

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

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December 19, 2024
Start: 11:22 a.m.
Recess: 11:29 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Alexa Avilés, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Erik D. Bottcher
Gale A. Brewer
Carmen N. De La Rosa
Rita C. Joseph
Shekar Krishnan

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Amanda Farías
Crystal Hudson

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sound check for the
3 Committee on Immigration. Today's date is December
4 19, 2024, being recorded by Danny Huang of the
5 Council Chambers.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet down, please.
7 Good morning, and welcome to today's New York City
8 Council vote for the Committee on Immigration.

9 At this time, we ask that you silence all
10 electronic devices, and at no time should you
11 approach the dais.

12 Chair Avilés, we're ready to begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [GAVEL] This meeting
14 is coming to order. Good morning, everyone. I am
15 Council Member Alexa Avilés, Chair of the Committee
16 on Immigration. I'd like to begin by thanking my
17 Committee Colleagues who have joined us here today.
18 We have Council Member Shekar Krishnan, Majority
19 Leader Amanda Farías, Council Member Carmen De La
20 Rosa, Council Member Crystal Hudson, Council Member
21 Rita Joseph, and Council Member Eric Bottcher. Thank
22 you, Colleagues.

23 Today, the Committee will be voting on
24 Resolutions 468 and 576. Resolution 468, sponsored by
25 Council Member Crystal Hudson, calls on the New York

2 State Legislature to pass the Empire State Licensing
3 Act, which would provide all New Yorkers access to
4 professional, occupational, commercial, or business
5 licenses, permits, certificates, or related
6 registrations, regardless of an applicant's
7 immigration status. This bill was previously heard on
8 June 11, 2024.

9 Resolution 576, sponsored by Majority
10 Leader Amanda Fariás, calls on the New York State
11 Legislature to introduce and pass legislation
12 amending the tax law to authorize the City of New
13 York to offer tax credits for businesses to
14 incentivize the creation of workforce development and
15 training programs for newly arrived immigrants. This
16 bill was previously heard on October 15, 2024.

17 These bills, which I've co-sponsored,
18 calls for changes that will benefit our immigrant
19 communities and help address the labor shortages
20 challenging our city's economy. Immigrants continue
21 to significantly contribute to some of the state's
22 fastest-growing industries, including industries that
23 are struggling with workforce shortages. There are
24 growing demands not only for labor, but for the
25 workers with bilingual skills, especially in fields

2 such as education and healthcare. Amending licensing
3 requirements to ensure that individuals with
4 experience and knowledge of an industry can access
5 relevant registration requirements and can open up
6 numerous occupations to more workers. Incentivizing
7 businesses to develop workforce training programs
8 through tax credits can help bridge businesses' needs
9 for workers and workers' needs for workforce
10 development. Addressing barriers to employment allows
11 immigrants to access jobs that meet their expertise
12 and interests and allows them to work in New York
13 City with dignity as they add to the fabric of our
14 city. The State actions called for in these
15 Resolutions can help immigrant workers earn higher
16 wages and increase job security, ultimately
17 benefiting the New York economy through more robust
18 tax revenues.

19 Thank you to the Committee Staff for
20 their work on this hearing, including Nicole Catá,
21 Rebecca Barilla, Carolina Gill, Florentine Kabore,
22 and to my Staff, Chief-of-Staff Edward Cerna,
23 Legislative and Budget Director Christina Bottego,
24 our Legislative Fellow Cate Byrne, and our
25 Communications Director Winnie Marion, and everyone

2 who is working in the background to ensure that this
3 hearing runs smoothly.

4 I will now turn it over to Council Member
5 Hudson to make a brief statement on her bill.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you so much,
7 Chair Avilés, for your remarks and also for giving me
8 the opportunity to speak on Resolution 468 today.

9 In light of the current political
10 climate, many New Yorkers fear what the new year will
11 bring for themselves and their families. Immigrants
12 are not just part of the fabric of this city, they
13 are the needle and the thread. New York must do
14 everything in its power to protect all of its
15 residents, and Resolution 468 urges the New York
16 State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign
17 the Empire State Licensing Act. This legislation
18 ensures that all New Yorkers, regardless of their
19 citizenship or immigration status, have access to
20 professional, occupational, commercial, and business
21 licenses, permits, certificates, and related
22 registrations. By passing this Resolution, we will
23 send a clear message that New York is a sanctuary of
24 opportunity and inclusivity where everyone can

2 contribute to the prosperity and strength of our
3 city. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you so much,
5 Council Member.

6 Now we'll turn it over to Majority Leader
7 Farías to make a brief statement about her bill.

8 MAJORITY LEADER FARÍAS: Thank you so
9 much, Chair Avilés. Reso. 576 urges the New York
10 State Legislature to pass legislation that would
11 authorize New York City to offer tax credits to
12 businesses that create workforce development programs
13 specifically for newly arrived immigrants. These tax
14 credits would help businesses offset the additional
15 costs of providing training in languages other than
16 English, and it would incentivize them to invest in
17 immigrant workers, preparing them for jobs in growing
18 sectors like construction and manufacturing. Our city
19 is rapidly developing. Housing, industry, and
20 infrastructure are expanding at an unprecedented
21 rate, but with many older generations of workers in
22 these sectors nearing retirement, we need to ensure
23 that newly arrived immigrants are prepared to take
24 their place. This is about creating opportunities for
25 immigrants to thrive while addressing the labor

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2 shortages we're seeing in key industries. Thank you
3 to the Chair for having my bill today, and I urge my
4 Colleagues to vote yes on this important Resolution.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I recommend a yes
6 vote and ask the Clerk to call the roll.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
8 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
9 vote, Committee on Immigration. Both Resos are
10 coupled. Chair Avilés.

11 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Proudly vote aye.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Bottcher.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brewer.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: De La

17 Rosa.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hanif.

20 Joseph.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Krishnan.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: With a
25 vote of six in the affirmative, zero in the negative,

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2 and no abstentions, both items have been adopted by
3 the Committee.

4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you. [GAVEL]

5 Adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 23, 2024