

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION  
AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

----- X

MARCH 23, 2022  
Start: 2:42 P.M.  
Recess: 6:21 P.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 2)

B E F O R E: ADRIENNE E. ADAMS, CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS: DIANA I. AYALA  
SHAUN ABREU  
JOANN ARIOLA  
ALEXA AVILES  
CHARLES BARRON  
JOSEPH C. BORELLI  
ERIK D. BOTTCHEER  
JUSTIN L. BRANNAN  
GALE A. BREWER  
SELVENA N. BROOKS-POWERS  
TIFFANY CABAN  
DAVID M. CARR  
CARMEN DE LA ROSA  
ERIC DINOWITZ  
AMANDA FARIAS  
OSWALD FELIZ  
JAMES F. GENNARO  
JENNIFER GUTIERREZ  
SHAHANA K. HANNIF

KAMILLAH HANKS

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

ROBERT F. HOLDEN  
CRYSTAL HUDSON  
KRISTIN RICHARDSON JORDAN  
RITA C. JOSEPH  
ARI KAGAN  
SHEKAR KRISHMAN  
LINDA LEE  
FARAH N. LOUIS  
CHRISTOPHER MARTE  
DARLENE MEALY  
JULIE MENIN  
FRANCISCO P. MOYA  
MERCEDES NARCISSE  
SANDY NURSE  
CHI A. OSSE  
VICKIE PALADINO  
KEITH POWERS  
LINCOLN RESTLER  
KEVIN C. RILEY  
CARLINA RIVERA  
RAFAEL SALAMANCA JR.  
PIERINA ANA SANCHEZ  
LYNN C. SCHULMAN  
ALTHEA V. STEVENS  
SANDRA UNG  
MARJORIE VELAZQUEZ  
INNA VERNKOV  
NANTASHA M. WILLIAMS  
JULIE WON  
KALMAN YEGER

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

EDWARD GRAYSON, Commissioner New York City  
Department of Sanitation

GREGORY ANDERSON, Deputy Commissioner New  
York City Department of Sanitation

BRIDGET ANDERSON, Deputy Commissioner New  
York City Department of Sanitation

STEPHEN HARBIN, Chief of Cleaning Operations  
New York City Department of Sanitation

RICKY CYRUS, Assistant Chief of Enforcement  
New York City Department of Sanitation

ERIC GOLDSTEIN, New York City Environment  
Director at Natural Resource Defense Counsel

LYNDA NGUYEN, Senior Research Analyst at  
ALIGN

JUSTIN B WOOD, Advocate

ADRIA BENEPE, President of Brooklyn  
Botanical Garden

DYLAN HALPER, student

JASMINE WYNN, Student Manhattan Borough  
Organizer with TRIAGE

SHIV SOIN, Student, NYU Executive Director  
with TRIAGE

VICTORIA LU, student of Forrest Hills,  
Queensboro Organizer with TRIAGE

HELEN BRADY, Student Borough Organizer of  
Staten Island in Brooklyn for TRIAGE

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

HILDALYN COLON HERNANDEZ, Director of Policy  
and Strategic Partners

CARLOS CASTELL CROW, Associate for New York  
City Programs at New York League of  
Conservation Voters (NYCVC)

MATTHEW M. CIVELLO, Chair of Manhattan  
Solid Waste Advisory Board (SWAB)

DERICK BOWERS, Director of social Enterprise  
in New York City for the Center for  
Employment Opportunity (CEO)

OLIVER WRIGHT, Chair of Brooklyn Solid Waste  
Advisory Board

HEATHER FEARS DEMETRIATIS, Chair for  
Community Board Six in Queens

DEBBY LEE COHEN, Executive Director and  
Founder for Cafeteria Culture

JUSTIN GREEN, Executive Director of Big  
ReUse

JESSICA VODOOR, President and CEO Snug  
Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Gardens

EMILY BACHMAN, Assistant Director of Zero  
Waste Programs at Grow NYC

DANIELLE FOSTER-RUSSELL, Assistant Director  
of Zero Waste Schools at Grow NYC

AFIA HERNANDEZ, advocate

MARCY NICKS, resident in District of  
Manhattan

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

JASMINE MCPHEARSON, member of Queens Solid  
Waste Advisory Board

CATIE SAVAGE, founder Hell's Kitchen Litter  
Legion

SHEILA O'CONNOR, volunteer Compost Program

ELLA RYAN, resident and a mom

LESLIE WOODRUFF, advocate

WILHIMENA PARAGEE, Sunrise Kids NYC

CLAIRE NIFLIN, Save our Compost Advocacy  
Group

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 6

2 SGT. PEREZ: Sergeants please turn on all  
3 recorders. Good afternoon. Please start the stream.  
4 Recording in progress.

5 SGT. BIONDO: Recording to PC underway.

6 SGT. PEREZ: Recording to the cloud is  
7 running. Waiting to confirm the stream. Stream has  
8 been confirmed. Good afternoon, welcome to New York  
9 City Council's remote committee hearing on Sanitation  
10 and Solid Waste Management. Everyone please turn on  
11 your video at this time. Silence all electronic  
12 devices. All written testimony can be submitted to  
13 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov) again that is  
14 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). Thank you. Chair Nurse  
15 we are ready to begin.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: All right.  
17 Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. Thank you for  
18 joining our Fiscal Year 2023 Preliminary Budget  
19 hearing for the Department of Sanitation. I'd like  
20 to acknowledge Committee members and Council Members  
21 Erik Bottcher, member Chi Osse, member Gennaro,  
22 Velasquez, Farias, and Menin. Also on with us today  
23 is Council Member Brewer and Caban. Thank you so  
24 much for being here. Before my opening statement I'm  
25 going to turn it over to our acting Counsel for the

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 7

2 Committee Jessica Steinberg Albin to go over some  
3 items.

4 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

5 COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. I am Jessica Steinberg  
6 Albin acting counsel to the Sanitation and Solid  
7 Waste Management Committee of the New York City  
8 Council. Before we begin, I want to remind everyone  
9 that you will be on mute until you are called on to  
10 testify when you will be unmuted by the host. I will  
11 be calling on panelists to testify. Please listen  
12 for your name to be called. The first panelist today  
13 will be from the Department of Sanitation. We will  
14 then hear from members of the public. During the  
15 hearing if Council Members would like to ask a  
16 question of the administration or a specific panelist  
17 please use the Zoom Raise Hand Function and I will  
18 call on you in order. We will be limiting Council  
19 Member questions to five minutes which includes the  
20 time it takes to answer your questions. Please note  
21 that for ease of this virtual hearing we will not, or  
22 excuse me. Thank you. I'll now turn it over to  
23 Chair Nurse to give an opening statement. Chair  
24 Nurse.

25

CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Thank you Jessica. So again good afternoon everyone and thank you again Committee Members for being here, advocates, Department of Sanitation Commissioner Edward Grayson, Deputy Commissioner for additional leadership for joining us today. Thank you so much for joining our preliminary budgeting hearing. Earlier this month Waste Advocates came together on the steps of Brooklyn Borough Hall to get sanitation done. Environmental Justice Organizations and sanitation workers understand that our sanitation system is in crisis. At our Clean Streets earlier this month many advocates testified on the conditions and challenges communities are grappling with on the ground and over 1300 people have signed a petition demanding the restoration and expansion of the sanitation budget to ensure clean streets for all New Yorkers. New York City is facing escalating climate impacts, increasing sanitation complaints and a faltering commitment to our Zero Waste goals and yet here we are to discuss another round of budget cuts to the Department of Sanitation on top of last years' devastating cuts. Today, we will hear from the Department on its Fiscal '23 Preliminary Budget of



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 9

2 \$1.78 billion which is \$60.2 million less than last  
3 year's adopted budget. Sanitation affects public  
4 safety, public health and environmental outcomes in  
5 every single neighborhood across the City. I along  
6 with many New Yorkers am deeply disappointed in the  
7 level of sanitation service our City has received  
8 over the past two years driving by deep cut  
9 implemented by the prior Administration. Council  
10 Members across the City have had to put millions from  
11 their discretionary funds that should be going into  
12 critical social services and nonprofits and put that  
13 money back to the Department to ensure cleanliness is  
14 maintained in their communities and this is  
15 unacceptable. Council Members should not be directly  
16 funding a city agency through their discretionary  
17 pots. The Fiscal '23 Budget includes cuts to litter  
18 basket service, curbside organics collection, organic  
19 drop off sites, school organics, rat mitigation, e-  
20 waste collection and more. Furthermore, the  
21 Departments head count continues to decrease year  
22 over year with over 493 uniform and civilian cuts  
23 proposed for Fiscal '23 while increasing overtime to  
24 outrageous levels. The number one complaint from  
25 almost every Council Member is trash and rodents.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 10

2 It's the first thing they say when they see me. A  
3 city budget that cuts services on the number one  
4 complaint therefore does not reflect the Council  
5 priorities nor those of New Yorkers. A continued  
6 reduction of essential sanitation services in the  
7 Mayor's Preliminary Budget is unacceptable given our  
8 increasingly dirty streets, growing rat problem and  
9 the impact it's having on the quality of life for all  
10 New Yorkers. It does nothing to increase street and  
11 sidewalk cleanliness and does not keep us on a  
12 trajectory of reaching zero waste to landfills by  
13 2030. We are frankly out of time and we must  
14 immediately accelerate the work of achieving the  
15 City's environmental justice, waste equity and zero  
16 waste goals. Commissioner Grayson, I look forward to  
17 today's discussion I have many questions. I know  
18 we've sent some ahead of time. I want to thank you  
19 for your leadership of the Department despite cuts to  
20 the resources that it needs to do the job well. We  
21 see you out on the frontlines with your workers and  
22 in the community supporting cleanups and educating  
23 the public on how to keep our City clean. Really  
24 diving in and getting your hands dirty is exactly the  
25 type of leadership we need when we are facing these

2 cuts, so thank you. I'm looking forward to your  
3 assessment of the resources that the department needs  
4 to keep our streets clean while implementing those  
5 innovative programs that we all know we need to  
6 achieve for a Zero Waste Management System across the  
7 five boroughs. I want to thank my wonderful,  
8 wonderful team, Einelle Hernandez, Mohamed Khan,  
9 Carlos Munoz for their hard work preparing for this  
10 hearing and preparing me for this hearing. I want to  
11 thank Jessica Steinberg Albin, uh, John Feltzer and  
12 Ricky Shalla for supporting me as Chair and thank you  
13 John especially for walking us through the detailed  
14 budget more than once until we got it. Thank you to  
15 all New Yorkers who are here and to long-standing  
16 waste advocates who are here waiting patiently to  
17 give testimony. My first round of questions will be  
18 on organics and then I will hand it to Council  
19 Members who I know are trying to hop in and out of  
20 many hearings today before going on to the second  
21 round where I'll be asking about staffing. But first  
22 I'm going to turn it over to our Committee Counsel to  
23 give some procedural items, swear in the witnesses  
24 and then we will hear from the Department, so thank  
25 you.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 12

2 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

3 COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. And I would also like to  
4 notice that we've been joined by Council Member  
5 Salamanca. I will now call on the following  
6 Department of Sanitation panelists to testify,  
7 Commissioner Edward Grayson, Deputy Commissioner  
8 Gregory Anderson, Deputy Commissioner Bridget  
9 Anderson, Chief of Cleaning Operations Stephen Harbin  
10 and Assistant Chief of Enforcement Ricky Cyrus.

11 Before we begin I will administer the affirmation. I  
12 will call on each of you individually to confirm your  
13 response for the record. Please raise your right  
14 hands. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole  
15 truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony  
16 before this committee and to respond honestly to  
17 Council Member questions, Commissioner Grayson?

18 EDWARD GRAYSON: I do.

19 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

20 COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner Bridget Anderson?

21 BRIDGET ANDERSON: I do.

22 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

23 COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner Gregory Anderson?

24 GREGORY ANDERSON: I do.

25

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 13

2 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

3 COUNSEL: Chief of Cleaning Operations, Stephen  
4 Harbin?

5 STEPHEN HARBIN: I do.

6 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

7 COUNSEL: Assistant Chief of Enforcement Ricky Cyrus?

8 RICKY CYRUS: I do.

9 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

10 COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin when ready.

11 EDWARD GRAYSON: Good afternoon Chair

12 Nurse and members of the City Council Committee on

13 Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I'm Edward

14 Grayson, Commissioner of the New York City Department

15 of Sanitation. Thank you for the opportunity to

16 discuss the department's portion of the Mayor's

17 Fiscal Year 2023 Preliminary Budget and our current

18 programs and operations. With me this afternoon are

19 Deputy Commissioner Gregory Anderson, Deputy

20 Commissioner Bridget Anderson, Chief of Cleaning

21 Operations Stephen Harbin and Assistant Chief of

22 Enforcement Ricky Cyrus. I will present brief

23 testimony after which I am happy to answer your

24 questions. Before I begin I want to thank once again

25 Speaker Adams, Chair Nurse and members of this

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 14

2 committee for passing resolution 58A today. This  
3 important measures supports the Governor's CPR  
4 Proposal to create transformational change in waste  
5 reduction and recycling by requiring upstream  
6 manufacturers and retails to take some financial  
7 responsibility for end of life of the products and  
8 the produce that they sale. The program could bring  
9 as much as \$100 million or more to New York City each  
10 and every year which would free of funds for  
11 investment and recycling outreach and education, new  
12 waste diversion programs and other vital sanitation  
13 services. As the State Budget process winds to a  
14 close, I urge you to continue speaking to your  
15 colleagues in the State Legislature regarding the  
16 importance of this proposal. Now let me turn to the  
17 FY23 preliminary budget. The Fiscal Year 2023  
18 Preliminary Expense Budget reflects cost savings  
19 associated with the program to eliminate the gap and  
20 provides funding for the department to continue to  
21 deliver core essential services necessary to keep New  
22 York City healthy, safe and clean. The preliminary  
23 budget includes \$1.78 billion in expense funds for  
24 the Department in FY2023. Our FY23 budgeted head  
25 count is 9,359 a decrcoease of 144 positions from the

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 15

2 FY22 preliminary budget. In FY23 the department's  
3 budgeted head count includes 7,391 full time uniform  
4 and 1,968 full time civilian positions. The  
5 Preliminary Budget includes additional funding in  
6 FY22 to close deficits in uniform overtime, \$50  
7 million, motor fuel costs \$5.6 million, and heating  
8 fuel costs \$.9 million as well as additional funding  
9 related to collecting upon the agreements for the  
10 department's personnel. In terms of program areas,  
11 the Budget is broken down as follows: \$808.3 million  
12 for refuse and recycling collection and street  
13 cleaning, \$471.4 million for waste export, \$97.3  
14 million for motor equipment maintenance, \$96.7  
15 million for snow removal, \$51.2 million for recycling  
16 and sustainability issues not including the cost of  
17 collection, \$31.7 million for building maintenance,  
18 \$25.6 million for solid waste transfer station  
19 operations, \$21.9 million for enforcement, \$18.9  
20 million for other waste disposal costs, \$16.8 million  
21 for landfill closure, and \$136.5 million for general  
22 administration and support functions including  
23 facility leases, fuel, utilities, telecommunications,  
24 public information, engineering, legal affairs. The  
25 department's budget is largely funded by city tax

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 16

2 levy funds, \$1.76 billion in FY23 but it also  
3 includes \$5.7 million in capital IFA funds, \$9.7  
4 million in intercity payments and \$7.6 million in  
5 federal funds. On the program to eliminate gap, the  
6 preliminary budget includes savings of \$38 million  
7 for FY22 and \$47.8 million in FY23 as part of the  
8 administration's program to eliminate the gap. These  
9 savings include re-forecasts of certain costs,  
10 adjustments based on increased revenue and the  
11 elimination of certain roles through attrition. The  
12 PEG initiatives do not include any direct cuts to  
13 services. In particular, the PEG includes the  
14 following savings: \$15.5 million in annual recurring  
15 savings related to the elimination of 188 currently  
16 vacant civilian positions, reflecting and 8.4%  
17 reduction in overall civilian headcount at the  
18 agency, \$9.4 million in FY22 and \$18.2 million in  
19 FY23 due to the suspension and expansion of the  
20 current Opt-In Curbside Organics Program, \$5.6  
21 million in FY22 and \$5 in FY23 in lower projected  
22 costs for fresh kills landfill closure and its post  
23 closure maintenance, \$4.6 million in FY22 and \$5  
24 million FY23 due to the reduction of 71 garage  
25 utility staff posts per day, which is the equivalent



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 17

2 to a reduction in uniformed headcount of 107 lines,  
3 \$1.6 million in FY22 and \$2.7 million in FY23 due to  
4 the reduction in uniform staff assigned to  
5 administrative and support roles and reduction in  
6 uniform headcount of 37 lines, \$1.3 million in FY23  
7 related to adjusting the frequency of defensive  
8 drivers training courses and \$0.7 million in FY22 in  
9 prior year state revenue and \$0.7 million FY22 of  
10 reusable bag fee revenue. The recurring savings  
11 related to the PEG initiatives in the preliminary  
12 budget increased to \$51.7 million in FY26. On our  
13 Preliminary Capital Budget for fiscal years '22  
14 through FY26 the department's Capital Commitment Plan  
15 for FY22 through 26 is \$2.01 billion. This includes  
16 \$1.01 billion for collection trucks and other  
17 equipment, \$902 million for garages and other  
18 facilities, \$75 million for solid waste management,  
19 and \$36 million for information technology and  
20 telecommunications. In FY23, the Department's  
21 Capital Budget totals \$362 million including \$171  
22 million for equipment, \$151 million for facilities,  
23 \$27 million for solid waste management  
24 infrastructure, and \$12 million for the information  
25 technology projects. The Department also advanced

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 18

2 some equipment funding into the FY22 capital budget  
3 to take advantage of the lower pricing for collection  
4 trucks in the current contract. That contract  
5 expires this fiscal year. The 2022-2023 snow season,  
6 snow fighting is a core component of the department's  
7 mission and this winter has had its fair share of  
8 snowstorms. To date this winter the department has  
9 responded to 17 winter weather conditions and five  
10 storms with a total accumulation of 17.5 inches as  
11 measured by the National Weather Service in Central  
12 Park. Every snowstorm in season brings its unique  
13 challenges. This year as the Omicron wave swept  
14 through New York City and DSNY the men and women of  
15 the department as always rose to the occasion during  
16 each of these snow events to ensure our streets  
17 remain safe and passable. I thank them for their  
18 service. This season was also had nearly 1000 new  
19 hires, our largest cohort in over a decade and their  
20 training and preparation has served them well. This  
21 year we expanded the number of mini plows on hand to  
22 service protected bike lanes and other narrow areas,  
23 leasing a total of 30 units citywide. For the first  
24 time we have not only pre-treated bike lanes with  
25 anti-icing brine but also deployed these mini plows

during the snowstorm to provide real time snow fighting for our expanded network of protected bike lanes. We hope to continue and expand the support of this approach in the future. To date this winter season the department has used 340,000 tons of road salt, 449,000 gallons of calcium chloride, and 230,000 gallons of liquid brine to treat New York City's roadways. While we hope that we have seen the last of the snow this winter and begun the first to see the first buds of spring we remain prepared for whatever Mother Nature has in store for us. The Preliminary FY23 snow budget is \$96.7 million and is calculated based on a rolling five year average of previous year actual spending per the New York City Charter. On commercial waste zones. Commercial Waste Zones will create a safe and efficient collection system for commercial waste that provides high quality service to New York City businesses while advancing the city's zero waste and sustainability goals. The new system is expected to reduce commercial waste traffic by more than 50% eliminating millions of miles of truck travel, cutting air pollution and reducing the time it takes workers to complete their routes. It is also

2 expected to nearly double the commercial diversion  
3 rate for recyclables and organic waste. The  
4 department released part 2 of the request for  
5 proposal for commercial waste zones in November of  
6 2021 and responses are now due on July 15th, 2022.  
7 The second and final part of the RFP requests  
8 detailed plans and pricing proposals from the 50  
9 responsive companies that responded to part 1 of the  
10 RFP last year. We have extended response deadline by  
11 90 days to ensure that carters have enough time to  
12 submit high quality proposals that are up to the  
13 standards that fully meet DSNYs goals for the  
14 program. DSNY is currently stepping up a new bureau  
15 of commercial waste to continue the implementation of  
16 this program including outreach staff, technical  
17 experts and contract administrators. We expect to  
18 finalize the contracts by the end of the year and  
19 begin customer transitions in 2023. The zones will  
20 be transitioned in phases over a period of up to two  
21 years. In closing, I wish to thank Chair Nurse and  
22 all the members of this Committee for your dedication  
23 and support as we continue to deliver our central  
24 services. You are all an important part of our work  
25 to keep New York City healthy, safe and clean and my

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 21

2 colleagues and I are now happy to answer any  
3 questions. Thank you.

4 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE  
5 COUNSEL: Thank you Commissioner. I will now turn it  
6 over to questions from Chair Nurse. Panelists please  
7 stay unmuted if possible during this question and  
8 answer period. Thank you. Nurse Chair.

9 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Thank you and  
10 thank you Commissioner Grayson. So as I mentioned,  
11 my first round of questions will just be on organics  
12 and then I'm going to open it to the rest of the  
13 members and then I'll come back. My second round  
14 will be on staffing issues. So for the, sorry,  
15 toggling between tabs, so for the preliminary plan it  
16 cuts \$9.4 million in Fiscal 2022, \$18.2 million in  
17 Fiscal 2023 and \$21.1 million in the out year to  
18 suspend expansion of the curbside organics program.  
19 In our earlier March hearing on vital sanitation  
20 services, the leadership here testified and publicly  
21 stated that a mandatory organics curbside program  
22 would be critical to the city achieving high rates of  
23 participation in the organics program which  
24 ultimately will move the city to its goal. We also  
25 agreed that the rollout, the start and stop nature of

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 22

2 it has been negatively impactful on participation of  
3 the program. So my question starts out with for  
4 fiscal years '18, '19, '20, what was budgeted and  
5 what was actually spent for curbside organics?

6 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Chair I  
7 appreciate your question and we were going to, I have  
8 these answers for you on the three fiscal years. Her  
9 we go, so budgeted for FY18 is, let's see hold on  
10 budgeted for FY18 is \$12,779,000 actually spent in  
11 FY18 \$10,729,000.00. Funding in FY19 is, hold on, I  
12 pulled up the wrong sheet. I apologize Deputy  
13 Commissioner Greg Anderson Do you have the right  
14 sheet? I'm looking at the wrong sheet.

15 BRIDGET ANDERSON: I can, I can jump in  
16 and . . .

17 GREGORY ANDERSON: Hey, so, so, in FY19  
18 which was the last year that we operated the full  
19 curbside organics program for a full year it was  
20 \$31.8 million for both the outreach and education  
21 components under Deputy Commissioner Bridget  
22 Anderson's staff as well as all the collection and  
23 organics processing costs. So that's pretty  
24 representative of what the cost was for each of those  
25 three years is around 31.8 million lower in FY20

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 23

2 because we suspended services as of April 2020 and  
3 then FY19 was about the same.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: What was  
5 actually spent in FY19?

6 GREGORY ANDERSON: In FY19 it was just  
7 under the \$31.8 million, actually I think it was  
8 closer to \$30 million but we can provide you those  
9 exact numbers after the hearing.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay in 2020?

11 GREGORY ANDERSON: 2020 was \$31.8  
12 million.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: And how much  
14 does it cost for current uniform staff to service  
15 this program?

16 GREGORY ANDERSON: Yeah, sure so for the  
17 current fiscal year we are, I have to pull this up  
18 real quick. Sorry. We're budgeted for \$2.1 million  
19 in fiscal 22 and that's after the pause in the  
20 expansion.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: That's just  
22 staff, right?

23 GREGORY ANDERSON: That's just for the  
24 collection operation staff. Yes, that doesn't  
25 include the staff on Deputy Commissioner Bridget

2 Anderson's team or doing the outreach, the customer  
3 service and coordinating the program on that side.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. And how  
5 much collection staff is on overtime versus "straight  
6 time?"

7 GREGORY ANDERSON: The entirety of that  
8 \$2.1 million so.

9 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Can you explain  
10 or just give us a little bit of a primer on why  
11 uniform staff or the curbside program are on overtime  
12 and if those workers will remain in overtime in FY22?

13 GREGORY ANDERSON: Sure, so the program  
14 as it stands today is baseline funded in FY23 and  
15 after that we will be just straight time not overtime  
16 funding and so, and obviously that's the way that we  
17 prefer for these programs to be funded because it is  
18 a cheaper approach.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. So, but,  
20 do you know why they were put on overtime in the  
21 first place?

22 GREGORY ANDERSON: Uh, typically when  
23 programs are funded for one year increments they are  
24 funded on overtime so that we're not hiring staff  
25 that we then have to trade out in future years.



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 25

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. Thank  
3 you for that and looks, so it was about \$8 million  
4 budgeted for the curbside for FY23 decreasing to \$4.9  
5 million in the out years plus the halt on the  
6 program's expansion. What specific impacts do you  
7 anticipate in FY23 and subsequent fiscal years in  
8 terms of staff, number of pickups, tonnage collected?

9 GREGORY ANDERSON: Sure, so in FY23 we're  
10 funded as I mentioned, we're baseline funded 23  
11 through 26 and beyond to continue the collection  
12 service component of that program and that's on  
13 straight time using a dedicated headcount. In FY23  
14 specifically we do have some OTPS funding as well  
15 that was, that's allocated for the Bureau of  
16 Recycling and Sustainability. We're still working  
17 with OMB to determine exactly what the OTPS need is  
18 for that program in FY23 and the out years so that  
19 number could change in the executive budget but it  
20 includes things for things like public education,  
21 customer service, additional bin deliveries because  
22 we are still signing up customers in those seven  
23 districts that have the service so we can make the  
24 routes more efficient and so that's what that funding  
25 covers next year and going into the future.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Thank you. And  
3 in the last hearing I know I asked and I'm sorry if I  
4 missed it I wasn't able to find it, I know you all  
5 are receiving expressions of interest from areas  
6 outside of the currently served districts, but could  
7 you give us more specifically what percentage of  
8 household in a given district would need to express  
9 interest for that route to be activated or that  
10 district to be activated? Even if we didn't have a  
11 budget cut what would be a number that would justify  
12 okay this is a route we want to open. We want to  
13 service a truck out here.

14 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Chair. That's  
15 a great question and really to this there was really  
16 no one size fits all. It was a combination of a  
17 total number of addresses against percentage of  
18 addresses inside the district. We focused on  
19 maximizing the participation in the seven districts.  
20 You know right now we're currently operating the  
21 program but as far as some of the more granularity on  
22 sign ups and some of the things we noticed in the  
23 trends of signups I'm going to let Bridget Anderson  
24 give you a little bit more details on the sign up

2 process and what we observed in that completely  
3 interactive process of, you know, sign up.

4 BRIDGET ANDERSON: Thank you Commissioner  
5 and thank you Chair. Yes, so we have had expressions  
6 of interest in every single community district  
7 citywide so that includes the 44 districts eligible  
8 plus the 15 not yet eligible. In the 44 districts  
9 where we could have rolled trucks we've had  
10 approximately 6 percent of all addresses sign up and  
11 so we have seven districts that have signed up and as  
12 the Commissioner mentioned, we look at the true  
13 numbers so how many addresses are signing up. We're  
14 trying to create clusters, geographic clusters of  
15 addresses so we're also looking at the percentage of  
16 addresses in a district that have signed up so that  
17 we don't have the truck going very far to collect a  
18 maximum number of buildings. So the number changes  
19 depending on the district depending, so it's, do we  
20 have at least 10 percent of addresses signed up so  
21 that was a threshold we were looking at. It wasn't a  
22 hard and fast threshold but that was something we  
23 were looking at as well as the pure number of  
24 addresses to make sure, because every address gives  
25 us tonnage so we want as many addresses as possible

2 and the geographic clustering. We use that 10  
3 percent threshold as our first indicator of  
4 efficiency.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: And I'm sorry  
6 if I don't, I haven't discovered this myself but is  
7 it possible or is there a place where people could  
8 see like where more focused where they could see  
9 where those expressions and interests are in case  
10 they wanted to support local organizing.

11 BRIDGET ANDERSON: Absolutely, so  
12 nyc.gov/curbside composting is our website and we  
13 have by district the number of addresses signed up  
14 the number of residential units that represents in  
15 that area and what the percentage is of the  
16 districts, of the addresses in that district. So we  
17 have all of that both in graph form and also as a  
18 table at nyc.gov/curbside composting. We update it  
19 every month.

20 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Thank you. The  
21 other question on curbside I had was, sorry, my  
22 screen is toggling. Within the current districts you  
23 are serving are you all tracking or do you know how  
24 many individuals who sign up for the program are  
25 reportedly then subsequently not able to be serviced

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 29

2 due to the landlord not willing to let them do it or  
3 the building management? Are you all tracking that  
4 data specifically?

5 BRIDGET ANDERSON: Yes, we are partly  
6 because we're trying to anyone who expresses interest  
7 we're trying to get that building, that address on  
8 board. In those seven districts we have just shy of  
9 5,000 sign ups, expressions of interest where it is  
10 specifically due to the landlord or the building  
11 management company declining participation in the  
12 program. It's voluntary. They aren't required to  
13 participate but we do work with those tenants, those  
14 residents to try to identify a contact where we can  
15 proactively reach out and try and encourage  
16 participation. So there's about 5,000 in those seven  
17 districts.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Across the  
19 districts. Okay. Thank you. So I'm going to move  
20 on to drop off sites. For fiscal 23, \$3.5 million is  
21 budgeted for organic drop off sites in comparison to  
22 \$7 million in 22 in addition to the curbside program  
23 being halted. So for Fiscal 2022, how many organic  
24 drop off sites are currently operational?

25

2 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Chair. Yeah  
3 right now I believe our current number, we always get  
4 it, just got a new one recently so I think we're up  
5 to 210.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: And then how  
7 many, will any be cut and if so how many?

8 EDWARD GRAYSON: Well, right now we  
9 really are still having, we have to see where our  
10 main goal is to provide funding and pass through  
11 funding, you know, to support these organizations to  
12 the best of our ability. As we, we're going to have  
13 to do some, a real deep dive on between now and  
14 thinking about what happens next. You know, this is  
15 the preliminary budget and we're going to have to  
16 have real conversations with these partners once we  
17 understand exactly what the landscape is and just  
18 decide with them who can be, who can stay with us and  
19 who will possibly have to drop off. Once we know  
20 that, if in fact that's in fact how it goes, we will  
21 definitely be, you know, make that very clear to you,  
22 you know, you particularly that this committee but  
23 right now we don't know what we would lose as of yet.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: So you don't  
3 have a sense of how many you might lose just with the  
4 kind of anticipated . . .

5 EDWARD GRAYSON: Yeah, the commitment  
6 level per site is different just because of how many,  
7 you know, hours of operation and how the other thing,  
8 you know, operational consideration. So, we would  
9 really have to look at -- our main goal would try to  
10 be triage that to provide as much access as possible  
11 naturally when we finally understood what we were  
12 working with.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. I'm  
14 going to move on to school organics. The average  
15 budget for school organics between 23 and 26 is  
16 approximately 792,000. It's unclear what, if any, at  
17 least for my end what plans DSNY has for expansion  
18 for the program in 23 and in the out years. So, just  
19 to get a picture how much waste is estimated to be  
20 generated by city public schools? And how much of  
21 that, and how much organic waste in terms of tonnage  
22 is part of that waste stream?

23 EDWARD GRAYSON: On organics tonnage we,  
24 you know, last year was an interesting year but  
25 typically we're, our estimates are that food school

2 waste our actual collections are about, you know,  
3 about 6,800 tons a year 7,000 tons a year, give or  
4 take between 6,000 and 7,000 tons. It's a little  
5 fluid and as far as our, our plans are to continue  
6 the current level of schools that we're servicing  
7 going in to next year.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: So you're  
9 saying you're usually collecting 7,000 tons per year.  
10 How many schools is that that you're collecting from  
11 right now?

12 EDWARD GRAYSON: 694 school building.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: And so you're  
14 not fully sure what . . . well, could you clarify  
15 what the plan is for the school organics moving  
16 forward?

17 EDWARD GRAYSON: Well, we're still  
18 working through what may be as we continue to look  
19 at, you know, coming out of last year and now that we  
20 see where we are with the school program but for  
21 right now we are expecting to run the school program  
22 that we currently service, the 694 schools with  
23 organic. We, that's what our current intent is to  
24 continue that leading into FY20.



2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Maintain the  
3 service level as of right now for the number of  
4 schools.

5 EDWARD GRAYSON: Yes, it's 600.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. Organic  
7 processing sites, has DSNY explored the development  
8 of large scale organics processing sites within the  
9 city boundaries and if so, can you walk us through  
10 your assessment of these publicly owned lots of sites  
11 and what specific factors are used to determine their  
12 feasibility to be built out for organics processing?

13 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Chair. Yes,  
14 in the past we have issued a report about the scale  
15 and scope of sites that would be needed, you know,  
16 sanitation facilities. I know you are aware they are  
17 very hard to site whether they be garages or  
18 composting facilities. We can however leverage some  
19 existing city resources such as, you know DEPs  
20 wastewater treatment plants, as well as, you know  
21 some regional composting facilities but right now we  
22 don't have, I don't have an answer for you where,  
23 what's the perfect location because in many cases  
24 it's not about the location. I'm happy to sit down  
25 with you and the committee to discuss, you know, a

2 current analysis so, you know, I'm, organics and  
3 composting sites as we move forward but we don't have  
4 a place to say this is what we have right now. This  
5 would be the perfect fit.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Do you have a  
7 short list? I mean you don't have to print them all  
8 out I mean but do you have like a short list or just  
9 a general set of assessment?

10 EDWARD GRAYSON: No, again it's when we  
11 look at it. We, it's really about part, also partly  
12 about program goals so it's hard to say where would  
13 be the perfect site because naturally that's going to  
14 depend on what the program is running on but we would  
15 gladly sit down and talk about what are the real  
16 estate needs what are the realities of that and  
17 infrastructure builds and what are the next steps on  
18 actually doing more processing or what would that  
19 take. We need to really sit down and see what that  
20 would look like. I don't have that answer for you  
21 today.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. So I  
23 know that one of the things that came out of the IBR  
24 report about the organics program last October was  
25 that the cost of this program which is what the mayor

2 is saying is wildly out of control. It's not  
3 justifiable people are not participating. They're  
4 saying well if we had a city site it would bring the  
5 cost down. It's a part of bringing the cost down.  
6 So is there within what you've assessed a site that  
7 would support the starting or be the starting site  
8 for starting to support the long-term goal of a  
9 universal organics collection program in the city.

10 EDWARD GRAYSON: Oh, it's a great  
11 question. Again, it comes back to a little bit of  
12 when we have a path towards what is the expected  
13 amount of material? What type of site are we  
14 hosting? Are we hosting something that's going to be  
15 a wind drone pile of organics or are we hosting  
16 something that is a real technology infrastructure,  
17 you know, launch, so again it's without having a  
18 predefined guess as to how we what the scale of  
19 material how fast we're expecting to create a site  
20 for turnover. What then the output of the new  
21 compost that's created? What's the, where's that  
22 going from there and understanding some of the  
23 timelines on the realities of creating compost,  
24 collecting it, sorting it, storing it, processing it?  
25 It's really hard to say this would be great. You

2 know, it's going to be a thing for real. It's,  
3 depending on what the scale is whether it be  
4 something like we, we have many community partners  
5 that are doing something really interesting on small  
6 parcels of land but they also can only process very  
7 tiny bots of material. And when you look at where  
8 we're going to be the scalability, the timeline, the  
9 new goalpost setting that's going to be done on  
10 timelines. That, when we have those discussions and  
11 we're looking forward to having them then we can  
12 really hone in on what that's going to look like.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. And my  
14 last question on organics around this and then I'll  
15 open the rest up for the committee. What do you  
16 think of, what would you need to financially to put  
17 down a site, you know, what would you like to have  
18 to, say this, we want to make an assessment of these  
19 sites. We want to move forward in identifying  
20 something. We want to put resources and energy  
21 towards getting it online. What would you do, what  
22 would be an estimated cost that you would need to get  
23 that in motion?

24 EDWARD GRAYSON: Chair, I have to tell  
25 you, I don't, it really, we have to have the first

2 answer before we can start to, because everything  
3 there's a cost to everything. So, first and foremost  
4 I don't want to make a broad statement that sounds  
5 exactly like it's empty but without knowing what  
6 we're looking to do I would hate to say when I like  
7 when I like to come back and talk to you or do you  
8 want my team to talk to you, you know, and the  
9 committee about, you know, the exploration of real  
10 estate ventures and trying to find out what that  
11 would be so we can get a cost matrix to work from. I  
12 definitely welcome that but as far today I wouldn't  
13 even know what to tell you to earmark for a  
14 composting site because it really all depends on what  
15 are we doing there? What's the intent of it long-  
16 term and then we could really talk about what kind of  
17 build and infrastructure and size and scope and  
18 without that it would be really tough for us to make  
19 an estimate.

20 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. Previous  
21 times there was \$1 million figure thrown around for  
22 identifying sites which is that was in the ballpark.

23 EDWARD GRAYSON: It, again, \$1 million to  
24 identify a site when it comes back into the  
25 identification. What do we mean? I'm sure we can

2 get anybody to find us a vacant lot for \$1 million  
3 bucks but I don't know what that means if it's the  
4 right thing. I'm not being tricky I just mean I  
5 don't know that that's the right figure and I don't  
6 want to put us on the wrong path. I want to  
7 literally go through this process, have these  
8 discussions and then sit down and really plan out and  
9 have a well thought out conversation about what the  
10 realistic expense needs would be to pursue more  
11 siting and more facilities.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. So in  
13 some there's not been any work within the department  
14 of, just to understand you don't have to give me the  
15 details but has there been any work to identify like  
16 these would work for a range of types of activities  
17 within a facility?

18 EDWARD GRAYSON: We do not have a clear  
19 cut path for that at this time for this hearing.

20 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Thank you.  
21 Okay, I'm going to turn it over to. Thank you  
22 Commissioner. I'm going to turn it over to Jessica  
23 to open up for other members.

24 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

25 COUNSEL: Thank you Chair. I will now call on

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 39

2 Council Members in the order they have used the Zoom  
3 Raise Hand Function. If you would like to ask a  
4 question and have not yet used the zoom raise hand  
5 function, please raise it now. Council Members  
6 please keep your questions to five minutes. The  
7 Sergeant at Arms will keep a timer and I will let you  
8 know when your time is up. You should begin once I  
9 have called on you and the Sergeant has announced  
10 that you may begin before delivering your testimony.  
11 We will first hear from Council Member Salamanca  
12 followed by Council Member Caban followed by Council  
13 Member Gennaro. Council Member Salamanca.

14 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

15 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: Thank you. Good  
16 afternoon Commissioner. It's great seeing you and  
17 your team and I want to congratulate the Chair on her  
18 first preliminary budget hearing for the Department  
19 of Sanitation. Commissioner, I want to first start  
20 talking about illegal dumping. I represent an  
21 industrial area which is the Hunt's Point. You know,  
22 I have the meat markets, produce markets. I have  
23 over 700 businesses there but I also have many areas  
24 in my community that are dark empty lots and there  
25 seems to be a big issue with illegal dumping. In the

2 budget that we just passed I allocated about 180 I  
3 believe about \$1000 to the sanitation so that we can  
4 purchase cameras so that we can catch those  
5 individuals who choose to illegally dump whether its  
6 tires, barrels of oil or just straight garbage or  
7 construction and debris. What processes do you have  
8 in place in terms of enforcement to catch these  
9 individuals that are illegally dumping?

10 EDWARD GRAYSON: Councilman I want to  
11 thank you and yes thank you for your leadership and  
12 your partnership. We have definitely done many  
13 walkthroughs and I know your commitment to illegal  
14 dumping and we appreciate it. For us, illegal  
15 dumping has definitely been on an uptick. Our  
16 enforcement staff and our SBOs that do try to do the  
17 undercover surveillance to try to catch that have  
18 certainly been busy and we've definitely been doing  
19 all we can to do the procurement and installation of  
20 the cameras to also help. Thankfully that  
21 Legislation that was passed that lets us use the  
22 cameras when we can marry up the license plate has  
23 definitely been effective and we are very anxious to  
24 keep expanding that with a little bit more  
25 granularity I would like our assistant chief



2 enforcement Ricky Cyrus to talk to us about what  
3 we're doing for illegal dumping and where we think  
4 we're going. Rick.

5 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: Yeah and if you the  
6 assistant Commissioner you can just get straight to  
7 the point because I have two more questions and I  
8 want to make sure that I want to utilize my time.

9 RICKY CYRUS: Thank you Commissioner. We  
10 are out there day and night trying to find illegal  
11 dumpers. The city is a big city and we can't really  
12 cover every area at the same time so the cameras are  
13 very helpful. We have had very good success with the  
14 cameras over the past couple of years and that  
15 purchase that you made, the POs we have some problems  
16 with supply chain and we expect to have these cameras  
17 in the middle of spring and they will be installed in  
18 your Community.

19 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: My second question and  
20 again it has to do with enforcement. I know that I  
21 believe it's between 8:00 and 9:00 and 4:00 and 5:00  
22 your enforcement officers are out checking the  
23 sidewalks and if businesses or homeowners have not  
24 cleaned up they get a violation. Some homeowners  
25 that get a \$25 violation and if they don't pay it and

2 it goes into judgment it's my understanding that that  
3 \$25 up to \$300 is that correct?

4 EDWARD GRAYSON: Ricky, you want to  
5 handle the multiplier, anything that goes into  
6 judgment can definitely have some added fees handled  
7 on but just for clarification sir, there's the  
8 residential routing times and then the commercial  
9 routing times and so 8:00 to 9:00 and 4:00 to 5:00  
10 and there's times that the residents have to clean in  
11 front of their streets, that's two hours per day and  
12 then there's also for the businesses it's also a  
13 different timeframe so Rick you want to answer the  
14 question please?

15 RICKY CYRUS: The current fines are \$50  
16 and it was just reduced from \$100 to \$50 and if  
17 you're a repeat offender than it goes up to \$300.

18 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: The \$50 is for  
19 businesses, what about homeowners?

20 RICKY CYRUS: It's the same cost.

21 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: It's \$50?

22 RICKY CYRUS: Yes.

23 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: I've seen violations.  
24 Now how much, what dollar amount do you generate per  
25 year in giving violations to homeowners?

2 RICKY CYRUS: That figure I don't  
3 currently have in front of me but we can get back to  
4 you with it.

5 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: All right. And what  
6 are the hours for homeowners that they have to ensure  
7 that their sidewalk is clean?

8 RICKY CYRUS: 8:00 a.m. to 8:59 a.m. and  
9 6:00 p.m. to 6:59 p.m.

10 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: Okay. All right. And  
11 then finally Commissioner, um, there, I have two bids  
12 in my district. The third avenue bid and the  
13 southern boulevard bid. These are extremely busy  
14 avenues. But throughout my district there seems to  
15 be, it seems that we need more trash pickup, trash  
16 can picks. What are you doing to address this issue  
17 with the overflow of garbage? Eventhough the bids  
18 have their staff but after hours they're not there.  
19 trash is overflowing. What, what processes have you  
20 put in place for trash pick up?

21 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

22 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Councilman.  
23 Um, yes, trying to meet the needs of busy commercial  
24 strips is always at the forefront. We have our  
25 regular basket truck service. We have the collection

2 trucks that pass along the routes also coming by to  
3 provide supplemental service. We certainly work in  
4 collaboration with the bids to know where they put  
5 out their material when they are servicing some  
6 tenants for us and to date we still try to do  
7 everything we can to get partnership both in the bids  
8 and external to the bids along commercial strips  
9 throughout the City to encourage adopt a basket  
10 programs with businesses that are very close to the  
11 baskets where we provide them the liner bags and we  
12 ask them to line it up this way increase capacity for  
13 that so that when we come by we can get more services  
14 with only the single pass or the second pass.

15 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: Okay and then finally  
16 are you guys planning in changing the rules back for  
17 alternate side parking from back to two days because  
18 I know when COVID hit the previous administration  
19 changed it to the last day that's on the street sign.

20 EDWARD GRAYSON: We are still currently.  
21 Great question, thank you. We are still currently at  
22 the one time a week and we are working with the  
23 administration and trying to talk through, you know,  
24 where we're going next with alternate side parking  
25 and continuing to work toward what's going to be the

2 final outcome because right now it is still intact to  
3 have only the last assigned day.

4 RAFAEL SALAMANCA: As a driver I like it  
5 because I don't have to move my car twice a week but  
6 as a leader, my streets are dirty. You know, we have  
7 to do something about getting the sweepers out there.  
8 Thank you Madam Chair for allowing me the opportunity  
9 to chat.

10 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

11 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now hear  
12 from Council Member Caban followed by Council Member  
13 Gennaro followed by Council Member Bottcher. Council  
14 Member Caban.

15 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

16 TIFFANY CABAN: Thank you. Good  
17 afternoon to the Department of Sanitation. Thank you  
18 Chair Nurse. Thank you to all the committee staff.  
19 I'll be pretty brief. I understand that there is, at  
20 this point, very limited organics processing  
21 happening at Riker's Island and so I want to know if  
22 sanitation supports an expanded organics recycling  
23 facility at Riker's as part of the broader renewable  
24 Riker's plan as we are, you know, moving towards  
25 closing Riker's Island. And then my follow up to

2 that is I'm hoping to talk a little bit about whether  
3 you've been part of the conversations with DCAS to  
4 ensure that the land is being transferred to reach  
5 that goal and whether there are any other relevant  
6 agencies that you've been in conversation with about  
7 the potential for increased composting on Riker's  
8 Island.

9 EDWARD GRAYSON: Councilwoman thank you  
10 so much for your question. The compost site at  
11 Riker's Island has been a partner with us for a long  
12 time. They've been really an innovative use of land  
13 and it was always good to have a program there.  
14 Clearly we love compost processing and we love  
15 having, you know, accessibility. More importantly we  
16 love places where the sustainability initiatives and  
17 getting to zero waste and really having a feel for  
18 compost is being championed. I'm going to let  
19 Bridget Anderson talk to you about our interactions  
20 because her unit is on the front line of that for us.  
21 Bridget.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: I think she  
23 needs to, um, help. There it goes.

24 BRIDGET ANDERSON: Okay. There we go.  
25 Thank you for that question. Thank you Commissioner.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 47

2 Yes, we are, the program that we've done on Riker's  
3 Island is self-sufficient so in other words we  
4 compose the food scraps from the island and that food  
5 is then used on the island for greening and gardening  
6 initiatives so it has a specific type of permit at  
7 the state level at DEC and we have been in  
8 conversations about the various plans to create a  
9 renewable Riker's Island. That includes not only  
10 Department of Sanitation it includes Department of  
11 Environmental Protection and DCAS and other groups to  
12 figure out how do we make the best, most efficient  
13 use of that space leveraging solar, leveraging  
14 wastewater treatment, leveraging composting so we are  
15 absolutely interested in continuing to pursue that  
16 type of a proposal should we be able to have one.

17 TIFFANY CABAN: Great. Thank you. I'll  
18 go ahead and yield the rest of my time.

19 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE  
20 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now hear  
21 from Council Member Gennaro followed by Council  
22 Member Bottcher, followed by Council Member Osse.  
23 Council Member Gennaro.

24 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.  
25

JAMES GENNARO: Thank you Madam

Moderator, thank you Madam Chair, and thank you

Commissioner and your good staff for being on the

call today. This is a question I'm going to phrase

as a budget question because this is a budget

hearing. This is a drum that I've been, uh, banging

back since the City passed it's first recycling local

law 19 in 1989. In that law and all subsequent

recycling laws passed by the City indicated, I got a

phone here making a noise, I don't know why it's

doing that, sorry. Um, that law requires that there

are weekly pickups of recyclables. We're just

talking the basics here. We're talking metal, glass

and plastic and, you know, mixed paper but much of my

district gets their recycling picked up on Monday and

there are many Monday holidays so areas that have

Monday holidays or people that have recycling dates

where it falls on a holiday they don't get any pick

ups that week and it has always been the case that it

would be too much money to strictly adhere to the law

to get the department to do that which the law

mandates which is weekly pick ups of recyclables.

Weekly means weekly there are no, there's nothing in

the law that gives the department a pass because



2 there's a holiday in that week and so I'm assuming  
3 that this is a budget issue more than an operational  
4 issue and I, you probably don't have it at your  
5 fingertips what it would cost to give full weekly  
6 recycling including holidays to make sure that people  
7 get picked up if their recycling day falls on a  
8 holiday. They get picked up sometime that week. Who  
9 could reply to that? I'd appreciate it.

10 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Council Member  
11 for your question and for your leadership and your  
12 commitment. It's always a pleasure to be with you  
13 and out in your district. And I have to tell you  
14 that yes, there would be cost. I do not have that  
15 cost. We can gladly formulate that here and get it  
16 back to the committee, particularly yourself, but  
17 yes, there would be costs involved to work every  
18 holiday to make sure that the recycling pick up  
19 happened. Because yes the way the program runs now  
20 is that if your recycling day falls we wait an entire  
21 week to come and pick it up.

22 JAMES GENNARO: Right, meaning that if  
23 the recycling date falls on a holiday you don't get a  
24 recycling pick up that day but your regular trash  
25 would get picked up either the next day or the day

2 after or the day after that which is the next regular  
3 you know recycling day. Which is the next regular  
4 refuse pick up day. And I think that, I stated, I  
5 don't know this is done in all these decades. I  
6 think with this Chair and with this Council and with  
7 the speaker we might have the ability to kind of  
8 shake that loose this year and so I would urge the  
9 Committee Staff to put this into its recommendation  
10 regarding the budget report that would be produced as  
11 a result of this year and I thank you for that and I  
12 have one more question. I have a little time left.  
13 What would it cost to expand composting collections  
14 to every public school building in the City, also a  
15 number you probably don't have at your fingertips and  
16 I'll add as a justification of that wouldn't you  
17 agree that this is a good long term investment so  
18 that you know that sooner or later you have to get  
19 organics out of landfills to help achieve our climate  
20 goal. So the question is full composting pick ups in  
21 all city public schools.

22 EDWARD GRAYSON: Again, thank you for  
23 your question and I do not have that exact cost for  
24 you but along with the projection of costs that we  
25 think it would take to service the holidays we could

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 51

2 certainly furnish what we believe the cost would be  
3 to expand to schools and just on a programmatic  
4 agreement I think that everybody, I don't think that  
5 there's a single person in the world would agree  
6 that, you know, making sure that the more direction  
7 we have with the kids and get them in to muscle  
8 memory it's going to be a great thing so I will get  
9 those costs to you.

10 JAMES GENNARO: Thank you Commissioner.  
11 I thank you for your partnership. You've been to my  
12 district many times. I appreciate the things we do  
13 together and I certainly appreciate your leadership.  
14 I would urge Council finance staff to give up those  
15 things that I've mentioned into the Council's Budget  
16 response for the Department of Sanitation.

17 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

18 JAMES GENNARO: Thank you all. Thank you  
19 Madam Chair.

20 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE  
21 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now hear  
22 from Council Member Bottcher followed by Council  
23 Member Osse followed by Council Member Menin.  
24 Council Member Bottcher.

25 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

2           ERIK BOTTCHER: Hi Commissioner. A  
3 couple of years ago there was a contest for a new  
4 model of corner litter baskets and the model that won  
5 it looks pretty good, hasn't been deployed widely. I  
6 think there's only a handful put out. I've been  
7 critical of the models that are available for us to  
8 purchase with Council Discretionary Funds like the  
9 silver model trash it falls behind the liner, the  
10 door doesn't shut. That's why so many of them have e  
11 the door swinging up and they break. The new model I  
12 was told that it's not being produced because of  
13 budget considerations. Do you have an update on that  
14 trashcan of the future?

15           EDWARD GRAYSON: Well, thank you  
16 Councilman. Yes, the better bin program. We are  
17 always looking for what would be the better bin and  
18 we definitely hear loud and clear from not just  
19 yourself but many about what's the best way to do  
20 this. What's the best can we could use, how do we  
21 have a better vessels. So with where we stand  
22 currently with the better bin I'm going to ask Greg  
23 Anderson to ask you exactly where we fall in line  
24 with where it's going, where we are and where we're  
25 going.

GREGORY ANDERSON: Thank you Commissioner. Thank you Council Member for the question, yeah, we're very excited about the better bin approach. It has sort of moved to the back burner for about two years because of the budget issues caused by the COVID pandemic but we are excited that we are moving it back to the front burner so we're in the midst right now of what is phase three of the program. Phase one was the initial competition. Phase two was the prototyping. This is phase three which is really refining that prototype so that it can be manufactured and mass produced and that's how we will really find out what is this thing going to cost, we anticipate that it will be cheaper than those steel cans you referenced but need to find that out through this process and you are exactly right when we put the call out to designers we really wanted to focus on making these bins more affordable to produce better for our employees and better overall for the New York City Streets.

ERIK BOTTCER: Thank you so much. Looking forward to those. Question about illegal dumping but in the corner baskets. That's a big

2 contributor to the overflowing baskets in our  
3 districts, people putting their residential and  
4 commercial trash in the corner baskets causing them  
5 to overflow very quickly. The DSNY has inspectors  
6 that will go into the trash and open the bags and  
7 find utility bills and try to identify people who are  
8 doing that. How many inspectors do you have citywide  
9 performing that task and how will these proposed  
10 budget cuts affect that position?

11 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Councilman,  
12 yes, so improper disposal and improper use of a DS  
13 basket it's definitely. Thankfully we have a little  
14 bit more teeth. We can go in and try to find the  
15 people doing that and it's certainly the predominant  
16 cause of overflowing litter baskets people improperly  
17 using it. Uh, Assistant Chief Cyrus, please talk  
18 through our staffing and how we're getting there for  
19 the Council.

20 RICKY CYRUS: Thank you Commissioner.  
21 Currently we have 42 sanitation police officers, 17  
22 lieutenants and three inspectors also we have 122  
23 enforcement agents and 51 lieutenants and sergeants  
24 who currently perform these tasks. Also that task  
25

2 can also be performed by all the supervisors who can  
3 issue some of it.

4 ERIK BOTTCHER: So that's a task that can  
5 be performed by the enforcement agency that also  
6 ticket businesses and residences as well?

7 RICKY CYRUS: Yes, Council Member.

8 ERIK BOTTCHER: And when they perform  
9 those rounds and those appointed hours every day do  
10 they focus on corner baskets, improper disposal in  
11 corner baskets as well or is that a special route  
12 that they go on to do that enforcement?

13 RICKY CYRUS: No they focus on  
14 everything. We send them out. We send them to  
15 particular areas and they focus on every violation in  
16 that area.

17 ERIK BOTTCHER: Okay. That's great to  
18 know so we can work with Department of Sanitation to  
19 ensure that the agents that are going out and  
20 ticketing property owners are also helping with  
21 chronic illegal dumping in those corner baskets on  
22 those same routes?

23 RICKY CYRUS: Yes, if you have specific  
24 areas you want us to check just reach out to us and  
25

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 56

2 we will have a crew go out and check those specific  
3 areas.

4 ERIK BOTTCHER: Thank you very much.

5 RICKY CYRUS: You're welcome.

6 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

7 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now hear  
8 from Council Member Osse followed by Council Member  
9 Menin followed by Council Member Velasquez. Council  
10 Member Osse.

11 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

12 CHI OSSE: Thank you so much everyone.

13 Good afternoon Chair Nurse and Commissioner Grayson.

14 I just have a couple of questions and I appreciate

15 all of your for spending the time today to speak

16 about very important issues. As we all know rat

17 infestation is an issue that is impacting not only my

18 district but the city as a whole. But you know

19 within my district rat sighting rates are increasing

20 throughout the past couple of months. Rats are found

21 all over our streets, our homes and our businesses

22 and this is a public health issue that is impacting

23 my community. In Fiscal year 2021 the original rat

24 program that provided additional refuse and basket

25 service for Brooklyn, the Bronx and Manhattan was



2 eliminated. In last fiscal year a portion of the  
3 program was restored. How has the elimination of  
4 funding affected DSNYs ability to take care of the  
5 city's rat infestations and has partial funding  
6 brought operations back to normal? And if not, what  
7 can the city do in terms of its budget and helping  
8 DSNYs rat infestation operations?

9 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Council  
10 Member. So DSNY is part of a multi-agency  
11 initiative. You know really headed by the Department  
12 of Health and what we, prior to the pandemic we had,  
13 you know, where the rodent mitigation zones were.  
14 They identified zones where it was the highest  
15 trafficking conduits where activity was, you know, we  
16 were providing some additional basket service and  
17 some additional collection service to date some of  
18 the basket service has been restored but the fourth  
19 day of collection in some of those areas that were  
20 three times a week pick up and we were adding a  
21 fourth day to try to eliminate some of the material  
22 that was being set out on the curb so the collection  
23 didn't come back. Partial restoration of some of the  
24 baskets that were involved in that but the reality of  
25 it is is that we are still, we're, watching the data.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 58

2 Greg Anderson who's on with us today, Deputy  
3 Commissioner Anderson he's going to talk to you.  
4 He's one of our leads on that committee. So Greg why  
5 don't you give the Council Member an update?

6 GREGORY ANDERSON: Yeah, thank you. Good  
7 afternoon Council Member. So I've, as the  
8 Commissioner mentioned I've been sitting on various  
9 City Hall Task Forces on rat reduction for probably  
10 five or six years now and we work very closely with  
11 our partner agencies. Keeping New York City clean is  
12 a vital part of our city's rat mitigation efforts but  
13 there's a lot that goes into it as far as addressing  
14 habitat. Also addressing extermination from the  
15 health department perspective, so we work very  
16 closely with them on the litter basket questions  
17 specifically we did have litter basket trucks per  
18 week restored to the budget in the November plan we  
19 we're very happy to have those and we're continuing  
20 to have conversations with the Administration around  
21 funding levels for litter basket service going  
22 forward.

23 CHI OSSE: Thank you and just one more  
24 question as we recover from the pandemic it is  
25 crucial that New Yorkers have safe and clean streets

2 in their communities; however, we also see that  
3 neighborhoods where streets are not the cleanest.  
4 Our black neighborhoods like the ones I represent in  
5 my district. I know the department works hard to  
6 ensure that our streets are clean but you will need  
7 sufficient staffing and resources to run these  
8 operations. Prior to COVID the agency had baseline  
9 funding of a total of 736 trucks I believe a week and  
10 now the agency has baseline funding for only 588  
11 trucks a week. Has this cut impacted your street  
12 cleaning operations and if so how much more funding  
13 would the agency need to ensure that street cleaning  
14 operations are done effectively in the City  
15 especially in black neighborhoods and neighborhoods  
16 of color.

17 EDWARD GRAYSON: Councilman thank you so  
18 much for your question. You know, when the pre-  
19 pandemic that's 700 basket truck number was some  
20 baseline funding and some additional funding that  
21 came from Council leading to FY20 and then we went  
22 actually down with COVID with the budget cut pandemic  
23 we went down to only 272 trucks per week so then we  
24 got restored. We're up from where we were  
25 thankfully, significantly up from that 272 number and

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 60

2 clearly working together being partners with so many  
3 of your colleagues at the Council, we've even gone  
4 past the 588 with some of that extra funding that you  
5 guys put in so thankfully we're committed to  
6 definitely working on baskets, working on identifying  
7 root efficiencies, temporal observations, you know  
8 can we try to get it at a different time would that  
9 maximize efficiency and definitely try to increase  
10 participation in things like adopt a basket which had  
11 definitely weaned off during the pandemic because  
12 really the interactions and even our own admittedly  
13 solicitations of that we were just trying to keep  
14 everybody safe and so now that we're getting back  
15 into close contact thankfully as we recover we're  
16 looking to see some increased numbers with that but  
17 our commitment to cleanliness is totally there.

18 Chief Steve Harbin he's the Chief of Citywide  
19 Cleaning Operations. He can talk you about how we  
20 look at putting out baskets or just dedication to  
21 trying to make sure that we're doing the best we can  
22 with the resources we have.

23 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

24 STEPHEN HARBIN: Thank you Commissioner.

25 Thank you Council Member for the opportunity. Right

2 now as you had mentioned to get us back to pre-  
3 pandemic funding for baskets for the 700+ that you  
4 mentioned it would be about an extra \$18 million for  
5 one shot amount for Fiscal year 23 and to be  
6 baselined which is where we are to sustain that  
7 amount it would be about half of that cost sustained.

8 CHI OSSE: Thank you so much for that  
9 response. That is very helpful and Chairwoman Nurse  
10 I have one more quick question for the Commissioner.  
11 On a scale of 1 to 10 how dirtier and rattier will  
12 the city become if these cuts do become a reality --  
13 these proposed cuts?

14 EDWARD GRAYSON: That's a good question.  
15 What, that's really subjective and what I mean by  
16 that is I'm a sanitation commissioner. Uh, for me, I  
17 can always do more with more and I think that the  
18 more, and this is just the truth of anything. The  
19 more you go out and scrape the front of your house  
20 the cleaner it will be. So that is really hard to  
21 determine because we also saw, I can tell you this  
22 much for the reduction of alternate side parking  
23 there were certain blocks that for whatever reasons  
24 they were getting multiple time sweep and they were  
25 impacted you know as bad as some other blocks. So

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 62

2 it's pretty subjective but I think the intent is to  
3 say that we love cleaning the streets and we  
4 appreciate having these discussions with you sir.  
5 Thank you.

6 CHI OSSE: Thanks. No number.

7 JENNIFER STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

8 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now hear  
9 from Council Member Menin followed by Council Member  
10 Velasquez, followed by Council Member Brewer.  
11 Council Member Menin.

12 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

13 JULIE MENIN: Thank you so much. First  
14 of all thank you to our chair for this important  
15 hearing and thank you Commissioner for your  
16 testimony. A couple of questions. As you know  
17 earlier this year in January allocated \$120,000 to  
18 increase trash pickups, litter basket pickups in my  
19 district to four times a day. My concern is it  
20 should not be up to individual Council Members to  
21 make up for inadequate funding of litter basket  
22 pickups. So can you talk a little bit about how  
23 you're going to be addressing this issue? What is  
24 the department's plan to make litter basket service

25

2 more efficient so each of our districts do not have  
3 the same problem of over flowing receptacles.

4 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Councilwoman  
5 and thank you for your partnership and thank you for  
6 the car, um, that you clearly exhibit on trying to  
7 make sure your district is cleaner. We thoroughly  
8 appreciate that partnership and for us it's always  
9 about looking at what are the service levels that  
10 we're providing and including the supplemental  
11 service that you funded and try to look at what is  
12 the impact of that and are we getting, are we seeing  
13 it, are we getting those positive feedback? You know  
14 street cleanliness and the overflowing baskets or our  
15 basket service in general is so temporal. If you  
16 know if you come by, if you happen to be lucky enough  
17 to be walking down the avenue right after the basket  
18 truck has serviced it, clearly if you did that every  
19 day and that just happened to be your daily walk  
20 you'd think that the basket service was sufficient in  
21 your district. However if you go back out on a few  
22 hours later or on a Monday morning after a long  
23 weekend perhaps you may say this particular corner  
24 this particular juncture could really use additional  
25 help and that's why we watch the 311 complaints. We

2 listen to the feedback from the community and we  
3 really try to look at the temporal distribution of  
4 those assets and work toward what the goals are.  
5 Again, for us, that's why, you know, when we look at  
6 where are we funded, what are the funding levels.  
7 That's how these discussions happen. It's being on  
8 this committee. It's being in this room having a  
9 forum like this to discuss these issues to say look  
10 as a Council person I don't feel like I should have  
11 to base, I should have to supplement your cleaning  
12 services when we're in, we're responding, we're  
13 working together towards getting to what the service  
14 levels have to be and I think globally what DSNY is  
15 very comfortable doing is sitting down having these  
16 discussions, coming back and talking realistically  
17 about what is the service level where we're at and  
18 most importantly internally we were providing  
19 efficiencies to see if we can cover more ground and  
20 really that's the entire process.

21 JULIE MENIN: Okay. I mean I just want  
22 to say strongly on the record I don't there should be  
23 any cuts there and I strongly urge administration to  
24 restore any cut whatsoever to litter basket pickup  
25 across the city. But I want to make sure I can ask



2 my other questions so waste containerization. I'm a  
3 huge fan of containerized garbage. I think we need  
4 to move to that system permanently. I am really  
5 concerned that the preliminary budget doesn't restore  
6 the one time funding of \$935,000 to pilot street  
7 containerization waste because obviously and you'll  
8 hear from my colleagues as well we all have rampant  
9 rat sitings in our district, trash piling up the  
10 street so it's disappointing to see that the pilot  
11 program for waste containerization is not restored in  
12 this budget. So if you could talk a little bit how  
13 is the \$935,000 spent and how much would be needed to  
14 fully move to containerized garbage across the City.

15 EDWARD GRAYSON: Councilman thank you for  
16 the inquiry on clean curbs, where we are? We are  
17 very excited about where it's going. Unfortunately  
18 the delays of the pandemic really did, you know, and  
19 it is, it's a lot of, it's those cascading delays of  
20 where we were, you know great idea. We can't wait to  
21 start and see what we learn from it because it's  
22 going to be a very interesting learning process  
23 before we can do, you know, a wide scale distribution  
24 but our lead coming out of his office on policy is  
25 Deputy Commissioner Greg Anderson so I'm going to let

him talk you through where we are right now and where we think we're going.

GREGORY ANDERSON: Thank you Commissioner. Good to see you Council Member Menin. So yeah we are actively working to get the first pallet out of the street. We want to do that as quickly as possible. We have had some delays related to the procurement there, just actually not that many vendors who work in that space in New York City so part of the conversation is about building this marketplace for those kinds of approaches and we are continuing conversations with the administration about how to continue that and expand those pilots into the next fiscal year and I want to reiterate that Commissioner Grayson mentioned at the last hearing which is this is a tremendous opportunity for learning. Not everything will work in every situation. We need to really adapt these approaches for what works based on the physical characteristics of the block based on the kind of housing stock, based on the way the street is designed. So we're really looking forward to learning what works and what doesn't, identifying any potential challenges

2 with that approach and you know trying to scale it up  
3 from there.

4 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

5 JULIE MENIN: Okay. Thank you.

6 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

7 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now hear  
8 from Council Member Velasquez followed by Council  
9 Member Brewer. Council Member Velasquez.

10 SGT. SADOWOSKY: Starting time.

11 MARJORIE VELASQUEZ: Hi. Good afternoon  
12 and thank you for this hearing. I want to thank  
13 Commissioner Grayson and all of New York's strongest  
14 and Chair Nurse or today's budget hearing. Uh, my  
15 question is very simple. Um, it seems a little odd  
16 to me that we're still funding litter basket pickups  
17 as a one shot added that gets added at adoption year  
18 by year instead of baselining these critical  
19 services. Wouldn't baselining cost less money in the  
20 long-run and also reduce your overtime budget?

21 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you for your  
22 questions. Um, and if we, you bring up a good point  
23 about it would be easier to plan around so to speak  
24 but the truth of the matter is the changing landscape  
25 I think and sometimes the decision matrix, you know,

2 on need, on accessibility, on budget, climate, you  
3 know, I think that's why it stays fluid and then I  
4 think that with the ongoing discussion on service  
5 levels and need is important. That's why, you know,  
6 we look at what we're walking into on this  
7 preliminary budget, it's a preliminary budget process  
8 and I think that those are very valuable discussions  
9 to continue on, uh, between here and adoption and  
10 your point is very well received.

11 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

12 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now hear  
13 from Council Member Brewer.

14 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

15 GALE BREWER: Thank you very much Madam  
16 Chair and certainly to your wonderful staff.  
17 Commissioner you're okay but your staff is even  
18 better. I just want to let you know. Bridget is  
19 awesome.

20 EDWARD GRAYSON: I agree.

21 GALE BREWER: Okay I will too, Marissa  
22 Yanin, Steve Harmon those are the people that I've  
23 met recently but and I want to just say something  
24 also positive because I'm a person who has organics.  
25 I have my little bin and I think the whole city

should know I get that. The whole city should know that there is a personal relationship between the person who sends you the emails to put it out Friday night to remind you and then some asshole stole my bin and they responded. You know, I got a new bin so but that, that's what people want. They want to know that the human being is on the other end and it's just, it's phenomenal. I mean you really feel like the city is being your, uh, fellow partner and so that program as our Chair has said needs to expand and certainly we hope that it does and the personal aspect to it is important. So, a few questions. First of all lots of good ideas have been suggested. The usual outreach and I guess talking to the merchants so Amersa [SP] and I are going to plan to do that but thanks to your staff we ended up cleaning up a street that was a mess. Now, how you do get these merchants, they're supposed to know 18 inches. They know, they don't pay attention, blah, blah, blah. So what kind of budget do you have for this outreach. It does seem to me obviously we can give out summons but in terms of the commercials who are around and in the stores. What kind of budget are you allocating if anything toward that? Today I was

2 passing by and it was beyond a location, you know,  
3 filthy dirty, so I don't know I might go get my own  
4 broom I'm telling you guys to scream at the merchant  
5 but there needs to have like a massive education  
6 campaign. Guess what the number one, there are two  
7 issues in New York City right now, sanitation,  
8 sanitation, sanitation and public safety, public  
9 safety, public safety. We could have difference of  
10 opinions on the public safety. There is no  
11 difference of opinion on sanitation. And so the  
12 question is we want to give you as much money as you  
13 need, I'm speaking for myself to do your job so just  
14 education would help. What do you suggest and how  
15 much do you allocate for that just on that topic  
16 alone?

17 EDWARD GRAYSON: Thank you Councilwoman.  
18 Clearly your partnership and your vigor and your  
19 commitment to keeping it clean. So right now we have  
20 outreach teams that work through the Bureau of  
21 Community Affairs. Normally it is interactive  
22 triggered meaning when you call up and give us or  
23 someone tells us that we need to go do an outreach we  
24 are building that into the regular day. Um, our  
25 community affairs division as far as interacting with

2 the public on how to be good neighbors. Um, in  
3 addition to doing some new, you know social media  
4 posts and working on our digital team to get  
5 messaging out there we definitely have the people.  
6 You've met them. They'll come out and we could also  
7 pull out the district personal to do a walkthrough.  
8 Do some educational outreach and I will since  
9 community affairs directly reports to Greg Anderson.  
10 I wanted to talk through what we do with that and how  
11 we incorporate that to our normal routine day.

12 GALE BREWER: What I'm saying is there  
13 needs to be a bigger part of your routine to get  
14 these idiots who don't clean to do so. You know,  
15 who's the worst, those freaking chain stores, go  
16 ahead.

17 GREGORY ANDERSON: Thank you Council  
18 Member. And I share your frustration with many of  
19 the chain stores, that are out there. Um, so and we  
20 know last year we talked about dark stores as well.  
21 So . . .

22 GALE BREWER: So . . .

23 GREGORY ANDERSON: . . . talk . . . Um,  
24 so we have a small, a pretty small but very mighty  
25 team in our community affairs that does direct

2 outreach to businesses. Marissa is on that team and  
3 I'm happy to pass along your kudos to her after this  
4 hearing. Maybe she's watching own the hall. And we  
5 also do work very closely with the field officers and  
6 DCC so close to, I don't know what the exact number  
7 is right now so close to a 1000 supervisors as well  
8 as superintendents and the deputy chiefs and the  
9 chiefs in the boroughs who you know, they're out  
10 there on the street every single day, they're not  
11 only evaluating you know how the collection crews are  
12 doing but they are also talking to residents.  
13 They're talking to business owners.

14 GALE BREWER: I don't mean, I just don't  
15 have a, I agree, I just want to say it needs to be a  
16 bigger part of what we're doing because you are new  
17 merchants. I won't get into it, it needs to be a  
18 bigger part.

19 GREGORY ANDERSON: I understand.

20 GALE BREWER: The second issue is moving  
21 cars. I don't know about other boroughs. I only  
22 know Manhattan. We double park, oh my God, just to  
23 get the street clean but they don't move so the  
24 street is dirty. So guess what, thank you district  
25 7. We decided to step it up so somebody comes in the



2 morning we hop, we scream, we yell and they're  
3 starting to move. So, I'm just saying in order to  
4 get these streets cleaned there has to be a different  
5 approach. At least in Manhattan because everybody  
6 goes back and forth. We all know what they do, they  
7 don't get out of their cars and they sit and wait and  
8 the streep-, so the issue may be using technology  
9 down the road. Again, this has been discussed in  
10 other countries so that you know when the street  
11 sweeper is coming and then you move your car. I don't  
12 want to get into specifics but it needs a different  
13 approach because these people don't move if they  
14 think the sweeper is not coming and they think it  
15 hasn't come for years and now it is coming. You got  
16 the picture, people are very cynical.

17 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

18 GALE BREWER: So that's what has to  
19 happen and just finally I just want to echo everybody  
20 else we need more pickups for the litter baskets. We  
21 need new litter baskets and at least in Manhattan we  
22 have so many people coming and going it needs a  
23 different approach. We really thank the absolutely  
24 fabulous sanitation department, it just needs more  
25 money. Thank you.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 74

2 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

3 COUNSEL: Thank you Council Member. We will now turn  
4 it back to Chair Nurse for additional questions.  
5 Chair.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Thank you. Um,  
7 I was going to need to staffing but I just wanted  
8 back up to school organics for one second. Um,  
9 Council Member Gennaro got my brain working in his  
10 line of questioning. So you had said for about 694  
11 schools it's about \$792,000. He was asking about,  
12 you know what would it cost roughly to service all  
13 public schools in New York City. Um, I just kind of  
14 like looked on the map and I was wondering, you know  
15 if a \$2 million amount. I guess what I'm trying to  
16 see is that looking at how to make it, if you have  
17 694 schools and you wanted to add a double amount of  
18 694 schools are there different variations and  
19 factors in being able to say we could just double up  
20 or triple up to achieve whatever, 1800 schools. I  
21 know some schools are, multiple schools are in a  
22 building. Is it as simple as being able to double or  
23 triple up that budget number or are there specific  
24 things tied to increasing and expanding, um, the  
25 ability to cover and collect organics from schools.

2 EDWARD GRAYSON: Um, thank you. Great  
3 question. Yes, clearly one would say oh we'll just  
4 double it and again no it's not that, we would have  
5 to really look at that and map that out. It's also  
6 service level type. Um, because not every school, so  
7 we would have to figure out exactly what the service  
8 level would be. Some of the schools that currently  
9 are included in the program are on containerized  
10 pickups and then therefore we would have to run a  
11 different resource whereas right now we can just swap  
12 out resources, um, from running an organics truck  
13 versus refuse truck, et cetera, so it needs to be  
14 mapped out but it would be a baseline to start with  
15 between outreach as well additional PS costs so we  
16 really have to give you a whole number but it's not  
17 directly binary to say that it's just double the cost  
18 because it will be another school.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay, great,  
20 that's helpful to know. Um, okay, let me move to  
21 head count. So the Fiscal year for 23 preliminary  
22 budget proposed numerous cuts to DSNYs headcount  
23 including the reduction of 164 positions of curbside  
24 collections, a reduction of 37 positions for the  
25 splintered roof, 107 for garage utility work and the

2 elimination of 188 civilian vacancies. You can  
3 correct me if I'm wrong. Um, so just looking on.  
4 I'm just going to walk through a couple of questions.  
5 My understanding is the last sanitation worker exam  
6 was in 2015. Do you anticipate additional exams and  
7 current or subsequent Fiscal years? And also when is  
8 the next academy for sanitation workers?

9 EDWARD GRAYSON: So we typically do our  
10 hiring, our attrition based hiring, you know,  
11 normally as we lead into the summer and fall. We are  
12 still working with OMB on the exact dates to replace  
13 you know the headcount that we would be at our  
14 training academy. We expect to run something but  
15 we're still working on that whole heartedly. Given  
16 just where we are with attrition versus where we are  
17 on the, you know, the preliminary budget. We are  
18 going to probably have to run the academy class and  
19 we're just trying to hone in on whether or not that's  
20 going to be in July or whenever, um, and we'll  
21 definitely get back to you on that but we do expect  
22 to hire and as far as will there be another test, I  
23 know that we are currently working with DCAS for a  
24 new exam. There was supposed to be an exam that got  
25 postponed because of the pandemic so we're working

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 77

2 towards that and as far as having an available hiring  
3 pool we are also working with DCAS to potentially get  
4 eligible hires while the currently extended exam  
5 until they give out the new ones. So there is a cue  
6 of people that we can go to and we are working with  
7 DCAS on that, DCAS on the preparation and  
8 implementation potentially of a new exam that's going  
9 to come out and we definitely are giving up our  
10 training facility to be able to host some new  
11 sanitation work re-hires.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Thank you. On  
13 the civilian title side, do any of the 188 civilian  
14 vacancies that were eliminated affect the hiring for  
15 the commercial lease on program?

16 EDWARD GRAYSON: No. The 188 that were  
17 eliminated were posit-, were vacancies that hadn't  
18 been filled but we are full bore to continue on the  
19 timeline of the commercial rezones that we have  
20 currently to staff that unit up.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. Um, were  
22 there any cuts to staff lines for that program in  
23 2022?

24 EDWARD GRAYSON: No.  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: And so I'm  
3 going to move on to overtime. The plan includes an  
4 additional \$50 million in Fiscal 2022 for a uniform  
5 overtime budget adjustment. The adopted budget for  
6 2022 included \$126.4 million for uniform overtime,  
7 but the current spending as of January 2022 is \$176.2  
8 million. How have the cuts made to the sanitation  
9 budget over the past few years increased usage of  
10 uniform overtime?

11 EDWARD GRAYSON: There, I think that, I  
12 think that a lot of the overtime and it's tr-, I, a  
13 lot of the overtime is because we had, you know, the  
14 outage rate has been significant. Over the last  
15 Fiscal Year we had, we were up to, during the Omicron  
16 variant, you know and near the holidays we had, we  
17 were back up to north of 20 percentage outage and we  
18 do everything that we can to try to maintain the  
19 collection frequency schedules and sometimes we can't  
20 make it but when we don't have the available, you  
21 know, personnel in, we do what we can to schedule. A  
22 lot of time that adds into extended tours and/or  
23 overtime and I think that's the reflection whole  
24 heartedly, our availability, into trying to, you  
25 know, make the, keep our service commitments.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. So, I  
3 guess with that being said, you know we're, a lot of  
4 the work force is vaccinated. Folks are coming back  
5 to work and I imagine that rate has gone down but the  
6 cuts specifically do you anticipate increased  
7 overtime usage in subsequent fiscal years?

8 EDWARD GRAYSON: I think that the  
9 reduction workforce, we're going to have to, it's  
10 going to be fluid. Well we did, the, the staffing  
11 particularly on the uniform side, those, those  
12 positions are, you know, those numbers. One was for  
13 now an organics curbside program that we're not  
14 running so those people were not to be haven't been  
15 hired yet so they were going to be hired for that  
16 program, therefore that should be. There should be  
17 some budget neutrality on that and as far as the  
18 garage utility and support serv-, you know, support  
19 posts and administrative posts that is, those  
20 positions will be attritted out but right now provide  
21 immediate availability of those personnel as they  
22 change roles from either inside the garage or in the  
23 support posts so we are expecting in FY22 a help on  
24 the remaining year with having that available  
25 personnel and then in FY, we really do need to see

2 it's really at it's infancy. We have to see what is  
3 the cascading cost of not having a support personnel?  
4 Those garage utility workers it isn't like we don't  
5 have any, anymore we just reduced the amount that are  
6 allocated per command we are using that additional  
7 resource out on fuel posts instead of in the garage.  
8 So it's going to take us a while to see what is the  
9 cascading impact of not having another body to be  
10 able to help with, you know, changing flat tires or  
11 fixing plows before a snow storm or something like  
12 that so it's going to be really fluent to see what is  
13 it actually going to be, the bottom line and that's,  
14 that is really. I don't, I can't answer whether or  
15 not we expect to see more overtime or less because of  
16 our availability. Thankfully we go through a year,  
17 I'm hop-, we're all hoping for a recovery year where  
18 our availability never pushed into a double digit  
19 outage factor again and if that, I mean that, I mean  
20 that's a game change in and of itself so I think that  
21 it really depends on the staffing level availability.  
22 You know, this year, thankfully it took a while in FY  
23 22 while we had this largest cohort that we've had in  
24 a decade where we've staffed up 1000 people. It  
25 still takes the entire time for all those people to



2 transition to the training academy to make them feel  
3 effective. So it's not like 1000 brand new people on  
4 day one. It took months. So we didn't get to feel  
5 the full weight of effect and then by the time that  
6 full 1000 was full board, we went back into now the,  
7 another wave of an Omicron variant which kind of  
8 negated all the positive the positivity that we  
9 would've got from having these fresh legs so to speak  
10 to help offset programmatic overtime. So I think  
11 that it's going to take FY23 really for us to see  
12 what are the staffing levels against the programs  
13 that we're running to try to make sure that we're on  
14 the right path to keep overtime in alignment with  
15 where we want to and look at straight time funding  
16 proposals so we could really talk, you know, honestly  
17 about where we need to be.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. Thank  
19 you for bringing up the garage utility workers. That  
20 was my next line of questioning. The plan includes  
21 \$5.1 million in savings in Fiscal Year 23 to reduce  
22 107 garage utility staff positions in attrition.  
23 With the proposed reduction budget head count for 23  
24 and in the out years will be 378 positions for garage  
25 utility staff. Can you walk us through exactly what

2 garage utility workers do on a daily basis and how  
3 important they are to your operation?

4 EDWARD GRAYSON: Garage utility workers,  
5 basically that, it's the most appally main function  
6 that we have. We utilize them for just about  
7 everything but primarily they prepare trucks and they  
8 prepare the facility for the next day's work. They  
9 also, if we have a collection truck for example that  
10 is coming to capacity on the route it is that worker  
11 that brings out the crew and empty to take the loaded  
12 one back to the garage so we can have as little  
13 downtime in routing efficiency as possible. They're  
14 also the key personnel who will change flat tires. I  
15 mean there are 10 tires on every sanitation truck and  
16 you know we definitely come across flat tires. They  
17 also do some vehicle fueling, basic preventative  
18 maintenance and one of the cornerstone things that  
19 they do for us is while we have the rest of the crew  
20 out working on refuse and recycling and street  
21 cleaning for as long as we can leading into preparing  
22 for a snow event or a weather event, the garage  
23 utility staff will start preparing the trucks for  
24 winter weather and emergency deployments. So that  
25 what we can do is transition the staff quickly onto

2 the other function. So they provide a really great  
3 support role and they also will go to some of the  
4 vendors. Some, not all of our vehicle repairs are  
5 done on site. Some of them because the vehicles  
6 thankfully come with a warranty. They also do the  
7 transportation from downed vehicle that are still  
8 under warranty going to repair facilities and back  
9 and they do a really multi-functional role and they  
10 are definitely a valued position. This cut of 71  
11 posts per day the 107 is the uninformed headcount  
12 total for full time equivalency but it's 71 positions  
13 a day and again it's in, it's one person in 71 of our  
14 locations but there are still other people who are  
15 assigned as the garage utility so it's a reduction in  
16 the people who fill that role, not that we have a  
17 single command that doesn't have someone working in  
18 that role.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: So my  
20 understanding it was about two garage utility workers  
21 per garage is that accurate? I mean how many, how  
22 many garage utility workers fulfill that role that  
23 you just broke down before these cuts. So you're  
24 right, for the most part Chair you're right. Um, in  
25 many locations there are two people assigned to the

2 day line and then one on each subsequent. We run  
3 three toward the day. We run 24 hours. So wherever  
4 the staffing level left us with either a combing of  
5 location because some of our garages you've taken  
6 towards you know, are located right next to each  
7 other so we try to do is work, you know, looking at  
8 this we tried to look at how we could  
9 programmatically you know look at the position from  
10 the garage and have the least amount of impact on the  
11 physical location, uh, so that can be a resource and  
12 additionally up until this point since we're working  
13 through that, we also know that if we had, if we had  
14 a significant amount of garage work we could try to  
15 pull another resource in from possibly another  
16 function and reschedule so we're still working  
17 through the complete absorption logistics of not  
18 having the staff where we normally have them but it  
19 is definitely a reduction in only the places that had  
20 more than one assigned so that there is at least  
21 someone with that core competency of knowledge to  
22 possibly train if we needed to, you know, add  
23 additional staff to it for a single one day only  
24 because we couldn't, you know, do the scheduling.  
25 Uh, the thing that we haven't come, that hasn't come

2 to full bore yet is what happens in real time like  
3 when, when we, we couldn't plan ahead for it and I  
4 won't know those costs until we've seen it really  
5 implemented and then we really can't gauge it until  
6 we have like more data on what's this cascading cost  
7 of not having this person all the time and their  
8 incumbent muscle memory and knowledge and just  
9 knowing how to get things done because even you, when  
10 we put someone else on it temporarily clearly that  
11 person may not have the complete or competency of  
12 everybody been trained to work safely but you know  
13 the more you do something the better you are at it.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Right, so what  
15 would you say, what kind of pressure does that put on  
16 a daytime utility working to go from having two folks  
17 to now having one. Also situations come on, you need  
18 that muscle memory, you need that institutional  
19 knowledge of those skill sets. What do you, in your  
20 own words or in your experience because you have a  
21 lot of experience in the department. How does that,  
22 how do you think that changes a day to day job for a  
23 a worker to go to have that reduction but the same  
24 level of responsibility for the garage?

EDWARD GRAYSON: I think, I think that it definitely is going to change the workload per day. Again that will be fluid. We've been trying to put this on the garage supervisor to try to do the best that he or she can do to schedule work. To do a little bit more meticulous planning on some of the things. It's, usually it's the adhoc, you know, situational deployment that's going to, you know, challenge the most but for the, there is also steady work. There's daily tasks that get assigned and what we've tried to do is really take a look at the distribution of the daily tasks, look what can be rolled over into the next shift and make command decisions. So we put a lot of ownership on we want the location supervisors to understand what the stretch of their now reduced GU staff would be, you know, garage utility staff. That reduction staff and try to communicate that effectively. As for resources make us to make management aware and make the borough commands aware of when they would need potentially. Here's the pinch point this week on where if something comes up I'm not going to be able to make that because I'm not going to have the bandwidth with the strips too thin. So when we're working it's in

2 two fold. The work day will definitely change for  
3 the teams that are there because there will be one  
4 less set of hands that knows exactly what to do. It  
5 doesn't mean there won't be a set of hands it will be  
6 one less expert so to speak on how to they have these  
7 little nuance jobs go on but it, we're more, it's  
8 also going to be different because we are asking our  
9 location supervisors to do more with managing the  
10 workload to make sure that they are put in a job  
11 where you have the trained person who can then  
12 potentially get a second set of hands in and be like  
13 the lead horse in that project.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Great. I have  
15 a few more sets of questions. I saw the borough  
16 president pop in and out. Um, just to let him know  
17 that we have a few more and then we'll let him do it.  
18 I also wanted to recognize that Council Member  
19 Williams had joined us as some point. I didn't  
20 mention her. Um, so my next question is about  
21 splinter group worker reduction. The plan includes  
22 an overall savings of 8.2 over 22, 23 in out years to  
23 reduce 37 splinter group staff positions through  
24 attrition. Can you walk us through exactly what  
25 splinter group workers do on a daily basis? And what

2 impact you anticipate this having on operations with  
3 that reduction?

4 EDWARD GRAYSON: Yes, Chair, splinter  
5 group is a great internal nomenclature so to speak  
6 because we have our bureaus and these are workers,  
7 both sanitation workers and supervisors who fill in  
8 to support units that aren't usually directly in BCC,  
9 Bureau Cleaning Collection field duties or solid  
10 waste management duties. Where they don't normally  
11 typically have a job that is 360, a post, a fixed  
12 sanitation post that it's variant. So we have people  
13 that are bureau of information technology for  
14 example. We love to have incumbent staff that's  
15 there in uniform to be able to really be hands on and  
16 do in house training response to emergencies. A lot  
17 of them are the people who do our route planning  
18 throughout route planning unit and our operations  
19 assistance unit where they really do, they go out and  
20 they do surveys and planning and they come back and  
21 they come back with some of the best data on how we  
22 can formulate new plans or field implementation and  
23 strategic initiatives. Um, another thing that we  
24 have with our splinter groups is some of our lot  
25 cleaning personnel and some of our you know vehicle



2 operations personnel and these are all unit, so it's  
3 a myriad of units that were employed. We try not to  
4 bear all of the brunt in any one of these particular  
5 units. Um, so it's a really mixed bag between you  
6 know these are secular jobs where, uh, they are not.  
7 You just don't see them on the front line but they  
8 are doing something in support of the front line so  
9 these cuts again are, what we're doing is we're  
10 reducing systemically a handful of people one or two  
11 posts here, one or two posts there, putting those  
12 people back on the frontline assignment. This is the  
13 job that they were hired for. They are trained they  
14 have the skills to do it. You really don't get into  
15 a splinter group until you have mastered the front  
16 line positions and then we're putting that expertise  
17 back into the field and then next year that loss is  
18 just the attrition of not backfilling them back to  
19 the splinter role. And again I don't, we will need  
20 to see what the cascading impact of that. We  
21 definitely value the work that these men and woman  
22 perform. However, we're doing what we've been asked  
23 to do. Look for efficiencies and not impact direct  
24 service levels. So that's why we made that  
25 transition there.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: My next  
3 question about the garages, um, women's bathrooms and  
4 locker rooms. How many of the 59 sanitation garages  
5 citywide have women's bathrooms and locker rooms?

6 EDWARD GRAYSON: That's a great question  
7 and I just want to put in for context, so, um,  
8 naturally women's locker rooms in our, in the  
9 collective bargaining agreement for sanitation  
10 workers particularly, we have wash up time and I know  
11 when I was a sanitation worker you want to be able to  
12 go and completely wash up meaning you have a shower  
13 facility. You have adequate facilities to completely  
14 wash yourself at the end of the collection day and  
15 right now we have all 59 assignments can go  
16 somewhere. We only have 57 that have standalone  
17 female locker rooms and the last two are in  
18 construction. So we are really at, so the last two  
19 in Queens, District 2 and District 4 currently have  
20 to go to District 3 which is in the same building by  
21 the way so it's not like they have to walk a million  
22 miles, it's in the same hub. They have to go and use  
23 that for a, for a full facility but they also do have  
24 a different room that they can relax it. It's just  
25 not co-mingled, unlike the male counterparts that

2 have a locker room that is one big locker room and  
3 they can also have a shower facility and other  
4 facilities. So we are down to only have two  
5 facilities. Two, two districts of 59 that do not  
6 have a female sanitation workers locker room.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: So for the D2  
8 and D4 you're saying there in the same hub?

9 EDWARD GRAYSON: Queens West 2 and Queens  
10 West 4 garage are situated right by Q3. They're on  
11 the same block.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay and so the  
13 women where they don't have, in those places where  
14 they don't have it, um, you're saying they have a  
15 different. What kind of room is it?

16 EDWARD GRAYSON: Well it's just a, it's  
17 just a place to sit. It's not, meaning it has no  
18 plumbing. It has no wet work. They have to go. If  
19 they want to go and do, but they also inside those  
20 same garages there was also a single occupancy  
21 bathroom that they can utilize. So there is a place  
22 to go the bathroom there's just not a place to take  
23 aa shower.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay. So, so  
3 those workers who identify as women won't have, they  
4 just can't shower in those last two garages?

5 EDWARD GRAYSON: Yes, they can go to Q2  
6 which is how it's been and I'm not saying that, we're  
7 working towards it. So the last two districts are  
8 currently under a construction project and we are  
9 very glad to be able to finalize a very long journey,  
10 uh, to get there but we are down to two that they do  
11 not have a women's facility with a shower inside the  
12 location that they have to walk a block. The women  
13 assigned there would have to walk about half a block,  
14 um, because the three garages are right next to each  
15 other to go use the shower facilities in the district  
16 3 garage but they could definitely sit down and it's  
17 not a female assigned standalone bathroom, shower,  
18 locker room.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: All right. Two  
20 more topics and then I will, uh, I'm going to hand it  
21 to the borough president after and then the public  
22 will have their chance. I'll be, I'll be quiet, I  
23 know it's a long day. Um, just quickly on city  
24 council funding for sanitation. A lot of members  
25 came out here and said that they, they, you know,

2 they don't like the fact that they have to give it  
3 over. We all agree, they, they, you know they don't  
4 like the fact that they have to give it over. We all  
5 agree that it's not great. Um, what is the number  
6 one thing that members are funding sanitation to deal  
7 with? What's the number one activity?

8 EDWARD GRAYSON: The, the primary funding  
9 from the members are for additional basket service.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Basket service.  
11 Okay and I know that you might have mentioned this  
12 before but what, what does the dep-, what would it  
13 take to baseline to cover all of those and remove the  
14 need for that, uh, supplemental funding from the  
15 Council Members?

16 EDWARD GRAYSON: I'm go-, so the baseline  
17 funding will be different because everything that's  
18 getting funded now is on, uh, OT from them. I think  
19 we have a number. I'm sorry, Greg, do we have a  
20 number?

21 GREGORY ANDERSON: So we don't have a  
22 number to baseline the services. For this current  
23 Fiscal year it's \$4.6 million that's being provided.  
24 The majority of that funding is coming out of the  
25 dedicated NYC clean up initiative funding that the

2 City Council has so it's funding that intended to be  
3 used for cleaning up neighborhoods and obviously, you  
4 know, anytime we're baselining something there's a  
5 lower cost compared to overtime but we don't have a  
6 specific number for that set of services.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: So you're, so  
8 then, I'm sorry, I'm toggling between my, in, so in  
9 order to get back to the truck level of service that  
10 you would need to cover every single basket you're  
11 saying you don't have a number?

12 GREGORY ANDERSON: So for the specific  
13 \$4.6 million in discretionary or initiative funding  
14 that City Council members are providing to sanitation  
15 this year. We don't have a number for what that  
16 would be on a baseline funding. A lot of those  
17 services, all of those services are currently being  
18 executed on overtime. Many of them are half shifts  
19 so it's like a four hour basket truck that goes out  
20 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the afternoon after  
21 the crew is done on collection. Those kind of things  
22 can't be done on straight time because that is by its  
23 nature an overtime assignment so we have to look  
24 through the specifics of which ones are half trucks,  
25 which ones are full trucks and do the analysis there.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: And how, what  
3 would be an ideal number of trucks per week to  
4 achieve optimal basket service across the City.

5 EDWARD GRAYSON: I think that's a, I  
6 definitely think that that's a fluid number and I  
7 know that right now so when you think about where we  
8 are, right now we are, you know, we're running 588  
9 basket trucks per week and I think that it's looking  
10 at what the temporal distributions are, understanding  
11 how collection truck targets change month over month  
12 and really looking at where are the pinch points  
13 because that's one of the things that we want to  
14 continue to talk about and work on and in this  
15 preliminary budget and you know, that's where we are.  
16 Having these discussions, getting a number out there,  
17 and as Greg said, you know, earlier we and we  
18 definitely appreciate the partnership with all the  
19 Council Members who did then come in and provide this  
20 additional service and it's definitely helpful and we  
21 want to continue having the discussion on where we  
22 need to be and what that analysis would look like and  
23 really find out where the pinch points are because it  
24 is a temporal fix. There are plenty of places where  
25 you know and it's multi-pronged approach to try to do

2 better with basket availability meaning volume left  
3 because if we can do something more with, you know,  
4 stopping on our enforcement side, stopping the misuse  
5 of the basket. If we can do something more with as  
6 we're scheduling our route assignments, coming out of  
7 the winter season, perhaps the temporal distribution  
8 of when the collection service passes by can also  
9 create an optic. So it really remains a fluid thing.  
10 In general though I love basket empty, I love every  
11 basket I can see so we're never going to, you know,  
12 deny that we love empty baskets too Chair.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay and just  
14 to back up a second. So what would be the baseline  
15 funding level needed for FY 23 versus FY 20 levels?

16 EDWARD GRAYSON: I think, uh, let me see.  
17 Let me see if we have a number on this?

18 GREGORY ANDERSON: Yeah, Commissioner. I  
19 think that's the \$18 million that Chief Hardin  
20 provided earlier. But that, that would be if it were  
21 funded as a, as a one-time funding on overtime it  
22 would be the \$18 million number.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay and has,  
24 has the department ever conducted a study on the  
25



2 effects of public waste receptacles? Receptacle  
3 numbers on litter?

4 EDWARD GRAYSON: We have not conducted a  
5 formal study on whether or not or how much  
6 receptacles or we have not, what we do is we review  
7 where the traffic is. We, you know, what the  
8 pedestrian traffic is going to be. We review what  
9 conditions are. We use our 3-1-1 data coming in. We  
10 talk to, we use situational antics from now social  
11 media streams. We're also talking to Council  
12 Members. But we also take into consideration the  
13 studies of all the municipalities that have paid for  
14 such, you know, things and we, it's really a  
15 committee as a whole and we would gladly love to talk  
16 about this more and what we know about basket  
17 service. What we've learned throughout the years by  
18 studying it, where other from now social media  
19 streams. We're also talking to Council Members. But  
20 we also take into consideration the studies of all  
21 the municipalities that have paid for such, you know,  
22 things and we, it's really a committee as a whole and  
23 we would gladly love to talk about this more and what  
24 we know about basket service. What we've learned  
25 throughout the years by studying it, where other have

2 conducted a formal study, understanding of course  
3 some of their topography is completely different than  
4 ours.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Okay and my  
6 last line of questioning is around the Gansevoort  
7 marine transfer stations. And mostly just to kind of  
8 generate and get out the public record kind of the  
9 status. So can you give us from your assessment what  
10 is the status of the Gansevoort marine transfer  
11 station?

12 EDWARD GRAYSON: So that's a great  
13 question. Clearly there is a, you know, it's been a  
14 hanging chad for a while. What are we doing at  
15 Gansevoort as we do the development? The progress  
16 there and it's because there is a few things that are  
17 going on. There's a few. It's right there on the  
18 river and there's a few things that are going on and  
19 to give you a little bit more of the programmatic of  
20 what's going on I'm going to ask Greg to step in and  
21 just talk you through some of the logistic because  
22 it's not, it's not that we're not moving on  
23 something. There's a lot of players in the game.  
24 Greg.

2 GREGORY ANDERSON: Sure, thank you  
3 Commissioner. So the 2006 Solid Waste Management  
4 Plan as one of the facilities envisioned for our long  
5 term export program did envision a recyclables  
6 transfer station at the Gansevoort Peninsula where we  
7 had previously had the Gansevoort MTS is the fresh  
8 kills and it would've transported recycles by open  
9 barge to our facilities, our partner facilities with  
10 Linsins [sounds like] and Pratt. Um, currently the  
11 paper that would go to Gansevoort is handled at one  
12 of our other NTS 9th Street just up the river and our  
13 collections are delivered directly to facilities in  
14 either Jersey City or the Bronx. Where this stands  
15 right now, the 2008 Amendment to state law that  
16 enabled this facility because it's in Hudson River  
17 Park requires a someone complicated joint MOU between  
18 the mayor, the Governor and the heads of both houses  
19 of Legislature in New York State that would commit  
20 funding for park improvements as a precondition for  
21 this product to move forward and at this point no MOU  
22 has been signed. We do still have, we had put out  
23 actually through DDC a design contract at this point  
24 probably six years ago so that design contract is  
25 still on hold. We do have \$52.9 million in capital

2 funding in the capital budget to construct the NTS.

3 Obviously that number of what it would actually cost

4 has increased since 2006 so we would need more but

5 right now the facilities are stuck in this limbo

6 position. It's something that we can look at as

7 we're doing the planning for the next solid waste

8 management plan which is due in 2026.

9 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Does the  
10 Department of Sanitation see this as a priority?

11 GREGORY ANDERSON: So I think it is a  
12 priority for us to have a sustainable long-term  
13 export and a waste management system. That is  
14 something that what our priorities were in 2006 were  
15 very different than what our priorities are now  
16 because at the time we were very much focused on the  
17 recent closure of fresh kills landfill. We were very  
18 much focused on the overreliance of our department on  
19 private waste transfer stations in historically  
20 overburdened communities. We have thankfully built  
21 our network of refuse Marine Transfer Stations. We  
22 have passed with the Council and with borough  
23 President, Former Chair Reynoso who I can see waiting  
24 in the wings. The waste equity law. So I think  
25 we've taken a lot of really steps forward. We have

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 101

2 more work to do on those topics but I think as we go  
3 into the next Solid Waste Management Planning process  
4 with the Council with a whole range of stakeholders.  
5 I think I want to have that opportunity to look at  
6 what our priorities are and figure out what the best  
7 investments are that we can make going forward.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: So does, has  
9 there been a decision at all to stop pursuing  
10 Gansevoort from the department?

11 GREGORY ANDERSON: No, not at this time  
12 and the funding remains in the capital budget.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Great. Well  
14 thank you all. That's, those are my questions, um,  
15 and I just wanted to acknowledge our borough  
16 president here, former Chair, filling some big  
17 footsteps, excited to always be learning from all the  
18 stuff that you've done over the years on this. So,  
19 I'm going to pull you up. I'm going to turn it over  
20 actually to Jessica who will do that.

21 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE  
22 COUNSEL: Thank you Chair and before we hear public  
23 testimony we will hear from Brooklyn Borough  
24 President, Antonio Reynoso.

25 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

ANTONIO REYNOSO: Thank you, uh, Sgt.

Biondo I never though I would be the one that jumps the gun when the Sergeant at Arms calls the clock. I want to say hi to Sgt. Biondo and to Chief Perez who is also there. Just got to do quick shout outs to the great people of, that were supporting me when I was there, Jonathan Seltzer, um, I see there, Nichole Anderson, Kurdin Francisco, all people that I care deeply about. The Sergeant at Arms that carried us through all these hearings. I can't tell you how happy I am to see you all. And to the Commissioner Grayson, to Greg Anderson it's so nice to see you all. Again I feel like it's a big reunion and if the time that I saw the questions being asked by Chair Nurse are any reflection as to how she's going to do in this position I couldn't be happier. You know we needed a change in pace, a change in style and I really feel like the next four years with you at the helm Chair Nurse is going to be extraordinary and I think people are going to really be happy with your work. I couldn't be happier to have somebody from Bushwick, from the same neighborhood, the same grounds in north Brooklyn to be carrying the torch. So more power to you, keep it up. You're doing a

2 great job. I have a statement but I want to cut it  
3 short because I'm coming back home. I just want to  
4 mention the Gansevoort situation, Chair Nurse, which  
5 I don't think the Deputy Commissioner or the  
6 Commissioner can say, can say that I can say is that  
7 it's bogged down in a bureaucratic nightmare that I  
8 believe was intentionally done. To get a commitment  
9 from four different levels of government, or two  
10 levels of government, three houses in one so the  
11 Governor, the Assembly and the Senate plus the  
12 Council, not the Council, the Mayor have to commit a  
13 certain amount of funding for the park before they  
14 can start construction. The Mayor's funding or the  
15 City funding has always been parked there so we're  
16 good to go but until we get the state to match that,  
17 they won't be able to start. This is a political  
18 play made by the people in and around Gansevoort.  
19 More power to them because they never wanted to see  
20 this happen and they were really smart enough to  
21 forth a bureaucratic like hashposh so to undo that  
22 has been more difficult in my time because I am a  
23 member of the Council and not a state rep. But I  
24 would suggest that we go after the people at the  
25 state level to finally commit to it and follow

2 through on finalizing the swap but it is one thing  
3 that I think would be meaningful. The things that I  
4 want to just mention here is because trash is out of  
5 sight out of mind is one of the departments that the  
6 Mayors like to go to cut and then we see crisis level  
7 garbage piling up on our streets and the Commissioner  
8 is going to be very clear with you more personnel  
9 means cleaner streets and so it's a very black and  
10 white dynamic in the department of sanitation. You  
11 can't be more creative. You have to drive the truck.  
12 You have to pick up the trash. It's a very, very  
13 black and white thing. More people pick up more  
14 trash and the routes have been re-routed I think  
15 under this Commissioner once and under the previous  
16 commissioner twice, the routes can't get any more  
17 efficient if we call in Amazon, V or Fedex to do the  
18 routing and the logistics. We are as efficient as we  
19 can get on these routes. What we need is more  
20 manpower to carry it and that's probably would follow  
21 suit in letting you know that that's part of the  
22 issue that we have. The Zero Waste by 2030 is going  
23 to have to get changed. I know again something that  
24 the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner were say  
25 but Chair Nurse without saving to draw which is a



2 very important program that is, that was, the  
3 narrative on that was that it was a tax on the people  
4 and was something that wasn't supported by the  
5 previous speaker. I'm kind of put the Mayor, the  
6 Mayor didn't want to put his neck on the line on  
7 something that he thought people would see as a tax.  
8 Regardless of whether or not it was probably the most  
9 important part of Zero Waste by 2030. We need to  
10 control how much trash people are putting out. If we  
11 give them the organics and cycling, give them the  
12 MGP, the metal glass plastic, we end up having very  
13 little trash left and the savings is just an  
14 incentive to keep people from having to use too much  
15 trash. The Commissioner, Captain Garcia at the time  
16 thought it would be smart to give people awards for  
17 doing a good job as opposed to fining them for not  
18 doing it so we call it savings withdrawal versus  
19 paying withdrawal. If we can't get the saving  
20 withdrawal moving forward we won't get Zero Waste  
21 ever, um, because we need to change culture when it  
22 comes to how we handle the trash. When organics  
23 recycling needs to be mandatory city wide for us to  
24 achieve these goals and if we don't do that again  
25 voluntarily or whatever system we have, these half

2 step systems won't allow us to achieve that. And I  
3 think . . .

4 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

5 ANTONIO REYNOSO: So those are the things  
6 that I think are important. I just really wanted to  
7 come back and say hi to everybody and hang out with  
8 Chair Nurse more than anything else. I have a lot of  
9 love in my heart for you guys. I'll be more  
10 technical at the next hearing but spread love is the  
11 Brooklyn way and it's so great to see you all. Thank  
12 you Chair Nurse for indulging me with extra time.

13 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

14 COUNSEL: Thank you very much Brooklyn Borough  
15 President Reynoso. We will now turn to public  
16 testimony. I would like to remind everyone that  
17 unlike our typical council hearings we will be  
18 calling individuals one by one. Each panelist will  
19 be given three minutes to speak. Please begin once  
20 the Sergeant has started the timer. Council Members  
21 who have questions for a particular panelist should  
22 use the raise hand function in Zoom and I will call  
23 you, call on you after the panelists has completed  
24 their testimony. For panelists, once your name is  
25 called a member of our staff will unmute you and the

2 Sergeant at Arms will give you the go ahead to begin  
3 upon setting the timer. Please wait for the Sergeant  
4 to announce that you maybe begin before delivering  
5 your testimony. You may also submit written  
6 testimony to [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). I would now  
7 like to welcome Eric Goldstein to testify. After  
8 Eric Goldstein we will hear from Lynda Nguyen  
9 followed by Justin Wood. Eric Goldstein you may  
10 begin when the Sergeant calls time.

11 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

12 ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Good afternoon Chairman  
13 Nurse and members of the Committee. My name is Eric  
14 Goldstein New York City Environment Director at the  
15 Natural Resource Defense Council. Thank you for your  
16 leadership Chair Nurse and holding this important  
17 hearing. I'm going to summarize my written testimony  
18 and we welcome Commissioner Grayson's comments  
19 earlier today regarding the creation of a new bureau  
20 of commercial waste that and hope that means there  
21 won't be any further delays in moving with the RFP to  
22 implement the commercial waste zone landmark program  
23 that will solve so many issues with respect to  
24 commercial waste. But today the topic is residential  
25 waste and the proposed DSNY budget for FY 2023 would

2 cut approximately \$60 million from the FY 2022  
3 adopted budget. The cuts however are not equally  
4 distributed. They fall disproportionately on  
5 programs designed to deal with the environmental and  
6 quality of life burdens of over 12,000 tons a day of  
7 trash that are imposed on the City and its residents  
8 and more often than not on communities of color.  
9 There are three programs in particular where the  
10 proposed cuts to the DSNY budget would be particularly  
11 harmful. One organics collection cuts and that  
12 includes curtailment of the expansion of the curbside  
13 program, the chopping in half of the popular and cost  
14 effective funding for compost drop off sites, and the  
15 programs for the city's public schools just allowing  
16 them to languish as Council Member Gennaro and you  
17 Chair Nurse have already noted. The second program  
18 on the chopping block are litter basket service where  
19 roughly 150 litter basket collection trucks per week  
20 are proposed to be cut at a time when litter is an  
21 increasing problem across all five boroughs. The  
22 rats are really enjoying this proposed cut. And the  
23 third is the cut in the electronic waste collection  
24 curbside for Staten Island. Electronic waste needs  
25 to be convenient for all New Yorkers under state law

2 and this cut is particularly harmful to the residents  
3 of Staten Island. While the City's litter basket cut  
4 back in service is just nutty, the cuts to organic  
5 waste collection are economically unwise as well.  
6 Organics represent a third of the residential waste  
7 stream and the cost of exports are climbing rapidly.  
8 In FY20 the cost of tax payers for waste export to  
9 out of state landfills and incinerators was \$430  
10 million, in FY27 that's increased to \$470 million.  
11 In other words, there's been a \$40 million increase  
12 in export costs. The solution is to send our food  
13 scraps, yard waste and composting to composting  
14 facility and anaerobic digestion facilities rather  
15 than to distant landfills and incinerators and if we  
16 invest wisely we'll end up saving money over the long  
17 term with these programs just as Seattle has already  
18 demonstrated.

19 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

20 ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Finally let me, let me  
21 conclude by making these tiny recommendations. Full  
22 restoration of funding for community composting.  
23 That's an additional \$3.5 million at least.  
24 Expansion of school food waste collections to every  
25 City public school. Funding for planning for

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 110

2 mandatory curbside compost collection which the  
3 department should be doing and the council needs to  
4 enact legislation to advance that. Restoration of e-  
5 waste collections for Staten Island and restoration  
6 and expansion of the litter basket collection service  
7 in all five boroughs. We urge you to include these  
8 in the Council's Budget Response Document to the  
9 City's proposed preliminary budget and we thank you  
10 for your attention.

11 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

12 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
13 hear from Lynda Nguyen followed by Justin Wood  
14 followed by Adrian Benepe. Lynda Nguyen you may,  
15 you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

16 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

17 LYNDA NGUYEN: Thank you for the  
18 opportunity to testify today. My name is Lynda  
19 Nguyen and I'm the Senior Research and Policy Analyst  
20 at ALIGN. ALIGN is the Transform don't Trash New  
21 York Coalition, a citywide partnership of  
22 Environmental Justice Communities, unions, safe  
23 street advocates working to create good green jobs  
24 and clean safer communities for all New Yorkers.  
25 Since the start of the pandemic, sanitation services

2 have been one of the first to experience budget cuts  
3 or even retention despite enacting every single  
4 neighborhood across the City. We saw this during the  
5 first two years of the pandemic when critical  
6 programs like commercial waste zones, basket service  
7 and community composting were de-prioritized and  
8 underfunded resulting in dirtier streets, a dramatic  
9 rise of litter and rodent complaint and lowered the  
10 quality of life for all New Yorkers. The proposed  
11 budget cuts to the Department of Sanitation will  
12 exacerbate our city's sanitation crisis while our  
13 Transform Don't Trash Coalition encourages the  
14 establishment of the division in the preliminary  
15 budget we are urging the City to implement the  
16 Commercial Waste Zone Law as soon as possible and to  
17 restore DSNYs budget to ensure vital sanitation  
18 services as I mentioned previously are operating at  
19 pre-pandemic levels. Our City frankly states that  
20 any opportunity to transform our waste management  
21 systems and implement improving strategies is the  
22 first step. Commercial Waste Zones implementing it  
23 exactly is what the City should be doing to enhance  
24 public safety, achieve the City's climate goals in  
25 order to support the whole economic recovery effort.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 112

2 How the sanitation work remains one of the most  
3 dangerous jobs in the nation and commercial waste  
4 would address this by requiring vehicle and safety  
5 measures, investing safer facilities and also to  
6 conduct safer, uh, safety trainings which area  
7 measures that will be critical to both work and  
8 pedestrian safety. Let's not forget the fatal  
9 incident that happened earlier this month in  
10 Brooklyn. On climate, commercial waste will promote  
11 high recycling and composting standards and also take  
12 18 million feasible truck miles off the city streets.  
13 On environmental recovery, the City's environmental  
14 impact statement for commercial waste zones found  
15 that a new system would offer at least \$14 million in  
16 system wide cost savings. The new system will also  
17 extend opportunities for minorities and women owned  
18 businesses by incentivizing to partner with  
19 recyclers, manufacturers, micro haulers and auditors  
20 to reduce the massive commercial waste stream.  
21 Delaying the implementation of commercial waste zones  
22 means that continued exclusion of many current and  
23 future rent a car innovators. Lastly, I'm going to  
24 speak a little bit about the program New York stands  
25 to, this stands to be a large opportunity for the



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 113

2 City to invest in jobs in the industry or get  
3 recycling with a very significant amount of waste  
4 away from landfills creating more good local jobs for  
5 New Yorkers and has a potential to up to \$20 million  
6 in revenue each year. You can learn from established  
7 proven models like Seattle that have done this in the  
8 past. New York Transform Don't Trash Coalition urges  
9 the City to implement commercial waste zones as soon  
10 as possible and to restore and extend DSNYS budget to  
11 ensure vital sanitation services are operating at  
12 pre-pandemic levels. I want to thank Chair Nurse for  
13 your leadership and also extend my thanks to the  
14 Committee for their collaboration on this important  
15 work and I hope I made it to time. That's all for  
16 me.

17 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

18 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
19 hear from Justin Wood followed by Adrian Benepe  
20 followed by Dylan Halper. Justin Wood you may begin  
21 when the Sergeant calls time.

22 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

23 JUSTIN WOOD: Thank you, thank you Chair  
24 Nurse and members of the Sanitation Committee and the  
25 Borough President for the opportunity to speak today.

2 I am also going to summarize my written testimony.

3 Um, in some as we've heard from so many Council

4 Members. As our world faces and escalating climate

5 crisis we continue in New York City to struggle with

6 rats, piles of garbage bags in the streets and a

7 grossly unequal waste system that still

8 disproportionately dumps and incinerates waste and

9 environmental justice communities. We echo the

10 concerns of many others, the cuts to recycling

11 programs in particular and the lack of investments in

12 the proposed 23 sanitation budget are taking us in

13 the wrong direction while perpetuating existing

14 inequities. On the residential side of the waste

15 system, we share the concerns of many about the

16 proposed cuts to community compost programs,

17 education, outreach and the freeze to the planned

18 expansion of the very limited curbside compost

19 collection program. We note that New York City's

20 diversion rate has been declining, going in the wrong

21 direction and it's far from on track to achieve our

22 zero waste and greenhouse gas reduction goals. So,

23 along with many others we call for the urgent need

24 for legislation and a long term budget plan so we're

25 not here every year, um, fighting over the same

2 things for a universal mandatory composting program  
3 in which all New Yorkers can recycle their food and  
4 yard waste in which building owners and managers are  
5 required to enable their tenants to participate. I'm  
6 going to sort of move quickly but we share in the  
7 call for containerization and innovation to go hand  
8 in hand with the expansion of composting. We need to  
9 deny food to the armies of rats we now see feasting  
10 on the mixed garbage in black bag piles throughout  
11 the City. We are equally concerned by the delays in  
12 the implementation of commercial waste zones and we  
13 saw that there was a sort of hasty weeping, uh, moved  
14 to delay this by three months. We hope that that's  
15 the end of these delays and that the City will move  
16 forward with the RFD and negotiations to arrive at  
17 comprehensive accountability and contracts with the  
18 commercial waste industry. I would just note that  
19 from a budget perspective this program should be  
20 self-sustaining by administrative fees but only once  
21 the contracts with Commercial Waste Providers are  
22 negotiated and go in to effect. It's concerning that  
23 any further delays would also be bad for the economy.  
24 There's a lot of savings associated with moving to  
25 the efficient commercial waste zone program. It will

2 save tens of millions of dollars compared to trying  
3 to ramp up diversion rates in the private sector  
4 without those deficiencies. Just to know, there's  
5 also been a lot of delays to the enforcement of  
6 commercial organic waste recycling rules and as New  
7 York City reopens and we go back to producing a lot  
8 of commercial food waste we really need enforcement  
9 of those rules to ensure that edible food is donated  
10 and that inedible food waste is recycled by a  
11 composting but again the commercial waste zone  
12 program and having an ample enforcement budget and  
13 enforcement personnel for DSNY is the only way to  
14 ensure that those services are being provided to food  
15 waste generating businesses by the commercial waste  
16 industry and the . . .

17 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

18 JUSTIN WOOD: . . . businesses that do the  
19 right thing are being rewarded with crisis. Finally,  
20 we just want to call for adequate enforcement of  
21 safety and environmental measures for both DSNY and  
22 the business integrity commission. We similarly have  
23 been shocked and disturbed by the recent death of a  
24 pedestrian in Brooklyn and by fixed data showing that  
25 only 27 percent of these dangerous large private

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 117

2 sanitation trucks have installed basic side guards,  
3 meaning the industry is not on track to be  
4 in compliance with local law 108 of 2021 which  
5 requires side guards on all trucks by 2023. Thank  
6 you so much Chair Nurse and to members of the Council  
7 and we look forward to working with you and agency  
8 staff to implement these programs.

9 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

10 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
11 hear from Adrain Benepe followed by Dylan Halper  
12 followed by Jasmine Wynn. Adrian Benepe you may  
13 begin when the Sergeant calls times.

14 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

15 ADRIAN BENEPE: Thank you Chairperson  
16 Nurse and all the Committee Member including my home  
17 district council member, Council Member Gale Brewer.  
18 Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you  
19 today. My name is Adrian Benepe I am President of  
20 Brooklyn Botanic Garden, a proud member of the New  
21 York City Call for Institutions Group. However, I am  
22 not here today to lobby for restoration of the  
23 cultural affairs budget. Instead I'd like to talk  
24 about the New York City Compost Project of which  
25 Brooklyn Botanic Garden has been a member since its

2 inception almost 20 years ago. During that time it  
3 has been our privilege to educate countless New  
4 Yorkers on healthy soils and provide a resource that  
5 New Yorkers need to produce and use their own  
6 compost. It's also been an honor to be a non-profit  
7 partner with the Department of Sanitation just as it  
8 was for many years when I was a Parks Commissioner  
9 and partnered with the Department of Sanitation in  
10 converting closed landfills into public parks  
11 including Fresh Gales Park and Shirley Shizum State  
12 Park so that you for that extraordinary  
13 collaboration. Prior to the budget cuts brought on  
14 by the pandemic, the New York City Compost Project of  
15 BBG had a total of six full time employees. At full  
16 strength the program had the bandwidth to engage in a  
17 myriad of community outreach and educational efforts.  
18 Our staff provided technical assistance to volunteer  
19 compost sites, hosting school and community based  
20 workshops. BBG also regularly hosted and taught  
21 classes as part of the master composter certificate  
22 program. As a result of budget cuts, the New York  
23 City Compost Project at BBG has been reduced to a  
24 single employee who is assigned to work with a non-  
25 profit initiative a community based, environmental

2 organization with a farm and composting operations in  
3 Red Oak, Brooklyn. While we strive to provide as  
4 many of these services we offered prior to the  
5 pandemic, our capacity has been greatly diminished.  
6 As our City works to meet with the challenges of  
7 climate change, the project of reducing our  
8 contribution to landfills is more important than ever  
9 and now I'm preaching to the converted. We urge the  
10 administration to invest in our City's soils and  
11 environment by fully restoring the New York City  
12 Compost Project to pre-pandemic funding levels. This  
13 investment will allow BBG and other nonprofit  
14 organizations that make up the New York City Compost  
15 Project to do what we do best, provide world class  
16 environmental educational to New Yorkers free of  
17 charge. We would also like the urge the  
18 administration to restore full funding for curbside  
19 organics collection while the understand the  
20 administrations concerns regarding the liability of  
21 the program, halting expansion is not the answer, it  
22 should be just the opposite. The salutation is to  
23 invest in outreach and education to encourage New  
24 Yorkers to enroll and to convince their landlords.  
25 By raising the participation rate of the program, we

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 120

2 can reduce processing costs and create a viable  
3 program for our entire city, Brooklyn Botanic Garden  
4 stands ready to work with the City Council and the  
5 Administration to advance this critical issue. Thank  
6 you for your time.

7 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

8 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
9 hear from Dylan Halper followed by Jasmine Wynn  
10 followed by Shiv Soin. Dylan Hopper [sic], Dylan  
11 Halper you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

12 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

13 DYLAN HALPER: Hello Chairwoman Nurse and  
14 members of the sanitation committee. My name is  
15 Dylan Halper and I'm a 15 year old student on the  
16 upper east side and I attend the Dalton School. I am  
17 also a member of Triage, a youth organization  
18 fighting for climate justice in New York City. Today  
19 I am testify to demand a reinstatement of \$47.8  
20 million back into the sanitary department's budget  
21 without the cuts proposed by Mayor Adams.  
22 Additionally I urge you to fully fund the Zero Waste  
23 Schools Program. As a young person, I'll experience  
24 first-hand the devastating effects brought by climate  
25 change and the damage caused by environmental harm.



2 Therefor students and young people like myself play a  
3 unique role in participating in action to work to  
4 protect our environment and taken proven steps to  
5 reduce environmental harm. Composting and the Zero  
6 Waste Schools program are proven ways to ensure a  
7 healthy environment. While some have criticized the  
8 composting programs like Zero Waste Schools that is  
9 not having a big enough impact, this is simply  
10 untrue. While it may appear like a small  
11 contribution to composting as one student doesn't do  
12 much, the collective composting done by students  
13 across the City under this program could make a  
14 significant difference on our environment.  
15 Additionally, the Zero Waste Schools program will  
16 allow students to learn more about sanitation and an  
17 inclusion to take action on these critical issues.  
18 The programs are necessary for us and therefore I  
19 urge you to ensure they remain fully funded. Thank  
20 you for your time.

21 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

22 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
23 hear from Jasmine Wynn followed by Shiv Soin,  
24 followed by Victoria Lu. Jasmine Wynn, you may begin  
25 when the Sergeant calls time.

2 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

3 JASMINE WYNN: Good afternoon Chairwoman  
4 Nurse and members of the Sanitation Committee. My  
5 name is Jasmine Wynn. I'm an 11th grade student who  
6 has lived in New York City for my entire lifetime and  
7 I am also a Manhattan Borough Organizer with Triage a  
8 youth led climate justice organization based in New  
9 York City. I'm speaking today to demand that Mayor  
10 Adams halt his proposed nearly \$50 million cut to the  
11 Department of Sanitation Budget and also restore full  
12 funding to the New York City Zero Waste Program and  
13 public schools. Sanitation is one of the greatest  
14 challenges that my community of Harlem has faced in  
15 recent years. Yesterday while I was walking along  
16 116th Street I noticed multiple dead rats and mice  
17 near heaps of food waste and garbage lined across the  
18 street. By cutting funding this will only worsen  
19 problems that are negatively impacting the lives of  
20 New York City residents on a daily basis. According  
21 to the Hunter College Food Policy Center, as of 2020  
22 it was estimated that over half of the food waste in  
23 New York City came from residential settings. By  
24 continuing the Zero Waste Program in New York City  
25 Public Schools students can learn about the negative

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 123

2 impacts of food waste on the environment and its  
3 impact on the climate crisis and thus encourage those  
4 within their households to take action on food waste  
5 by bringing composting practices into their daily  
6 home lives. By providing funding for the Zero Waste  
7 Program in schools in conjunction with other  
8 community based composting initiatives in New York  
9 City, this directly provides residents with a way to  
10 take action on the climate crisis and aid in New York  
11 City's efforts in reducing food waste and helping the  
12 climate. Therefore, once again I am demanding that  
13 for the sake of improving the quality of life in New  
14 York City residents and also for the sake of  
15 effectively combating the climate crisis that we  
16 reinstate the \$50 million cut and also continue to  
17 fund the Zero Waste Programming in public schools.  
18 Thank you.

19 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

20 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
21 hear from Shiv Soin. Followed by Victoria Lu  
22 followed by Helen Brady. Shiv Soin you may begin  
23 when the Sergeant calls time.

24 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.  
25

2 SHIV SOIN: Good afternoon Chairwoman

3 Nurse, members of the sanitation committee and  
4 everybody present. My name is Shiv Soin and I'm a  
5 resident in Lower Manhattan, a 21 year old Senior at

6 NYU and I also serve as the Executive Director of  
7 Triage, a youth organization fighting for climate

8 justice across New York City. I speak on behalf of

9 hundreds of our members all of whom are high school

10 and college students within the five boroughs of New

11 York City to strongly state our support for re-

12 instating the \$47.8 million cut from the sanitation

13 budget and to ensure that this money is directly

14 invested in trash pickup, our organic composting

15 program and the Zero Waste School initiative all of

16 which are critical in our city's fight against

17 climate change. The Zero Waste Schools initiative

18 provides 66,000 students with critical opportunities

19 to learn and engage with the environment. It's also

20 a valuable educational aspect for our students,

21 provides our communities with access to fresh food

22 and ensures that our schools are kept clean. This

23 vital program currently exists in only half of our

24 schools and I employ you to allocate funding in the

25 FY23 budget to fully fund this program. We have only

2 seen the beginning of the impact that this program  
3 has in half of our schools and additional funding to  
4 all of our schools in the City to make this program  
5 universal will be transformational not only for our  
6 students but for the communities that these schools  
7 are in and for everybody involved in our City.

8 Moreover, our City is continuously facing a trash  
9 crisis. If I walked outside my door right now, you  
10 would see over two dozen garbage bags lined across  
11 the sidewalk. It makes it nearly impossible to use  
12 that area of the road as rats and other animals have  
13 made it their homes. It is unsanitary, unsafe, and  
14 degrading to our residents to be forced into these  
15 conditions with no other choice of their own. As I  
16 talked to residents in lower Manhattan, Cypress Hills  
17 in Brooklyn, Astoria in Queens, Harlem in the Bronx,  
18 residents across all five boroughs of our City are  
19 continuously facing a trash crisis and this is  
20 showing us not only to me but to other residents of  
21 our City that this is how we value them. We value  
22 our, we value the lives of all of our residents here  
23 and we must make this investment immediately in order  
24 to show who matters in our City and in our budget.  
25 Finally the work of the sanitation committee is

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 126

2 critical in our fight against climate change. We  
3 currently deal with our trash by incinerating it or  
4 leave it in our streets which results in increased  
5 emissions and litter that devastates our City's eco  
6 system. Reinstate the \$47.8 million cut from the  
7 Sanitation Budget will be essential for our City to  
8 meet its environmental justice, waste equity, zero  
9 waste goals and ensure that our schools are set up  
10 for future generations and that myself and that my  
11 children will have a City that we're proud to live  
12 in. Thank you.

13 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

14 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
15 hear from Victoria Lu followed by Helen Brady  
16 followed by Hildalyn Colon Hernandez. Victoria Lu  
17 you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

18 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

19 VICTORIA LU: Hello everyone. My name is  
20 Victoria Lu and I'm the Queensboro Organizer with  
21 Triage. I've been a student within the New York City  
22 Public School system my entire life and this is my  
23 last year culminating as a senior in Forest Hills  
24 High School in Queens New York and I'm here to ask  
25 that we reinstate \$47.8 million back into the

Sanitary Department budget fully funding the Zero waste school program. I've seen first-hand the amount of unnecessary waste from paper to plastic to food within our schools and the implementation of our recycling and gardening programs has seen explicit benefits from both our administrative and student body. Our school is now more conscious of their waste and have been implementing sanitation education and improvements such as specific trash bins and recycling campaigns such as recycling Expo Markers and electronics that are no longer in use. Gardening has also provided a space not only to cultivate produce and even pollination sites but have mobilized many of our students towards eco-consciousness.

While these changes seem minor, when a school like mine with over 4,000 kids and 200 administrators are striving to lessen their waste a significant amount is reduced. However, there still remains a large amount of waste left every day and most notably within our cafeterias where plastic utensils, cups and mounds of food are thrown out on a daily. We need to continue investing especially in a composting program that could greatly reduce our food

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 128

2 consumption. We need to invest in our future and in  
3 our schools. Thank you.

4 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

5 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
6 hear from Helen Brady followed by Hildalyn Colon  
7 Hernandez followed by Carlos Castell Croke. Helen  
8 Brady you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

9 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

10 HELEN BRADY: Hi. Good evening. My name  
11 is Helen Brady and I'm 16 and I'm from West Brighton  
12 Staten Island. I'm a sophomore attending Curtis High  
13 School and Borough Organizer of Staten Island in  
14 Brooklyn for TRIAGE. I've come here today to demand  
15 the re-instatement of \$47.8 million back to the  
16 Sanitary Department budget and for Mayor Adams to  
17 fully fund Zero Waste School Program. Now, living in  
18 Staten Island I saw the first hand effects of the  
19 last time they were issued in a sanitation department  
20 in August when there was no garbage pickup, in south  
21 Brooklyn and Staten Island for over a week. This  
22 left residents to deal with mice, rats and other  
23 investigations. To act as if garbage and waste in  
24 our City is not an issue when across the City, city  
25 corners and storm drains are overwhelmed with filth



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 129

2 and garbage is disrespectful to the residents and to  
3 the works on DSNY who work every day cleaning up the  
4 City the best that they can. Cutting their budget  
5 will only make their jobs more difficult to  
6 accomplish. Programs such as the Zero Waste Program  
7 when implemented into early childhood well most event  
8 and the feature of the City into well-educated  
9 climate citizens. That's creating a solution to our  
10 City's pollution problems. I hope that this  
11 Committee can understand my frustrations and those  
12 shared by many others here today. Thank you for  
13 listening.

14 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

15 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
16 hear from Hildalyn Colon Hernandez followed by Carlos  
17 Castell Croke followed by Matthew Civello. Hildalyn  
18 Colon Hernandez you may begin when the Sergeant calls  
19 time.

20 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

21 HILDALYN COLON HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon  
22 my name is Hildalyn Colon to the Committee to Chair  
23 Nurse, thank you for the opportunity to speak to all  
24 of you. I am the Director of Policy and Strategic  
25 Partners. We are here to support the call to

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 130

2 reducing the cut of the budget. We know how  
3 important that is for the City and for actually those  
4 liveries to also have a clean road to make sure that  
5 they can deliver the essential food in the area. One  
6 thing also that we want to highlight that is part of  
7 the budget as we see it. We need to start thinking  
8 in the budget, maybe not for this budget but for the  
9 next budget that's the importance of how having a  
10 plan for the disposal of electronic equipment, our  
11 delivery workers use lithium batteries. We have  
12 close to 150,000 of lithium batteries in the City  
13 that are constantly used 12 hours a day seven days a  
14 week so we need to start a process about how do we  
15 address that issue that would affect all of us in the  
16 climate. We are offering and we are proposing a  
17 delivery solution where workers can dispose that kind  
18 of equipment and that something that part of like of  
19 our discretionary funding of asking to invest in this  
20 project there is not only an alternative to that  
21 reality about regular disposable garbage is essential  
22 but we need to start thinking that technology, a safe  
23 way to disposed technology and this kind of equipment  
24 is essential for the sake of all of us because not  
25 only safe and properly but have to make sure it

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 131

2 doesn't get to our soil and doesn't get contaminated.

3 My last minute, I just want to highlight the

4 importance too for the City to invest and keep

5 training the delivers that actually help a lot of the

6 support of some of the cleanup sometimes the City

7 cannot pick up as a lot of the time as City Council

8 Member Brewer, like individuals kind of like take on

9 their own to do this cleaning as the day labor

10 workers who get hired to do the essential clean up

11 especially in the areas where maybe sanitation is not

12 as accessible especially in private neighborhoods

13 where a lot of people own their homes. So that is

14 something that is, I think is essential and part of

15 the process that we would like to consider as the

16 designation of budgetary needs are. I want to thank

17 to everybody and thank you for the opportunity.

18 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

19 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now

20 hear from Carlos Castell Croke followed by Matthew

21 Civello followed by Oliver Wright. Carlos Castell

22 Croke you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

23 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

24 CARLOS CASTELL CROKE: Good afternoon.

25 My name is Carlos Castell Croke, I am the Associate

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 132

2 for New York City Programs at the New York League of  
3 Conservation Voters. NYLCV represents over 30,000  
4 members in New York City and we are committed to  
5 advance as a state ability agenda that will make our  
6 people, our neighborhoods and our economy healthier  
7 and more resilient. I would like to thank Chair  
8 Nurse and all the members of the committee for the  
9 opportunity to testify today. At NYLCV we firmly  
10 believe that a comprehensive and eco-friendly Waste  
11 Management System is essentially to the cleanliness  
12 and health of our City. With 1/3 of the waste that  
13 New Yorkers produce being organic materials, a  
14 citywide Organic Recycling program is long overdue.  
15 If we want to achieve our City's goals of 25, 30, um,  
16 sorry 0 by 30 and improve quality of life for our  
17 residents we must be investing in expansions and  
18 comprehensive overhauls to our Waste Management  
19 System and programs. Clean streets are undoubtedly a  
20 public health issue but a comprehensive composting  
21 collection program would do even more for environment  
22 and our quality of life. By collecting food waste we  
23 can drastically reduce emissions from transporting  
24 waste and decomposition at landfills. Secured brown  
25 bins can also help us manage our growing pest problem

2 in New York City protecting our trash from rats.

3 It's worth noting that neighborhoods near polluting

4 facilities like garbage collection stations and

5 incinerators, most often low income communities of

6 color are the ones who's environments, public health

7 and social justice could be benefited the most by

8 improving composting systems. The higher rates of

9 pollution in these communities cause a

10 disproportionately higher rate of cases of asthma,

11 cancer and other health issues and compound already

12 existing environmental and racial inequities. This

13 is why we were disheartened to see the Composting

14 program expansion cut in the preliminary budget. We

15 know from previous suspensions in recycling the City

16 struggles and people often lose good habits they

17 build leading to confusion and aggression on our

18 climate goals. We must seek to not only fund the

19 expansion of the curbside program but also additional

20 initiatives such as the core act and skip the stuff

21 to further reduce waste. We're also very happy to

22 hear about the commercial waste zone system. We

23 really hope that gets moving forward as many people

24 said. I'm not going to go too far into that but I

25 also want to note that if the state legislature

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 134

2 adopts and extends a producer responsibility program  
3 for packaging waste in this year's state budget it  
4 could both reduce the amount of waste that we have to  
5 deal with in the first place and require waste  
6 producers to help cover the City's cost related to  
7 collection despite growing disposal of packaging  
8 waste. I hope that everyone votes yes on the  
9 resolution that should come up for a vote I'm  
10 expecting soon to support that measures. We hope  
11 that when the Council releases their budget response  
12 it will be true to commitments many made around  
13 expanding composting. We look forward to working  
14 with the Council and this committee toward those Zero  
15 Waste goals and truly investing in sanitation. Thank  
16 you.

17 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

18 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
19 hear from Matthew Civello followed by Oliver Wright  
20 followed by Derick Bowers. Matthew Civello you may  
21 begin when the Sergeant calls time.

22 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

23 MATTHEW CIVELLO: Yes. Thank you Chair  
24 Nurse and the members of the Committee on Sanitation  
25 and Solid Waste Management. My name is Matthew

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 135

2 Civello and I am the chair of the Manhattan Solid  
3 Waste Advisory Board. Manhattan SWAB is a volunteer  
4 citizen organization dedicated to helping New York  
5 City achieve its Zero Waste goals since 1988. We are  
6 appointed and advised the Manhattan Borough  
7 President, City Council and others in the City  
8 regarding Solid Waste Management Policy. Thank you  
9 Chair Nurse and thank you for your leadership and  
10 commitment to this subject and to the City. Thank  
11 you for this opportunity to provide comment at  
12 today's Sanitation and Solid Waste Management  
13 Preliminary Budget hearing on the Department of  
14 Sanitation Fiscal 2023 budget. New York City exports  
15 1.1 million tons of organic material annually to  
16 landfill and incineration at a tremendous physical,  
17 environmental and opportunity costs to the City of  
18 New York. With each exported ton of organics New  
19 York City literally exports a ton of money and  
20 possibly jobs. We estimate that the combined costs  
21 associated with our City's export of 1 million plus  
22 tons of organics for burying and burning is \$233  
23 million annually. Over the next four a half physical  
24 years, this City will spend approximately \$1 billion  
25 properly disposing of just its organic material.

2 This is before possible substantial adjustments for  
3 inflation. In 2022 inflation is now running at about  
4 7 percent. New York City could recapture much of  
5 these costs and stop the environmental harm  
6 associated with our burying and burning of organics  
7 by diverting organic material away from the waste  
8 export and instead to beneficial use. Recaptured  
9 costs could be used in part to fund the viable  
10 organics collection program but to do this the City  
11 needs to design a viable organics program that will  
12 maximize its chance of success. Participation rates  
13 must be maximized using behavioral science and  
14 marketing techniques in order to fill the trucks to  
15 make the program economically viable starting with  
16 pilot programs to districts and housing density and  
17 demographics that resemble the City's overall  
18 population. Therefore the Manhattan Solid Waste  
19 Advisory Board recommends the City start this process  
20 by restoring annual funding to the Community Compost  
21 Projects and food scrap drop off locations from \$3.7  
22 million to \$7 million annually and to restore the  
23 total \$91.5 million to curbside collection over the  
24 next four and a half fiscal years. Frustration of  
25 funding over the next four and a half fiscal years



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 137

2 should be considered an investment to find an optimal  
3 solution to organics crisis and to lower overall  
4 future waste export costs and create an efficient,  
5 mandatory, universal and equitable organics program.  
6 The Council should update the City's Recycling Law so  
7 that organics will be part of the City's Recycling  
8 Program make mandatory and universal and same as it  
9 is with recyclables, adequately fund organics  
10 outreach and education, Seattle and San Francisco  
11 where they are successfully recycling spend \$3 per  
12 person per year on educational outreach. New York  
13 City spends \$0.86 per head. Now is a good time . . .

14 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

15 MATTHEW CIVELLO: . . . to get serious  
16 about saving real money and get serious about  
17 restoring investment and finding a way to create an  
18 equitable robust and well executed organics program.  
19 Thank you very much.

20 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

21 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
22 hear from Oliver Wright followed by Derick Bowers  
23 followed by Heather Fears Dimetriatis [phonetic].  
24 Oliver Wright you may begin when the Sergeant calls  
25 time.

2 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

3 OLIVER WRIGHT: Good afternoon my name is  
4 Oliver Wright and I am the Chair of the Brooklyn  
5 Solid Waste Advisory Board. I'm pleased to present  
6 testimony today relating to the Mayor's preliminary  
7 budget. Thank you everyone involved for the  
8 opportunity to testify today. We are extremely  
9 concerned that the Department of Sanitation is once  
10 again facing budget cuts. DSNYS services are  
11 essential to the functioning and overall well-being  
12 of the City and should be treated as non-negotiable.  
13 In particular, since the onset of COVID 19 the City's  
14 streets, especially in low income communities have  
15 been impacted by increased litter, unclear streets  
16 and all sorts of rodents. This is demoralizing for  
17 residents and hinders the economic and social  
18 development of the City. Moreover, progress toward  
19 the City's Zero Waste goals continue to stagnate with  
20 work underway towards both the 2023 Waste  
21 Characterization study and the next Solid Waste  
22 Management Plan, the City is no closer to a coherent  
23 approach to reducing and diverting waste from  
24 landfill. The states to serve the Curbside  
25 Composting Program is indicative of this.

2 Participation in the Opt In Program is low and  
3 expansion of the program has now been halted less  
4 than a year since the announcement of its return.  
5 Stopping and starting the program is both a waste of  
6 resources and confusing to residents. How much  
7 further along would we be if collection had not  
8 stopped? Brooklyn SWAB has previously called for  
9 DSNY to be given funding commensurate with the scale  
10 of both his day to day operations and the long range  
11 planning required to bring the City to Zero Waste.  
12 We re-iterate this call today and request that the  
13 department be given funding that is not boxed for an  
14 in-depth evidenced based planning process. This  
15 planning process needs to encompass all communities  
16 not just the more active neighborhoods such as those  
17 now being served by the Curbside Composting  
18 Collections and those chosen for Organic Smart bin  
19 pilots. This is a mass of equity and environmental  
20 justice to achieve the City's goal of Zero Waste to  
21 landfill by 2030, work must begin immediately in all  
22 communities with specific regards to organic waste  
23 funding for community, composting should be restored  
24 especially in light of further delays to the curbside  
25 program. Delaying further expansion of the Curbside

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 140

2 composting program is regrettable but understandable.

3 It should resume expansion only following the

4 aforementioned planning process. The diversion of

5 organic waste is complex in multi-faceted and pilot

6 programs. Should be deployed to help us determine

7 which approaches work best in different communities.

8 We suggested examples of pilot programs in our

9 written testimony submitted separately. At this

10 waste hierarchy an opportunity to save money exists

11 in the form of a Food Waste Reduction Campaign. By

12 our estimate, the City spends almost \$18 million

13 annually sending preventable residential food waste

14 to landfill and incineration. A 10 percent reduction

15 of that through a concerted outreach campaign would

16 therefore save more than the entire cost of the

17 entire cost of the community composting campaign

18 program. It's our belief that an adequately executed

19 funding process can and should lead to a citywide

20 mandatory organics program within five to seven

21 years. To sum up, a report issued this month by the

22 international panel on climate change states that the

23 world is in a climate emergency and Code Red for

24 Humanity according to the UN Secretary General.

25 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

2 OLIVER WRIGHT: The Department of  
3 Sanitation's budget and the interest of short term  
4 savings therefore endangers not only New York City's  
5 future environmental, economic and social prosperity  
6 but hinders progress toward national and global  
7 climate goals as follow the science and do as we  
8 must. Thank you very much.

9 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE  
10 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
11 hear from Derick Bowers followed by Heather Fears  
12 Dimetriatis followed by Debby Lee Cohen. Derick  
13 Bowers you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

14 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

15 DERICK BOWERS: Good evening. My name is  
16 Derick Bowers and I am the Director of Social  
17 Enterprise in New York City for the Center of  
18 Employment Opportunities also known as CEO. Thank  
19 you Chair Nurse and the members of the Committee and  
20 all Council Members present. I appreciate this  
21 opportunity to submit testimony about our program  
22 model and work across New York City and how  
23 innovative sanitation initiatives intersect with our  
24 work in the re-entry space. CEOs mission is to  
25 provide immediate, effective and comprehensive

2 employment services to individuals recently returning  
3 from incarceration and young adults who have had  
4 interactions with the criminal legal system. As the  
5 largest provider of re-entry employment services in  
6 New York. Our intentional focus is to service  
7 individuals facing the most significant barriers to  
8 gaining and maintaining employment. Also returning  
9 \$3.30 for every \$1 of public investment. Our four  
10 stage program has two core components transitional  
11 employment which we provide through partnerships with  
12 City agencies like DCAS and NYCHA and vocational  
13 services to help participants obtain long-term  
14 employment outside of CEO. Since its inception, CEO  
15 has made nearly 39,000 unsubsidized job placements  
16 for formerly incarcerated individuals over half of  
17 which benefited New Yorkers. CEO believes that  
18 increasing investments in additional sanitation  
19 services that also support employment and training  
20 such as the NYC Clean up Initiative are essential to  
21 organizations like CEO that utilize transitional work  
22 as part of our model. Improving public spaces and  
23 economic prosperity goals for New York City go hand  
24 in hand. Specific work flow enterprises can be  
25 paired with sanitation opportunities. For example,

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 143

2 CEOs work crews focus on supplemental sanitation  
3 efforts throughout the City and this work helps our  
4 participants gain stability and motivation so they  
5 can ultimately succeed in long-term employment. This  
6 has been made possible year after year through  
7 funding from the City Council's NYC Clean up  
8 Initiative. A funding to increase innovative NYC  
9 clean up initiative would provide an opportunity to  
10 direct funds toward expanding our work through  
11 opportunities throughout the five boroughs thereby  
12 increasing the number of justice impacted individuals  
13 we can serve annually and the amount of immediate  
14 paid employment available for thousands of New  
15 Yorkers who are often underserved and overlooked. It  
16 would also provide the City with a diverse labor pool  
17 for individuals who are screened, trained and  
18 motivated to work during a time when the job market  
19 is experiencing a downturn and maybe even create a  
20 municipal hiring pipeline into City Agencies like  
21 DSNY. These are sound investments that the City can  
22 and should adopt due to budget and at CEO we don't  
23 just put individuals at work, we keep them out of  
24 prisons and jails. Thank you for your time and  
25 consideration.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 144

2 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

3 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
4 hear from Heather Fears Dimetriatis followed by Debby  
5 Lee Cohen followed by Justin Green. Heather Fears  
6 Dimetriatis you may begin when the Sergeant calls  
7 time.

8 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

9 HEATHER FEARS DIMETRIATIS: Good  
10 afternoon Chair Nurse and fellow committee members.  
11 My name is Heather Fears Dimetriatis and I am the  
12 Chair for Community Board Six in Queens. Community  
13 District six includes neighborhoods of Regal Park and  
14 Forrest Hills. Today I am here to advocate for not  
15 only the continuation of composting in District six  
16 but also for an expansion. This District unlike some  
17 others in the City has not benefited from the  
18 implementation of Curbside Composting in any form.  
19 Instead they relied on local efforts to dispose of  
20 their food scraps. The compost collection for  
21 example has been in our community for over 10 years.  
22 They serve over 1,375 families and have volunteers  
23 and participants as young as four and as old as 84  
24 years old. They collect 65,000 to 72,000 pounds of  
25 compost a week. They were one of the few sites that



2 remained open during the lock down and they had  
3 people coming from as far as Brooklyn and Rosedale to  
4 drop off their food scraps. Any reduction in funding  
5 for composting and organics recycling will cut their  
6 capacity in half. As the lock down eased the Forrest  
7 Hills Green Team started a volunteer led food scrap  
8 collection site at the Forrest Hills Green Market  
9 that would serve 250 to 300 people a week. It  
10 started with two containers and doubled over time.  
11 They would collect 206 pounds every Sunday and at  
12 times have to turn people away as they reached  
13 capacity. At times they had a team of 20 volunteers  
14 managing the process. We now have Grow NYC managing  
15 the compost collection efforts and the participation  
16 is going strong. Any reduction in funding for  
17 compost and organics recycling will cut this program  
18 all together. Community Board Six recently learned  
19 that over 15,000 households in our district requested  
20 curbside composting to the Department of Sanitation  
21 of New York's campaign. This is not surprising to us  
22 given the amount of engagement our community has had  
23 with the compost collected at Forrest Hills Green  
24 Team and Grow NYC. On top of their individual  
25 efforts, their homes, Community Board Six in our

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 146

2 recent filing of budget requests to the OMB  
3 prioritized the implementation of curbside composting  
4 and expansion of additional composting efforts  
5 throughout the district. Had we any notion that this  
6 program could be scraped entirely, we might have even  
7 ranked it higher. Community Board Six not only sees  
8 composting as a productive way to recycle food scraps  
9 but also understands its impact on the reduction of  
10 landfill waste. We are also tremendously concerned  
11 at the number of jobs that will be lost when this  
12 program loses its funding. It is our hope that the  
13 City Council can find a way to not only keep this  
14 program but to also expand the program. We  
15 understand that the implementation of programs such  
16 as this requires a lot of community engagement and  
17 education. Community Boards are well positioned to  
18 help with that huge lift. Thank you for your time  
19 this afternoon.

20 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

21 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
22 hear from Debby Lee Cohen followed by Justin Green  
23 followed by Jessica Vodoor. Debby Lee Cohen you may  
24 begin when the Sergeant calls time.

25 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

2 DEBBY LEE COHEN: Thank you. Good  
3 afternoon Chair Nurse and Council Members and members  
4 of the Department of Sanitation who are still here.  
5 I am Debby Lee Cohen Executive Director and Founder  
6 of Cafeteria Culture. We are an environmental  
7 education non-profit. We pilot innovative  
8 environmental Zero Waste Education mostly in schools  
9 located in lower income communities of color by  
10 merging citizen science, civic action, media and the  
11 arts. I am also the Co-Director and Producer of the  
12 movie Micro-plastic Madness. I'm a parent and  
13 educator and a Stage 4 cancer patient so I am deeply  
14 concerned about the climate as well as health impacts  
15 of our City's Solid Waste Management decisions that,  
16 and also our public school's contribution to the  
17 global climate and plastic pollution crisis. I'm  
18 testifying to urge the Council to re-instate the full  
19 budget to the Department of Sanitation and to  
20 increase it. It's time to implement a universal  
21 curbside organics collection program not just for our  
22 residents but for all schools really it's overdue and  
23 we need a plan and a timeline to make that happen.  
24 We need a dramatic increase of funding for  
25 innovative, interdisciplinary Pre-K through 12 Zero

2 Waste Climate Education prioritizing NYCHA and  
3 environmental justice communities and we also should  
4 restore an increase community composting which is a  
5 funding for community composting which is also a  
6 valuable educational resource as well as a diversion  
7 resource. I just came off a workshop of PD with  
8 teachers, I can tell you that this unprecedented  
9 climate emergency is really breeding climate anxiety  
10 and that our children should be witnessing adult  
11 decision makers doing everything possible to reduce  
12 climate warming, life threatening greenhouse gas  
13 emissions that they will have to deal with most  
14 likely for their entire lives. Based on our decade  
15 of leading school environmental education programs we  
16 would like to stress that the funding to expand  
17 school organics collection program with a target date  
18 to provide all 1,800 daily schools of composting by  
19 the spring 2023. We also would like to see funding  
20 for educational support and pilots to reduce single  
21 use items and single use plastics in school food  
22 service across the City. There are some meals that  
23 have seven, eight, nine items of single use plastics  
24 and many of them are not recyclable. Even if they  
25 are recyclable they may not be recycled. It is also

2 not healthy for our children to be eating food that  
3 is packaged and heated in plastic and this is an  
4 issue where more and more studies. We'll be sharing  
5 more information with you this coming year. We'd  
6 also like additional support for education to reduce  
7 wasted food through investing in education with a  
8 long-term goal to handle all school organics locally.  
9 In other words, yes, we need volume but we also need  
10 to very aware that we should be reducing in schools  
11 the amount of wasted food that's up to 50 percent.  
12 It's much higher. In the Citywide it's 30 percent.  
13 In schools sometimes from our waste audits it's 50  
14 percent of the waste stream is actually organics  
15 which is really, really, shameful.

16 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

17 DEBBY LEE COHEN: And finally I'll just  
18 say I urge you to increase your support for Zero  
19 Waste Climate Literacy for all students across New  
20 York City. I thank you for the funding for our  
21 pilots. We continue to share our resource and I  
22 just can't urge you enough that the timing for this  
23 for Zero Waste as it connects to climate education is  
24 critical right now. Thank you so much for all that  
25 you do. Thank you.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 150

2 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

3 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
4 hear from Justin Green followed by Jessica Vodoor  
5 followed by Emily Bachman. Justin Green, you may  
6 begin when the Sergeant calls time.

7 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time starts now.

8 JUSTIN GREEN: Thank you Chair Nurse and  
9 Council Member Brewer for sticking around through all  
10 of these, the testimony. I mean, thank you again to  
11 Department of Sanitation and Commissioner Grayson and  
12 Deputy Commissioner Anderson for pushing of  
13 innovative projects at sanitation. I know its, I  
14 feel bad sometimes but this Department of Sanitation  
15 actually has done some amazing and innovative  
16 projects and we need to keep supporting that. Thanks  
17 also to everyone here that's still testifying, Debby  
18 Lee Cohen and Cafeteria Culture. They need all the  
19 support they can get, deserve all the support they  
20 can for all their great programs in school. So,  
21 highly, my support to Debby and Cafeteria Culture.  
22 I'm the Executive Director of Big Reuse for  
23 environmental non-profit. We work with the City for  
24 over a decade on composting projects underneath the  
25 Queensboro Bridge in Brooklyn and community

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 151

2 composting drop off sites through the City. We  
3 currently host over 70 food scrap drop offs  
4 throughout the City as part of the 215 that have been  
5 opened by so many different community groups for NYC  
6 for community gardens around the city to make up for  
7 the cuts to curbside in 2020 with COVID. The cuts  
8 span cut the legs out of a program that was expanding  
9 that was becoming more successful and ended up  
10 throwing away all the effort that the Department of  
11 Sanitation put in over half a decade to launch the  
12 program. It's been a waste of funds by cutting the  
13 program so we need to really commit as a city to  
14 composting in its many forms and make that funding  
15 available this year. So that means we're asking for  
16 funding for community composting to be restored.  
17 Right now there's \$3.5 million baseline. We're  
18 asking for a \$7 to \$10 million baseline ongoing so we  
19 don't have to keep coming back and fighting for  
20 community composting year after year. That will  
21 allow the continuation of the current programs at the  
22 Botanical Gardens to train composters and community  
23 gardens. Funding for us and our composting site and  
24 food scrap drop offs throughout the City, funding for  
25 programs at schools to engage in composting with

2 children. And so that's a baseline and also  
3 composting with the park. So we compost that  
4 material over almost 2 million pounds a year and give  
5 that compost back to the community to street care to  
6 improve the soil in the City. So we're asking that  
7 that funding be baselined. At least \$10 million,  
8 hopefully \$10 million year after year. We're also  
9 asking that the funding be returned to the expansion  
10 for optic. It's not a perfect system but it is a  
11 great step toward getting citywide mandatory. Right?  
12 It's a step in the right direction. We need to keep  
13 expanding it. For funding for citywide mandatory  
14 composting as soon as possible. That needs to happen  
15 immediately to respond to the climate crisis. Thank  
16 you so much.

17 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

18 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
19 hear from Jessica Vodoor followed by Emily Bachman  
20 followed by Danielle Foster-Russell. Jessica Vodoor  
21 you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

22 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

23 JESSICA VODOOR: Thank you and good  
24 afternoon Chairperson Nurse and members of the  
25 committee. My name is Jessica Baker Vodoor and I am



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 153

2 the President and CEO of Snug Harbor Cultural Center  
3 and Botanical Garden located in Council District 49  
4 in Staten Island. And we're a member of the Cultural  
5 Institutions Group, a collection of 34 cultural  
6 organizations that operate on City owned property and  
7 Snug Harbor is tasked with stewarding an unique and  
8 historical and environmental asset for the City. A  
9 mission that we believe is crucial to the public  
10 health, public life and public benefit. Since 1993,  
11 the New York City Compost Project has been hosted at  
12 Snug Harbor, the only such site in Staten Island.  
13 Our partnership with the Bureau of Recycling and  
14 Sustainability at the Department of Sanitation  
15 supports Snug Harbor's ability to generate and  
16 distribute quality compost and mulch and provide  
17 technical composting support to community gardens and  
18 individuals. We also host weekly programs by season  
19 in our compost demonstration site and run the master  
20 composter certificate program while also engaging and  
21 supporting community members throughout Staten  
22 Island. Across our borough our Compost Ambassadors  
23 operate neighborhood based food scrap drop off sites  
24 and our Compost Coordinator connects with Community  
25 Gardens and volunteers. To date this fiscal year,

2 the New York City Compost Project at Snug Harbor has  
3 processed over 39 tons of organic waste and we've  
4 engaged with more than 10,000 people. Snug Harbor  
5 has 14 staff members supporting compost. Some full-  
6 time and some part-time and our Compost Ambassador  
7 positions provide employment opportunities to young  
8 adults from across our borough. In addition to  
9 providing quality compost and molds for the Snug  
10 Harbor Heritage Farm and our 12 botanical gardens the  
11 New York City Compost Project is also a central  
12 element in our environmental educational efforts. We  
13 serve thousands of Staten Islanders each year and  
14 substantially reduce the amount of trash on our  
15 streets. I'm here today to urge everyone on the  
16 Committee to please support as many advocates have  
17 asked the expansion of the New York City Compost  
18 Project as Mayor Adams had outlined during his  
19 campaign. The Mayor's current plan to halt the  
20 reintroduction and expansion of curbside compost pick  
21 up, represents a savings of only 0.02 percent of his  
22 proposed \$98.5 billion for the coming fiscal year.  
23 If the proposed cuts would have a profound and  
24 deleterious effect on the City's efforts to reduce  
25 waste. The City needs more composting not less and

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 155

2 through an established and effective compost  
3 education program, we have Snug Harbor work daily to  
4 help Staten Islanders understand both benefits and  
5 the logistics of composting and we advocate for more  
6 responsible consumption habits. So we please ask for  
7 your support to expand this program in the coming  
8 fiscal year by restoring full funding to the Bureau  
9 for Recycling and sustainability of the Department of  
10 Sanitation. Thank you for letting me testify today  
11 and thank you for all of your support and advocacy.

12 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

13 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
14 hear from Emily Buchman followed by Danielle Foster-  
15 Russell followed by Afia Henrique. Emily Bachman you  
16 may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

17 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

18 EMILY BACHMAN: Thank you Chair Nurse and  
19 the committee for this opportunity to testify. My  
20 name is Emily Bachman and I'm the Assistant Director  
21 of Zero Waste Programs at Grow NYC and today I'm here  
22 representing 70 Grow NYC employees who's jobs are at  
23 stake due to the proposed DSNY Budget cuts. Waste  
24 Reduction, reuse and recycling programs at DSNY  
25 represent a small share, less than 3 percent of the

2 overall DSNY budget but an outside share, over 31  
3 percent of the proposed cuts. Included in those cuts  
4 are three popular Grow NYC Zero Waste programs. My  
5 colleague Danielle Foster-Russell is here to speak  
6 about Zero Waste schools and I'll focus on stop and  
7 swap and compost. So first, our stop and swaps are  
8 free public events in every community district where  
9 New Yorkers can bring unwanted household goods like  
10 books, clothing and toys and take items brought by  
11 their neighbors. These events cut down on disposal  
12 cost for the City and help New Yorkers save money by  
13 exchanging durable goods. Our Compost Program  
14 consists of 50 food scrap drop off sites like the one  
15 behind me where we are currently collecting 25 tons  
16 of food scraps from 7,000 participants each week.  
17 Now while curbside composting is only serving  
18 neighborhoods with the highest demand our drop off  
19 sites are filling the gaps to provide citywide access  
20 to composting. In the last year, we've also  
21 distributed 54,000 pounds of finished compost to  
22 Green Thumb Gardens, City Parks and Street Trees and  
23 this weekend we're celebrating a very big milestone  
24 of 20 million pounds of food scraps collected since  
25 our program began in 2011. So just to be clear, all

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 157

2 of the work that I just described is missing from the  
3 preliminary budget and will stop after June 30th if  
4 the budget passes as well. At Grow NYC we envision a  
5 future where composting is a normal part of life for  
6 all New Yorkers and we've helped to make that true  
7 for tens of thousands of people so far. But the  
8 proposed budget cuts put all of that progress at  
9 risk. We respectfully request that \$10 million for  
10 community composting be baselined in the Fiscal year  
11 23 budget including educational programming and  
12 schools to keep us moving forward toward the ultimate  
13 goal of mandatory universal curbside composting.  
14 Composting is joyful. It brings people together and  
15 it gives people hope and how often do you hear those  
16 things about waste management, climate change, how  
17 often does DSNY get such positive feedback on its  
18 programs. For those of us who are paying attention  
19 to climate science which I think everyone who has  
20 stayed this long is there are very few sources of  
21 hope but composting is one and that's why you'll see  
22 so many people testifying today and every chance they  
23 get to voice support for Zero Waste Programs because  
24 . . .

25 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

2 EMILY BACHMAN: . . . as put so well  
3 investing in composting is a vote in confidence in  
4 our future. So thank you for the opportunity to  
5 testify. My written testimony has more. Thanks.  
6 Great to see you guys.

7 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

8 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
9 hear from Danielle Foster-Russell followed by Afia  
10 Henriques followed by Marcy Nicks. Danielle Foster-  
11 Russell you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

12 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

13 DANIELLE FOSTER-RUSSELL: Good evening  
14 everyone. Good evening Chairperson Nurse and members  
15 of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to  
16 testify in support of expanding funding for  
17 composting and composting education in fiscal year 23  
18 preliminary budget. My name is Danielle Foster-  
19 Russell. I am the Assistant Director of Zero Waste  
20 Schools at Grow NYC and along with my colleague Emily  
21 Bachman I'm here to express our disappointment that  
22 the preliminary budget again slashes funding for  
23 curbside composting programming. Since 2011 Grow  
24 NYCs daily schools have partnered with DSNY and DOE  
25 to provide educational and operational support to

2 pre-K through 12 public schools across all five  
3 boroughs. Our programming has been instrumental in  
4 increasing recycling and curbside composting  
5 collection rates in the larger school system in the  
6 United States. We prepare the next generation of New  
7 Yorkers by providing them with the tools to  
8 understand the importance of waste reduction and  
9 composting and recycling and effectively practice  
10 those critical behaviors. Our work has a measurable  
11 impact. From fiscal year 2015 to 2019 GrowNYC  
12 supported 100 schools. Those schools improved their  
13 organic tonnages 103 percent compared to 22 percent  
14 improvement along other school compost collection  
15 routes during that same time. MTCP tonnages improved  
16 by 74 percent at schools receiving our support while  
17 decreasing 7 percent along other routes. Currently  
18 about half of New York City Public Schools received  
19 DSNY curbside compost collection. To reach the  
20 City's Zero waste goals all schools must be enrolled  
21 in the curbside compost collection services while  
22 receiving the necessary support to do so  
23 successfully. Grow NYC Zero Waste schools provided  
24 that support to all 130 schools included in the  
25 curbside compost expansion in Fiscal year 19. When

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 160

2 schools closed in March of 2020 these schools were  
3 performing so well the stations were set up  
4 consistently and they were served by staff and 80  
5 percent of schools had a 25 percent contamination  
6 rate, had less than 25 percent contamination rate in  
7 their compost at MTPC, a remarkable achievement which  
8 would have improved had we been to finish the school  
9 year. After a year of cost organics, hybrid learning  
10 and service acting throughout the school even in  
11 hallways we have found that it is critical that  
12 schools receive our support to get back on track with  
13 their Zero Waste practices. I want to thank Dylan  
14 and Jasmine who so eloquently talked about how Zero  
15 Waste Schools has been impacting their schools and  
16 why it's important for it to be baseline in the  
17 budget and I just want to thank them for their  
18 testimony and say that since August of last year we  
19 have provided over 300 schools with support through  
20 site visits and remote training. Most recently we  
21 supported PSA in Manhattan and they had a vast  
22 improvement in their waste separation that is evident  
23 in the schools' curbside set out. It is now orderly  
24 and separated by . . .

25 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.



2 DANIELLE FOSTER-RUSSELL: . . . I'm just  
3 going to skip past a few of these and just say to you  
4 that we will provide the structure and the support  
5 necessary for schools to make these kinds of  
6 advancements. It is vital that City Council take  
7 action demonstrating to students across the City that  
8 a adults in leadership are serious about tackling the  
9 climate crisis which directly impacts their future by  
10 increasing access to curbside compost collection in  
11 schools and in their community. We respectfully  
12 request that City Council allocates \$10 million in  
13 the Fiscal year 23 budget for New York City Compost  
14 Project for Grow NYC Zero Waste programs including  
15 compost program, stop and swap and for funding for  
16 Zero Waste Schools. A high impact program that fails  
17 environmental leadership among New York City public  
18 schools, school students and diverts the School Waste  
19 along DSNY routes. Further, we encourage the Council  
20 provide funding for implementation plan for mandatory  
21 citywide curbside compost collection because like  
22 recycling it takes time to build a successful  
23 program. This is the only way for composting to  
24 become cost effective and equitable for all New  
25 Yorkers. Without this program, the City will fall

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 162

2 short of its 20 by 30 goals. All programming makes a  
3 difference at the curb. Thank you Chairperson Nurse  
4 and the Committee for your, for this opportunity to  
5 speak and for your work and I will submit the rest of  
6 my testimony later on. Thank you.

7 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

8 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
9 hear from Afia Henrique followed by Marcy Nicks  
10 followed by Jasmine McPhearson. Afia Henrique you  
11 may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

12 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

13 AFIA HENRIQUE: Hello members of the  
14 Council and Sanitation and staff. Thank you for  
15 having me today. So I don't have a fancy title, I'm  
16 just basically a nobody I started an Instagram page  
17 last year called Taste and Waste NYC to document what  
18 I've been seeing around my neighborhood which is east  
19 New York Brooklyn and also other parts of the City  
20 because my work takes me all around to the Bronx,  
21 Queens and I think the situation is dire and the  
22 sanitation budget does not need to be cut right now.  
23 We really can't afford to cut the sanitation budget  
24 because when I'm walking around especially green  
25 areas I'm seeing lots of single use plastics, lots of

2 bottles and like Borough President said before, the  
3 Brooklyn Borough President said, our culture has to  
4 fundamentally change. There's a lack of stability  
5 and also I feel like people don't know about  
6 recycling and they don't know where to put  
7 electronics and we sometimes find things in strange  
8 places. We'll go into Marine Park and we'll find  
9 something like a printer. Well, how did it get  
10 there? So it's integral that we keep this Zero Waste  
11 in Schools program because education really is the  
12 key.

13 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

14 COUNSEL: Afia I believe that your feed has . . .

15 AFIA HENRIQUES: . . . I've talked to a  
16 lot of people. Oh yeah, my Instagram feed has  
17 brought me into contact with a lot of people who have  
18 to clean up hazardous things outside of their homes.  
19 One woman told me about a comforter covered in feces.  
20 She had to clean it herself because if not sanitation  
21 would issue her a citation for a sidewalk violation.  
22 So I feel like right now New Yorkers are desperate.  
23 The situation is dire. And really now is not the  
24 time to cut the budget when we're seeing so many  
25 emissions. We're having effects of climate change.

2 I also, like the remnants from Hurricane Ida, all the  
3 water coming from everywhere its affecting our storm  
4 drains and its degrading our infrastructure when we  
5 have litter just flowing around and flowing into our  
6 waterways and that's basically all I have to say  
7 today. I just thank you so much for letting me be  
8 here and I'm really inspired by hearing the stories  
9 of a you all and all the great work that's being done  
10 but we really need to do more work and the men and  
11 women of sanitation really deserve more. New Yorkers  
12 who pay a lot to live here really deserve more. We  
13 pay a lot of taxes. We pay a lot of rent. We want  
14 more. Thank you.

15 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

16 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
17 here from Marcy Nicks followed by Jasmine McPhearson  
18 followed by Catie Savage. Marcy Nicks you may begin  
19 when the Sergeant calls time.

20 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

21 MARCY NICKS: Hi everyone I'm Nicki. I  
22 am a resident in the District of Manhattan where I  
23 have lived since 2013. New York City is my adopted  
24 home and I love it here. I do not intent to leave  
25 unless it is physically impossible for me to remain.

2 I will return to that point in a moment. I am here  
3 to ask that the sanitation committee support Mayor  
4 Adams in keeping his campaign promise to make  
5 composting available to every New Yorker. That work  
6 should begin by restoring the community composting  
7 budget to its current level and funding should be  
8 restored for the planned expansion of the curbside  
9 composting program. The Mayor's proposed budget cut  
10 to the composting, to curbside composting are based  
11 on a misinterpretation of the independent budget  
12 office's analysis of that program. Although IBO  
13 found that organic collection is relatively expensive  
14 today. It also found that the quickest route to  
15 reducing costs is to increase participation not to  
16 freeze it. I am not here with any organization. I  
17 am here as a concerned mother. My children who you  
18 may hear in the background were born in 2018 and 2021  
19 at around 1 degree of warming as compared to pre-  
20 industrial global temperatures. Those temperatures  
21 have been driven up in significant part by greenhouse  
22 gas emissions from landfills. Landfill trash from  
23 New York City alone generates about a million tons of  
24 emissions per year. In large part, due to the  
25 portion of organic waste in the system that could

otherwise be composed. Looking at the City's own mask in a business as usual world my children could theoretically lose at my Flatiron address when they reach the age of 80 with global temperatures around 3 and a half or maybe more degrees of pre-industrial levels. Assuming that global civilizations hasn't fallen apart by then, it would still be different New York. It would be hotter and smaller. For the children who happen to live a few blocks east or west of me or a few miles north or south of me however it will be physically impossible to remain. Those children's homes will be in high tide zones, lovely. Neither the children of today nor the grandparents of 2100 should suffer more than my family just because they happen to live in a different neighborhood or to have been born a bit later in world history. I agree with Mayor Adams that New York is the greatest city in the world. I also agree that we can be better. Composting is one of the easiest ways to meaningfully reduce the emission that are driving the climate crisis. By making composting available and accessible all New Yorkers can participate in helping to support a more just and sustainable future for all. Thank you.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 167

2 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

3 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
4 hear from Jasmine McPhearson followed by Catie Savage  
5 followed by Sheila O'Connor. Jasmine McPhearson you  
6 may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

7 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

8 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

9 COUNSEL: Jasmine we cannot hear you. Jasmine I will  
10 come back to you after the next panelists. We will  
11 now hear from Catie Savage followed by Jasmine  
12 McPhearson followed by Sheila O'Connor. Catie Savage  
13 you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

14 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

15 CATIE SAVAGE: Hi. My name is Catie  
16 Savage, I am the founder of the Hell's Kitchen Litter  
17 Legion, a community clean up group that started in  
18 June of 2020 in response to the pandemic budget cuts.  
19 This has been an incredibly long meeting so I will  
20 not reiterate what others have said but I would like  
21 to give a huge shout out to Council Members Brewer  
22 and Farias for staying for this entire meeting and  
23 also Greg Anderson and Chief Harbin from sanitation  
24 for also staying for this. I mean it's great that  
25 you guys are here to listen to the concerns of the

2 public. I have, you know, learned a lot about  
3 sanitation over the last two years. I work in  
4 fashion. This is not my normal thing. I'm not part  
5 of like a special interest group or anything else,  
6 I'm just a concerned New Yorker who is frustrated by  
7 the way our city handles trash. I think not only  
8 does the sanitation budget need to be fully restored  
9 there needs to be a lot of changes such as baselining  
10 the funding for Litter basket pick up so it's not  
11 fluctuating every year due to the fiscal whims. And  
12 also increasing funding for education and this is not  
13 just for children but also for the general public  
14 there is a serious lack of education for how to deal  
15 with the new types of waste we have. Most of the  
16 stuff we learned about throwing things out were when  
17 we were in school and we were kids. Things have  
18 changed. We have a lot more types of products that  
19 is really confusing to figure out how they are  
20 supposed to be disposed off especially when it comes  
21 to electronics and I think a lot of people just  
22 assume I'm going to put it on the curb and it will  
23 disappear and that is not the case and we really need  
24 to make sure everyone understands the way to deal  
25 with all of this stuff. That's it. I'll submit more



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 169

2 details in my written testimony but you know, thank  
3 you so much for the chance to speak and again thank  
4 you to everyone from Council who stayed on to listen  
5 to this whole meeting. I really appreciate it.

6 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

7 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
8 hear from Jasmine McPhearson. Jasmine you may begin  
9 when the Sergeant calls time.

10 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

11 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

12 COUNSEL: Jasmine unfortunately it seems like you are  
13 having audio issues.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: It looks like  
15 she's unmute.

16 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

17 COUNSEL: She is unmuted, yes, Chair. Jasmine we  
18 will circle back to you at the end and hopefully  
19 we'll be able to sort out the audio issues.

20 Apologies for that. But also just a reminder that  
21 you are able to submit written testimony at

22 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). We will now hear from

23 Sheila O'Connor followed by Ella Ryan followed by

24 Leslie Woodruff. Sheila O'Connor you may begin when  
25 the Sergeant calls time.

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 170

2 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

3 SHEILA O'CONNOR: Thank you and I will  
4 also be brief since it's been a long meeting. I do  
5 appreciate the opportunity to speak on, you know,  
6 obviously we're all here because we want to stress  
7 the importance of reinstating the funding to  
8 sanitation. One are that is of particular concern is  
9 the Compost Program. In my neighborhood I've been  
10 participating in a Voluntary Compost Program in which  
11 we have organized the community, educated the  
12 community on how to effectively compost and we  
13 succeeded in diverting 38,560 pounds of food scraps  
14 in 2021 and I think that's just a testament to how  
15 New Yorkers are ready to compost and the idea of  
16 cutting it is short sided. I've also been a regular  
17 volunteer along with Cate Savage in the Hell's  
18 Kitchen Litter Legion so I've visibly been able to  
19 see how much dirtier our streets have gotten. The  
20 amount of trash and the amount of rats is just  
21 dramatically increased over the last couple of years  
22 and one thing that I've observed is that when the  
23 trash starts to overflow it creates, sends a message  
24 to the residents that nobody cares. If the City  
25 doesn't care about picking up those big corner

2 baskets then why should I care about picking up after  
3 my dog and that's the kind of mindset that I'm  
4 beginning to observe in my neighborhood and it's a  
5 real concern. So I really want to stress the  
6 importance of restoring funding, particularly on the  
7 corner litter baskets. The Council has taken the  
8 step of restoring much of that funding themselves.  
9 It's clear that the Council understands the  
10 importance of it so it's important to negotiate that  
11 back into the budget. Thank you.

12 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

13 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
14 hear from Ella Ryan followed by Leslie Woodruff  
15 followed by Wilhimena Paragee. Ella Ryan you may  
16 begin when the Sergeant calls the time.

17 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

18 ELLA RYAN: Hi. I'm Ella I live in  
19 Brooklyn. First of all thank you for the opportunity  
20 to testify and thank you DSNY and our City's  
21 Sanitation workers for their hard work. I won't  
22 claim to have deep knowledge of the budget process  
23 although I have learned a lot today. I'm here as a  
24 resident and a mom to defend our City's composting  
25 programs because I thought the City was committed to

expanding them and now I hear they're on the chopping block yet again. When my partner and I first moved to Brooklyn in 2014 we didn't have kids yet. We kept our compost in a plastic bag in the freezer and we would drop it off at a green market on the way to work. And we really appreciated having that option and it's an option that works for many New Yorkers and gives access to composting to people who live outside of the limited curbside composting zones which is great and I'm sad to hear that those are going to be reduced potentially. Now we are a family of four and if I were to use the same method our freezer would just be like bursting with organic waste every two days. Not to mention that it's like full of chicken nuggets and ice pops anyway. So when we moved to Pike Cliff I was so excited. That's not an understatement to find that curbside composting was available to me and suddenly composting is easy. Every time my kids didn't finish a meal I could just scrape it in the compost bin and I would know that it was going back to the Earth as nutrients and not into the atmosphere as Greenhouse gas. And I think that every parent should have that piece of mind as somebody else said composting is a hopeful thing.

2 And I felt pride in my City doing what's right for  
3 people and their futures. But here we are two years  
4 later and not only as progress not been made in  
5 composting we're going backwards and that makes me  
6 sad and not only that the more we limit the  
7 composting program the more inefficient it becomes.  
8 So I'm speaking here today because I fear that our  
9 City's curbside composting program and all the other  
10 composting programs, schools, community composting,  
11 once the largest program in the country will now die  
12 a death by a thousand cuts. The composting programs  
13 are such tiny line items on the overall City's budget  
14 yet they have an outside impact on greenhouse gas  
15 emission not to mention providing green jobs and  
16 bringing us much closer to our Zero Waste goal. It's  
17 virtually impossible to achieve that goal in my  
18 opinion if we don't have organics collection and  
19 diverting organics from landfills. So we just owe it  
20 to our City's residents to invest in these programs  
21 so composting can reach its full potential and thank  
22 you for your time.

23 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

24 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
25 hear for Leslie Woodruff followed by Wilhimena

2 Paragee followed by Claire Niflin. Leslie Woodruff  
3 you may begin when the Sergeant calls time.

4 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

5 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

6 COUNSEL: My apologies. It appears that Leslie is no  
7 longer on the Zoom so we will go now to Wilhimena  
8 Paragee. You may begin. I think she stepped away  
9 for a moment. We will now skip to Claire Niflin and  
10 we will circle back. Claire Niflin, you may begin  
11 when the Sergeant calls time.

12 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

13 CLAIRE NIFLIN: Sorry I was having  
14 problems getting to my unmute. Can you hear me?

15 SGT. SADOWSKY: Yes, you may begin.

16 CLAIRE NIFLIN: My name is Claire Niflin  
17 I'm the Executive Director of the non-profit sense to  
18 Waste Design and part of the Save Our Compost  
19 Advocacy Group. I think we all know we're never  
20 going to get rid of the litter racks and trashbags  
21 piled up on our sidewalks without a comprehensive  
22 plan to change things. The streets blog went out  
23 yesterday, Trash City, New York is filthy and the  
24 fault is government and NYCHA is a good primer. Also  
25 freeze food waste collection, again we got to do

2 better than that. We all know heaping trashbags on  
3 sidewalk causes litter, odor and rats and in some  
4 neighborhoods buildings clean up but not in under  
5 resourced ones. As many Council Members said one of  
6 the solutions is containerization. I know Greg and  
7 Bridget support that so they need more funding and  
8 support of the Mayor to get there. In a  
9 comprehensive plan, to containerize waste transition  
10 to the circular economy and collect all organic waste  
11 affordably is required. We've outlined many of the  
12 design planning and logistics strategies necessary in  
13 our Put Waste to Work for vibrant streetscapes, green  
14 jobs and healthy neighborhoods vision plan. I hope  
15 the upcoming solid waste management plan will include  
16 many of them and be led by the Mayor's Climate Team  
17 who can ensure collaboration across agencies and  
18 sufficient funding. Right now DSNY needs to be  
19 properly funded over multiple years to do extensive  
20 pilots so that the swamp can be based on solutions  
21 that work to every building and neighborhood  
22 including those with few stops. Think of pilot clean  
23 curbs across the City, food waste processing  
24 equipment in big building and collection of  
25 containers that can be rolled straight from a

2 building to the truck because in high density  
3 neighborhoods clean curb enclosures are too small.  
4 In many buildings bring up bags and hampers then  
5 empties them on the sidewalk to attract rats all  
6 night and then DSNY pick them up one by one in the  
7 morning lifting five tons a shift. Instead DSNY  
8 could retrofit their trucks for about \$10,000 or  
9 \$15,000 a truck to fit those containers directly in  
10 the back. Still two workers but fewer injuries. No  
11 parking spaces. No maintenance agreements. No rats.  
12 No litter. And lastly increase funding for Community  
13 Scale Composting, at least \$10 million baselined for  
14 multiple years as far of reach resilience climate and  
15 livability goals. It could be wrapped up to  
16 rejuvenate all city parks and landscape spaces and  
17 then could use about half of the City's residential  
18 food waste. Local distributors . . .

19 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

20 CLAIRE NIFTIN: . . . like this reduce  
21 large infrastructure with an inequitable impact. As  
22 part of New York City's recovery we need to make all  
23 of our streets safer, cleaner and greener and cutting  
24 the funding to do that makes no sense. Thank you.



1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 177

2 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

3 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
4 hear from Jasmine McPhearson followed by Wilhimena  
5 Paragee. Jasmine McPhearson you may begin when the  
6 Sergeant calls time.

7 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

8 JASMINE MCPHEARSON: Hello. Can you hear  
9 me?

10 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

11 COUNSEL: We can hear you now, yes.

12 JASMINE MCPHEARSON: Okay. Thank you.  
13 Good evening everyone and thank you for staying on  
14 for this meeting. I'm a Chair Member of Queen Solid  
15 Waste Advisory Board and a resident of District 13 of  
16 Queens. I'm speaking today to request that the Mayor  
17 restore the funding to Sanitation that he is  
18 proposing to cut. As an esteem educator on  
19 environmental justice, a gardener, composter and  
20 advocate of NYC Compost Projects I'm glad to take  
21 time to speak about the importance on education on  
22 Organic Recoveries and Soil Rejuvenation. For  
23 decades volunteers have been the backbone on organics  
24 collection in New York City and providing education  
25 and analytics on its growth. If you look at NYC Open

2 Data you can see how New York City Compost Project  
3 and other small communities that are volunteers have  
4 carried organics recovery with a limited budget even  
5 since it was cut last year. If these volunteers,  
6 nonprofits and small corporations have been able to  
7 drive, survive, sustain and influence the state with  
8 such a limited budget, imagine how much closer we  
9 could be to the state of Zero Waste if they are  
10 provided more funding. DSNY has shown that organic  
11 tonnage collected increased every year from the start  
12 of the curbside program through its last year of  
13 operation. It remained a very small part of the  
14 overall waste system. The City only diverted around  
15 1.4 percent of its waste from landfills to organics  
16 collection. If we want to meet our reduction of  
17 waste by 90 percent by 2030 there has to be a change  
18 outside of cutting funds and pushing trucks to  
19 collect organics. I asked today that we fully fund  
20 the department of sanitation's community composting  
21 program which provides over 200 food scrap drop off  
22 sites throughout the City and local composting sites.  
23 That provides Compost for our parks and Community  
24 Garden. The Community Composting should not only  
25 continue to be funded at the current level of \$7

2 million but also be extended to meet the increasing  
3 demand for these programs with additional funding to  
4 equitably locate community composting sites in  
5 communities that do not have one. Thank you for your  
6 time.

7 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

8 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. We will now  
9 hear from Wilhimena Paragee. You may begin when the  
10 Sergeant calls time.

11 SGT. SADOWSKY: Starting time.

12 WILHIMENA PARAGEE: Hi. My name is Wila.  
13 I live in Brooklyn. I'm a mom and I'm part of a  
14 coalition of parents who are really concerned about  
15 climate and doing all sorts of direct actions and  
16 part of a group called Sunrise Kids NYC and there are  
17 a bunch of other groups in the City that are  
18 concerned about and acting on similar issues.  
19 Anyway, I moved to Brooklyn with my husband and my  
20 one year old in 2019 and on my first day here I had  
21 empire state of mind stuck in my head and everywhere  
22 I went I just had like few streets will make you feel  
23 brand new. And I was [recording damage] my initial  
24 exuberance and I would climbing over piles of trash  
25 with my toddler and my husband and I turned to each

2 other and we started singing in New York and from  
3 then on it just became kind of an inside joke and  
4 whenever we see something disgusting and doing trash  
5 that's full of compostable things prominently we belt  
6 this out to each other and our kids have started  
7 doing it as well. And as everyone on this call knows  
8 there's a pretty simple solution. [recoding damage]  
9 in the way that it deserves to be funded and I'm not  
10 talking about 10 percent of people you know hauling  
11 their stuff out of the freezer to the farmer's market  
12 like Ella mentioned. I'm talking about the kind of  
13 widespread funding all of us are advocating for and  
14 obviously it's not just about the aesthetics it's  
15 about the environment and all of us know that as well  
16 so I won't go into the details. But as you all know  
17 we have seven years to cut global emissions and New  
18 York has the opportunity to be a use case for the  
19 world and there's that saying you know if you can  
20 make it here you can make it anyway. Well, if we can  
21 make composting work here any City in the world can  
22 do it and we have to do it. We have no choice.  
23 We're out of time as we all know. So now that I've  
24 been here for two years I have a two year old and a  
25 four year old you might have seen coming in and out

of this call because I didn't know I was supposed to come at the end, I've been here since 2:00. And they like I said they also like to sing in New York when we see disgusting things but they are also starting to realize that it's actually not that sunny because it's a matter of life or death and it's a matter of their future being viable and it sounds hypervolic but you all know that it's not and I have a quote from the Environmental Defense Fund but I'm going to skip it for the sake of time. You know that this is an issue of life or death and my toddler's know that too and my kids are starting to figure out like everything is pretty precarious isn't it and everything is really interconnected isn't it mom. And they're starting to ask questions like why did you guys let this get so bad and those questions are really hard to answer. So I was in so [recording damage] composting in New York and my own exuberance was soon outweighed by that of my own children. They realized like this is a way to be part of the solution and my four year old likes to imagine the trees are frozen and she likes to say that I can use my magic, use my powers to turn trash into dirt and that's her new thing. And my two year old likes to

2 help me push the bin out to the curb and he likes to  
3 stop climate change and I'm not . . .

4 SGT. SADOWSKY: Time expired.

5 JASMINE MCPHEARSON: . . . trying to make  
6 fun of their accent, their way of speaking but it  
7 just really pulls on my heart strings when I hear how  
8 enthusiastic they are to be part of the solution and  
9 how deep their understanding of the problem is.  
10 Anyway you know we have a quickly shrinking window of  
11 opportunity we need to make that clear to the Mayor  
12 and it's obviously complex and extensive to get this  
13 program to scale but once it's to scale it will pay  
14 of you know in so many ways our pocketbooks and  
15 saving our future and the words of that one go  
16 there's nothing that you can do now you're in New  
17 York. Thank you.

18 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

19 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony. If we have  
20 inadvertently missed anyone that has registered to  
21 testify today and have yet to be called please use  
22 the Zoom Raise Hand Function and you will be called  
23 in the order that your hand has been raised. Seeing  
24 none I will now turn it over to Chair Nurse for  
25 closing remarks. Chair.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Well thank you  
3 everything. Thank you for that spirited last  
4 testimony to close us out. Thank you everyone for  
5 staying on and also special shout out to the young  
6 people that came on. It was very refreshing and very  
7 heartwarming to have them here and also thank you to  
8 the Council Member Brewer who stayed on and other  
9 folks. We're really, really grateful for all of you  
10 spending time and advocating for the needs that are  
11 so clear and as the Borough President said, you know,  
12 sanitation really isn't just an operation it is a  
13 giant like a machine and it needs people and it needs  
14 resources to do its job and we're all facing the  
15 impacts of that so the harder that we fight to demand  
16 those resources the better shot we have right now and  
17 I know that many of our communities particularly the  
18 outer boroughs are hurt by this. They've fought  
19 really hard to get the same level of service over  
20 many decades and here we are again dealing with  
21 missed pick ups and chronic issue and illegal dumping  
22 in their neighborhoods feel under served and your  
23 members, your Council Members they call me, they text  
24 me, they say, you know, this is the number one issue  
25 how do I get help. What can I do? So this is the

2 number one issue in the City it seems and I think we  
3 have the data to show it so we need your voices in  
4 this and I appreciate all of you for being here and  
5 unless we're going to hear from Leslie. Jessica  
6 otherwise I was going to close out.

7 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

8 COUNSEL: Um.

9 CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: I see one.

10 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

11 COUNSEL: I see one hand is raised. Leslie Woodruff.

12 LESLIE WOODRUFF: Hi. Thank you so much  
13 for allowing me to jump in. I know you just made  
14 your final call for testimonies. I just wanted to  
15 share that we're a family living in Hell's Kitchen.  
16 We've, you know, made it through this pandemic that  
17 just went on and on and here we are like so ready to  
18 move on with our lives and get back to normal but we  
19 walk outside and it just looks like a slum. Like  
20 it's really embarrassing to live this way. I refuse  
21 to accept that so I, sorry, I refuse to accept that  
22 so I go outside and I clean up my own block and I  
23 participate in as many clean ups as possible with the  
24 Hell's Kitchen Litter Legion led by Catie Savage who  
25 is on here today with us. It's excruciating to spend



2 this much money to live in Manhattan and still walk  
3 outside and there's just litter everywhere. The  
4 garbage will sit sometimes for days. I'm always  
5 putting in a 311 complaint. I'm making personal  
6 phone calls to contacts that I know at DSNY to try  
7 and get change. I understand that they are  
8 definitely doing the best they can with the resources  
9 they are given but to not get a street clean up more  
10 than once a week and with this close to Times Square  
11 and have so many tourists coming into this area it's  
12 a bad look. And we just we have a young child, she  
13 asked me recently mom are we poor? Because she  
14 didn't understand why we walk outside our door and  
15 there's loose litter and piles of garbage that don't  
16 get picked up and she'll see a luxury building that  
17 is immaculate out front and she's just turned six  
18 years old and is already starting to notice the  
19 difference so we can't continue to live this way and  
20 we'll just move if things don't change pretty  
21 quickly. I really truly hope that this testimony  
22 will help any way it can. Thank you.

23 JESSICA STEINBERG ALBIN, COMMITTEE

24 COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony and I'll turn  
25 it back to the Chair to close this out.

CHAIRPERSON SANDY NURSE: Yeah. Thank you I just want to say I have actually walked on some, in some of the largest slums on this earth and it is no joke and New York City is in no where a comparison to the conditions that slums have and where our trash blows often is in those places where people have entirely livelihoods based on picking through trash so. Just to remember where we are in the inequity that exists around the world of waste. So I want to say thank you all for being here. We're all fighting very hard to restore the budget and fight for as many restoration to as many cuts as we can get. I encourage you to reach out to your Council Members and let it be known what you are looking for and what you need, what you will accept and what you won't accept and make sure you stay involved in the conversations. We'll be having another hearing in April on equity which is a really important one. It'll have updates on the Waste Zones. I encourage you to come back in May for our final budget hearing and come back again in June. We'd love to keep having you in the conversation so thank you. Thank you Jessica for moderating and ensuring we got to folks that we might have missed

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 187

2 and thank you all for being here. I conclude this  
3 hearing.

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date May 31, 2022