nostalgic experience through Central Park. Most have no reason to believe they are stepping into an activity that carries inherent risks associated with navigating a horse through one of the busiest cities in the world. Consumers deserve attractions that are not only enjoyable but also reasonably safe. Intro. 943 recognizes that these risks cannot be eliminated simply through regulation and takes the appropriate step of preventing another avoidable tragedy.

I also recognize that horse carriage drivers have built livelihoods around this industry and deserve to be treated with dignity throughout any transition. As the City considers the future of horse-drawn carriages, it should also commit to supporting workers through a thoughtful and equitable transition.

New York City has consistently adapted its transportation systems as our understanding of safety, public policy, and animal welfare has evolved. Intro. 943 represents an important

step toward protecting both people and animals from preventable harm. I respectfully urge the Council to pass this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Testimony Before the New York City Council Committee on Health

In Support of Int. 943 — Romanch's Law

Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify. I urge this Committee to pass Romanch's Law and finally begin the phase-out of the horse-drawn carriage industry.

For decades, this Council has been asked to choose between tradition and safety. That framing has always been false, and the events of the past few years have made it impossible to sustain. In 2022, a horse named Ryder collapsed in Hell's Kitchen and later died. In 2025, another horse, Lady, collapsed and died on the street. This summer, a carriage horse died in Central Park after eating a poisonous plant — and just weeks ago, Romanch Mahajan, an eighteen-year-old visitor to our city, was killed when a spooked horse bolted with the carriage he was riding in. The Central Park Conservancy, after years of neutrality, has now documented seven horse-related incidents in the park in a little over a year and has called for a ban.

This is not a run of bad luck. It is the predictable result of placing thousand-pound prey animals amid traffic, sirens, crowds, and summer heat, and asking them to work as machines. When a horse panics, no regulation on the books can stop it.

And we have tried regulation. The Council passed heat protections in 2019. Oversight was strengthened by executive order in 2025. Horses continued to collapse, and now a young man is dead. The incremental approach has been tested for years, in good faith, and it has failed. The only measure that actually addresses the risk — to horses, to passengers, to pedestrians, to drivers themselves — is ending the practice.

Romanch's Law does this responsibly. It does not shut the industry down overnight. It phases carriages out over two years, with a full transition by June 2028, and it establishes a program to help carriage drivers move into new work. That is the right structure: it protects the people whose livelihoods are tied to this industry while ending a practice the public overwhelmingly wants ended. Polling has consistently shown that a large majority of New Yorkers support removing horse-drawn carriages from city streets. The Mayor supports this bill. The Speaker supports this bill. Cities around the world — from Montreal to Chicago to Barcelona — have already made this transition without losing what makes them beloved to visitors.

New York does not need a working horse in midtown traffic to be magical. What it needs is a government willing to act before the next collapse, the next runaway carriage, the next preventable death.

I ask you to vote this bill out of committee and send it to the full Council. Thank you.

From: [Varsha Sehwat](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Romanch's Law and the Ban on Horse-Drawn Carriages
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2026 1:35:01 AM

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Respected members of the council,

I am writing to express my strong support for Romanch's Law and for a complete ban on horse-drawn carriages.

The tragic death of 18-year-old Romanch is a heartbreaking reminder that preventable accidents can have devastating consequences. A young man with his entire life ahead of him lost his life while reportedly protecting his mother during an incident involving a horse-drawn carriage. No family should ever have to endure such an unimaginable loss.

This tragedy has highlighted the urgent need to reconsider the continued operation of horse-drawn carriages in busy urban environments. Public safety must always come first. If stronger safety measures or a ban had already been implemented, incidents like this might have been prevented.

Supporting Romanch's Law is about more than remembering one young life. It is about creating meaningful change that protects countless others in the future. It is also about recognizing that horse-drawn carriages pose risks not only to people but also to the horses that operate in congested city streets.

I respectfully urge policymakers to support Romanch's Law and take decisive action to end horse-drawn carriage operations. Let Romanch's legacy be one that inspires safer streets and prevents future tragedies.

No family should have to experience the grief and heartbreak caused by a preventable incident.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Supporter

I respectfully ask the New York City Council to pass Romanch's Law and finally bring the carriage horse industry to an end.

Horses do not belong working in extreme heat, surrounded by heavy traffic, loud noises, and the constant chaos of New York City streets. As prey animals, they can easily become frightened or overwhelmed, putting both the horses and the public at risk. New York City is simply not an appropriate environment for them, and tragedies will continue until meaningful change is made.

These horses deserve the opportunity to retire and live peacefully beyond the city streets. Safe retirement options already exist through a comprehensive transition plan, making it possible to protect the horses while responsibly ending the industry.

Please vote YES on Romanch's Law and help create a safer, more compassionate future for these animals and for New Yorkers.

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I am writing in strong support of Intro 943 to phase out New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.

As someone who has lived in New York City for many years, I deeply love this city and everything that makes it unique. But traditions should never continue simply because they are traditions. As our understanding of animal welfare evolves, so too should our policies.

The recent heartbreaking death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan, along with the repeated injuries and deaths involving carriage horses over the years, has made it painfully clear that horses and modern Manhattan streets are not a safe combination.

These are intelligent, sensitive prey animals being asked to work amidst constant traffic, construction, sirens, crowds, extreme temperatures, and unpredictable urban conditions. Even with caring drivers and existing regulations, no amount of oversight can change the reality of the environment they are forced to navigate.

This is not a criticism of the hardworking men and women who have built their livelihoods in this industry. They deserve respect, support, and meaningful assistance in transitioning to new careers. I am encouraged that the proposed legislation includes workforce transition provisions because protecting workers and protecting animals should go hand in hand.

New York has always evolved. We have modernized countless industries in the interest of public safety, ethics, and progress. Ending the use of horse-drawn carriages is another step in that evolution.

I hope the Council chooses compassion, safety, and forward-thinking leadership by passing Intro 943.

Thank you for your time and for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Victoria Asher

Dear Chair Lynn Schulman and Members of the Committee on Health,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding Romanch's Law. I am writing to you today to strongly urge this committee to vote "YES" on Intro 943 and permanently phase out New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry.

For years, we have watched both horses and humans pay the ultimate price for the sake of an outdated tourist tradition. The tragic events of this past June—the sudden collapse and death of 16-year-old carriage horse Deniz, and the devastating, entirely preventable death of 18-year-old Romanch Mahajan—have shattered any illusion that this industry can be safely regulated.

No amount of new rules or safety reforms can predict or prevent the next horse from spooking, bolting, or collapsing in the middle of our crowded, concrete metropolis. It is clear that a bustling, traffic-heavy city like New York is no place for horses.

Romanch's Law provides the only humane and equitable solution. It protects public safety, mandates ethical retirement placements for all carriage horses, and provides a necessary workforce transition program so carriage workers are supported during this phase-out.

Furthermore, I hate bringing my young daughter to the park to see such cruelty taking place, it teaches poor values and shows that it is okay to use and abuse others to get what you want. This is not the set of values I want to associate with New York.

New Yorkers are compassionate, and we can no longer allow innocent lives—human or animal—to be lost in the name of tradition. We must choose safety and humanity.

I respectfully urge the Committee on Health to advance Romanch's Law to the full City Council so we can finally end this deadly industry.

Sincerely,

Victoria Kosnik

It breaks my heart that doctor's orders keep me from being with you in person. In the 1970s, as a young person in Kansas City who viewed New York as the magical land of Oz, I learned about the movement to ban the carriage trade and make New York all it was meant to be: inspirational, aspirational, the flagship American city. I watched through the 80s and the 90s, confounded by how little public opinion meant on this issue. I moved here in 2000 and joined the cause myself. I supported candidates who said they'd see to it that this cruelty ended. They didn't. At least 30 innocent horses have died as a direct result of this barbaric industry, and now it's caused the needless death of a precious young man. I lost a stepson at 16 and believe me: you don't want to know what that feels like. This could have been prevented when I was 20. I'm 76 now and still waiting. What you do today will not bring back the lost lives, but you have in your hands the ability to prevent even more carnage.

From: [vikas mahajan](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pass Romanch"s law
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 2:58:59 PM

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[Yahoo Mail: Search, organise, conquer](#)

Ban horse carriages so that no other life suffer as our romanch gone

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

I arrived in New York City 16 years ago. One of the very first places I visited was Central Park. It was even more beautiful than I had imagined—more breathtaking than in the movies.

But there was one sight that stayed with me for a very different reason.

I saw the horse-drawn carriages. I saw these magnificent animals standing for hours with carriages attached to them, dressed up to entertain tourists. To me, it felt like a heartbreaking contradiction. Such graceful, intelligent, and powerful animals deserve our admiration, not a life of pulling carriages through busy city streets.

I felt it physically—a heaviness in my chest and a tightness in my breath—because every part of me wanted to unclip their harnesses and set them free. Right then. Right there.

But I couldn't. I knew that acting on compassion in that moment would have consequences, so all I could do was walk away. Leaving them behind was heartbreaking, and that feeling has stayed with me ever since.

For years, I avoided that part of Central Park because it hurt too much to see them. Then I realized I wasn't alone. Thousands of New Yorkers and visitors feel the same way. Together, we have an opportunity to end a tradition that no longer reflects the values of a compassionate, modern city.

Even my grandfather, who had a horse to help him work his fields and grow food for his family, believed the right thing to do is to end horse-drawn carriages. When I told him how the carriage horses spend their days, he simply asked, "**Why? For what reason? Do they help you harvest potatoes?**" I said "**No! Its only to entertain tourists!**" He said that asking a horse to stand for hours with a carriage attached and a harness on its body just to give rides to tourists is cruel and ridiculous.

Horses have given so much to humanity. They carried soldiers through wars, helped build our farms and communities, transported people before modern vehicles existed, and stood beside us for centuries as loyal companions and partners. They helped shape the world we live in today.

Now it is our turn to stand for them.

These horses are living, feeling beings. They deserve to feel the sun on their backs without a carriage behind them, to graze in open fields, to run freely, and to live as horses were meant to live—not surrounded by traffic, noise, pavement, and endless work.

The people of New York—and people around the world—are watching. You have the opportunity to show that New York City leads not only through innovation, but through compassion. By passing legislation to end the horse-drawn carriage industry, you can leave a legacy that future generations will look back on with pride.

This change is not only about protecting horses—it is also about protecting people. We have safer, humane alternatives for sightseeing today. There is no need to continue asking animals and the public to bear these risks for an attraction that belongs to another era.

The city is watching, and we need your bold leadership to seize this moment and pass this life-saving law. We trust that you will stand with us and champion this vital cause.

I love horses. I always will. I hope that soon we can all walk through Central Park and feel only joy, knowing these beautiful animals are finally in a better place. I hope that one day, when people think of New York, they will remember the city that chose kindness over tradition and compassion over profit.

We look forward to celebrating a historic victory for animal welfare with you.

Thank you for your time, your compassion, and your leadership.

Free the Horses.

Vilma Duplantier

Council Members,

I stand here on behalf of Romanch Mahajan's extended family. I strongly support passage of Intro 943, "Romanch's Law" to shut down horse-drawn carriages, and urge the Health Committee and entire Council to pass it in law immediately. We sent a vibrant, heroic 18-year-old boy on a dream vacation to your city. We received his body back in a coffin.

Romanch did not die of natural causes. He died because an outdated, unregulated tradition failed him. When that horse panicked and bolted without a driver, Romanch fell from the moving carriage while trying to protect his mother. His final act on this earth was one of pure bravery. This tragedy was entirely preventable. No tourist should face death for taking a carriage ride in Central Park. No family should ever have to endure the agonizing, permanent grief that we carry every single day.

Tradition can never justify the loss of human life. We urge you to pass Romanch's Law immediately. Do not wait for another family to be shattered. Let his legacy be the moment New York City chose public safety over negligence.

Thank you!

Opposition to Intro 943

First let me introduce myself. My name is Walker Blankinship. I have been involved with New York City horses for over 35 years now. I have owned dozens of horses and ponies. I am a breeder. I have retrained, and retired dozens of horses from the carriage stables. I currently own 23 horses and ponies and provide furlough and retirement to carriage horses from NYC in Manalapan NJ.

Part of my experience has been learning how urban horse husbandry works. I have consulted with many equine vets and professionals including top researchers in equine behavior and health from both Cornell University in NY and The University of Pennsylvania. But I can sum up this topic from the horse perspective with a short story.

I brought my young horse True, the grandson of my first horse to visit Clinton Park Stables in on 52nd Street. He had recently moved to NYC from where he was born and raised in south NJ. He had never seen carriage horses or Manhattan. He only was curious and observed everything happening as the carriage horses got ready for work and left one by one for Central Park. He saw those horses and humans going off and his only desire was for us to join them. He saw nothing which bothered him, his only desire was to meet new friends and share their world.

We all need a little horse sense.

To the human perspective, I have introduced thousands of children and adults to horses. In busy weeks that might have been a thousand every week. Nowhere is the presence of horses more needed than NYC. Central Park is the oasis where NYers can get back to nature. People interacting with horses are people interacting with nature. This bond we share is not only our heritage, but it also reminds us that we still need each other. Horses have proudly helped us build this city and the park. Now horses teach us to slow down and enjoy nature and simple things. In respect of ancient bond we share with horses, they deserve to be cherished and preserved where they belong with their humans.

Romanch Mahajan's death was a heartbreaking tragedy. His parents righteous anger is understandable. But to think that it is justice to destroy the lives of both carriage workers and their horses is not governance. We need to work to improve the lives of both horses and their humans by working to make NYC horse carriages safer.

Sincerely, Walker Blankinship

To: The New York City Council Health Committee

From: Wendy G. Glickstein

Re: Public Hearing to Ban Horse Carriages
Wednesday, July 15, 2026
City Hall, Manhattan

NYCLASS was created right before Bill DeBlasio ran for his first term as mayor in 2013. He pledged that, if elected, he would abolish the carriage horse trade in New York City. He never did keep his promise. As an alternative, a prototype vehicle was created to offer employment to drivers who would be affected if the ban were to go into effect. The proposal was ultimately rejected by the drivers.

To be sure, 1,500 pound horses should not be lugging tourist-filled carriages on New York City's streets or around Central Park. As sentient beings they, like humans, suffer from the adverse effects of inhaling car exhaust fumes. They are also easily spooked by sudden jolts and loud noises like honking horns, and are often faced with adverse weather conditions, not to mention speeding bicycles and motorcycles. Last month in the park, New Yorkers were justifiably horrified when an 18 year-old tourist was killed by an overturned horse carriage in which he was riding while the driver stepped away to take a souvenir photo for his passengers. Also, over the past few years, a shocking number of equine deaths occurred while on the job.

Common sense dictates that, since we live in the 21st Century, the horse & buggy should no longer be used for entertainment or recreation in a bustling metropolis such as ours. It was a different story before the invention of the automobile as a viable means of transport, but our streets and roads are now overly congested, as it is.

Many cities globally and across the U. S. have banned horse-drawn carriages due to animal welfare and traffic concerns. Notable examples include Philadelphia, Chicago, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, and Key West. San Antonio also voted to phase out its carriage industry.

Global cities including Paris, London, Toronto, Montreal, Beijing, Melbourne, and Brussels have either implemented full bans or restricted horse-drawn carriages from their historic centers.

The time has come for New York to follow their lead. We must act now, before it's too late.

Respectfully,

Wendy G. Glickstein

July 14, 2026

Your Honor,

I am in support of Intro 943 to Ban Horse Carriages. I am a horse owner and they are smart and loyal animals. They should not be subjected to the horrific conditions these carriage horses are forced to endure; traffic, pollution, hard sweltering/freezing roadways. Long relentless hours just to take visitors for a sight-seeing tour at the horse's expense. The owners only see them as revenue and not a living, breathing creature that deserves humane treatment. Please support this bill and help end this unnecessary and cruel practice before more horses are essentially killed.

Sincerely,

Wendy Teira

[REDACTED]

Wharton, NJ 07885

[REDACTED]

Quickly pass Intro 943, Romanch's Law. I have been contacting the city for over 20 years about the problems with NYC's carriage horse operations. The horses look dead in the eyes after they have succumbed to their fates of not living free lives, forced to carry people around the city.

I have seen reports by the ASPCA that carriage horse operators still go out in the heat after told not to on hot days. They even hide from law enforcement on hot days so they don't have to comply.

It's common sense that traffic and horses don't mix. There is death after death of carriage horses in vehicle collisions. There is no reason horses should be trotting around in a major city. The smog isn't healthy for the horses. There was even a tragic death of a teenager due to your carriage horse operations.

Philadelphia just banned carriage horse operations. There is no reason NYC cannot do the same.

The public is overwhelmingly in support of banning carriage horse operations. I for one won't spend my tourism dollars in NYC until carriage horse operations have ceased.

For the sake of horses, drivers, and pedestrians, pass Intro 943 today.

Growing up, my family had horses. They were in a country setting, paradise, according to some of you. I say we had them; bill collectors decided their future, pretty settings mean nothing.

Sanctuaries like individuals often live paycheck (donation) to paycheck (donation) without long-term security. This county has about 1,200 equine rescues and sanctuaries, most of which operate by rehoming healthy animals. At any given time, up to 10,000 horses are looking for homes. Space for new intakes is often limited and needed for neglected or abused animals that require care. A horse may then change hands several more times. This leads to uncertain futures.

Additionally, about 20,000 horses a year are purchased en masse at auctions as kill animals for consumption purposes. Every space needlessly taken from a rescue can save one of these animals. A horse can easily cost \$8000 or more a year for basic care without board - that's over 1,6000,000 for the NYC Carriage horses! It seems ludicrous to think that we should even consider trying to place the wanted and well cared-for NYC carriage horses in such places and deny other animals a possible opportunity of a better future.

This is one of the reasons I strongly oppose Intro #0943

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,
William Young

From: [yelena tolstop](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Intro 943/Romanch's Law
Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 8:21:26 AM

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Hello,

I urge the New York City Council to swiftly pass Intro 943, also known as Romanch's Law, to end the horse carriage industry, send the horses to loving sanctuaries, and help drivers transition to new employment. There are rezoning opportunities with the stables, and fewer than 500 people's employment is not worth animal suffering and abuse. We can have exceptional automated carriages, and these people can operate them; they wouldn't be out of a job. With the automation, it also gives an opportunity for more jobs in the wrong run due to access provided for new entrepreneurs. Please!

--

yelena tolstoppyatova

[REDACTED]

staten island, ny 10306

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Yvette and I am a resident of District 1. I am writing to express my support for Romanch's Law and to urge the Council to pass it.

This legislation matters because the status quo has produced repeated, preventable harm, and the pattern speaks for itself. This Council now has the votes needed to act. I respectfully ask the Committee to advance this legislation without further delay.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Yvette

From: [Zukka 88](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in support of Romanch's law
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 4:58:21 PM

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Good evening, Chairperson Schulman and members of the Committee.

My name is Zach Borodkin, and I am the Deputy Policy Director of Manhattan Young Democrats. I am here today on behalf of Manhattan Young Democrats in support of Intro 943, Romanch's Law, formerly Ryder's Law.

Manhattan Young Democrats proudly supports this legislation because it recognizes a simple reality: horse-drawn carriages no longer belong on the streets of modern New York City.

The tragic death of Romanch Mahajan was a devastating reminder of the dangers this industry poses. Horses are prey animals forced to navigate one of the busiest and most chaotic urban environments in the world. No regulation can eliminate the response when frightened animals share crowded streets with cars, cyclists, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles. They are acting on instinct, just as we get startled when we hear a loud noise.

Romanch's Law is about preventing another tragedy while ensuring a fair transition for carriage drivers into safer, stable employment. It protects public safety, advances animal welfare, and reflects the values of a modern New York City.

On behalf of Manhattan Young Democrats, I respectfully urge the Council to pass Romanch's Law. If New York can ban the use of animals in circuses, which they did in 2017 with no negative consequences, we can do the same with use of horses.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Zach Borodkin

Testimony in Support of Intro 943 (Romanch's Law)

I'm writing to you in full support of Intro 943 as a resident of the Upper West Side, where I live just one block from Central Park. I walk my dog through the park at least once a day, and am often witness to the myriad of concerns shared by so many New Yorkers regarding the horse-drawn carriage industry.

I often see carriage drivers texting during rides, or turning around entirely to talk to their passengers for extended periods, never checking to see if the road ahead is free of potential hazards to their horses or passengers. This pattern has continued even after the deaths of both Deniz and Romanch.

Most notably, I recently witnessed a driver allow a young boy to stand on the carriage step while it was in motion—a clear disregard for his passenger's safety. This was on June 14th, 2026; just three days before Romanch's death.

I sent a video of this incident to the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (see screenshot to the right), which determined that this issue wasn't "within its jurisdiction" and that they didn't "know of any agency" that would be able to act on my report.



In addition to these public safety concerns, I share the concerns of fellow Intro 943 supporters about the well-being of the horses used by the carriage industry, and want to speak to a common narrative put forth by carriage industry spokespeople at Wednesday's hearing.

I urge you to deeply examine the carriage industry's claims that passing Intro 943 would be a "death sentence" for these horses, when so many sanctuaries have already committed to providing them with a safe place to retire. Their claims should sound alarm bells to everyone listening: are they so confident that this is what will happen to their horses because this is the standard route of "disposition" they *already* take for some of the carriage horses that "retire"? They claim that horses often become too expensive to maintain when the animals can no longer contribute to their own care by working, but is that not exactly what happens when older horses are "retired" as well?

Is it possible that they are more favorable towards this outcome for their horses than sending them to some reputable sanctuaries, as hinted at in a recent social media comment written by a current NYC carriage driver?



Finally, I want to make clear that I don't doubt that many of the drivers and owners of these horses deeply care for and bond with them. As evidenced above, however, the nature of this relationship is inherently transactional. No matter how much they claim to consider their horses family members or business partners, it is incredibly important to remember that we don't tend to sell or slaughter our loved ones the moment their existence in our lives fails to bring us profit.

Thank you very much for reading my testimony. To Speaker Menin, as well as the City Council members who have already voiced their support for Intro 943: thank you all for taking a stand for horses, workers, and public safety. Please vote yes on Romanch's Law.

Zoe Griffiths