



TESTIMONY

Presented by

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on

Int. 1278: Posting of a Performance Summary Card for Social Adult Day Cares
Int. 1519: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Enrollment at Senior Centers

before the

New York City Council
Committee on Aging & Subcommittee on Senior Centers

on

Wednesday, April 26, 2017
10:00 A.M.

at

Committee Room, City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Good morning, Chairperson Chin, Chairperson Vallone and members of the Aging Committee. I am Caryn Resnick, Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs at the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA). From DFTA, I am joined by Dr. Robin Fenley, Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of HealthCare Connections. Also, I am joined by Kinsey Dinan, Deputy Commissioner of the Office of Evaluation and Research, and Lamaunda Maharaj, Director of the Emergency Food and Nutrition Assistance Program from the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA). I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on Int. No. 1278, in relation to the posting of a performance summary card for social adult day cares, and Int. No. 1519, in relation to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) enrollment at senior centers.

SOCIAL ADULT DAY CARE OVERVIEW

Formal opportunities to ensure that the growing population of older adults are actively engaged in community life come in many forms. During the past few years, we have witnessed the proliferation of Medicaid-authorized social adult day care (SADC) programs in New York City that are funded through Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) companies. To recall, social adult day care is a structured program of socialization for individuals whose physical and cognitive needs are beyond their ability to independently participate in activities such as that which would be found at a senior center. Social adult day care programs provide supervised and structured activities, some personal care assistance, snacks and meals, overall monitoring, and transportation. DFTA currently oversees ten social adult day care programs that are supported by Council discretionary funding.

The Medicaid financing model has promulgated an increase in the development of new SADCs throughout the five boroughs, most notably in Brooklyn and Queens. As of April 10th of this year, 315 sites had registered: 131 in Brooklyn, 108 in Queens, 32 in Manhattan, 30 in the Bronx, and 14 in Staten Island.

STATE SOCIAL ADULT DAY CARE OVERSIGHT

Managed Long Term Care companies receive their funding from the New York State Department of Health (DOH) Medicaid Program for the provision of authorized community-based healthcare

services. As stated above, social adult day care, as one component of NYS DOH-authorized services, receives its funding through each of its MLTC contracts. Therefore, primary oversight responsibility rests with the originator of this funding, the New York State Department of Health. It is precisely for this reason that principally it is the obligation of the State to ensure the quality of the services that are provided and to protect the integrity of the taxpayer-funded Medicaid program.

DOH has taken steps to address reported problems with MLTC-contracted SADCs, notably requiring the MLTCs to conduct an initial and annual on-site visit of all their contracted SADCs in order to monitor compliance with the minimum State requirements; to assess the cognitive and physical status of all potential SADC participants prior to authorizing attendance; to ensure SADC compliance with the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) SADC regulations; and to maintain documentation of such compliance for all related audits. Additionally, DOH has required that all MLTC-contracted SADCs self-certify annually with the New York State Office of the Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG), asserting that they are in compliance with the NYSOFA SADC requirements.

LOCAL LAW 9 OF 2015 UPDATE

As you know, Local Law 9 of 2015 designated DFTA as the SADC Ombuds Office and as such, the agency accepts all SADC-related inquiries and complaints, has developed a system to receive required registrations of all SADC programs operating within New York City, and continues to work with the Law Department regarding establishing rules for civil penalties for violations of NYSOFA social adult day care regulations.

In order to implement this law, DFTA has successfully developed relationships with relevant governmental entities. On the City level, these agencies include the Fire Department, the Department of Buildings, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, and the Human Rights Commission. Partners on the State level include NYSOFA, OMIG, and DOH. Our intergovernmental partners have been very responsive to DFTA's SADC Ombuds Office, as we request their assistance in addressing complaints received that are outside

of DFTA's purview and expertise. Each agency has also been helpful in aiding our understanding of the parameters of their respective areas of responsibility.

DFTA has developed a close partnership with OMIG, demonstrated through our joint participation in bimonthly convenings with the MLTCs, mutual support provided to each other regarding complaints, and our collaborative involvement in the recent creation of a multiagency public education team. This public education team consists of OMIG, DFTA, and the New York State Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. This initiative grew out of the awareness that many seniors who attended pop-up social adult day care programs expected incentives to participate, whether in cash or goods. The objectives of this group are to educate older adults and the general public about what participation in an SADC involves, to educate about the legal liability of programs who may engage in the inappropriate use of Medicaid funds, and to provide resources for participants and their family members who may have questions or want to report their concerns.

MLTCs are also actively monitoring and communicating with their contracted SADCs. DFTA recently sent a reminder to each registered site of their requirement to prominently post the SADC Ombuds Office and Participant Rights posters. The MLTCs with whom these SADCs contract were notified of this transmission and were also reminded of their obligation, as funders with oversight of these SADCs, to ensure that each site had registered with the Ombuds Office, and/or that any updated registration information was provided to the Ombuds Office. Since that notification, DFTA has received numerous communications from MLTCs and SADCs regarding registration status. In addition, several MLTCs have distinguished themselves through their comprehensive responses to complaints forwarded by DFTA, in some instances, offering additional findings that were not included in the original complaint. Many MLTCs inform us that they will conduct follow-up on complaints, once they issue a corrective action plan to the contracted SADC.

INT. NO. 1278: PERFORMANCE SUMMARY CARD FOR SADCs

The Administration shares the concerns prompting the introduction of Int. No. 1278, as quality social adult day care programming that is in conformance with regulations is of paramount

importance. Int. No. 1278, however, would put the City in a position of potential liability for a matter that falls within the realm of State oversight. As you are aware, it is the State and not the City that reimburses the MLTCs for providing social adult day care services, and in turn, the State has the decisive monitoring obligations in relation to SADCs. Given that the City does not have a fiscal or contractual relationship with any of the MLTC-contracted SADCs, this proposal is ultimately unenforceable on the local level. There are also legal concerns regarding the scope of the bill, which the Administration is happy to discuss at a later date.

Further, to provide the degree of oversight and monitoring set forth in Int. No. 1278 is beyond the capacity of DFTA. The agency does not have the staff nor the resources that would be required to ably comply with this legislation. In addition, the credentialing and specialized training that would be necessitated by Int. No. 1278 are well outside of DFTA's expertise.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In January 2017, at the Council's annual hunger hearing, HRA testified in regards to the comprehensive work that this Administration has been undertaking over the past three years to address hunger and food insecurity.

At that hearing, HRA noted that SNAP is the nation's most important anti-hunger program, assisting more than 45 million low-income Americans, and more than 1 in 4 are households with seniors or individuals with disabilities. Currently, 1.7 million New Yorkers receive SNAP, including more than 410,636 seniors. While the national participation rate for seniors is 42%, the participation rate, in recent years, among seniors in New York City, is now approximately 70%. Despite enrollment declines among other age groups, from September 2015 to September 2016, the SNAP caseload among seniors increased by 16,282 cases (4.13%).

At the hunger hearing, HRA provided details concerning the efforts underway to reform, streamline, and eliminate bureaucratic barriers to enrollment and recertification for benefits, including SNAP. They also included updates on the steady progress made to modernize and optimize their benefits systems, allowing clients to access online services outside of HRA's brick and mortar offices located throughout the City.

These reforms make it easier for eligible New Yorkers to apply, enroll, and recertify for SNAP benefits. In optimizing their technology systems, they enable clients to apply and recertify for certain benefits and programs in a more efficient and accessible means online, with the result that staff at HRA's job centers can work directly with the 30% of clients who do not access benefits via these online tools.

Since the inception of the SNAP Helps campaign in April 2015, FoodHelp.nyc has seen approximately 117,000 lifetime users. The SNAP Helps campaign encourages New Yorkers struggling to afford food to seek help, targeting low-income seniors and immigrants. FoodHelp.nyc redirects potential clients to ACCESS NYC where they are able to determine if they qualify for more than 30 different City, State, and Federal benefits. There were approximately 53,000 click-throughs from FoodHelp.nyc to ACCESS NYC, representing 45% of site visitors, up from 25% last year.

Various multilingual marketing materials are routinely distributed to community partners by the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, and DFTA. Multilingual marketing materials are also distributed by HRA's Community Affairs and Emergency Intervention Services/SNAP support teams and the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit, and at Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption sign-up events and Deferred Action citizenship events. HRA is also focused on expanding SNAP outreach services to homebound clients who are eligible for utility assistance and/or HEAP.

Additionally, HRA's SNAP Support Services unit manages out-stationed staff at three community-based "Paperless Office System" sites providing online access to benefits with an 88% approval rate. SNAP Support Services staff also provides technical assistance to 103 community-based organizations that provide SNAP facilitated enrollment and recertification services, seven of which target primarily seniors. Over the past year, the SNAP Support Services staff prescreened more than 9,526 potentially eligible applicants, including almost 600 seniors at more than 1,676 individual community events, 134 of which specifically targeted seniors. And as reported in January 2017, HRA's SNAP Support Services unit has a presence (providing prescreenings, application assistance, trainings, and presentations) at 45 senior centers throughout NYC.

INT. NO. 1519: SNAP ENROLLMENT AT SENIOR CENTERS

HRA has worked hard to ensure that eligible New Yorkers have unencumbered access to SNAP and other crucial supports. The Administration supports the intent of the legislation to enroll eligible seniors in the SNAP (food stamps) program.

However, as we just briefly summarized and detailed further in the January hunger hearing testimony, closing the enrollment gap can be achieved by services redesign and technological improvements that allow New Yorkers, including seniors, to apply and recertify for SNAP benefits without the need to go to an HRA office or submit documents to out-stationed HRA staff. All that is required is access to a computer, which can be provided at a wide range of community locations.

Moreover, as a 2015 pilot program in 14 senior centers found, New Yorkers who go to senior centers are already some of the most connected older adults when it comes to receiving benefits and participating in entitlement programs.

Further, one reason some older adults remain unenrolled is due to a perceived stigma associated with receiving government benefits. This is precisely why the Administration implemented FoodHelp.nyc, increased our community-based partnerships, and expanded outreach efforts both on and offline in order to have flexibility to reach those at-risk but not seeking help because of a perceived stigma.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Council to refine the Administration's approach to connecting seniors to benefits.

CONCLUSION

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony on Int. No. 1278 and Int. No. 1519. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.



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**Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses
Before the New York City Council
Committee on Aging
Honorable Margaret Chin, Chair**

Hearing: Social Adult Day-Care and SNAP legislation proposals

**Submitted by Kasey Williamson
April 26, 2017**

Good morning, Chair Chin and members of the Committee on Aging. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Kasey Williamson, and I am here on behalf of United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), New York City's federation of settlement houses and community centers. UNH member organizations provide a broad range of services in a neighborhood-based, multi-generational setting including early childhood education, afterschool, adult literacy, homelessness prevention, and services for older adults. Settlement houses value older adults as a key resource to strengthening communities in New York City and support over 80,000 older adults each year through senior centers, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), home delivered meals, and other programs. Relevant to this hearing, UNH member organizations operate four Social Adult Day Care (SADC) programs and 33 senior centers around the City, and provide congregate and home delivered meals in Manhattan and Queens. We are grateful for the City Council's continued financial support and attention to SADC programs, senior centers, and meal programs for older adults.

Social Adult Daycare Programs and Int. No. 1278

SADC programs are an important part of the continuum of community-based supports for older adults, providing therapeutic and socialization services to older adults with various stages of dementia and other physical or cognitive impairments. The model offers a safe environment to older adults who may be unable to participate in a senior center because of their frailty or dementia. This individual attention and assistance with activities of daily living like eating, using the bathroom, or mobility, ensures that participants are safe and able to participate in activities. In the UNH network, settlement houses run SADC programs that offer music and art therapy, activities to stimulate cognitive and physical abilities, exercise programs, and support groups. They also help older adults age in place by diverting them from nursing homes that both cost more and may put them at further distances from their families and social networks. SADC programs also provide needed respite to caregivers and families.

Int. No. 1278 would require SADC providers to post performance summary cards near their entrances. UNH has several concerns and comments around the implementation of this legislation.

First, SADC programs are regulated by the New York State Office for the Aging (SOFA) and the State Department of Health (DOH), but the proposed legislation calls for the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) to monitor program conditions and issue performance cards. Because the programs must adhere to State regulations, even if a SADC program fails to comply with regulations, it is unclear whether DFTA would have authority to close or correct the non-compliant program. It is not clear how

the scorecard information will factor into oversight of the SADC programs, and clarity around that interaction would help SADC providers understand how to respond to any ratings.

Second, UNH is concerned that this legislation creates an unfunded mandate for DFTA. Previously, Local Law 9 was passed in 2015 that created a central registry with DFTA of all SADC programs, established civil penalties for non-registration and non-compliance, and established an ombudsperson program to mediate consumer complaints. Local Law 9 provided minimal funding to DFTA to establish an ombudsperson program, though effective ombudsperson programs require significant staffing and resources.

UNH recommends that the City take the following actions to support SADC programs:

- Allocate resources to strengthen the SADC ombudsperson program to provide oversight and support to SADC programs;
- Include provisions in Int. No. 1278 for a correction plan for SADC that are non-compliant with State regulations, and provide appropriate funding to implement the plan; and
- Examine the need for SADC programs for non-Medicaid eligible individuals with the ultimate goal of expansion. Individuals whose income is above Medicaid eligibility still struggle to afford quality elder care, and expanded options would help both older adults and their caregivers.

Senior Centers, SNAP, and Int. No. 1519

Senior centers play a vital role in the lives of older New Yorkers by providing community-based services ranging from recreation and socialization to education and health services. Participation in senior centers promotes independence and self-reliance in older adults and enhances their well-being. Senior centers are particularly important for low-income, vulnerable, and socially isolated older adults. There are currently 251 senior centers in New York City.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides food support to low-income Americans, including working families, those with disabilities, and the elderly, in order to increase their ability to purchase food. SNAP programs have been shown to decrease the rate, depth, and severity of poverty in the United States; however, more than half of adults 60 and older who are eligible for SNAP benefits in NYC do not enroll. Consequently, they must often choose between food and other necessities, including rent and medical expenses. This often results in inadequate nutrition which can exacerbate disease, make it difficult to recover from illnesses, and heighten depression in older adults.

Int. No. 1519 would require each senior center in New York City to offer programming no less than once each month to enable eligible seniors to enroll in SNAP. UNH is concerned that this proposal would be duplicative of already existing obligations to enroll senior center participants in various benefits programs. DFTA already contractually requires senior centers to assist their participants on a monthly basis with enrollment in benefits, including SNAP, under the Assistance/Information/Benefits provisions of a senior center contract. Staff at senior centers are often stretched to capacity with their work and caseloads, and are already completing significant amounts of reporting for their DFTA contracts. Despite this, they continue to meet the provisions of their contracts, including their AIB units. To impose further requirements on staff to focus on SNAP enrollment without additional funding or support for those enrollment events would make compliance with this legislation difficult. Furthermore, older adults who attend senior centers are often the most well-connected older adults in the City, as they are connected to institutions that screen for benefits and other entitlements. The efforts to enroll older

adults in SNAP would be better served by providing outreach and enrollment opportunities elsewhere in the community.

Regarding SNAP outreach for older adults, UNH recommends that the City do the following:

- Conduct further research into the demographics of older adults receiving SNAP benefits to identify where the need is; and
- Invest in alternative methods to identify and enroll eligible older adults in benefits programs by conducting outreach in new ways, for example, by utilizing mailings, distributing information through hospitals, clinics, caregiver programs, and places of worship, and advertising on buses, subways, and radio announcements.

Meal programs for Older Adults

Ensuring halal meals in home delivered meals program, Res. No. 262

The proposed resolution calls on DFTA to ensure that halal meals are made available as an option in the home delivered meals program. The program currently provides kosher meals and other culturally relevant meals; however, none of DFTA's providers currently offer a halal option. UNH supports the provision of a halal meal option, as well as other culturally sensitive and therapeutic meals, as long as providers are reimbursed appropriately for preparing those meals. Culturally sensitive and therapeutic meals often come at a greater cost than standard home delivered meals, as they require different levels of preparation that are more costly.

Restoring the congregate meal program and promoting public awareness, Res. No 112

The proposed resolution calls for DFTA to restore the congregate meal program, providing older adults an additional weekend meal. It also includes conducting a public awareness campaign to promote congregate and home delivered meals. UNH supports the additional meal and the corresponding public awareness campaign.

Regarding meal programs and other supports for older adults, UNH recommends that the City take the following actions:

- Support halal and other culturally relevant meals through the home delivered meals program, and provide appropriate reimbursements for providers;
- Allocate funding towards restoration of the congregate meal program and a public awareness campaign to promote congregate and home delivered meals programs;
- Baseline City Council initiatives that support core services which promote stability in the aging services network. This includes \$660,000 for DFTA's Core Services Enhancement, \$3.85 million for the NORC program, \$3.578 million to support senior center programs, \$950,000 for SADC programs, and \$1.2 million to support the Congregate Weekend Meal program; and
- Baseline \$1.12 million to support nursing services in the NORC programs, \$15 million to decrease disparities among senior center funding, and \$1.8 million to continue the Geriatric Mental Health Initiative.

We look forward to collaborating with you on supporting and improving vital services that keep older adults safe in their communities and provide access to necessary nutritional benefits. Thank you for your time and holding this hearing, and I am happy to answer any questions that you have. You may contact me at kwilliamson@unhny.org, or (212) 967-0322, ext. 329 or my colleague Nora Moran at nmoran@unhny.org, or (212) 967-0322 ext. 316.

Testimony in support of Res. No. 1225:

Calling upon the New York State Legislature to significantly increase funding for the New York State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
Before the Committee on Aging with the Subcommittee on Senior Centers
April 26, 2017

Statement of Angela Ghesquiere, PhD, MSW
Program Manager, Sadin Institute for Law and Public Policy
Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging, Hunter College
City University of New York

The Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging of Hunter College, an academic gerontology center of the City University of New York, supports Resolution 1225 to increase funding for the New York State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. We thank Council Members Chin, Barron and Palma for their sponsorship of this important resolution.

As an academic gerontology center, we are aware of the body of evidence that supports the need for addressing elder abuse in nursing homes, a key task of the state long-term care ombudsmen.¹ This evidence includes:

- Elder abuse in long-term care settings is prevalent. A New York State survey of older adults living in community settings estimated that 260,000 older adults had been victims of at least one form of elder abuse in the preceding year.² While there are not clear estimates of rates of abuse in long-term care settings in New York, a Michigan survey of relatives of people in long term care found that that 28% had identified abuse in their family members,³ and a survey of over 4,000 nurse aides in Pennsylvania nursing homes found that 36% observed argumentative behavior between staff and residents and 28% observed intimidation of residents.⁴
- Elder abuse in long-term care settings has many negative consequences, including dehydration, pressure sores, undernourishment, and increased mortality rates.⁵
- Elder abuse is vastly underreported. The New York State survey found that rates of self-reported elder abuse were nearly 24 times greater than the number of

¹ Administration on Aging and Administration for Community Living. (2012). "FY 2012 Report to Congress." Retrieved April 18, 2017, from https://acl.gov/NewsRoom/Publications/docs/AOA_2012_AnnualReport.pdf.

² Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Weill Cornell Medical Center and New York City Department for the Aging (2011). Under the radar: New York State elder abuse prevalence study. New York, NY.

³ Page, C., T. Conner, A. Prokhorov, Y. Fang and L. Post (2009). "The effect of care setting on elder abuse: results from a Michigan survey." *J Elder Abuse Negl* 21(3): 239-252.

⁴ Castle, N. (2012). "Nurse aides' reports of resident abuse in nursing homes." *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 31(3): 402-422.

⁵ Lindbloom, E. J., J. Brandt, L. D. Hough and S. E. Meadows (2007). "Elder mistreatment in the nursing home: A systematic review." *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association* 8(9): 610-616.

cases reported to authorities.⁶ Potential reasons for under-reporting include physical or cognitive impairments that limit ability to report; fear of not being believed; and stigma about being labeled a victim.⁷ Older adults in long-term care may be especially concerned about reporting because they fear retaliation or other repercussions from staff.⁸

- Substantiation of cases in long-term care settings is challenging without sufficient resources. A study of assisted living elder abuse cases found that only 36% were ever substantiated,⁹ and a study of abuse reported at nursing homes throughout the U.S. found only about 13% of cases ever went to trial.¹⁰

Increasing funding to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program would provide sufficient staffing and other resources to fully investigate the high number of elder abuse cases in long-term care, enable the Program to quickly respond to and investigate allegations (which could increase willingness to report abuse and substantiation rates), and provide effective interventions, which would limit the negative consequences of elder abuse. Increasing funding to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program may also enhance the ability of the Program to effectively prosecute cases and prevent further abuse.

While we applaud the State's support of the New York State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to date, we believe that the safety and well-being of vulnerable older New Yorkers would be improved if the New York State Legislature significantly increases funding for the Program. Expanding the Program is essential to effectively address elder abuse in long-term care.

Thank you for this consideration, and I will be happy to respond to any questions.

⁶ Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Weill Cornell Medical Center and New York City Department for the Aging (2011). Under the radar: New York State elder abuse prevalence study. New York, NY.

⁷ Stiegel, L. A. (2012). "An overview of elder financial exploitation." Generations-Journal of the American Society on Aging 36(2): 73-80.

⁸ Castle, N., J. C. Ferguson-Rome and J. A. Teresi (2015). "Elder Abuse in Residential Long-Term Care: An Update to the 2003 National Research Council Report." Journal of Applied Gerontology 34(4): 407-443.

⁹ Phillips, L. R. and G. Guo (2011). "Mistreatment in assisted living facilities: complaints, substantiations, and risk factors." Gerontologist 51(3): 343-353.

¹⁰ Payne, B. K. and R. Cikovic (1995). "An empirical examination of the characteristics, consequences, and causes of elder abuse in nursing homes." Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect 7(4): 61-74.

Testimony in support of Res. No. 1226:

Calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.5820-A, in relation to violations of safety conditions in adult care facilities

Before the Committee on Aging with the Subcommittee on Senior Centers
April 26, 2017

Statement of Theresa Montini, MSW, Ph.D

Director of Research

Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging, Hunter College

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The Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging at Hunter College, the academic gerontology center of the City University of New York, wishes to be recorded in strong support of Res. No. 1226, "Calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.5820-A, in relation to violations of safety conditions in adult care facilities." The Brookdale Center thanks Council Members Chin and Palma for their sponsorship and support of this important resolution.

Res. No. 1226 would put the New York City Council on record in support of legislation sponsored by Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried that would amend the social services law and the mental hygiene law to improve Department of Health safety enforcement.

The bill (currently A2743) would protect the health, safety and quality of life of New York residents living in adult care facilities by more effectively sanctioning violations of safety conditions in adult care facilities by:

- Authorizing suspension or limitations of errant adult care facilities' operating certificates
- Increasing penalties for violations
- Decreasing the time periods for correcting found violations
- Establishing a notification system that places errant facilities on a "Do Not Refer" list
- Prohibiting errant facilities from admitting any new resident until danger is eliminated
- Requiring annual reviews for all facilities, regardless of past high ratings
- Mandating that inspection reports set a timeline for violations to be ameliorated

The City of New York has a justifiable interest in A2743 given that nearly half of all licensed adult care facilities in New York State are located in New York City. This bill would protect the health, safety and quality of life of a class of New York's vulnerable residents – adults who are not able to live independently, but who do not require admission to a nursing home. The Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging urges the Committee on Aging and the Subcommittee on Senior Centers to support Res. No. 1226 and join in every effort to advance Gottfried's act to amend the social services law and the mental hygiene law to better address violations of safety conditions in adult care facilities.

Thank you for this consideration.



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Testimony of Will Thomas, Director of Research, Policy, and Advocacy

Hunger Free America

Hearing Before The New York City Council Committee on Aging and Subcommittee on Senior Centers

April 26th, 2017

My name is Will Thomas, and I am the Director of Research, Policy, and Advocacy at Hunger Free America. Formerly called the New York City Coalition Against Hunger, Hunger Free America changed its name in 2016 to better reflect the broad scope of our national work. This was also accompanied with intensifying our local efforts under the new name, Hunger Free New York City.

I would like to thank Chairwoman Chin, Chairman Vallone and the rest of the Committee and Subcommittee for your work, and especially for the opportunity to testify. I come before you in order to support several of the proposed pieces of legislation in front of this Committee and Subcommittee today. Specifically, we encourage you to advance Int. 1519-2017 supporting SNAP outreach, Res. 0112-2014 restoring weekend congregate meals service and calling for a public awareness campaign for congregate and home delivered meals, and Res. 0262-2014 ensuring Halal meals are available within the home delivered meals program.

It bears repeating that older adults experiencing food insecurity are among the most vulnerable populations in our City, state, and country. A 2016 research study found that the state of New York ranked fourth worst in terms of older adults facing the threat of hunger, with 19.28% of New Yorkers – that's one in every five – over the age of 60 at risk for food insecurity.¹ Our own research found that an average of 171,197 adults over the age of 65 experienced food insecurity between 2013 and 2015, representing 13.6% of all seniors in New York City. This represents a nearly 30% increase in food insecurity in this population when compared to before the Great Recession (2006-2008).²

¹Ziliak, James P. and Gundersen, Craig. *The State of Senior Hunger in America 2014: An Annual Report*. June 2016. <http://www.nfesh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/State-of-Senior-Hunger-in-America-2014.pdf>

² Hunger Free America. *The State of the Working Hungry: Low Wages Chief Cause of Malnutrition*. 2016. <http://www.hungerfreeamerica.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/2016%20Annual%20Hunger%20Survey%20Report%20Final.pdf>

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Food insecurity wreaks havoc on the health of older adults, especially those already predisposed to chronic illnesses. When compared to older adults not experiencing food insecurity, older adults experiencing hunger are 60 percent more likely to experience depression, 53 percent more likely to die of a heart attack, 40 percent more likely to have congestive heart failure, and 22 percent more likely to face limitations in their Activities of Daily Living (ADLs).³ These costs are subsequently passed on to the healthcare system through Medicare and Medicaid, and to the New Yorkers who struggle to provide care to their aging family, friends, and neighbors.

We fully support Int. 1519-2017. We believe this legislation would increase access to information about SNAP and socialize its use among older adults, whose participation in SNAP is traditionally lower than the rest of the SNAP-eligible population. Having access to SNAP benefits, even just the minimum benefit, can ensure that older adults have enough resources to cover their expenses; however, lack of access to trusted information and social stigma are common barriers to older adults opting to participate.⁴

Nationwide, only 42 percent of eligible older adults participate in SNAP, according to the latest data from USDA⁵. While the latest state-specific data shows that approximately 60% of eligible older adults participate in SNAP⁶, when compared with NYC Human Resources Administration's self reported, overall participation rate of 77%⁷, it becomes clearer that more work needs to be done to ensure that older adults who are eligible for SNAP are receiving these benefits.

We believe this bill has the potential to help boost SNAP participation among older New Yorkers and look forward to its implementation. We also applaud that this legislation calls for quarterly data reporting, which will guide future efforts and help to develop promising practices.

We fully support Res. 0112-2014, but encourage the Council to extend previous funding for its implementation. It is absolutely crucial that congregate services are available to all older adults who are at risk of food insecurity, not only because of income constraints, but also because of physical constraints, such as the inability to shop for or prepare their own meals. As stated in the legislation and in this testimony, providing food to older adults who cannot otherwise access it improves health outcomes and ameliorates social isolation.

³ Feeding America. *Spotlight on Senior Health: Adverse Health Outcomes of Food Insecure Older Americans*, <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/our-research/senior-hunger-research/or-spotlight-on-senior-health-executive-summary.pdf>

⁴ USDA Food and Nutrition Service. *Engaging Special Populations*. August 2016. https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/engaging_special_populations.pdf

⁵ USDA. *Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: Fiscal Year 2010 to Fiscal Year 2014*. June 2016. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ops/Trends2010-2014.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.ncoa.org/economic-security/benefits/visualizations/senior-snap-participation/>

⁷ NYC Human Resources Administration. *SNAP Program Access Index and Participation Rates: 2002-2013*. https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hra/downloads/pdf/facts/snap/2002_2013NYCSNAPParticipation.pdf

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We would, however, encourage the Council to allocate additional funding in order for the Department for the Aging (DFTA) to carry out this legislation. Based on our estimates, Federal Older Americans Act (OAA) nutrition programs funding for New York declined by 13.1% between 2009 and 2016, adjusted for inflation.⁸⁹ Program data indicates that the New York State Office on Aging has transferred funds from other OAA programs for a net gain to OAA nutrition programs from at least 2009-2013, presumably in an attempt to meet the increased need.

In Fiscal 2017, the Council wisely invested \$1.2 million in funding for these additional “sixth day” meals over weekends¹⁰, and we encourage the Council to extend these funds to Fiscal 2018 and beyond.

We fully support Res. 0262-2014. As stated in the legislation, DFTA accommodates many other dietary practices such as kosher meals, as well as culturally appropriate meals for Chinese, Polish, and Korean preferences. We would hope that the Committee would advance this common sense legislation so that those adhering to halal practices can be served properly.

If the members of this Committee are interested in learning more through interacting with our clients and citizen advocates, we look forward to connecting you with those resources.

⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Administration for Community Living. Mandatory Funding Allocations.* https://acl.gov/About_ACL/Allocations/OAA.aspx

⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Administration for Community Living. Aging Integrated Database. Profile of State OAA Programs: New York.*

<https://agid.acl.gov/StateProfiles/Profile/Pre/?id=34&topic=13&years=2009,2010,2011,2012,2013,2014>

¹⁰ <http://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2017/03/125-DFTA.pdf>

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City Council Committee on Aging
April 26, 2017 Topic: Res. 262 and Int. No. 1519
Remarks by Molly Krakowski, Director of Legislative Affairs
Jewish Association for Services for the Aging (JASA)

Good morning. I'd like to thank Councilmember Chin for chairing today's Committee hearing on aging and for the opportunity to testify. My name is Molly Krakowski and I am Director of Legislative Affairs at JASA.

JASA is a not-for-profit agency serving the needs of older adults in the greater New York area. Its mission is to sustain and enrich the lives of the aging in the New York metropolitan area so that they can remain in the community with dignity and autonomy. JASA has developed a comprehensive, integrated network of services that provides a continuum of community care. Programming promotes independence, safety, wellness, community participation, and an enhanced quality of life for New York City's older adults. These programs reach over 40,000 clients and include home care, case management services, senior centers, NORC supportive services, home delivered meals, caregiver support, continuing education, licensed mental health, housing, advocacy, legal services, adult protective services, and guardianship services.

Underfunding of Human Services Contracts

Prior to addressing today's agenda items, I would like to speak for a moment about the underfunding of human services contracts. JASA joins with members of the Humans Services Council (HSC) in calling for a 12% across the board increase in human services contracts. For JASA, this translates into \$2.5 million to fill the gap of current City underfunding; \$1.1 million to pay for social worker parity and 2% increases, and \$350,000 for expected increases in food, health insurance, rent and fuel. Simply put, New York City contracts do not fund the full cost of direct service delivery nor the indirect expenses associated with contracts management. Community based organizations, like JASA, cannot be expected to raise philanthropic dollars in order to resolve the funding gap. Inadequate funding prevents agencies from paying appropriate salaries for staffs who are tasked with taking care of the most vulnerable older adults in New York. As a result, turnover rates are high and vacancies are difficult to fill. It also makes it harder to identify vendors interested in taking the City's rate when subcontracting for necessary services.

Resolving this funding crisis is JASA's top priority for this budget cycle, and we appreciate the City Council's attention to this issue in your response to the Executive Budget. We hope the FY18 final budget will reflect the sector's need.

Today I will offer testimony on two of the items on the Committee agenda, Res. 262 regarding halal meals, and Int. No. 1519 re: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program enrollment at senior centers.

Res. No. 262

JASA supports Res. No. 262 calling on DFTA to ensure that halal meals are made available as an option in the home delivered meals program. While DFTA providers currently offer a variety of culturally appropriate meals, in compliance with religious observance and/or cultural preferences, including kosher, Chinese, Korean and Polish meals, there are no contracts with halal providers.

In its DFTA funded Brooklyn Case Management programs, JASA partners with COPO, Council of People's Organization, formerly known as Council of Pakistan Organization. COPO's mission is to assist low income immigrant families, particularly South Asians and Muslims, to reach their full potential as residents of New York City. As a subcontractor with JASA, COPO provides three social workers to improve case management services access to an underserved population. Without a doubt, the population targeted by COPO, specifically vulnerable older adults, would be better served if halal meals were available via home delivery.

Identifying an appropriate provider of halal meals at the current reimbursement rates from DFTA continues to prove challenging. JASA serves 486,250 meals annually; more than half are kosher meals. Providing kosher meals continues to cost an additional \$1.35 per meal and JASA projects a deficit of \$157,000 for FY17. When JASA conducted an initial exploration of the cost to provide halal meals, one bid was for \$15, well above the current rates. JASA urges the Department for the Aging to revisit the reimbursement rates for culturally appropriate home delivered meals and cover their full cost.

Int. No. 1519

Senior Centers serve a vital role in helping older adults continue to engage in community life and remain socially connected. Recent research demonstrates the importance of these factors in overall well-being. Senior Centers offer hot, nutritious meals, fitness, health, and wellness activities; classes, lectures, and trips; and meaningful volunteer and intergenerational opportunities. The majority of senior centers operate with bare bones funding. For example, most fitness activities are presently funded through the generosity of individual Council Members. However, with increases in rent and utility costs, senior centers do not have sufficient funding to pay for these important classes, much less expand their reach.

Senior centers are also a key venue for providing older adults with case assistance, effective in improving access to benefits and entitlements. One of those benefits, Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP), provides food support to low-income New Yorkers. Despite the overwhelming number of eligible individuals 60+, SNAP continues to be underutilized by older adults in New York. Int. No. 1519 requires each senior center to offer additional programming at least once per month to assist eligible seniors to enroll in SNAP. While JASA recognizes the good intention in Int. No. 1519, we are concerned that this proposal may be unnecessary, considering DFTA's current contract requirements. Staff at senior centers regularly conduct benefits assessments and enrollment into programs such as SNAP, and all statistics are reported to DFTA. This

proposal would place additional requirements on overextended staff and programs that are struggling to provide quality programs within their limited budgets. A wide-range publicity campaign focused on older adults, calling attention to SNAP, SCRIE and other underutilized programs would be welcome and likely increase referrals to all DFTA programs.

Universal Access to Legal Assistance

Finally, I would like to call attention to Universal Access to Legal Assistance announced by Mayor De Blasio and Speaker Mark-Viverito. Through this right to counsel, tenants facing eviction proceedings in New York City Housing Court will have access to free legal services, with a new \$93 million allocation rolled out over a 5 year period. This funding is desperately needed. I will highlight several reasons for the needs of older adults to be prioritized in Year One of the initiative (additional issues are included as an addendum to my written testimony).

1. Most seniors are living on the fiscal cliff due to high rent burden and fixed incomes.
2. One out of five NYC seniors lives below the federal poverty level, which is \$13,670 and the average income from Social Security is \$15,000-16,000.
3. Many seniors who get SCRIE are already paying more than 50% of their income when their rent is frozen. According to a study by LiveOn NY, many SCRIE recipients skip meals, skip doctor visits or medication, because they still cannot afford the cost of living.
4. Seniors are an attractive target for landlords looking to harass and evict long time tenants with lower rents.
5. Providing legal assistance to seniors in housing court will lead to fewer seniors being referred by DOI and other agencies to Adult Protective Services saving the City money and resources

Currently, it is our understanding that the City is planning to target only a set number of city zip codes in Year One, leaving many vulnerable seniors outside these zip codes without universal access to legal assistance. Many older adults cannot wait until Year Two and will find themselves facing displacement and possible institutionalization. We urge the City Council and the Committee on Aging to raise this concern to the Administration, serving the most vulnerable populations first.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

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Advocates of the
Food Industry
Since 1900



FOOD INDUSTRY ALLIANCE OF NEW YORK STATE, INC.

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Testimony

**By the Food Industry Alliance of New York State, Inc.
in Support of
Int. No. 1519-2017**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Food Industry Alliance of New York State (FIA) regarding Int. No. 1519-2017. FIA is a nonprofit trade association that promotes the interests statewide of New York's grocery, drug and convenience stores. Our members include chain and independent grocery stores that account for a significant share of New York City's retail food market and the grocery wholesalers that supply them, as well as drug and convenience stores.

FIA supports this legislation, which requires the Department of Social Services to distribute SNAP applications to all senior centers. In addition, under the legislation, the department must, in coordination with the Department for the Aging, establish and implement a program to enable SNAP enrollment at all senior centers. At a minimum, the program must enable eligible seniors to enroll in SNAP in person at each senior center. Moreover, each senior center will be required to offer such programming at least once a month.

Maximizing the SNAP enrollment of eligible populations should be a top policy priority for the city. Increasing the enrollment of eligible senior citizens is especially important, since they are under enrolled. According to the National Council on Aging, in fiscal year 2014, while 83% of all eligible individuals participated in SNAP, just 42% of eligible elderly individuals were enrolled in the program. AARP points out that "...67 percent of struggling older people age 60 and above" who are eligible for SNAP benefits are not receiving them. AARP asserts that as a result "...millions of seniors today are suffering from the debilitating effects of hunger and poor nutrition, despite the fact that most of these 67 percent paid taxes to support the program for years."

FIA has periodically partnered with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance to help increase SNAP enrollment. These efforts are not only intended to alleviate hunger, but also to bring federal dollars into the state. The OTDA programs have targeted communities in Manhattan and Queens, thus highlighting the need to reach under enrolled populations living in those areas.

For the foregoing reasons, FIA, on behalf of its members, supports adoption of this legislation. We would like to thank Councilmember Koslowitz for introducing the bill and her thoughtful work on this issue. We look forward to working with government stakeholders to facilitate its enactment.

Respectfully submitted,

Food Industry Alliance of New York State, Inc.

Jay M. Peltz

General Counsel and Vice President of Government Relations

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April 26, 2017



**TESTIMONY
of
FPWA**

**Before the
New York City Council Committee on Aging
and Subcommittee on Senior Centers**

Proposed Legislation on Meals, SNAP, and Social Adult Day Services

April 26, 2017

Prepared By:

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Introduction

My name is Jeanette Estima and I am a Policy Analyst at FPWA, an anti-poverty policy and advocacy organization with a membership network of nearly 200 human service and faith-based organizations. Thank you, Chairperson Chin, Chairperson Vallone, and members of the Committee on Aging, for the opportunity to testify here today.

FPWA has been a prominent force in New York City's social services system for more than 92 years, advocating for fair public policies, collaborating with partner agencies, and growing its community-based membership network to meet the needs of New Yorkers. Each year, through its network of member agencies, FPWA reaches close to 1.5 million New Yorkers of all ages, ethnicities, and denominations. FPWA strives to build a city of equal opportunity that reduces poverty, promotes upward mobility, and creates shared prosperity for all New Yorkers.

Social adult day care (SADC) and access to nutritious food are critical to the safety and health of older New Yorkers, and to the well-being of thousands of caregivers. Both the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and home-delivered and congregate meals play a significant role in reducing food insecurity among older adults. SADC provides therapeutic and social programming that helps especially frail older adults, including those with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, who may not be able to participate in senior centers. It is also an important source of respite for caregivers, allowing them an opportunity to take care of other responsibilities, such as work or caring for a child or a household. We thank the Committee for recognizing the importance of these programs and attending to various challenges in their implementation.

Response to Proposed Legislation

Int. No. 1278

SADC programs target older adults whose cognitive and physical impairments require greater level of attention and care. SADC programs create a continuity of care that allows older adults to age in place, and provide much needed respite to caregivers.

Int. No. 1278 requires the posting of a performance summary card at the entrance of social adult day care sites, indicating the provider's compliance with SADC regulations and standards, as well as any penalties imposed. A scorecard system brings a welcomed level of transparency to the public. In addition, in order to ensure more robust oversight, we urge that additional funding be allocated for both this program and for DFTA's ombudsman program.

Local Law 9, passed in 2015, requires all SADC programs to register with the city's Department for the Aging (DFTA). It also established civil penalties for non-registration and non-compliance, and established an ombudsperson program to mediate consumer complaints. However, minimal funding was provided to DFTA for the ombudsperson program, limiting its effectiveness.

FPWA recommends that the City fully fund DFTA's SADC ombudsperson program in order to provide more robust oversight of SADC programs.

Int. No. 1519

The SNAP program addresses food insecurity for low-income New Yorkers by increasing the purchasing power of their dollars spent on food. Int. No. 1519 seeks to increase enrollment among older adults by requiring senior centers to offer programming each month to enable eligible seniors to enroll in SNAP. However, DFTA-funded senior centers already help participants enroll in a variety of benefits, including SNAP. In fact, studies have shown that older adults who attend senior centers are well-connected to support programs and benefits. As such, FPWA is concerned that the proposed legislation does not effectively target eligible but unenrolled seniors. Moreover, it is unclear whether the program—and its concomitant reporting requirement—come with additional funding. We are very concerned about adding an unfunded mandate for senior centers, many of which are already underfunded and struggling with burdensome reporting requirements.

FPWA recommends that the City investigate barriers to SNAP enrollment among older adults, and create a plan to address them.

Res. No. 112

Res. No. 112 calls for the restoration of the congregate weekend meal program and a public awareness campaign to promote congregate and home delivered meals. The congregate weekend meal program provides one additional meal on weekends, which is critical in reducing hunger among older New Yorkers.

FPWA supports the resolution and recommends that adequate funding be provided to support both the weekend meal program and the public awareness campaign.

Res. No. 262

The proposed resolution calls for DFTA to ensure that halal meals are available as part of the home delivered meals program. The availability of culturally appropriate meals is so important to the health and well-being of older adults. As with other specialized or therapeutic meals, halal meals come with an additional cost that must be funded.

FPWA supports the resolution to provide halal meals and recommends that adequate funding be provided to support the increased cost of these meals.

Building a Community-Based Safety Net for Older New Yorkers

In addition to the proposed legislation, FPWA urges the Committee to seek a comprehensive plan to address the needs of older New Yorkers. Especially given the threat of sweeping federal cuts to existing safety net programs, there must be a commitment to fully fund and build an infrastructure for aging services.

We propose an investment of \$132.8 million over the next five years. With this investment, the City will be able to address current needs as well as plan and develop an infrastructure for aging services that can bear the increasing needs that we are already starting to see.

A Five Year Investment Plan for Aging Services

<u>Program</u>	<u>Five Year Total</u>
Senior Centers	\$42.2 million
Homecare	\$25.3 million
Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals	\$12.9 million
Case Management	\$10.2 million
Service Coordinators in Affordable Housing	\$10 million
Social Adult Day Services	\$10 million
NORCs	\$9 million
Caregiver Programs	\$8 million
Transportation	\$6 million
Elder Abuse	\$1.8 million
TOTAL	\$132.8 million

We ask for a strong upfront commitment of \$60.6 million in FY18, the Year of the Senior, in order to baseline core services that are currently council funded or funded for one year only, and close the deep gaps in existing services. The four following years can then focus on building the infrastructure for services and responding to changes in needs based on shifting demographics, with an additional \$24.3 million in FY19, \$20.3 million in FY20, and \$13.9 million in FY21 and FY22.

Conclusion

We thank the Committee on Aging for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to working closely with you to ensure that older New Yorkers and their families receive sufficient services needed for them to live and thrive in the City.



Making New York a better place to age

**New York City Council
Committee on Aging, Council Member Margaret Chin, Chair
April 26, 2017
Testimony by LiveOn NY**

LiveOn NY (formerly Council of Senior Centers and Services of NYC, Inc.) is dedicated to making New York a better place to age. At the core of LiveOn NY's mission is the desire to support our membership organizations, numbering over 100 organizations that provide 600 community based programs and services for older adults, ranging from individual community-based centers to large multi-service organizations throughout all five boroughs. We are pleased to focus our efforts towards promoting better policy which will provide for better aging both today and for the years to come.

LiveOn NY administers a citywide outreach program that targets older adults in the communities where benefits are most underutilized. This program places friendly and highly-trained retired professionals within low-income, high-needs communities to educate thousands of older adults, including those who are homebound, about food assistance options, and screen and enroll those who are eligible for SNAP, SCRIE and other benefits.

LiveOn NY also staffs a call hotline, (347) 815-5930, staffed by a professional client services team that assists older adults and caregivers with benefits screenings and applications, serving approximately 1,000 clients per quarter.

LiveOn NY respectfully offers this testimony and recommendations, which include the request for the City to adopt and support LiveOn NY's Aging Coalition FY18 Year of the Senior Budget Request, and our joint Year of the Senior Legislative Agenda Proposal, both of which appear at the end of this testimony, and specifically address many issues raised at this hearing today as noted below.

Int. 1519-2017

LiveOn NY opposes Int. 1519-2017. While food insecurity among seniors is an important issue to address, this legislation imposes an unfunded mandate as well as unclear additional reporting requirements on senior centers that are already historically grossly underfunded. New York City's Department for the Aging (DFTA)'s budget has experienced stagnation and dramatic cuts at a time of rapid growth of older adults. DFTA's budget is less than 1/2 of 1% of the city's budget despite older adults comprising more than 18% of the city's population. The human impact of underfunding is severe - growing waiting lists, senior centers in disrepair and lacking adequate staff and program funding, and no community-based safety net for older New Yorkers. Rebuilding this safety net to allow older New Yorkers to age in place safely will require a robust investment in home based, neighborhood based, and caregiver services.



Making New York a better place to age

Despite the gross underfunding, senior centers and programs in the aging network are already performing outreach providing benefit enrollment information, including SNAP information, to seniors who participate in their programs. Seniors that access the aging network programs are well connected thanks to the important work senior centers and programs are already doing.

Therefore, LiveOn NY opposes Int. 1519-2017.

LiveOn NY also makes the following recommendations that address the important issue of senior hunger.

Adopt the Year of the Senior Budget Request

LiveOn NY strongly urges City Council and the Administration to focus its efforts into supporting our attached FY18 Budget Request for Aging Services which would provide \$60,608,000 for Department for the Aging (DFTA) funded services. This budget request is supported by a coalition of organizations including LiveOn NY, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (FPWA), United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), CityMeals on Wheels, UJA Federation New York, AARP and CaringKind and other organizations. In addition to this FY18 budget request Live On NY supports the human service sector ask for a 12 percent increase to all human services contracts to address under-funded OTPS costs, raise salaries, and support reasonable fringe benefits.

Introduce and adopt legislation to establish a per meal reimbursement for senior center congregate and home delivered meals based on the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food costs in NYC

Per meal reimbursement for congregate and home delivered meals does not reflect the increasing costs for food. Legislation that would establish an automatic reimbursement increase annually based on NYC's annual CPI for food costs would not cause an undue burden on the budget, and would ensure that these major nutritional programs for older New Yorkers will be able to purchase nutritional food to serve a diverse population.

Support a shortened SNAP Application form for older adults

LiveOn NY recommends that the Human Rights Administration (HRA) consider using a streamlined SNAP Application form for older adult applicants. Because older adults' incomes generally remain stagnant, or even worse, decline over time, removing one of the initial barriers to application for benefits would help older adults, as well as reduce the immense amount of time that often multiple caseworkers need to spend per applicant.

Several states have explored the usage of a shortened application form for older adults through pilot programs. LiveOn NY recommends that HRA explore this option, as well as related waiver options to streamline the process for older adults.



Making New York a better place to age

Form an HRA Senior Task Force to address the barriers to enrollment for older adults

LiveOn NY applauds the New York City Department of Finance (DOF) for their foresight in establishing a SCRIE Task Force which includes stakeholders from the government as well as community based organizations. LiveOn NY has been active with this Task Force and it has been a valuable experience to discuss challenges and recommendations to strengthen the SCRIE program.

LiveOn NY recommends that HRA form a Senior Task Force, which would include governmental representatives, beneficiaries, stakeholders from the community and caregivers, among others, to discuss barriers and practical solutions to increase access to benefits including SNAP. Older adults are also often accessing benefits across multiple systems and departments, so a Task Force would explore cross-department challenges and solutions. LiveOn NY would welcome the opportunity to participate in this Task Force.

Int. 1278-2016

LiveOn NY does not take a position on Int. 1278 at this time.

LiveOn NY advocates that the city must adequately fund the Adult Day Ombudsperson position at DFTA that was created through Intro 0358-2014-A. LiveOn NY also encourages City Council to ensure social adult day care services, particularly those funded through DFTA that are available to seniors above the Medicaid level, are not subject to overly burdensome or duplicative reporting requirements.

LiveOn NY also makes the following recommendation regarding social adult day, which was part of LiveOn NY's legislative package proposal.

The City must research the need for adult day care for seniors above the Medicaid level and provide for one social adult day care per CD in NYC. Access to affordable elder care is the workforce issue of the 21st century, particularly for women.

Adult day care has been underfunded for many years. Establishing a city funded safety net for family caregivers and their loved ones will allow for caregivers continue to provide care and take care of other responsibilities like working. Older adults with Alzheimer's, dementia or disabilities will be able to attend a program in a safe, supportive environment.

LiveOn NY recommends that the city must fund an independent study of the need for adult day by looking at activities of daily living (ADL) needs and other demographic information today and projecting into the future. Further, the city must develop and implement a plan that the city provide for a minimum of one social adult day program for seniors above the Medicaid level in each community district. This will provide for a broad safety net citywide to meet the need of a diverse senior population.



Making New York a better place to age

Resolution 0112-2014

LiveOn NY supports Resolution 0112-2014. LiveOn NY thanks City Council for the funding over the past several years to reinstate this program which was eliminated under the former administration. This extra meal provides seniors one additional takeaway meal on Fridays for the weekend, which is so valuable for senior food access. As part of our joint Coalition ask, LiveOn NY respectfully requests that the city baseline one-year funding to provide an extra weekend meal to older adults, including for congregate meals, for a total of \$1.2 million plus add an additional \$3,900,000 to increase per-meal reimbursement to cover years of inflationary increases. LiveOn NY also recommends that the city fund the public awareness campaign and target both seniors as well as families, caregivers and others.

Resolution 262-2014

LiveOn NY supports Resolution 262-2014. LiveOn NY has long advocated for adequate funding that would allow aging services providers to provide healthy meals to meet the needs of an increasingly immigrant and diverse older adult population. The city must provide adequate funding for this program.

Additional Recommendations

The city must establish a city planning process for city agencies to plan for the increasing number of older New Yorkers

The city should establish a baseline of what city agencies are doing now to serve older adults. Include current demographics, future projections, and tie to service needs. Each appropriate city agency will be given six months to develop a plan to be implemented the first year after this legislation is enacted and updated annually. This will include benchmarks to show progress, or lack of progress, service gaps and new needs. Finally, the city should establish the position inside City Hall of a coordinator (and additional staff) for all city agencies impacting older New Yorkers.

The city must ensure that the Case Management caseload size needs to be lower than 65

DFTA's case management system has an inordinately high caseload size, one case manager to 65 clients. This was seen as a positive move at the end of the Bloomberg administration because caseload sizes had been averaging 80+. However, there is no other case management system for other populations with such high caseload sizes. In order to truly provide professional case management, caseloads need to be lower so that case managers can work in depth with the complex situations faced by frail, homebound seniors and their family caregivers. The holistic needs of homebound seniors and their family caregivers cannot be narrowly defined by a limited case management system. Therefore, the city should perform a study, independent of government, on the case management needs of homebound seniors and determine the appropriate caseload level. After that, if caseload levels go too high, funding needs to be added to compensate for that.

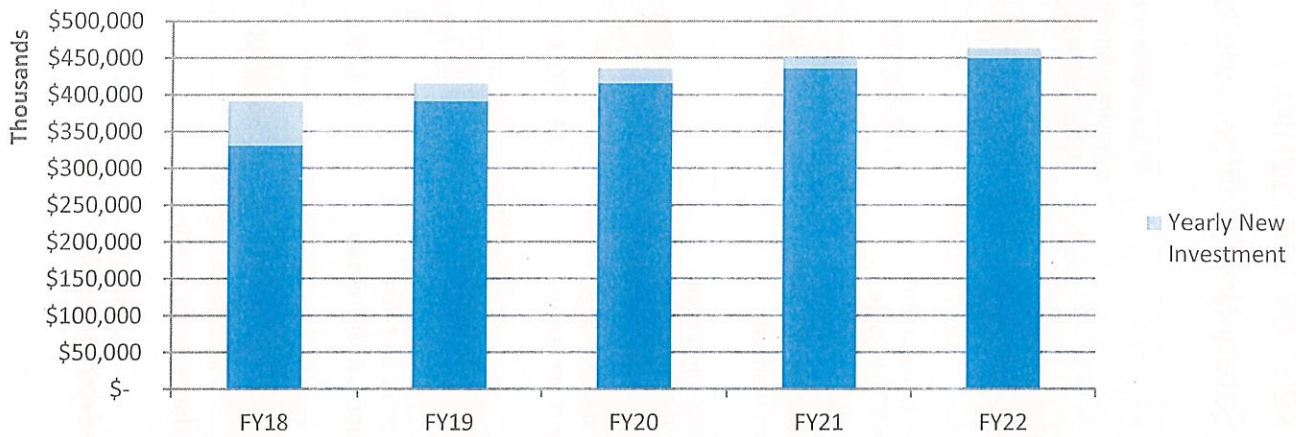
For more information on LiveOn NY, contact Bobbie Sackman, Associate Executive Director of Public Policy at 212-398-6565 x226 or bsackman@liveon-ny.org.

Building a Safety Net for Older New Yorkers

We believe that older New Yorkers should be able to live in their neighborhoods with dignity and support, as engaged members of their communities. But decades of underfunding have resulted in growing wait lists for services, senior centers in disrepair, and no community-based safety net for older New Yorkers.

Rebuilding this safety net that allows older New Yorkers to age in place safely will require a robust investment in home based, neighborhood based, and caregiver services. *We ask that the City commit to fully funding services for older adults with an investment of \$132.8 million over the next five years.* (The chart below shows how our proposal would impact DFTA's budget each year.) *Additionally, we support the human service sector ask for a 12 percent increase to all human services contracts to address under-funded OTPS costs, raise salaries, and support reasonable fringe benefits.*

Proposed Five Year DFTA Financial Plan



1.1 million New Yorkers are 65 and older

47% are immigrants

60% are women

32% live below or just above the poverty line

Building a robust network of aging services will require an investment in the following areas over the next five years:

Senior Centers	\$42.2 million
Homecare	\$25.3 million
Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals	\$12.9 million
Case Management	\$10.2 million
Service Coordinators in Affordable Housing	\$10 million
Social Adult Day Services	\$10 million
NORCs	\$9 million
Caregiver Programs	\$8 million
Transportation	\$6 million
Elder Abuse	\$1.8 million

DFTA's budget is just 1.98% of NYC's human services budget

1,900 on waitlists for case management

780 on waitlists for homecare

6.5% of DFTA's core budget is council funded



Make FY18 the Year of the Senior!

Invest \$60,608,000 in a Safety Net for Older Adults

Program	Description	Discretionary & one-time funding (\$15,738,000)	Close gaps in place-based programs (\$44,870,000)	Total (\$60,608,000)
Senior Centers	Baseline discretionary funding for program costs at senior centers. Fund a system-wide upgrade, to rectify funding disparities and move them all to an Innovative Senior Center model.	\$3,578,000	\$15,000,000	\$18,578,000
Homecare	Baseline one year funding for homecare services to maintain current service level, and increase funding to address waitlist of 780 people.	\$4,300,000	\$9,000,000	\$13,300,000
Case Management	Restore remainder of FY16 council funding to address waitlist of 1,900 people, and increase to meet rising demand and prevent waitlists.	\$1,200,000	\$5,000,000	\$6,200,000
6 th Weekend Meal, Congregate & HMDL	Baseline one year funding to provide an extra weekend meal to older adults (including congregate meals). Increase per-meal reimbursement to cover years of inflationary increases. (From \$8.50 to \$9.50/meal in FY18.)	\$1,200,000	\$3,900,000	\$5,100,000
Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities	Baseline discretionary funding for on-site services to areas with high numbers of older adult residents, and increase to support currently unfunded mandate for nursing hours.	\$3,850,000	\$1,120,000	\$4,970,000
Caregiver Programs	Increase funding for support and respite programs for growing number of caregivers.		\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000
Social Adult Day Care	Baseline discretionary funding to provide non-medical adult day care services to individuals with cognitive or physical limitations. Restore prior City Council funding to increase service level.	\$950,000	\$2,500,000	\$3,450,000
Transportation	Baseline discretionary funding for transportation programs and increase to expand access to services.	\$660,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,660,000
Service Coordinators in Affordable Housing	Provide service coordinators for all affordable housing that exists and is in development.		\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Elder Abuse	Provide mental health counseling for abuse victims. One counselor per existing elder abuse contract.		\$350,000	\$350,000



Commitment to Improve
the Quality of Life

Wednesday April 26, 2017

To: New York City Council Committee on Aging
From: India Home, Inc.
Re: Halal Home Delivered Meals

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify in front of the Committee on Aging. My name is Nargis Ahmed. I am the Program Director for India Home's Desi Senior Center in the basement of Jamaica Muslim Center in Jamaica, Queens. India Home is a non-profit organization founded by community members to serve South Asian older adults. The mission of India Home is to improve the quality of life for older adults by providing quality care in a culturally appropriate environment.


I am here today to support Resolution 0262-2014 which calls on the Department for the Aging to ensure halal meals are available as a part of the home delivered meal program.

We run the largest halal senior center congregate meal program in the city. Everyday, we have over 100 seniors come attend our program, access our case assistance services, recreational activities, health and wellness programs, and much more. As the director of the largest Muslim senior center in New York City, I know firsthand the hardships that Muslim seniors face every day.

Halal food is an integral part of Islam. it is a subset of one of the five main pillars of our religion. As Muslims, we need to eat only Halal food in order to continue our faith and religious practices. Before our senior center started, other senior centers in the area did not offer Halal meal options. Because of our culturally relevant meals, we are able to target an underserved and ignored segment of seniors in New York City.

P.O.Box 40263, Glen Oaks, NY 11004 ▪ Phone: (917) 288 7600 ▪ Fax: (718) 425 0891
Website: www.indiahome.org ▪ Tax Id: 20-8747291

Dr. Kiran Dave President	Dr. Amit Sood Treasurer
Dr. Bhuvana Dorai Vice President	Dr. Masood Mirza
Ms. Kamla Motihar Secretary	Dr. Gnanendra Sinha
	Ms. Jaya Bahadkar



The next step for us is to reach the homebound Muslim seniors who desperately need culturally appropriate Halal home delivered meals. If the Halal option does not exist for home delivered meals, we will miss the opportunity to serve many homebound Muslim seniors who need case management services, friendly visiting programs, social services, and much more!

Halal meat is now very readily and easily available to procure and purchase. As a result of great advocacy of which I was a part of, Halal lunches are now available in many New York City public schools. There should be no reason why Muslim seniors cannot get Halal home delivered meals in this day and age. We at India Home are ready to partner with DFTA to delivered these meals.

Thank you so much for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,
Nargis Ahmed
Program Director



COUNCIL OF PEOPLES ORGANIZATION

1077 Coney Island Ave. Brooklyn New York 11230.

Phone 718-434-3266 Fax 718-859-2266

www.Copo.org

Let Us Serve Our Community

April 26, 2017

Good Morning,

My Name is Mujtaba Ali, the Executive Assistant at Council Of Peoples Organization. COPO's mission is to assist low income immigrant families, particularly South Asians and Muslims, to reach their full potential as residents of New York City. COPO empowers marginalized communities to advocate for their rights and understand their responsibilities as Americans. It helps to build community relations amongst Muslim and non-Muslim community groups. It works to establish connections between the communities and various government agencies.

We provide multiple services to the community. We are the first Halal Senior Centers in Brooklyn NY. We provide essential services to seniors, such as food, transportation, socialization, benefit enrollment, and case management services. Asians represent 15% or more of the population in the city, however they receive 2.7% resources for the community. South Asians and Arabs whom we provide services to receive .00001 % of resources to serve the community. We are grateful to receive \$10k in 2015 and 2016 for our seniors. Recently we have been awarded through the council initiative and received \$75k for 2016 & 2017, thank you. We were budgeted to serve 100 meals a week totaling 5,200 meals however the need is far greater and we are currently serving twice the amount of meals; approximately 11,000 Halal meals. We are providing essential services to our seniors.

We are now also subcontracted with JASA to provide case management services to over 200 seniors. As we are providing these seniors with services, we are learning that many Muslim seniors are reluctant to receive meals on wheels due to religious and cultural requirements. There are over 1 million Muslims in NYC of which there are many seniors in need of Halal meals.

I personally have been working with the seniors. One of my seniors that receives Halal meals, informed me that he uses this meal for both lunch and dinner to meet his nutritional needs. This senior is disabled. He suffers from torn rotator cuffs in both shoulders and uses a cane to assist with mobility. Yet, still with his mobility impairment, he walks into our office daily to receive his meals. We want to be able to provide seniors such as this with Halal meals on wheels. They are in dire need of this service.

We request city council and DFTA to fund us in providing Halal home delivered meals to seniors. Help us to help our seniors.

Thank you,
Mujtaba Ali



Committee on Aging
April 26, 2017

Testimony submitted by: Rachel Sherrow
Associate Executive Director
Citymeals on Wheels
355 Lexington Avenue, NYC 10017
(212) 687-1234
Rachel@citymeals.org

My name is Rachel Sherrow and I am the Associate Executive Director at Citymeals on Wheels. I would like to begin by thanking the Council for their continued support of aging services and Citymeals on Wheels which will help to deliver over 2 million meals to nearly 18,400 homebound elderly citywide this year.

As most of you know, Citymeals is a not-for-profit agency working in a public/private partnership with the New York City Department for the Aging. The Department funds the meals that homebound elderly receive Mondays through Fridays, and Citymeals funds the same network of providers to deliver weekend and holiday meals. On the days the city does not provide a meal, Citymeals steps in to prevent our aging neighbors from being without food or human company. In fact, Citymeals, as an added benefit generates revenue for New York City through the federal government's cash in lieu of commodities program which reimburses DFTA approximately 67 cents for every meal funded by Citymeals. All of this money goes

toward the city-funded weekday meals program, bringing in over \$1.4 million last fiscal year and an additional 180,000 home delivered meals for those who need it. Core services like meals on wheels are incredibly vital to those who are frail and vulnerable and often hidden behind their doors.

Throughout our nation and right here in NYC, our population is aging, with 17% of our city over the age of 60 and by 2050 the number of older adults will double, and will outnumber children. Living longer on fixed incomes means more struggle over access to food. Because income for older adults remains fixed, or worse, declines, many experience increased difficulty affording healthy food.

In addition, since 2012, New York City's older adults experienced an increase in poverty from 16.5% to 19.1%. According to the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity, 1 in 3 New Yorkers over the age of 65 live in poverty.

The Nutrition Screening Initiative estimates that one in four senior citizens living in our communities is malnourished.¹ It has been estimated that up to 55% of seniors admitted to hospitals are suffering from malnutrition.² In addition, an inability to resist disease as people age may be related to hunger and malnutrition which can exacerbate cardiovascular disease, hypertension, osteoporosis, cancer, diverticulitis, and diabetes. According to Hunger Free

America's most recent hunger survey, there has been a 25% increase in food insecurity in the senior population.³ A Hunger Study conducted by LiveOn NY shows this to mean 35% of older adults in NYC are living with food insecurity, or hunger.

Meals on wheels is a vital service for our homebound elderly to prevent hunger, decrease isolation and ensure our older neighbors can remain in their homes and live within their communities and neighborhoods. Therefore Citymeals supports the resolution to restore congregate sixth weekend meals, however a marketing campaign designed to promote meals on wheels, would need to ensure that there are available case managers to handle the influx of those interested in this service, along with an array of others.

However, with a wait list for case management services of over 1,900 people as of today, we are concerned many who are already currently in need will not receive essential in-home services and we will end up having more older adults fill our emergency rooms, become severely isolated and depressed, unable to pay their bills, and even perhaps end up homeless. Adding to the increasing need will only overburden an already taxed system. Therefore we must adequately support the current system.

Citymeals also supports the resolution to ensure Halal meals are offered through meals on wheels, however, there needs to be

additional funding to providers to pay for the increase in cost for these specialized meals.

Regarding the SNAP resolution, senior centers are already assisting their members enroll in benefit programs like SNAP and with an unfunded mandate as this resolution does not address, the current system will be continue to be overburdened and unable to provide quality services.

The city's budget for Aging services has not kept up with the increasing need and growth in population. In this Year of the Senior, together with FPWA, UNH, LiveOn NY, and AARP, Citymeals requests the city shore up aging services with an FY 18 request of \$60 million dollars including the baselining of core services like case management, home care, and the sixth congregate meal as they are crucial in ensuring we have a safety net for those aging in New York City and will be able to serve this ever growing population in the very near future.

For Citymeals, we know that bringing a meal to the door is one less struggle for the homebound to worry about financially. In addition, this food delivery is one way to prevent them from slipping into more expensive kinds of care. Evidence does support the fact that programs like meals on wheels which allows older adults to age in place, may help save costs for families, government and our health

systems.⁴ This is a savings in Medicaid costs that the city would bear if these economically disadvantaged and elderly neighbors of ours were institutionalized instead. It is in their interest and ours to keep them with us, right here in the communities where they have lived for so long. Meals on wheels is also a benefit to the growing population of caregivers whose emotional, physical and financial efforts can be unburdened by knowing a meal is being delivered to their loved ones allowing for respite and relief on so many levels.

Together with the Department for the Aging, and The New York City Council, Citymeals is determined to keep 18,400 elderly New Yorkers and growing, fed 365 days a year plus some extra. We hope you, our partners in city government, will help us to continue to advocate on behalf of those who are often forgotten and marginalized.

As we continue through our 35th year, we thank you for consistently working with us and I hope we can count on all of your support once again this year as we seek increased funding to keep up with the need.

¹ 2000 to 2010 Census, as reported in NYC Department for the Aging's "Census 2000: Changes in the elderly population of NYC 2000-2010. ²ibid. ³ Hunger Free America's 2015 Hunger Report. ⁴Measuring the costs and savings of aging in place. 2013. (Accessed December 3, 2014, at http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/em/em_archive.html).

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I represent: 2 Lafayette

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Name: Andrea Cianfrani

Address: _____

I represent: Live On NY

Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

2016

Date: _____

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X Name: Theresa Mantini

Address: _____

I represent: Briefcase Center for Healthy Aging, Hunter College

Address: 2130 3rd Ave, New York NY 10035

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. ¹²⁷⁸ 1519 Res. No. ⁴² 262

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/26/17

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Name: Seanette Estima

Address: 40 Broad. 5th Fl. NYC

I represent: FPWA

Address:

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in favor in opposition

Date: 4/26/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANGELA GHESQUIERE

Address: 35-38 73rd St., Jackson Heights, NY 11372

I represent: Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging

Address: 2180 3rd Ave. New York, NY 10035

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in favor in opposition

Date: 4/26/17

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Name: Jay Peitz

Address: 1385 Boston Post Rd, Carmel, NY

I represent: Food Industry Alliance of NY

Address: Same

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in favor in opposition

Date: 26 APRIL 2014

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Name: WILL THOMAS

Address: 50 BROAD ST NY, NY 10004

I represent: HUNGER FREE AMERICA

Address: 50 BROAD ST NY, NY 10004

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

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Name: Rachel Sherron

Address: _____

I represent: City Meals

Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

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Name: Kasey Williamson

Address: _____

I represent: United Neighborhood Houses

Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

Date: April 26, 2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: THERESA MONTINI 10024

Address: 155 West 91st Street Apt C NY NY

I represent: Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging

Address: 2180 Third Ave NY NY 10035

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Address: _____

I represent: JASA

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Date: 04/26/17

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Name: MUJTABA ALI

Address: 1077 Coney Island Avenue, BROOKLYN, NY

I represent: COUNCIL OF PEOPLES ORGANIZATION

Address: _____

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Name: DIL AFROZ AHMED

Address: 69-55, 260th Pl. GLENDALES, NY.

I represent: INDIA HOME 11004

Address: SAME AS ABOVE.

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