

COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS

***VOTE**

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Wednesday, April 29, 2026

Start: 1:13 P.M.

Recess: 1:17 P.M.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - 8th Floor
Hearing Room 1

B E F O R E: Hon. Lincoln Restler, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Gale A. Brewer
James F. Gennaro
Kamillah Hanks
Althea V. Stevens
Inna Vernikov
Julie Won

Other Council Members Attending: Farías

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Check one, two. Check one, two. This is a pre-recorded sound test for the Committee on Contracts. Today's date is April 29th, 2026, being recorded by Michael Leonardo

(INAUDIBLE)...

(CROSS-TALK)

UNIDENTIFIED: (INAUDIBLE)

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: I'm keeping it moving in case anybody was wondering. We're ready? Let's go.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon, and welcome to today's vote for the Committee on Contracts. We ask that you please silence all cell phones and electronic devices to minimize disruption throughout this proceeding. Thank you for your kind cooperation, Chair. We are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: [GAVEL] Good afternoon, welcome, Billy.

I'm Lincoln Restler. I have the privilege of chairing our Contracts Committee, and we are going to have a vote today on Proposed Resolution 183-A, sponsored by Council Member Amanda Farías, which calls on the State Legislature to pass legislation that would allow for more flexibility on food contracts.

This bill would let city agencies factor food quality, labor practices, and environmental impact into food procurement. So as long as the qualifying bid comes within 10% of the lowest responsible bidder, helping ensure the 200 million meals that the City serves every single year in our schools, in our shelters, in our correctional facilities are high-quality and nutritious.

I really want to thank the Council Member for her leadership on this important issue. It is a great resolution and important legislation.

I'll now turn it over to Council Member Farías for her remarks on the resolution.

COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Thank you so much, Chair Restler, for convening today's hearing.

Today's a great day as we advance this resolution calling on the State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.7638.B/A.8091.B.

New York City feeds millions of people every day through its public institutions, yet current procurement law often requires agencies to select the lowest bid, even when it results in lower quality food, contracts awarded to vendors that fall short on labor and sourcing standards, and public

dollars bypassing New York farmers and local food producers.

This legislation creates a real workable option. When a better vendor is within reach, agencies would have the ability to choose them, factoring in food quality, work standards, and local sourcing, not just price.

This moment reflects nearly a decade of advocacy led by community food advocates, alongside a coalition of labor, food system, and community partners who have pushed for a more equitable and accountable approach to food procurement across New York.

Following multiple revisions in response to concerns raised by the governor's office, agricultural stakeholders, and labor partners, the current version of the bills reflects a balanced and workable approach. When agencies are required to accept the lowest bid, that often means accepting food that is close to expiring, damaged, or not safe to serve. That is unacceptable.

We now have an opportunity to move toward a more responsible farm-to-institution approach, prioritizing local producers, strengthening our

1 agricultural economy, and ensuring that food served
2 in our public institutions meets a standard that's
3 higher from source to service.

4 I also want to acknowledge I've worked on
5 this food procurement issue both with Council Members
6 Won and Brewer over the last five years in our tenure
7 in the Council, and we're excited to be here today to
8 vote on this.

9 New York City is moving forward, and now
10 the State must do its part to get this across the
11 finish line.

12 Thank you for your time, and I urge the
13 members of this Committee to vote yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you so much,
15 Council Member, for your leadership. I'd now like to
16 invite the Clerk to call the roll.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Good afternoon, William
18 Martin, Committee Clerk; roll call vote, Committee on
19 Contracts.

20 Chair, Restler?

21 CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Brewer?

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes, thank you.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Gennaro?

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CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Thank you, Gale.

COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: I vote aye, and I make a note to my Legislative Director to add me as a sponsor to this resolution if I am not already a sponsor. So once again, I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Noted.

Hanks?

COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: (ABSENT)

COMMITTEE CLERK: Stevens?

COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: (ABSENT)

COMMITTEE CLERK: Won.

COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Vernikov?

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Sorry. No, we're not holding it open (INAUDIBLE)...

COMMITTEE CLERK: With a vote of 4 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and no abstentions, the item has been approved by the Committee.

CHAIRPERSON RESTLER: Okay, we are adjourning this hearing before we start the next one. Thank you so much to Billy and to the sergeants and to everybody, and congratulations, Council Member.

[GAVEL]

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 no interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date July 21, 2026