

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 1  
CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID  
WASTE MANAGEMENT

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September 12, 2023

Start: 10:17 a.m.

Recess: 12:08 p.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Sandy Nurse, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Erik D. Bottcher

Amanda Farias

James F. Gennaro

Julie Menin

Chi A. Osse

Rafael Salamanca, Jr.

Marjorie Velazquez

Kalman Yeger

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Shaun Abreu

A P P E A R A N C E S

Jessica Tish, Commissioner at New York  
Department of Sanitation

Javier Lojan, First Deputy Commissioner at New  
York Department of Sanitation

Greg Anderson, Deputy Commissioner at New York  
Department of Sanitation

Alison Bonfoey, Chief-of-Staff and Deputy  
Commissioner of Operations at the Business  
Integrity Commission

Bonacio Crespi, Secretary Treasurer of Teamsters  
Local 813

Timothy Chubinidze, Director of Civic Engagement  
for Queens Borough President Donovan Richards,  
Jr.

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Check one, two, check  
3 one, two. This is a prerecorded sound test for the  
4 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.  
5 Today's date is September 12, 2023. It is being  
6 recorded by Michael Leonardo and Walter Louis in the  
7 Council Chambers.

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and  
9 welcome to today's New York City Council hearing for  
10 the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste  
11 Management.

12 At this time, we ask that you silence all  
13 cell phones and electronic devices to minimize  
14 disruptions throughout the hearing.

15 If you have testimony you wish to submit  
16 for the record, you may do so via email at  
17 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). Once again, that is  
18 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov).

19 At any time throughout the hearing,  
20 please do not approach the dais. We thank you for  
21 your cooperation.

22 Chair, we are ready to begin.

23 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: [GAVEL] All right.  
24 Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the oversight  
25 hearing of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid

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2 Waste Management. My name is Sandy Nurse, Chair for  
3 the Sanitation Committee.

4 Thank you, Sanitation Committee Members,  
5 for being here, Council Member Julie Menin, Council  
6 Member Chi Osse, Sanitation Commissioner Jessica  
7 Tish, Sanitation Deputy Commissioner Greg Anderson,  
8 Director of Legislative Affairs Nicole Mathias from  
9 the New York City Business Integrity Commission for  
10 joining us today. I'd also like to thank the members  
11 of the public who are here to testify. Thank you also  
12 to my Staff including Legislative Director Annel  
13 Hernandez and to our Sanitation Committee Staff  
14 Policy Analyst Ricky Chawla, Committee Counsel  
15 Morganne Barrett who is first time doing Counsel for  
16 our hearing, welcome, Finance Analysts Andrew Lane-  
17 Lawless, and Data Specialists Reese Hirota and Brooke  
18 Frye.

19 Today, we will be discussing and focusing  
20 on the City's initiatives to address street  
21 cleanliness. DSNY under Commissioner Tish's  
22 leadership has embarked on a number of aggressive but  
23 much-welcomed reforms in an effort to keep New York  
24 City's streets clean. These efforts require  
25 significant changes for many New Yorkers and

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2 additionally raise challenging questions we all need  
3 to answer about what to prioritize on our city  
4 streets.

5 I'm looking forward to discussing new  
6 set-out times, street vendor enforcement, and hearing  
7 initial updates on containerization efforts.

8 We will also be looking at the tracking  
9 and disposal of yellow and brown grease, civil  
10 penalties for littering that obstructs sidewalks and  
11 other street cleanliness violation notices, DSNY's  
12 dumping enforcement program, and emergency and  
13 resiliency planning.

14 We also look forward to hearing initial  
15 thoughts from the Commissioner on the Mayor's new  
16 announcement of a 5 percent PEG for November and the  
17 potential impacts of the proposed PEGs on cleaning  
18 operations.

19 We will be hearing a handful of bills.  
20 The first bill we will be hearing today, Intro. 413  
21 sponsored by myself, establishes a system for  
22 documenting and tracking yellow and brown grease from  
23 restaurants. We want to know who is transporting the  
24 grease and where it's going. When improperly disposed  
25 of down drains, grease can congeal around debris to

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2 form clogging masses. In 2018, nearly 90 percent of  
3 sewage backups citywide were attributed to grease and  
4 wipes. We can clean up this mess with the added  
5 benefit that yellow and brown grease can be reused.

6           Next up, we have Intro. 861, also  
7 sponsored by myself and in partnership with the  
8 Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, which  
9 would require DSNY to maintain a public web page  
10 outlining its emergency and resiliency planning. This  
11 would give DSNY and the public greater ease of access  
12 to information about sanitation services provided  
13 during emergencies such as blackouts, hurricanes,  
14 storm surges, flash flooding, and other severe  
15 weather events as well as the agency's plan to design  
16 or retrofit facilities for climate resiliency.

17           Following that, we have Council Member  
18 Moya's Intro. 769 which would require DSNY to report  
19 the resources it needs for a dumping enforcement  
20 program. Unlawful dumping of household and business  
21 waste is an ongoing challenge to maintaining clean  
22 and sanitary sidewalks and streets despite increased  
23 penalties and enforcement in recent years. This bill  
24 would require a report from DSNY on how it staffs its  
25 dumping enforcement program and whether additional

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2 personnel, equipment, or funding are required. The  
3 bill also asks DSNY to report on the use of and need  
4 for surveillance equipment in designated dumping  
5 hotspots as well as any discretionary funding the  
6 agency receives from the City Council.

7           Next up is Intro. 809 sponsored by  
8 Council Member Ung. This bill would increase civil  
9 penalties for repeated littering violations up to  
10 1,000 dollars for entities which receive 20  
11 violations in 12 months.

12           Intro. 981 sponsored by Council Member  
13 Bottcher would alter DSNY's routing system used for  
14 issuing violation notices against persons in charge  
15 of residential premises. Violations are issued for  
16 acts such as littering, sweeping, or otherwise  
17 directing refuse into specified public or open spaces  
18 or for spitting on a sidewalk or other property  
19 commonly used by the public. This bill would also  
20 limit the hours during which violation notices can be  
21 issued and would expand DSNY's routing system for  
22 enforcement against commercial premises.

23           Finally, we have Intro. 1032 from Council  
24 Member Abreu who will be here to make a statement on  
25 behalf of his bill. This bill would require DSNY to

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2 remove any abandoned vehicle within 72 hours of being  
3 notified of its existence.

4 I look forward to hearing the dialogue  
5 regarding these bills today. I'm going to also  
6 recognize we do have Council Member Moya and Ung  
7 online, and we have some opening remarks from Members  
8 which you'll hear from.

9 I'm going to let you administer the oath  
10 until we get folks online.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL BARRETT: Good morning.  
12 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and  
13 nothing but the truth in your testimony before the  
14 Council Members and to respond honestly to Council  
15 Members questions?

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: I do.

17 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LOJAN: I do.

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: I do.

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BONFOEY: I do.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL BARRETT: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Good morning, Chair  
22 Nurse and Members of the City Council Committee on  
23 Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I am Jessica  
24 Tisch, Commissioner of the New York City Department  
25 of Sanitation. I am joined today by First Deputy



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2 Commissioner Javier Lojan and Gregory Anderson,  
3 Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Strategic  
4 Initiatives. Thank you for the opportunity to testify  
5 today on DSNY's initiatives to address street  
6 cleanliness, a real passion of mine.

7           We are in the midst of a trash revolution  
8 in New York City. This is a complete overhaul of our  
9 old way of doing things. Trash set out later and more  
10 in containers and bins and picked up earlier than  
11 ever before. The highest levels of litter basket  
12 service and street cleaning the City has seen in over  
13 20 years. New investments in high impact cleaning  
14 programs for previously overlooked public and private  
15 spaces. Sustained and strategic enforcement of our  
16 most basic cleanliness rules. Together, these efforts  
17 are bringing a tidal wave of change to New York  
18 City's streets. I will briefly detail these efforts  
19 before moving to the bills on today's agenda.

20           Over the last year, the Adams  
21 Administration has implemented an ambitious and game-  
22 changing set of new initiatives, programs, and  
23 policies around reducing the impact of trash bags on  
24 sidewalks, fighting rats, and cleaning up our city.

25

2           We implemented the first changes to set-  
3 out times in decades, creating a simple standard that  
4 no trash in black bags can be set out for collection  
5 earlier than 8 p.m. Trash in bins can be set out  
6 earlier at 6 p.m. for residents or an hour before  
7 closing for businesses. This is an incredibly  
8 meaningful change to regulations around waste. Since  
9 these regulations took effect on April 1, we have  
10 issued more than 24,500 warnings and 42,700  
11 violations for failure to set out waste properly. The  
12 results are clear. Since April 1, the number of 3-1-1  
13 complaints about rats decreased by 20 percent  
14 citywide and 45 percent in rat mitigation zones.

15           In August, we implemented another new  
16 rule requiring that all food-related businesses,  
17 restaurants, delis, bodegas, grocery stores,  
18 caterers, and others, set out their trash for  
19 collection in containers with a lid. This month,  
20 those rules expanded to included chain stores with  
21 five or more locations in New York City. Black bags  
22 of trash leak food waste and attract rats, and moving  
23 trash into rigid containers with lids reduces the  
24 occurrence of foul odors and vermin. We have issued

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2 23,000 warnings and violations since these rules took  
3 effect.

4           Putting trash in bins and containers is  
5 not rocket science. Other cities in the U.S. and  
6 abroad have been doing this for decades. We are late  
7 to the game, but we are moving aggressively to bring  
8 New York City in line with our peers.

9           For residential trash, we have begun a  
10 pilot to use on-street containers and mechanized  
11 collection in Manhattan Community Board 9, as  
12 envisioned in our report, The Future of Trash, which  
13 looked at the feasibility of waste containerization  
14 that we released earlier this year.

15           In the last year, DSNY has also refocused  
16 our efforts to enforce core Sanitation regulations.  
17 Businesses and property owners must keep their  
18 sidewalks and the area 18 inches into the street  
19 clean and free of litter, and they must set out trash  
20 and recyclables properly and at the right time. This  
21 is not enforcement for enforcement's sake. It is  
22 appropriate and meaningful action to uphold these  
23 basic rules around cleanliness. This year,  
24 cleanliness violations are up 64 percent year-to-  
25 date.

2 We have also stepped up our fight against  
3 illegal dumping, a theft of public space and a  
4 scourge on neighborhoods across New York City. We now  
5 have 258 illegal dumping cameras installed across the  
6 five boroughs, up from exactly zero when I started as  
7 Commissioner, and we have increased the number of  
8 violations and impounds by 137 percent year-to-date.  
9 We are sending a clear message, if you dump on our  
10 City, you will be caught, and you will pay.

11 Earlier this year, we created a new  
12 partnership with the NYPD to address the challenge of  
13 abandoned and derelict vehicles on city streets.  
14 Before, these cars would be stuck in a game of hot  
15 potato between the two agencies with no clear  
16 responsibility and accountability. Now, we have  
17 created a joint task force with five NYPD officers  
18 assigned to DSNY to coordinate efforts to remove  
19 these eyesores from our streets. We now conduct  
20 multiple joint operations per week, up from just one  
21 or two a month last year. This has led to a 68  
22 percent increase in vehicle removals, a total of  
23 about 7,000 removed so far this year.

24 We also created the new Targeted  
25 Neighborhood Taskforce to address long-overlooked

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2 areas around the City that fell through the cracks of  
3 maintenance jurisdiction. DSNY is on the sixth round  
4 of cleaning these 1,700-plus locations since last  
5 November.

6           This summer, DSNY created our first ever  
7 Highway Unit, assuming responsibility for cleaning  
8 highways across the city. These areas, including the  
9 medians, shoulders, and adjacent grassy areas, were  
10 filthy from years of neglect. For the first time, we  
11 are giving these areas a deep clean, removing litter  
12 and debris that has accumulated over time. These  
13 efforts are difficult, some highways like the FDR  
14 Drive and BQE get dirty again soon after being  
15 cleaned, but I believe our efforts are making a big  
16 difference for New Yorkers.

17           Lastly, in April we assumed operational  
18 control of the City's graffiti cleaning program from  
19 EDC. DSNY had historically been responsible for  
20 taking graffiti complaints but for over a decade had  
21 just passed them off to EDC for cleaning, with  
22 neither agency taking full responsibility. Now, we  
23 have implemented new procedures and policies to  
24 increase productivity and effectiveness. Since April  
25

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2 1, we have closed more than 5,000 graffiti service  
3 requests.

4 I am here today to deliver a sobering  
5 message that I hope will serve as a wakeup call.  
6 Despite all of this Administration's new programs and  
7 efforts, we will not win the war on cleanliness  
8 without meaningful and decisive action from the  
9 Council and our colleagues in the State Legislature.

10 How is it that a single store on 7th  
11 Avenue in Manhattan can dump its entire contents on  
12 the sidewalk, and the biggest fine that we can give  
13 them is 50 bucks? 50 dollars. That is the maximum  
14 fine that we can give this business for dumping the  
15 entire contents of its store on the sidewalk under  
16 the law today.

17 How is it that a major retailer can leave  
18 its sidewalk a mess all day long, but we can only  
19 write a ticket if we catch them during two one-hour  
20 periods in the middle of the day? This is what the  
21 street looks like in front of the 5 Below. For most  
22 of the day, we can't enforce that. We can enforce it  
23 only for two one-hour periods during the day.

24 Obviously, this is a big problem that  
25 calls for big action, action at the both the local

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2 and state levels to hold violators accountable and  
3 give DSNY the tools and authority we need to clean up  
4 our city.

5           We must substantially increase penalties  
6 for core Sanitation violations, penalties that had  
7 been wrongly reduced by City Council and the previous  
8 Administration.

9           These are the types of conditions that  
10 Council Members call me about to clean up all the  
11 time. That kind of response, sending crews to clean  
12 messes left by businesses and properties, is not  
13 scalable.

14           We have shown through our enforcement  
15 efforts that the Department's ability to conduct  
16 enforcement is not the problem. Sanitation violations  
17 must have meaningful consequences. Council needs to  
18 send the message that these very basic rules around  
19 cleanliness are a top priority for the City of New  
20 York.

21           The penalties for these core violations,  
22 including failure to clean sidewalks and along the  
23 curb line, failure to use a container with a lid when  
24 required, and failure to follow set-out time  
25 regulations should be increased substantially,

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2 particularly for larger residential properties and  
3 commercial establishments, and include steep  
4 escalations for second and third violations.

5 Council Member Osse's bill, Intro. 544,  
6 is a great start in this direction, but it can and  
7 should be expanded to address violations other than  
8 set-out.

9 Expand the hours of the day that property  
10 owners are responsible for cleaning. Enforcing these  
11 laws during only two hours per day sends the message  
12 that cleanliness is barely a passing obligation.

13 Council Member Bottcher's bill, Intro.  
14 981, addresses this issue for commercial  
15 establishments. But for larger residential properties  
16 with on-site staff, we should be able to conduct  
17 enforcement during all daytime hours, not just at 8  
18 a.m. and 6 p.m. each day.

19 We need to strengthen enforcement of  
20 street cleaning regulations by increasing penalties  
21 for drivers that do not move their cars for street  
22 cleaning and authorizing, once and for all, automated  
23 enforcement, similar to bus lanes and speed limits.  
24 This action, which must be taken at the state level,  
25 would unleash the full potential of our fleet of



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2 street sweepers and allow them to fully clean along  
3 curbs where they are currently blocked by parked  
4 cars.

5 We also need to modernize derelict  
6 vehicle regulations to allow DSNY to more quickly  
7 remove vehicles that create eyesore conditions in  
8 nearly every neighborhood and to loosen the criteria  
9 a vehicle must meet to be considered derelict. This  
10 action must also be taken at the state level.

11 I will now address the specific bills  
12 being considered at today's hearing.

13 Intro. 413 relates to grease haulers and  
14 is covered by existing requirements by the Business  
15 Integrity Commission, DSNY, and DEP regulations. I am  
16 joined today by BIC's Chief of Staff and Deputy  
17 Commissioner of Operations Alison Bonfoey, excuse me  
18 if I butchered your name, should you have any  
19 questions regarding this bill.

20 Intro. 769 would require DSNY to publish a  
21 report on the resources needed for litter pickup and  
22 illegal dumping prevention. These resource needs  
23 should be considered in the context of the City's  
24 annual budget process, and, in my opinion, it is not  
25 appropriate to publish a standalone report.

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2 Intro. 809 would create a new penalty for  
3 repeat violators that receive more than 20 violations  
4 for failing to clean their sidewalks and curb lines.  
5 This bill in its current form will not have a  
6 meaningful impact on cleanliness. The types of  
7 businesses that Council Members call me about every  
8 day do not come close to having 20 violations fully  
9 adjudicated by OATH in a single year. We must  
10 increase penalties for basic violations and for  
11 first-, second-, and third-time penalties, not just  
12 the 21st penalty, and I look forward to working with  
13 the sponsor to improve this bill.

14 Intro. 861 would require DSNY to post  
15 emergency response and resiliency plans on its  
16 website. Efforts to prepare for and respond to  
17 emergencies are led by New York City Emergency  
18 Management. This is an all-of-government approach to  
19 these situations, and it is not appropriate to  
20 separate DSNY's role from the roles of our sister  
21 agencies, which is really the reason for NYCEM's  
22 being. Any public plans should be made available by  
23 and through New York City Emergency Management.

24 Intro. 981 would extend the amount of  
25 time DSNY agents and officers can issue violations to

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2 businesses for failure to clean sidewalks and the  
3 area 18 inches from the curb to any posted business  
4 hours or, for businesses without posted hours, the  
5 period from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day. As I mentioned  
6 previously, this is an appropriate first step, but  
7 the bill should be amended to also extend enforcement  
8 timeframes for larger residential buildings with on-  
9 site staff.

10           Lastly, Intro. 1032 would add additional  
11 requirements for DSNY around the removal and referral  
12 of abandoned vehicles. This bill in its current form  
13 does not account for the realities of our derelict  
14 vehicle operations or the requirements of State law  
15 that apply. As I have described, DSNY has worked  
16 closely with NYPD to create a joint Task Force for  
17 abandoned vehicles that has increased removals of  
18 derelict and abandoned vehicles by close to 50  
19 percent compared to last year.

20           In my opinion, it would be a missed  
21 opportunity if this package of bills is the sum total  
22 of the Council's action on cleanliness at this moment  
23 given how much work we have to do.

24           My hope is that we can expand upon the  
25 bills as drafted today to end up with a strong

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2 package that truly makes the Council a partner in our  
3 trash revolution. I feel so strongly about this  
4 because it is absolutely achievable. Thank you very  
5 much.

6 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thanks, Council  
7 Member.

8 Council Member Abreu, did you want to  
9 speak on your bill?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Good morning thank  
11 you, Chair Nurse. Good morning, Commissioner Tish.

12 Today, I am speaking in support of my  
13 bill, Introduction 1032, which would require that the  
14 Department of Sanitation remove cars to be removed or  
15 refer for removal abandoned vehicles within 72 hours  
16 after DSNY becomes aware of the vehicle.

17 My office has heard from many  
18 constituents about the need to get derelict and  
19 abandoned vehicles off the street in a timely manner.  
20 They are eyesores, they don't move for alternate side  
21 parking, allowing trash to pile up underneath,  
22 attracting rats and other vermin.

23 As it currently stands, there is no  
24 requirement that designates when these vehicles must  
25 be moved. Our bill would require them to be moved or

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2 referred for them to be removed within 72 hours and  
3 allows for additional provisions to be set by the  
4 Commissioner to meet these goals. This bill would  
5 provide greater oversight and transparency on the  
6 removal of these vehicles and be a huge source of  
7 progress for constituencies like mine that deal with  
8 these vehicles taking up space and getting in the way  
9 of street sweepers.

10 I look forward to hearing feedback from  
11 Sanitation Department and appreciate the support of  
12 Chair Nurse and my Colleagues on this piece of  
13 legislation. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thanks, Council  
15 Member. Just checking to see if we have any of the  
16 other bill sponsors if they wanted to speak.

17 No? Okay. Great. So I have a few  
18 questions about the PEGs, initial updates on  
19 containerizations pilots, some stuff about street  
20 cleanliness, vendors, and then we'll open up for  
21 questions and then we'll come back.

22 I just wanted to start out with the PEGs  
23 just because it seems very pressing and I'd love to  
24 get your initial thoughts about how you think the  
25 hiring freeze will impact DSNY operations as well as

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2 the pilots that you have going, new initiatives you  
3 have going, just love to hear some initial thoughts  
4 from you all and where you see those impacts  
5 happening.

6 COMMISSIONER TISH: Clearly, these are  
7 hard fiscal times, and every agency has to do its  
8 part, but, as we just received the letter and the  
9 information about the PEGs on Saturday, I don't have  
10 specifics to share at this time, but, as always,  
11 would be very happy as this process moves forward to  
12 update you in the coming weeks.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: As it relates to the  
14 hiring freeze, are there positions for some of these  
15 new initiatives, for some of these pilots that will  
16 not be able to be filled?

17 COMMISSIONER TISH: Not at this time,  
18 there aren't.

19 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay.

20 COMMISSIONER TISH: I guess it depends how  
21 long the hiring freeze lasts, but, at this time, the  
22 Department is in very good shape on staffing. As you  
23 know, staffing is something that I take very  
24 seriously so we don't let vacancies linger, and we're  
25

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2 very aggressive about finding great candidates and  
3 bringing them on quickly.

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, and just as a  
5 reminder, do you have an update or can you refresh us  
6 on your vacancy rate?

7 COMMISSIONER TISH: I don't have the  
8 vacancy rate in front of me at this time, but it is  
9 quite low. I go through the numbers of active hires  
10 that we're doing at any given time, and, for an  
11 agency of 10,000 people, that list last week was less  
12 than 50, and many of those 50 had already been hired  
13 and are awaiting start dates. It's fluid so I can get  
14 back to you with the exact percentage, but it's going  
15 to be quite low.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Great. I want to focus  
17 on the new set-out times and just a little bit on  
18 containerization. Thanks for all the information that  
19 you provided in your testimony. I see that you  
20 mentioned you've issued 24,500 warnings, 424,700  
21 violations to date so thank you, that was our opening  
22 question.

23 How are you seeing compliance though  
24 across the City?

25

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2                   COMMISSIONER TISH: I think that the  
3 City's streetscape looks dramatically different today  
4 than it did six months ago. If you remember in New  
5 York City under the old paradigm, trash could  
6 basically be set out at all hours so the rule was 4  
7 p.m. for residences and an hour before closing for  
8 any business, and who really knew what an hour before  
9 closing meant, so basically on every street in the  
10 city, every day at all hours of the day, there were  
11 the piles of black bags. On April 1st, we changed the  
12 set-out times. The new rules say no black bags are  
13 allowed on the street until 8 p.m. If you want to set  
14 out earlier, residences can do so at 6 p.m. with a  
15 container, businesses can do so an hour before  
16 closing but in a container if it's before 8 p.m. On  
17 top of that, we've added container requirements for  
18 certain types of businesses. We started with food-  
19 related businesses, restaurants, bodegas, bars,  
20 delis, groceries, caterers. All those businesses have  
21 to containerize all of their trash, their refuse  
22 specifically, regardless of what time they set it  
23 out. We started with those businesses because those  
24 businesses produce an outsized amount of food waste,  
25 and we know that human food is also rat food. This



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2 month, we've expanded that role to require any chain  
3 store in New York City to containerize their waste.  
4 We moved to chain stores specifically because chain  
5 stores tend to produce more waste than your average  
6 small business, but I am, we are, this Administration  
7 is very serious about containerizing all 44 million  
8 pounds of trash that are put on our streets every  
9 single day. As I mentioned before, cities around the  
10 country and around the world have done this over the  
11 past decade or two, and New York City just hasn't and  
12 so right now we are playing a game of catchup. I  
13 believe, because I look at this, I look at basically  
14 only this all day, every day when I walk around the  
15 streets, that there is a noticeable difference in  
16 every borough of the City. You see many more  
17 containers on the street and you see fewer bags out.  
18 We are not perfect yet, but we have definitely made  
19 significant progress, and I look at the early rat  
20 numbers as a very good indication that this strategy  
21 is working so to see a 20 percent decrease citywide  
22 on 3-1-1 calls about rat complaints, May, June, July,  
23 and 45 percent in rat mitigation zones, and that  
24 happened one month after we change the set-out times.  
25 That is an unbelievable result.

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2 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: When you say rat  
3 mitigation zones, are you talking about the areas  
4 with the, you have the one established one in Harlem,  
5 but are you talking about the Bronx, are you talking  
6 about Brooklyn?

7 COMMISSIONER TISH: I'm talking about all  
8 the rat mitigation zones together on average. When  
9 they ran the numbers, it was a 45 percent decrease in  
10 calls.

11 Now, I don't look at 3-1-1 as the perfect  
12 data source about this.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yeah, I don't think  
14 any of us do.

15 COMMISSIONER TISH: But you have to  
16 understand that 3-1-1 rat complaints don't go down  
17 year-to-year so to have them go down so many months  
18 in a row after we took this huge action is very  
19 meaningful and a very good indication that these  
20 efforts, which to be honest, are completely obvious.  
21 Like you want the rats to go away, get the food out  
22 of the trash, put it in a container. Almost every  
23 other major city across the world has already done  
24 it.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: How are food and chain  
3 businesses receiving these new rules in terms of like  
4 the logistics? Are they getting a piece of mail, is  
5 it door to door? Can you just tell a little bit about  
6 the outreach effort?

7 COMMISSIONER TISH: As you know, like you,  
8 I very much believe in outreach. We did this in  
9 phases so that we could the outreach model right.  
10 Every food business, every chain store that was  
11 impacted got a few things. First, they got a mailer,  
12 something in the mail in advance of the rule taking  
13 effect that explained the requirements in very simple  
14 clear language because it's pretty straightforward.  
15 We also worked with the NYPD Community Affairs to do  
16 door-to-door flier-ing in case the businesses don't  
17 check the mail. We've been very active on social  
18 media about it and have received a lot of media  
19 attention for it. In addition to that, for the first  
20 month that these rules take effect, we are doing not  
21 summonsing but issuing warnings, and those warnings  
22 look just like a summons which is intentional so that  
23 they have the desired wake-up effect, and we issued  
24 about 23,000 warnings for food-related businesses in  
25 that first month. We're now onto summonsing. We're

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2 doing warnings now for the chain businesses, and, at  
3 the end of the month, we'll move on to summoning as  
4 well, but between the mailers, the door-to-door  
5 canvassing, the phone calls, the meetings with local  
6 trade representative groups, Community Boards, etc.,  
7 I think that there has been robust outreach about  
8 these rules to the point where if a business doesn't  
9 know about it, it's because they don't want to know  
10 about it. The outreach has been robust.

11 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. I want to switch  
12 to talk about the various types of container pilots  
13 that are happening under DSNY's purview. Can you  
14 share any data on the Times Square Pilot? I know that  
15 was in partnership with the Times Square Alliance,  
16 but can you share a little bit about how that's  
17 going?

18 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yeah. We have a number  
19 of different big fixed container pilots going. The  
20 first one is called Clean Curbs, and what Clean Curbs  
21 did was we worked with Building Improvement Districts  
22 around the city, the Times Square Alliance among  
23 them, and we gave them grants to buy these large  
24 containers in which the Building Improvement District  
25 would store its trash, and so each BID manages and

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2 uses their own container, and then the Department  
3 works with the BID, either for the Department to  
4 collect directly from the container or in some cases  
5 the BID brings the contents of the container to a  
6 specific location for DSNY collection. I don't have  
7 any specific data on how many tons of trash have been  
8 stored in those bins, but what I can say is that we  
9 have worked with dozens of BIDs who have put out  
10 dozens of containers citywide for BID trash, and it's  
11 a model that I'm looking to expand on. Now that we  
12 don't have as many of the trash bags from businesses  
13 and residences on the streets all day, one thing that  
14 is really noticeable is the BID bags in areas where  
15 you have BIDs right next to the trash cans, and they  
16 can sit out there until the next litter basket  
17 collection, and we are about to start working with  
18 the BIDs to change that paradigm so that all BIDs  
19 citywide use the types of containers that are being  
20 used in Times Square so that those trash bags don't  
21 sit out on the streets.

22 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: What data are you all  
23 collecting from these pilots, like how are you going  
24 to evaluate this just so I understand what you're  
25 seeing as a metric (INAUDIBLE)

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2 COMMISSIONER TISH: To be clear, I don't  
3 consider this a pilot program. Nothing about the  
4 Clean Curbs is a pilot. We have given BIDs grants,  
5 they have bought containers, they store their trash...

6 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: It's not a pilot.  
7 Understood, but how are you collecting data, how are  
8 you determining the success of it?

9 COMMISSIONER TISH: I think the success of  
10 the containerization efforts is reflected in how many  
11 fewer bags of trash you see on the streets all day  
12 every day.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Are you collecting  
14 photo evidence? That's what I'm trying to understand,  
15 the logistics of it.

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yeah, we do  
17 photographs, we do site visits, all of that. I think  
18 one pilot around containerization which is launching  
19 now which we will be able to have very clear metrics  
20 around is the pilot that we have just launched in  
21 Hamilton Heights working with Council Member Abreu.  
22 There, we have put DSNY-managed containers rather  
23 than containers managed by some outside entity at 14  
24 schools in that District and, starting today, the  
25 bins are being installed on the residential streets,

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2 and there we will have great data so we will have  
3 tons collected, how much is sitting outside of the  
4 containers. When we manage both the container itself,  
5 the use of it, and the collection of it, we can  
6 really put really good data behind it, and so I look  
7 forward to sharing that with you as that pilot  
8 progresses.

9 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: That's great. The  
10 Committee Report that we got cited some potential  
11 increased labor costs for containerization moving  
12 forward in general, and can you share more about how  
13 a potential shift to some form of universal  
14 containerization will impact the Sanitation  
15 workforce?

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: Sure. We put out a  
17 report this spring, in April I believe, called The  
18 Future of Trash. It was a 100-page report that looked  
19 at the viability of rolling out containerization  
20 citywide. Among the findings of that report were that  
21 in about 10 percent of residential streets in New  
22 York City, we would have to increase collection  
23 frequency to make containerization viable, and so in  
24 Hamilton Heights, for example in this pilot that  
25 we're doing, we are not collecting trash from those

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2 impacted streets three times a week. We are  
3 collecting trash six days a week, and so there are  
4 streets in the city that will require increases in  
5 frequency of collection in order to accommodate the  
6 larger fixed containers.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, and have you all  
8 had any initial conversations with Labor regarding  
9 these potential changes?

10 COMMISSIONER TISH: Actually, Local 831  
11 has been a tremendous partner to us. For example, as  
12 we have retrofitted the backs of the collection  
13 trucks in Hamilton Heights, we worked very closely  
14 with 831, with the Sanitation workers in our  
15 Manhattan 9 Garage who gave a lot of very important  
16 feedback about basic safety-related items,  
17 efficiency-related items. This has definitely been a  
18 collaborative effort, and one of the things we are  
19 going to be looking at in the pilot is how much does  
20 this mechanized collection make the work of the  
21 Sanitation worker easier, does it decrease the number  
22 of injuries that they get on the job. That's one of  
23 the important goals here. Instead of having to lift  
24 each and every bag, instead you roll out a container

25



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2 and you do mechanized flipping of the container and  
3 its contents into the truck.

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Just a few more  
5 questions related to this. How many trucks were  
6 purchased or retrofitted for the pilot?

7 COMMISSIONER TISH: We didn't purchase new  
8 trucks for this pilot. We retrofitted 11 trucks I  
9 believe in our Manhattan 9 Garage, and those trucks  
10 will be used for the 14 schools and the 10  
11 residential blocks with their six-day-a-week  
12 collection. We are, however, building a brand new  
13 first of its kind automatic side-loading truck in the  
14 United States that will work in a dense urban  
15 environment to support a much broader rollout of  
16 containerization in New York City. We are building  
17 that truck aggressively now, and the reason that we  
18 are doing that is because I don't think that wheeled  
19 containers is a go-forward model at scale for New  
20 York City so we are looking at fixed on-street  
21 containers that don't have wheels, and in order to  
22 lift them we need to develop this special side-  
23 loading truck which is in the works right now.

24

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: That's great. That was  
3 started, that process through the previous budget  
4 cycle? Is that a part in any way of the new needs?

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: No. We didn't take new  
6 needs for that because this is a prototype so we're  
7 really developing the prototype truck, and, once we  
8 get to a place where we have a truck that we are  
9 happy with, that will be the time to go for new needs  
10 to buy those trucks.

11 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: How many staff are  
12 exclusively dedicated to the Hamilton Heights  
13 project?

14 COMMISSIONER TISH: We didn't add staffing  
15 to our Manhattan 9 Garage. Correct me if I'm wrong.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: We did. 12.

17 COMMISSIONER TISH: Oh, we did. Sorry, we  
18 added 12 staff to our Manhattan 9 Garage, and the  
19 reason is because we've increased the collection  
20 frequency.

21 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, thanks. I just  
22 have a few questions regarding street cleanliness,  
23 street vendors, and then I'll open it up to Members.

24 Our Data Team actually, it's not live  
25 yet, but they put together a very cool visualization

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2 tool of a lot of the 3-1-1 data because it's not for  
3 everyday people to understand so we're looking  
4 forward to that, but when they were showing it, we're  
5 seeing that we're rebounding from complaints and  
6 grievances, but it doesn't seem like we're fully  
7 there. It doesn't seem like New Yorkers are fully  
8 satisfied. I don't know if it's just they're calling  
9 more, they're complaining more or not, but they're  
10 showing declining performance metrics. Do you have  
11 any, in terms of missed collections, in terms of  
12 street cleanliness, and is there something that you  
13 may want to offer about why that might be happening?

14 COMMISSIONER TISH: Can you be more  
15 specific?

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yeah. For example, 3-  
17 1-1 data for missed collection complaints increased  
18 from approximately 3,000 at the beginning of 2020 to  
19 approximately 6,000 at the beginning of 2023.

20 COMMISSIONER TISH: Okay, so this  
21 Administration wasn't here in 2020, and there was  
22 that whole pandemic thing that happened, and the  
23 pandemic was a really rough time for the Department  
24 of Sanitation. I've heard about it anecdotally, but  
25 it was not smooth sailing at the Department so yes, I

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2 would expect that during that time the missed  
3 collection complaints have gone up..

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: So they were at 3,000,  
5 from what our Data Team gave us, it's now 6,000 so  
6 during the pandemic it was 3,000. Now, we're at 6,000  
7 at the beginning of 2023.

8 COMMISSIONER TISH: Okay, so you're saying  
9 January of 2023?

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER TISH: Not having the data in  
12 front of me. I just want to make sure I'm talking  
13 about the right thing.

14 One of the things that we are seeing in  
15 particular with Queens composting is an increase in  
16 missed collections associated with bulk so bulk  
17 cannot be set out on your recycling day, and the  
18 reason why is we're using the dual bin trucks in  
19 large portions of Queens and soon to be large  
20 portions of Brooklyn to collect in half of the truck  
21 refuse and in half of the truck compost, and, in  
22 those dual bin trucks, they're not big enough to  
23 collect bulk so we are seeing an increase in 3-1-1  
24 calls associated with that specific condition, and we  
25 are working now on a mailer for all Queens residents

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2 and a proactive mailer for the rest of the city  
3 because this is going to roll out to the rest of the  
4 city to communicate the adjustment that you cannot  
5 set out bulk on your recycling day, but you can set  
6 it out, bulk, on your other one or two trash  
7 collection days, and I think that if there is an  
8 increase in missed collections right now, it's  
9 probably largely attributable to that bulk issue.

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Is that messaging that  
11 you all plan to include for the Brooklyn rollout?

12 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yes, that is going in  
13 the Brooklyn rollout, and we are going to also be  
14 proactively doing it in the Bronx, Staten Island, and  
15 Manhattan well in advance.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: That was missed  
17 collections. We did see an increase through 3-1-1  
18 data for dirty conditions. Do you have any  
19 explanation or ideas about why that could be?

20 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yes, I believe that we  
21 need to work with the Council to make our enforcement  
22 which is up big time this year more meaningful.  
23 Cleanliness in New York City is a shared  
24 responsibility. The Department of Sanitation has our  
25 roll to play. We have more Sanitation workers than we

2 have ever had in New York City. We are spending more  
3 money on cleanliness-related items than we ever have  
4 in New York City. Our Litter Basket Service is the  
5 highest it's ever been. We're doing more street-  
6 sweeping than we've ever done. We launched our  
7 targeted Neighborhood Task Force to clean parts of  
8 the City that had never been cleaned before. We're  
9 cleaning the highways for the very first time. The  
10 investments are there. In an agency of 10,000 people,  
11 we will never be able to clean every sidewalk in the  
12 city, which is why the Department's responsibilities  
13 are the streets and the City-owned property, and we  
14 really need the partnership of the property owners to  
15 be cleaning the sidewalks in front of their property,  
16 and so we've been working very hard on getting that  
17 messaging out. That's not messaging that has changed,  
18 but I also believe that an important piece of this is  
19 the fines can't be 50 dollars for dumping the entire  
20 contents of your store out on the street, and the  
21 fines changed in the same period that you are  
22 referencing. They were cut in half to 50 dollars in  
23 what, 2021, and so I believe that plays an important  
24 role in this. That cut was devastating to cleanliness  
25 in New York City.

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2 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yeah, that's before  
3 our time, and I know Council Member Osse has been  
4 working really hard to get support among the Members,  
5 and we do get a lot of complaints, most of our  
6 offices, from people who feel that they were wrongly  
7 ticketed for litter in front of their house when they  
8 clean all the time so there is a balancing act to  
9 this. I do agree with increased fines for businesses,  
10 they certainly can pay it, and they certainly take  
11 advantage of the rules.

12 Okay, so the last question on cleanliness  
13 we had is, is DSNY on track for the launch of Local  
14 Law 9 of 2023, which is the GPS trackers on street  
15 sweepers?

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay.

18 COMMISSIONER TISH: That goes into effect  
19 I think it's the end of the year, January 1st, yes,  
20 we are on track.

21 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Do you know when we'll  
22 have it? Do you think it'll be at the end of the year  
23 or do you think it'll be earlier?

24 COMMISSIONER TISH: I think it will be  
25 after Thanksgiving.

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2 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Great. Okay, street  
3 vendors. Since DSNY took over enforcement of street  
4 vending, we've seen a couple of flashpoints including  
5 Corona Plaza. Can you describe for the record the  
6 protocol for responding to complaints about vendors?

7 COMMISSIONER TISH: Sure. As I have said  
8 before, DSNY takes a quality-of-life approach to  
9 vending enforcement. Generally, we look for things  
10 like leaving your trash behind at night, throwing  
11 grease into a sewer, blocking curb cuts, blocking  
12 entrances to subway stations, vending right in front  
13 of a business or blocking the entrance to a business.  
14 Our general approach looks first at the condition and  
15 then at the status of the vendor. We also generally  
16 take a warning-first approach. Our warnings can take  
17 several forms. Either we would post signs in the area  
18 at least 24 hours in advance, in which case that  
19 would serve as a warning, or we would issue  
20 individual warnings to vendors first before we would  
21 summons or confiscate.

22 If you're asking about Corona Plaza  
23 specifically, our action there earlier this summer,  
24 we did post those warning signs well in advance of  
25 the enforcement that we did. I think that our



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2 enforcement effort there has been mischaracterized.

3 In total, we issued a grand total of one summons, and

4 we confiscated no property. The only property we took

5 was property that was abandoned in the location in

6 the street, and that was property from five vendors,

7 and we held that property for safekeeping. Reading

8 some of the accounts of that enforcement effort was

9 difficult because I don't think that it represented

10 truly the approach that our officers took. When we

11 were in Corona Plaza, we saw things like tents bolted

12 into the sidewalk which is like a real no-no. We did

13 not issue the summonses for that. We gave each vendor

14 an opportunity, not 10 minutes, not 30 minutes, hours

15 to correct the condition so I do believe that our

16 Corona Plaza enforcement was very much true to the

17 spirit of what we committed to, although I will say

18 in that situation that area had just, it had really

19 become a big quality-of-life issue and really

20 required the level of action that we took.

21 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: I don't know all the

22 details of the Corona Plaza. I just know the women

23 who came here, they're saying they don't have work,

24 and so I was more interested in the protocol in

25 general. When you first do the condition, do your

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2 staff members walk with any outreach or education  
3 materials?

4 COMMISSIONER TISH: The Department of  
5 Sanitation is not responsible for the outreach and  
6 education. We just do the enforcement. SBS and DCWP  
7 have retained the lead on outreach in that area, but,  
8 again, I think that the warning-first approach, while  
9 it is different than like straight-up outreach, is a  
10 type of education. We're not going straight to  
11 confiscations or summonsing.

12 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: So when someone calls  
13 DSNY or makes a complaint about a vendor, are you all  
14 in coordination at all with DCWP for the outreach and  
15 coordination because that hasn't been my experience?

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: I don't know  
17 specifically if DCWP or SBS is notified every time we  
18 go out, but you have identified an area where I think  
19 that I can look to tighten up.

20 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, if you have it,  
21 can update the Committee on how many summons or  
22 violations have been issued to vendors since you all  
23 began enforcement?

24 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yeah, since we began  
25 enforcement, we have issued 447 summons and 388

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2 confiscations. We have donated 46,200 pounds of  
3 produce, and we have composted 4,400 pounds of  
4 produce.

5 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: For the record again,  
6 how many personnel are dedicated to vendor  
7 enforcement?

8 COMMISSIONER TISH: It's 40 total.

9 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, and for vendors  
10 when they operate after normal business hours, who  
11 does the enforcement after-hours?

12 COMMISSIONER TISH: Sanitation police.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Again, that  
14 hasn't been my experience so just was wanting to  
15 understand.

16 Okay, so Council Member Velazquez, thanks  
17 for joining us.

18 I'm going to open it up. Council Member  
19 Osse and then Abreu if you have questions.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: Thank you so much,  
21 Chair Nurse, and good morning, Commissioner, nice to  
22 see you.

23 Thank you so much for your continued  
24 support of Intro. 544. I know that it's been some  
25 time since we've been advocating and pushing for it,

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2 but I hope it comes into fruition soon so that we are  
3 sizably fining those who are abusing throwing out  
4 their trash in our city and soiling our streets.

5 I had a question about an announcement  
6 that the Mayor at the end of June in regards to Clean  
7 City Alliance and some of the work that he wanted to  
8 do behind that. I know that both Crown Heights and  
9 Bed-Stuy, two neighborhoods that are a part of my  
10 District, were impacted by that initiative of his,  
11 and I just wanted to clarify some questions on how  
12 are you guys measuring the success of the program,  
13 and, in addition to that, is there any data on the  
14 work that's being done by the program, and, if so, I  
15 would love to hear about it.

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yeah, I love the Clean  
17 City Alliance. It's a great initiative. That one is  
18 actually not led directly by the Sanitation  
19 Department. We work in partnership with the  
20 Sanitation Foundation, which is the philanthropic  
21 arm, and the Sanitation Foundation raised money to  
22 pay for the supplemental cleaning services that many  
23 BIDs provide along Utica and Nostrand Avenues,  
24 substantial portions of Utica and Nostrand, so I  
25 apologize that I don't have the data on that here,

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2 but the concept is areas that have organized  
3 themselves into BIDs, a good portion of the BID money  
4 goes to providing those supplemental cleaning  
5 services so litter picking in front of stores. When I  
6 say supplemental, I mean they're supplementing the  
7 work of the property owner, cleaning in front of the  
8 sidewalk, and, if you look around, commercial  
9 corridors that have BIDs tend to be cleaner than  
10 commercial corridors that don't yet have BIDs because  
11 of those supplemental cleaning services, and so the  
12 Sanitation Foundation provided I think a million  
13 dollars to provide those supplemental cleaning  
14 services that a BID would traditionally provide to  
15 those commercial corridors that don't yet have the  
16 organized BIDs, and I can get you data on how much  
17 trash has been collected, but I've walked the  
18 corridor before, I have walked it several times  
19 since, and there is a noticeable difference on how it  
20 looks and feels.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: Thank you so much  
22 for that. This is on topic but off topic from this  
23 hearing, but I was just talking to my Colleague right  
24 here about obviously the initiative of containerizing  
25 trash has started in his District. I would really

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2 love it to come over to Bed-Stuy or Crown Heights  
3 next. We do this all the time whenever we're at these  
4 hearings, but it's the straight-shot solution to  
5 solving our rodent and trash problems that we're  
6 dealing with in the city. As many as you could give  
7 to my community, I would be welcoming them with open  
8 arms.

9 COMMISSIONER TISH: Thank you so much for  
10 your support, and I'm going to really look forward to  
11 working with you on it. I want to get a few months of  
12 data on...

13 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: Sure.

14 COMMISSIONER TISH: Hamilton Heights  
15 before we finalize plans for expansion, but I am  
16 committed to containerizing every piece of trash in  
17 New York City so definitely will look forward to  
18 working with you on it.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSE: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Council Member Abreu.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Thank you, Chair.

22 We are very excited about the containerization  
23 program in our District and very encouraged to know  
24 that the pilot is ongoing, especially now with the

25

2 residential installation. We're very grateful for  
3 that.

4 I am also more than happy to explore  
5 legislation to discuss fines. I think we have to find  
6 multiple ways to address behavior, but, with respect  
7 to 1032, I have a few questions.

8 Commissioner, can you please describe the  
9 process used to determine the wholesale value of a  
10 vehicle and which agency is responsible for making  
11 this determination?

12 COMMISSIONER TISH: DSNY is responsible  
13 for making the determination. We have a whole  
14 procedure, which I can get you a copy of, which is  
15 about how you determine whether a vehicle qualifies  
16 as derelict, and I think the procedure is too long to  
17 read here, but, at a very high level for most  
18 categories of cars, it has to meet at least four  
19 different criteria for derelict, and the four  
20 different criteria have to be four different parts of  
21 the vehicle, but rather than read you, it's a very  
22 complicated procedure, rather than read the whole  
23 thing to you today, I would like to just send a copy  
24 of it to your office.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: That works. When an  
3 abandoned or derelict vehicle is removed from the  
4 street, where is it stored?

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: Historically, the  
6 Sanitation Department has handled the derelict  
7 vehicles, and the NYPD has handled the abandoned  
8 vehicles.

9 Let me take derelict first. Derelict  
10 doesn't get stored. Derelict gets destroyed  
11 immediately or pretty close to immediately so we  
12 don't store them.

13 In the case of the abandoned vehicles,  
14 which the NYPD has historically addressed, they have  
15 their roto-vendors, and I am not exactly sure where  
16 those vehicles are stored, but I can work with the  
17 NYPD and get you that answer. There's going to be a  
18 number of different locations around the City.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: That works as well.  
20 If you have this information, how long does a vehicle  
21 owner have to reclaim their vehicle once it has been  
22 removed from the street?

23 COMMISSIONER TISH: When it's derelict,  
24 they don't have...

25



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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: They don't get it  
3 at all, right. All right, and if it's abandoned,  
4 that's an NYPD question, correct?

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: Correct.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Okay. Are you open  
7 to exploring legislation to help codify some of the  
8 existing practices (INAUDIBLE)

9 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yes, when I started  
10 this job, I went on District walks with a number of  
11 different Council Members, and Council Member Brooks-  
12 Powers pointed out to me every abandoned vehicle in  
13 her District, a number of Council Members did, and it  
14 really hit me early on wow, this is a major quality-  
15 of-life issue and we have to, whatever we were doing  
16 at the time wasn't working and we need to address it.

17 We've done a few things. First, we got  
18 five NYPD officers and a sergeant assigned to the  
19 Department of Sanitation, and they work with a team  
20 of DSNY supervisors so whether the vehicle is  
21 abandoned or derelict, they can take it, and the idea  
22 there was to get rid of this game of finger-pointing  
23 that resulted in no cars coming off the streets, and  
24 that is working. In addition to like the work of that  
25 task force under my direction, we're also doing more

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2 joint NYPD/DSNY Tag and Tow operations so we're up  
3 from like twice a month to two or three times a week  
4 where we'll pick a specific precinct and both the  
5 district and the precinct will go in there. Between  
6 those two efforts, we have really upped our game on  
7 getting abandoned vehicles off the street. This is  
8 since April 1st so it's only been a few months, but  
9 in New York City we get so many 3-1-1 calls about  
10 abandoned and derelict vehicles. Some of them go the  
11 NYPD, some of them go to Sanitation, who knows what's  
12 what, right. A person seeing a vehicle on the street  
13 doesn't necessarily know if it's meets the  
14 Department's criteria for derelict..

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: They just want it  
16 off the street, right.

17 COMMISSIONER TISH: Or abandoned, they  
18 just want it off the street, which is why we created  
19 this joint task force. We estimate that the calls to  
20 3-1-1 have covered about 9,000 unique vehicles so far  
21 this year because each vehicle can get more than one  
22 call. We've taken off about 7,000 vehicles so far  
23 this year, and so for the first time we have both a  
24 strategy and the resources necessary to address the  
25 probably and, as this goes on, we'll see if we need

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2 more resources for it. It's still too soon to tell  
3 because the teams started by working off a very big  
4 backlog.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Thank you,  
6 Commissioner. Thank you, Chair, for hearing the bill.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, Council  
8 Member Abreu.

9 I want to recognize Council Members  
10 Yeger, Farias. Thanks for joining us.

11 Council Member Velazquez.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Hi,  
13 Commissioner. Great seeing you.

14 COMMISSIONER TISH: Great to see you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Just going back  
16 a little bit to some earlier questions and just  
17 followup directed towards my District. The new set-  
18 out times and containerization. I have in my  
19 community heard from seniors and those that have  
20 disabilities about how difficult it is for them to  
21 comply. Is the City considering any exemptions or are  
22 there ways that we could assist residents to prevent  
23 fines for people who have valid reasons?

24 COMMISSIONER TISH: The set-out time that  
25 we put forward in New York City, those times are very

2 much in line with the set-out times around the world.

3 What we added for seniors, as an example, one of the

4 stakeholders we were thinking about, was an

5 opportunity to set out the trash earlier than 8 p.m.

6 at 6 p.m. if it goes in a container, and so I think

7 that we accounted for, we tried to account for the

8 needs of various types of impacted stakeholders when

9 we came up with the 8 p.m./6 p.m. paradigm.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: One of the

11 other issues I'm having in my District when we've

12 done multiple walk-throughs with DSNY is that in

13 areas where there's mixed commercial and residential,

14 some building management has not properly educated

15 their residents nor have they allocated the resources

16 to deal with garbage, and so what we have now are

17 tons of garbage bags in the streets and what

18 typically happens is a lot of the businesses end up

19 getting the fines so is there a way that we can go

20 back into either enforcement or education to the

21 different properties because what we find, it's just

22 like multi-family residences where it's like six or

23 more units that typically engage in this behavior

24 within my District so how can we work with you to

25 first identify the problem, educate, right, if it's

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2 fixable, right, and if they keep on doing this  
3 persistently how can then we enforce it through fines  
4 and the like?

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: As I've mentioned  
6 before, I don't believe in enforcement for the sake  
7 of enforcement so I don't New Yorkers, residences or  
8 businesses, getting summonses for conditions that are  
9 not of their creation or not their responsibility so  
10 I'd be happy to work with you and dedicate resources  
11 to go and re-educate the buildings that are not  
12 complying and send the Chief from the District out  
13 with you to look at any areas of concern that you  
14 have.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Would you  
16 consider something like the Times Square pilot  
17 program in a non-business commercial district kind of  
18 like Pelham Bay in my District?

19 COMMISSIONER TISH: As I've mentioned  
20 before, I am committed to containerizing every piece  
21 of trash in the city. The model that we have working  
22 as part of the Clean Curbs Program in Times Square as  
23 one example is one that really requires an entity  
24 like a BID to centrally manage it so the BID collects  
25 all the trash and puts it in a shared bin rather than

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2 out on the street so it doesn't necessarily have to  
3 be a BID that we work with but any organization or  
4 entity that can manage it. I think what's going to be  
5 the go-forward model is more along the lines of what  
6 we're testing in Hamilton Heights where for mid- and  
7 high-density we put out on the residential side the  
8 shared containers and lower density, we require the  
9 individual bins.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Got it. Lastly,  
11 under this new waste management program, will union  
12 workers lose their jobs and then is DSNY ensuring  
13 that awardees have recycling, composting, and  
14 organics facility?

15 COMMISSIONER TISH: On the first question,  
16 there is not intended to be any job loss. If  
17 anything, it will, at least in the Department's  
18 version of containerization, more Sanitation jobs  
19 because in some parts of the city we will have to  
20 increase frequency of collection.

21 I'm sorry. There was a second question,  
22 but I don't remember it.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Whether DSNY is  
24 ensuring that awardees have recycling, composting,  
25 and organics facilities?

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2 COMMISSIONER TISH: Oh, now you're talking  
3 about Commercial Waste Zones I think.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Correct.

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: And the answer is yes,  
6 the Commercial Waste Zone RFP requires that each of  
7 the three services is offered and that composting  
8 service is offered at a cheaper price than refuse.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VELAZQUEZ: Got it. Thank  
10 you.

11 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, Council  
12 Member Velazquez.

13 Council Member Bottcher.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Thank you so  
15 much, Chair Nurse. My apologies in advance for asking  
16 about an issue that was discussed earlier. I was at a  
17 press conference at Madison Square Garden, but I do  
18 understand that you discussed unlicensed street  
19 vending earlier. Unlicensed street vending, it was  
20 first under the Parks Department then it was Consumer  
21 Affairs, now it's DSNY. In our District office, my  
22 staff gets a lot of calls about unlicensed vendors  
23 often outside of small businesses that are selling a  
24 similar product, and we've struggled to get  
25

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2 enforcement, and one of the things that we've been  
3 told is that DSNY is short on resources to...

4 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yeah, we were when we  
5 started. We're not now. When we started, we took over  
6 on April 1st. We were funded to hire 40 additional  
7 Sanitation police officers to staff so when we  
8 started on April 1st, we started with just one team  
9 of seven existing Sanitation police, and we did a big  
10 training class for Sanitation police officers where  
11 we put 40 more people through the Sanitation Police  
12 Academy. I graduated them three weeks ago, and so now  
13 we have five, this is brand new, we have 40, the five  
14 teams citywide, and so we are no longer resource-  
15 constrained. We have like one team in every borough  
16 so I expect that if you have any enforcement needs  
17 related to vending that my team is going to be very  
18 responsive because they have the resources that they  
19 need to do it. It just took 16 weeks to get everyone  
20 trained.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Great. So one  
22 enforcement team per borough?

23 COMMISSIONER TISH: Yes.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: And how many  
25 enforcement agents per team?



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2 COMMISSIONER TISH: Seven.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Seven, and they  
4 are full-time dedicated to vending enforcement?

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: 40 people including  
6 supervision in the Sanitation police are dedicated to  
7 vending.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Okay, great.  
9 Well, we really look forward to seeing progress on  
10 that and checking in on a later date and working  
11 closely with your office on this issue.

12 COMMISSIONER TISH: For sure.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: I want to ask  
14 about the newfangled corner baskets that were the  
15 winner of the design contest.

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: They're here.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: They're here.  
18 When can we expect them in City Council District 3?

19 COMMISSIONER TISH: I'm going to look in  
20 City Council District 3, but they've just arrived.  
21 The basket is two parts. It's like a gorgeous outer  
22 shell and then like the inner basket and the...

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: A gorgeous outer  
24 shell and a beautiful inner basket.

25

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2 COMMISSIONER TISH: Attractive. There was  
3 a manufacturing problem with the inside piece so it  
4 had all the gorgeous shells but none of the baskets  
5 that sat in them, and those baskets, finally we  
6 worked through the mold problem in the manufacturing  
7 process, and we go them so those baskets are going to  
8 start to hit the streets the end of this week or  
9 early next week. The first order was like between 300  
10 and 400. We just ordered 1,000 more. There are 22,000  
11 baskets citywide so it will take time and money to  
12 replace them, but I'm looking forward to working with  
13 every Council Member, if this is a priority, to get  
14 all of those mesh, wire, and defunct litter baskets  
15 replaced.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Great. So the  
17 first traunch has been funded and ordered and is  
18 about to be received and then...

19 COMMISSIONER TISH: We've received 300.  
20 We've ordered 1,000 more.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Okay, so 1,300,  
22 and then more will need to be ordered. Those have not  
23 yet been funded or?

24 COMMISSIONER TISH: We have to work  
25 through the funding for the balance.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Okay, what kind  
3 of geographic area will 1,300 cover roughly?

4 COMMISSIONER TISH: They're going to go  
5 citywide. It's not like they're all going to go in  
6 one district, and a lot of this is like very  
7 bureaucratic. It's like which Council Member gave us  
8 money to buy how many baskets so it's not entirely up  
9 to my discretion where and how we put them.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Okay. I don't  
11 think we allocated any funding to you because it was  
12 the old design that I didn't want.

13 COMMISSIONER TISH: But the new one is  
14 just so great so we look forward to working with you  
15 on it.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Okay, thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER TISH: Great, and all of your  
18 Colleagues.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, I'm going to ask  
21 a couple questions on behalf of Council Member Ung  
22 for Intro. 809. Does DSNY have a policy of issuing a  
23 warning to small businesses before issuing a  
24 littering violation?

25

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2 COMMISSIONER TISH: No. Just to clarify,  
3 we are very intentional about doing warning periods  
4 when there is a new rule so that no one gets a  
5 summons without being appropriately educated about  
6 it, but we don't use warnings for things that have  
7 been on the books for a long time.

8 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. How many  
9 establishments across the city have received  
10 littering violations more than 20 times in the last  
11 12 months?

12 COMMISSIONER TISH: Zero, and the reason  
13 that it is zero is that we can only enforce those  
14 types of violations during two one-hour periods a  
15 day, so two hours a day, and we have an entire city  
16 to enforce on so one of the things that we are  
17 looking to be able to do is expand, to have the  
18 Council write legislation that would expand the  
19 number of hours a day that we could enforce those  
20 rules, and I think that animates my frustration with  
21 that bill as drafted because raising the penalty for  
22 the 21st violation is meaningless because no one gets  
23 21 violations. It's just, anyway.

24 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Point taken. What is  
25 the process that DSNY follows, if any, to consult

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2 with an establishment or residence when you see the  
3 number of violations over a 12-month period rising  
4 steadily?

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: Again, it can be a  
6 supervisor who visits the store or someone from the  
7 District, but generally when we summons, you can get  
8 like one, two, three, maybe four a year. It's highly  
9 unusual to be well above that.

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, thank you. In  
11 relationship to Intro. 981, what inputs of  
12 information does DSNY currently use to decide where  
13 to allocate money for street cleanliness operations?

14 COMMISSIONER TISH: We use a lot of  
15 different inputs. I guess they're different for each  
16 program so street sweeping hasn't really changed very  
17 much over time. That's where the regulations are in  
18 place, and we work with the Community Boards and the  
19 Council Members when they require or want a change to  
20 those. We're very open to adding street sweeping  
21 regulations. For the Targeted Neighborhood Task  
22 Force, that is citywide, and that's just based on  
23 where there are underpasses, overpasses, side roads  
24 next to highways so it's just based on where those  
25 locations exist.

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2 On the enforcement side, we generally do  
3 it by borough, and so each borough gets an  
4 appropriate amount of enforcement agents based on its  
5 size.

6 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: To what extent is the  
7 presence or absence of a BID considered in allocating  
8 commercial routing resources?

9 COMMISSIONER TISH: It's not.

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, great. For  
11 tracking disposal of yellow and brown grease, I know  
12 we have BIC here as well, to the extent that you are  
13 aware, how much are licensed commercial carters  
14 already picking up yellow grease free of charge or as  
15 a paid services to businesses?

16 COMMISSIONER TISH: I am going to hand it  
17 over to my colleague from the Business Integrity  
18 Commission. They're taking the lead on this.

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BONFOEY: Thank you,  
20 Commercial. Hello, Chair Nurse. Allison Bonfoey,  
21 Chief-of-Staff at BIC, Deputy Commissioner as well.

22 Based on the carters customer registers  
23 which they submit quarterly to BIC, for the first  
24 half of 2023 carters picked up yellow grease from  
25 approximately 15,500 commercial establishments.

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2 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, and how many of  
3 the carters under consideration in the CWZ RFP  
4 process are capable of fat rendering or other grease  
5 recycling, and to what extent is this capability  
6 considered in the eventual awarding of a CWZ  
7 contract?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BONFOEY: Grease was  
9 carved out of the CWZ program, meaning they will be  
10 able to pick up wherever necessary.

11 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Does DEP share data  
12 with DSNY and BIC on the number and locations of  
13 sewage backups and clogs that can be attributed to  
14 improperly disposed-of grease?

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BONFOEY: In the past,  
16 BIC and DEP have worked together on those matters. We  
17 are engaged with DEP on this topic to improve further  
18 communications between the agencies.

19 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Would BIC require  
20 additional resources to comply with this legislation?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BONFOEY: Given that  
22 the proposed requirements are covered by existing  
23 rules at BIC, DSNY, and DEP, the customer registers  
24 under BIC rules, DSNY collects disposal data through  
25 a semi-annually survey of the licensees, and DEP's

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2 oversight over the grease interceptors at commercial  
3 establishments, we'd have to engage further to see  
4 what might be warranted and follow up with Council.

5 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. We also wanted  
6 to check in on the status of the CWZ. It was brought  
7 up quite a bit today. Where is DSNY in the process of  
8 awarding contracts to carters?

9 COMMISSIONER TISH: We're on schedule  
10 based on the schedule that I gave you on the  
11 dedicated hearing on this topic. We have scored all  
12 of the proposals, and we are in the midst of doing  
13 negotiations with the carters that had the best  
14 scores.

15 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Have there been any  
16 unanticipated delays in the process?

17 COMMISSIONER TISH: I think that the  
18 process has been moving ahead aggressively, and we  
19 are definitely on track. Because this is an ongoing  
20 procurement, I want to limit what I say at a public  
21 hearing about it, but it is definitely on track to  
22 meet the goal of the first zone launching at the end  
23 of 2024.

24 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: I'm hoping this is an  
25 opportunity to clarify, but we heard some concerning



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2 information that DSNY had potentially miscalculated  
3 the cost of bids and had to withdraw some initial  
4 awards and reassign. Can you confirm this?

5           COMMISSIONER TISH: Yeah, we had a vendor  
6 called Arcadis which was doing some of the data  
7 analysis associated with the scoring, and actually my  
8 team, the DSNY Commercial Waste Zone team, noticed an  
9 issue in one of the spreadsheets that they had put  
10 together. Fortunately, we noticed it very early on in  
11 the negotiation process so we paused the  
12 negotiations. We had Arcadis do a full review of each  
13 of their deliverables, not just the sheet that was in  
14 question. I also had the DSNY Data Science team  
15 independently do their own review of each of the  
16 Arcadis deliverables, and the selection committee met  
17 again and made a few adjustments based on having  
18 corrected the error in the scoring sheet. That is all  
19 handled, and we are back to the aggressive  
20 negotiation schedule that we had been on, and I do  
21 not expect that to impact the timeline for the  
22 implementation of the program.

23           CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Do you know what  
24 percentage of the contracts had to be or the offers  
25 had to be kind of repulled?

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2 COMMISSIONER TISH: I want to check with  
3 the lawyers before I talk about that publicly.

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Absolutely.

5 COMMISSIONER TISH: If they give me the  
6 green light, I'm happy to go through it with you.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: I also had some  
8 concerns communicated to our office about brokers  
9 being awarded zones or in negotiations, and there  
10 were questions about how a broker can be awarded a  
11 zone if they don't own trucks, they don't own  
12 facilities, they don't have infrastructure, they are  
13 not actually a trash provider, just a broker, so  
14 there were concerns about potentially the size of, I  
15 mean information is flying around, the potential size  
16 of awards for some of these brokers.

17 COMMISSIONER TISH: I'm going to have  
18 Deputy Commissioner Greg Anderson answer that  
19 question. He's leading our Commercial Waste Zone  
20 implementation.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Local Law  
22 199 requires that awardees be licensed carters so  
23 registered brokers were not eligible for awards.  
24 There were in the process some brokers who applied  
25 and received BIC licenses, but they are subject to

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2 the same level of scrutiny by the Department  
3 regarding their operational capacity, their financial  
4 capacity, their ability to perform the services that  
5 every other carter is.

6 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Lastly, during  
7 this process, were companies with union labor and  
8 benefits favored over companies without?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: We took  
10 into account the entire capability of these  
11 companies. I think we're prohibited by a variety of  
12 state and federal laws from taking into account  
13 specifically whether workers are unionized or not,  
14 but we looked at operational capacity, we looked at  
15 staffing plans, we looked at compliance history with  
16 labor laws, and I think all of those factors went  
17 into the scoring process.

18 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, great. Lastly,  
19 we just wanted to check in on the status of the  
20 curbside organics starting on October 2nd. Do you  
21 want to take this opportunity to give us any updates  
22 on the rollout, how many people you've engaged, how  
23 many mailers have gone out, how many brown bins have  
24 been requested or stickers?

25

2           COMMISSIONER TISH: Yes, I would. We are  
3 very excited to launch curbside composting in the  
4 borough of Brooklyn on October 2nd. For all Brooklyn  
5 residents who may be listening to this hearing, set  
6 out anything from your kitchen, anything from your  
7 yard once a week on your recycling day starting  
8 October 2nd, we will come, collect it, and in the  
9 spring we will come back and deliver some compost  
10 back to you that you can use in your garden, a  
11 community garden, wherever you want to use it. We  
12 have sent a mailer to every Brooklyn residence  
13 explaining the program and announcing its start date.  
14 In that mailer, we also explained that you can use  
15 any bin you want, but if you want to order a free bin  
16 from the City of New York, go to  
17 [nyc.gov/curbsidecomposting](http://nyc.gov/curbsidecomposting). Order before I think it's  
18 October 15th, and you will get a free bin from the  
19 City. If you decide not to order a bin or if you miss  
20 the window to order a bin, not a problem. You can and  
21 should still participate. You can use any bin you  
22 want. Just make sure that organics is clearly labeled  
23 on it.

24           In addition to sending the mailer to  
25 every Brooklyn resident, we are also doing door-to-

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2 door canvassing in the entire borough. The goal is to  
3 reach every one- to nine-unit building in Brooklyn.  
4 Last I checked, which is the beginning of yesterday,  
5 we were like in the 60-ish percent range on that door  
6 knocking. Yeah, door knocking, mailers...

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Did you say how many  
8 bins have been requested?

9 COMMISSIONER TISH: I want to get you the  
10 actual number. Do we have that actual number? It was  
11 like 30,000.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yes, I  
13 think around 33,000 as of yesterday.

14 COMMISSIONER TISH: 33,000 (INAUDIBLE)  
15 yesterday.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, great. 30,000?

17 COMMISSIONER TISH: 33,000 as of  
18 yesterday.

19 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: 33,000. Great. I know  
20 Council Member Salamanca, thanks for joining. Did you  
21 have a question?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you,  
23 Madam Chair. Good afternoon. How are you,  
24 Commissioner?

25 COMMISSIONER TISH: I'm good. Thanks.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: I want to first  
3 open up by thanking you for working with my office. A  
4 big chunk of my District is industrial and, as a  
5 result, I get a lot of illegal dumping, and it's good  
6 to partner with you. I know my office allocates  
7 funding for the cameras. I'd love to see your videos  
8 when you're catching these individuals illegally  
9 dumping and you're shaming them on social media so,  
10 in my opinion, keep it up, please.

11 COMMISSIONER TISH: Thank you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: One of the  
13 issues that I have in my District is the alternate  
14 side parking, vehicles not moving because they either  
15 are abandoned, they have no license plates. One big  
16 issue that I'm having, I was dealing with this this  
17 morning, was there are groups that are taking cars  
18 that are salvaged with no tags and parking them in  
19 the streets and then bringing these big containers so  
20 they can ship them out of the country, and so it's a  
21 problem that's happening in my District, and I know  
22 that I have an illegal mobile carwash bill that we  
23 will hear soon, but I'm having an issue with these  
24 carwashes, these vans that are just parked on the  
25 streets and they put their own boots on them so that

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2 they cannot be moved. My question is are you hearing  
3 this a lot in the borough of Bronx in terms of not  
4 being able to clean the streets properly because  
5 these vehicles are not moving?

6 COMMISSIONER TISH: On the abandoned  
7 vehicles, for sure, and that's why we recently  
8 created a joint NYPD/Sanitation task force. It's  
9 housed in the Department of Sanitation where we pair  
10 NYPD cops who handle abandoned vehicles with DSNY  
11 supervisors who handle derelict vehicles, and they'll  
12 go into a neighborhood together, and whatever type of  
13 vehicle it is, whether it's abandoned or derelict or  
14 somewhere in between, they can address it, and we've  
15 gotten very good feedback on the work of that task  
16 force. It sounds to me like you need that task force  
17 in your District asap, and I'm happy to have that  
18 task force go there as much is required to get the  
19 job done because the cars that don't move and that  
20 sit on the street block the street cleaning, and it  
21 is a very big cleanliness issue.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Yeah. You and I  
23 spoke at the beginning of the summer, and you did  
24 assist me with one vehicle that was just parked  
25 abandoned by a fire hydrant for almost four, you

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2 addressed the issue, which I want to say thank you.

3 Your superintendents, are they aware of this program

4 and are they using it as frequently as they should

5 be?

6 COMMISSIONER TISH: To be honest, we are

7 getting most of the inputs now from 3-1-1. You raise

8 an important gap which is even though the

9 superintendents don't directly deal with it, it's

10 important that they are all aware of it and that is a

11 message that I can and will and frankly should

12 deliver so thank you for identifying that is an

13 issue.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: All right.

15 That's it for my questioning. Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 Thank you, Commissioner.

17 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thanks. My last round

18 of questions is related to the emergency and

19 resiliency plans for the Department of Sanitation.

20 This is a topic that the Queens Borough President is

21 extremely passionate about so I would be remiss to

22 not ask the questions. How does DSNY adapt operations

23 during emergency scenarios including hurricanes,

24 blackouts, and flash flooding? For example, does DSNY

25



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2 change collection schedules, how does DSNY notify New  
3 Yorkers?

4 COMMISSIONER TISH: New York City

5 Emergency Management takes the lead on all largescale  
6 disasters, and DSNY has an important role to play in  
7 various types of disasters. Obviously, for snow in  
8 particular, we take the lead. For other types of  
9 weather-related emergencies, we play an important  
10 supporting role. These plans are reviewed annually,  
11 and, for weather-related response plans, they are  
12 reviewed prior to the relevant season beginning so,  
13 for example, like the snow plan is coming out soon,  
14 the updated snow plan.

15 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: How does DSNY respond  
16 to post-emergency scenarios? For example, like post-  
17 Hurricane Sandy, DSNY supported debris pickup.

18 COMMISSIONER TISH: DSNY is one of those  
19 agencies that does whatever is needed, like this year  
20 we had a condition with some coastal flooding, and  
21 DSNY was in that neighborhood for three weeks after,  
22 every day, whatever the residents needed, as that  
23 material came out of the homes, DSNY was there to  
24 collect it, and each emergency is different, and one  
25 of the great things about this agency is that we can,

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2 working with NYCEM obviously, adapt and meet the very  
3 specific needs that each emergency creates.

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Does DSNY work with  
5 DEP at all in targeting street cleaning in the flood-  
6 prone areas because we've just had a lot of Members  
7 talk about the stormwater basin drains being clogged  
8 up and just wondering what the communication is  
9 there?

10 COMMISSIONER TISH: When we see that there  
11 is going to be a big storm or even heavy rain, we  
12 send out extra sweepers, specifically to clean the  
13 catch basins, and every District is notified of it.

14 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Great. How frequently  
15 are DSNY staff trained on the Department's emergency  
16 and/or resiliency plans, and does employee onboarding  
17 include emergency and resiliency components?

18 COMMISSIONER TISH: As an example, we are  
19 just about to begin our snow training for every  
20 Sanitation worker in the Department. That is  
21 something that we do annually and so whether this is  
22 your first year as a Sanitation worker or your 25th,  
23 you're getting some form of meaningful snow training.  
24 Javier, do you want to add anything else about it?

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2 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LOJAN: Sure,  
3 thank you. We also do drills in the summer, mock  
4 blackout drill to make sure that our facilities have  
5 the adequate generators and backup equipment for  
6 those kinds of events as well.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Did you say, sorry if  
8 I missed it, how often the emergency protocols are  
9 updated? Is it right before a season?

10 COMMISSIONER TISH: NYCEM looks at  
11 emergency protocols annually, but my understanding is  
12 that their weather-related protocols are updated  
13 prior to the relevant season commencing. That is  
14 definitely my experience working with NYCEM on snow.

15 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Those are all my  
16 questions. I just wanted to clarify. This isn't a  
17 package of bills. You had mentioned that in the  
18 opening. These are just Members' bills. My job to  
19 hear them.

20 COMMISSIONER TISH: Note.

21 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Thank you so  
22 much.

23 COMMISSIONER TISH: Thank you.

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL BARRETT: We will now  
3 transition to public testimony. First will be Bonacio  
4 Crespi from Local 813.

5 If you have not filled out an appearance  
6 card and you wish to testify, please pick up a card  
7 in the back of the room so we can get you on deck.

8 BONACIO CRESPI: I guess it's good  
9 morning. I am Bonacio Crespi, Secretary Treasurer of  
10 Teamsters Local 813, a union which represents workers  
11 in the private sanitation industry. Our Union  
12 President, Daniel Wright, could not join us today,  
13 but I have some testimony that I will read on his  
14 behalf.

15 Teamsters Local 813 has been a supporter  
16 of the Commercial Waste Zone since its beginning. We  
17 celebrated the passage of Local Law 199 with our  
18 members who worked in the private sanitation  
19 industry, their employers, and the communities which  
20 they serve. The process was supposed to raise  
21 standards for workers, communities, businesses, and  
22 the environment. Presently, it appears that many of  
23 these important objectives that the union fought for  
24 are not being considered. In fact, the City has  
25 rewarded several (INAUDIBLE) companies, third party

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2 brokerage firms who don't own a single truck. How can  
3 a broker be considered who will subcontract work to a  
4 company from well outside the metropolitan area? This  
5 will add to overall vehicle miles traveled, something  
6 this effort was supposed to reduce. How can a company  
7 be considered that has ties to a questionable union?  
8 Can we expect this to improve conditions for workers?

9 The law was designed to reward companies who do the  
10 right thing, having good union jobs with proper pay,  
11 benefits, proven safety records, real recycling  
12 execution, reduce VMTs, and concern for the  
13 communities and the environment where they operate. I

14 am disappointed to hear of several of the bids  
15 granted by the Administration. Many of these bids  
16 seem to be driven by price with no consideration  
17 given to the critical parameters of the program.

18 There is much of the current process that fails our  
19 workers, our employees, our communities, and our  
20 environment. I urge the Administration to make  
21 further and complete review of the process. We need  
22 to get this right from the beginning and see that  
23 many benefits of Local Law 199 are given full  
24 consideration and are implemented as a benefit to

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2 all. Thank you, Danny Wright, President, Teamsters of  
3 Local 813.

4 I echo President Wright's remarks. As a  
5 former 20-plus-year worker in the sanitation  
6 industry, we need to make sure we are looking out for  
7 workers and safety issues. To ignore these important  
8 points compromises our hardworking members. My former  
9 employer was M and M Sanitation. M and M consistently  
10 did the right thing by its workers and has an  
11 excellent safety record. I am confused as to why  
12 their submission is not being considered. This is an  
13 example of a company that is being pushed to the side  
14 for reasons no one can figure out. Full consideration  
15 should be given to reputable companies like M and M  
16 and (INAUDIBLE) Industries rather than several of the  
17 questionable companies included so far. This law was  
18 aimed to reform the commercial waste-hauling industry  
19 in New York City. What happened?

20 As for brokers, Local Law 199 was  
21 supposed to seek to eliminate waste-hauling brokers  
22 and reduce the number of their intermediaries between  
23 waste generators and hauling companies. The law was  
24 aimed to streamline the waste collection process,

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2 increase transparency, and ensure fair pricing.

3 Again, what happened? Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you all.

5 Appreciate you all being here.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL BARRETT: Thank you.

7 Next will be Timothy Chubinidze. Apologies for the  
8 mispronunciation.

9 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Just before you  
10 testify, I want to welcome and acknowledge the  
11 journalism class coming from Council Member Shaun  
12 Abreu's District. Welcome to the tail end of our  
13 oversight hearing on Sanitation. Council Member Abreu  
14 left, but he did testify about his bill.

15 You're welcome to begin.

16 TIMOTHY CHUBINIDZE: Good morning. My name  
17 is Timothy Chubinidze, and I am the Director of Civic  
18 Engagement for Queens Borough President Donovan  
19 Richards, Jr., and I am here to present testimony on  
20 behalf of the Borough President.

21 Thank you to Chair Nurse for the  
22 opportunity to present testimony in support of two  
23 important pieces of legislation that you have  
24 introduced and that the Borough President is proud to  
25 support.

2 I would like to first discuss Intro. 413,  
3 which would require the Business Integrity Commission  
4 to establish a tracking system requiring transporters  
5 of yellow and brown grease to report to the BIC how  
6 such grease is disposed of. As you know, commercial  
7 kitchens produce a large amount of yellow and brown  
8 grease that needs to be discarded and removed  
9 properly so it does not end up in our sewer system  
10 where it can congeal in pipes and cause the sewer  
11 system to overflow. It is therefore of supreme  
12 importance that the City makes sure such grease is  
13 properly disposed. The best way to do this is through  
14 the tracking system envisioned by Intro. 413 which,  
15 if adopted, would allow civil penalties to be imposed  
16 on grease transporters who fail to adhere to its  
17 tracking requirements. The management and disposal of  
18 grease is a vital component of environmental  
19 conservation so the City must play an active role in  
20 ensuring proper grease disposal procedures are  
21 followed. It cannot afford to take a hands-off  
22 approach towards this important aspect of  
23 environmental protection. As the old saying goes,  
24 sunlight is the best disinfectant. Having grease  
25 transporters track and report their work would help



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2 protect both the environment and our City's public  
3 health by keeping grease out of our sewer system. The  
4 Borough President therefore strongly urges the  
5 adoption of Intro. 413.

6 I would like to next discuss Intro. 861,  
7 which would require the Department of Sanitation to  
8 maintain a separate page on the City's website where  
9 it will make available all of its plans relating to  
10 emergencies and resiliency. As we are just one day  
11 beyond the 22nd anniversary of the September 11,  
12 2001, terrorist attacks, it is important to remember  
13 that the ability to prepare in advance for an  
14 emergency often makes all the difference in being  
15 able to survive an emergency. That is why it is  
16 important that all City agencies including the  
17 Department of Sanitation be proactive in making sure  
18 their emergency contingency are plans are  
19 communicated effectively to the public well before  
20 any emergency. As we learned from our experiences  
21 during Hurricane Sandy and Ida as well as during the  
22 recent influx of Canadian wildfire smoke, the chaos  
23 of an actual emergency often leads to poor  
24 communication and the distribution of inaccurate  
25 information which could prove disastrous in a crisis.

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2 That is why it's critical that our residents be armed  
3 with as much information as possible before a crisis  
4 occurs so they are not unprepared. The Borough  
5 President is committed to making sure our City is  
6 never caught off guard during an emergency so he  
7 strongly urges that that the Council pass and the  
8 Mayor sign Intro. 861.

9 Thank you for your time and attention.

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL BARRETT: Is there  
12 anyone else who would like to provide testimony  
13 today?

14 Seeing no further testimony, I'll hand it  
15 to you, Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you. Thank you,  
17 everyone, for being here. Sorry you missed the end of  
18 this. I think there's a DOT meeting that's probably  
19 going to be more exciting a little later on, but this  
20 concludes the Sanitation hearing. Thank you. [GAVEL]

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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 September 21, 2023