

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER  
EQUITY

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October 16, 2025  
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway-8<sup>th</sup> fl. Hearing Rm. 1

B E F O R E: Farah N. Louis  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Tiffany Cabán  
Jennifer Gutiérrez  
Kevin C. Riley  
Inna Vernikov

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

Saloni Sethi  
Commissioner at Mayor's Office to End Domestic  
and Gender-based Violence

Edward Hill  
Deputy Commissioner at Mayor's Office to End  
Domestic and Gender-based Violence

Jeehae Fischer  
Korean American Family Service Center Executive  
Director

Kavita Mehra  
Sahki for South Asian Americans

Margarita Guzman  
Executive Director at Violence Intervention  
Program

Dr. Carla Smith  
CEO of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans  
Community Center

Rachel Braunstein  
Director of Policy at Her Justice

Fauziya Muhummud

Khalid Melvin

Jason Moore

Eva Santos Veloz

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

Kathryn Robb  
National Director of Children's Justice Campaign  
at Enough Abuse

Carine Silva

Logan Youngberg

Emily Miles  
NYC Alliance Against Sexual Assault

Chaplain Dr. Donna Hylton

Elizabeth Ebright  
Safe Horizon

Jerome Block  
Levy Konigsberg Law Firm

Anthony T. DiPietro  
New York Patient Safety and Medical Malpractice  
Trial Attorney

Jordan Mersen

Edita Birnkraut

Paisely Ana Bailey

Andrew Sta. Ana  
Asian American Federation

John Baldwin

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

Audacia Ray  
NYC Anti-Violence Project

Yasmeen Hamza  
COO of Womankind

Jessica Schidlow  
Child USA

Dr. Candace L. DeBlasio

Thomas J. DeBlasio

Ron Lukas

John Lopez



1  
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon and  
3 welcome to today's New York City Council hearing for  
4 the Committee on Women and Gender Equity. At this  
5 time, please silence all electronic devices. Please  
6 silence all electronic devices. No one may approach  
7 the dais at any time during this hearing. Chair, we  
8 are ready to begin.

9 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [gavel] Good  
10 afternoon and welcome to today's oversight hearing on  
11 examining the adequacy of domestic and gender-based  
12 violence data in New York City. I'm Council Member  
13 Farah Louis, Chair of the Committee on Women and  
14 Gender Equity. Thank you to everyone who has signed  
15 up to testify. We look forward to hearing from you.  
16 Today, the Committee will consider the following  
17 legislation: Intro 459 sponsored by Council Member  
18 Ung requiring all domestic violence-related 311  
19 complaints to be automatically transferred to the New  
20 York City Domestic Violence hotline; Pre-considered  
21 Resolution T20254297, also sponsored by Council  
22 Member Ung, calling upon the New York State  
23 Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign  
24 S.2280AA4899A which would require law enforcement  
25 officers to conduct a lethality assessment in

1 incidents of domestic violence; Intro 1216 sponsored  
2 by Council Member Lee requiring cosmetology  
3 establishments to display a poster about gender-based  
4 violence; Intro 1297 sponsored by Council Member  
5 Brooks-Powers reopening the look-back window to the  
6 victims of gender motivated violence protection law;  
7 Reso 889 sponsored by Council Member Menin declaring  
8 New York City's commitment to affirm and defend  
9 continued access for reproductive rights; Intro 1188  
10 sponsored by myself requiring NGBV to create an  
11 informational resources-- bless you-- informational  
12 resource for newly-married individuals; and Intro  
13 1416 also sponsored by myself increasing access to  
14 data around gender-based violence. As a survivor of  
15 domestic violence myself, this issue is deeply  
16 personal to me. Today's hearing is not only an  
17 opportunity to address a systemic crisis, but it is  
18 also a tribute to my own journey and to the countless  
19 individuals across central Brooklyn who have shared  
20 their stories with me in pursuit of safety, justice  
21 and healing. I am proudly grateful to have worked  
22 alongside powerful organizations that have supported  
23 both myself and my neighbors, including warm Haitian  
24 Center's Council, Brooklyn District Attorney Eric  
25

1  
2 Gonzalez, and the Urban Justice Center which  
3 represented me during my own domestic violence case.  
4 Their partnership and advocacy have been instrumental  
5 in helping survivors find strength, rebuild their  
6 lives, and reclaim their voices. Domestic and  
7 gender-based violence is a crisis that hides in plain  
8 sight. Often referred to as an invisible epidemic,  
9 today we are shedding a light on the severity of this  
10 issue in New York City. October is nationally  
11 recognized as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. It  
12 is a time when we raise awareness about the issue,  
13 honor victims and survivors and advocate for violence  
14 to end. To understand the full extent of the problem  
15 here in New York City, comprehensive and comparable  
16 data is crucial, and the data we have gathered  
17 reveals a sobering reality. According to NGBV,  
18 domestic violence homicides accounted for 17 percent  
19 of all homicides in New York City. While this data  
20 from NGBV shows the prevalence of gender-based  
21 violence and domestic violence across New York City,  
22 this picture is not a complete one. We must  
23 acknowledge and account for the under-reporting of  
24 domestic violence. The data we collect from NGBV  
25 while valuable must be supplemented with information



1 from sources like other city agencies and community-  
2 based organizations. Data on domestic and gender-  
3 based violence enables providers to understand the  
4 true scope of this type of violence. Victims'  
5 characteristics, their race and ethnicity, religion,  
6 class, English proficiency, age, sexuality, and  
7 gender can shape how they are affected by the abuse.  
8 And New York City lacks data on diverse and  
9 marginalized populations who often face barriers to  
10 disclosing abuse and accessing help. Domestic and  
11 gender-based violence can have devastating  
12 consequence for survivors, survivors' health and  
13 well-being. We need to learn more about the many  
14 ways this type of violence can take place and the  
15 context in which it can occur so we can identify how  
16 best to meet survivors' needs. So today, we'll hear  
17 from NGBV advocates and service providers and  
18 survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, and  
19 we ask what data can we collect to ensure that  
20 reporting captures the experiences of survivors. How  
21 can we work across service providers to share  
22 information to improve services to address gender-  
23 based violence across the City, and many more  
24 questions. Thank you to the members of the Women and  
25

2 Gender Committee who have joined us today, including  
3 Council Member Ung, and we also are joined on Zoom by  
4 Council Member Cabán, and we're joined by Public  
5 Advocate Jumaane Williams. I would also like to  
6 thank committee staff, Julia Goldsmith-Pinkham,  
7 Katie Salina, Allie Stofer, and Taylor Francisco, as  
8 well as my own staff, Daniel Heredia and Shubhra  
9 Mishra for their work on today's hearing. Before we  
10 swear in the administration, we will hear remarks  
11 from Public Advocate Jumaane Williams.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you,  
13 Madam Chair. As mentioned, my name's Jumaane  
14 Williams, Public Advocate of the City of New York.  
15 Thank you, Chair Louis and members of the Committee  
16 on Women and Gender Equity for holding this hearing  
17 and allowing me the opportunity to provide a  
18 statement. I thank you, Commissioner, for being here  
19 as well. We live in an era which men credibly  
20 accused of sexual harassment hold very powerful  
21 positions. Some even feel entitled to run for  
22 leadership here in New York City. It is important  
23 that-- more important than ever that we make it  
24 clear to New Yorkers who are survivors of domestic,  
25 sexual,

1 or gender-based violence that you matter. You  
2 deserve closure, and we will not stop fighting for  
3 you. We know that COVID-19 pandemic was associated  
4 with significant increase in number of calls to  
5 domestic violence hotlines, both in New York City and  
6 nationwide. While calls to the New York City  
7 domestic violence hotline have declined in pre-  
8 pandemic levels-- to pre-pandemic levels, the number  
9 of NYPD domestic violence incident reports and the  
10 number of visits to the City's Family Justice Centers  
11 have risen slightly each year since 2020. These  
12 concerning trends are compounded by a recent job  
13 growth and the upcoming opening of new casinos, both  
14 of which have been associated with increase in  
15 domestic violence. I'm able to share this information  
16 because I have dedicated staff who spend time  
17 locating, compiling, cleaning, and analyzing data  
18 published by the Mayor's Office to End Gender-Based  
19 Crimes. I commend the City's efforts thus far to  
20 track data on gender-based violence, but New Yorkers  
21 including many municipal offices and service  
22 providers do not have the luxury of data savvy staff  
23 members. Organizations and city offices supporting  
24 domestic violence survivors will benefit from an  
25

1  
2 audit of the city's data on gender-based violence and  
3 from a dashboard compiling this data across the  
4 agencies. Introduction 416 will mandate these  
5 measures and so ensure our city programs are as well-  
6 equipped as they can be to serve survivors. It is for  
7 this goal that I support Intro 1416 and this  
8 committee's effort to ensure the city's data on  
9 gender-based violence are consistent, transparent and  
10 easily accessible. The City offers several programs  
11 to those experiencing domestic or gender-based  
12 violence, but affected New Yorkers are too often  
13 aware that they exist. Intros 1188 and 1216 will go  
14 a long way toward ensuring that more New Yorkers know  
15 about these resources. Introduction 1997-- I'm  
16 sorry, 1297 is particularly vital. If passed, this  
17 law would reopen the look-back window for the Gender-  
18 Motivated Violence Act so that survivors of gender-  
19 based or sexual violence have full access to due  
20 process. In particular, we would clarify the law to  
21 allow survivors to pursue action against institutions  
22 that enable abuse by their staff members. It is even  
23 more painful that many institutions were run by New  
24 York City government. At last month's rally and many  
25 before in support of this law, we heard how important

1 this ability would be for those New Yorkers who  
2 experience sexual abuse in juvenile detention  
3 centers. In a moment when too many abusers feel  
4 emboldened by government inaction, we must pass Intro  
5 1227 to empower survivors and hold abusers and the  
6 institutions that protect them accountable. I want  
7 to thank the survivors who have been working on this  
8 bill and pushing it. I understand the trauma,  
9 empathize with the trauma of having to relive this  
10 time and time again. I'm hoping we can get this bill  
11 passed and some semblance of justice can finally  
12 occur. I would also hopefully prevent it from  
13 happening again. Thank you very much.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Public  
16 Advocate Williams. Now, we will hear remarks from  
17 Council Member Ung.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Thank you, Chair,  
19 and good afternoon. And thank you everybody for  
20 consideration today on my two pieces of legislation  
21 that I'm proud to have introduced and that has the  
22 potential to make real difference the lives of  
23 survivors of domestic and gender-based violence.  
24 When a victim of abuse finally takes the courageous  
25 step of reaching out for help for themselves, for

1 their children, for their family, that moment is  
2 critical. It takes immense bravery to pick up the  
3 phone and ask for help. When they do, we should make  
4 sure that the help is immediate and direct. My bill  
5 Intro 459 would require the City to ensure that any  
6 complaints related to domestic violence made through  
7 311, whether through the website, the app, or over  
8 the phone, is immediately transferred to the New York  
9 City Domestic Violence Hotline. This hotline operates  
10 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and staffed by  
11 professionals who are ready to help at any moment.  
12 The committee will also be considering a resolution  
13 that I introduced that calls on New York State to  
14 pass legislation requiring law enforcement officers  
15 to conduct a lethality assessment when responding to  
16 incidents of domestic violence. NYPD responds to  
17 roughly 230,000 domestic incidents every year which  
18 translates to nearly 600 calls every day. Given that  
19 sheer volume, it is unreasonable to expect that even  
20 when the most experienced officers to accurately  
21 assess every situation and determine when a victim  
22 might be at risk of escalating violence or homicide.  
23 That require officers to conduct a lethality  
24 assessment. We are giving them a structured,  
25

1 research-backed way to identify the warning signs  
2 that a situation can turn deadly. I want to thank  
3 Speaker Adrienne Adams for her leadership and  
4 advocacy on this issue, as well as being a champion  
5 for victims and survivors of domestic violence during  
6 her time at City Council and as Speaker. Both my  
7 legislations and this resolution are about ensuring  
8 that when someone finally reaches out for help, that  
9 moment becomes the start of real safety and support  
10 and not a missed opportunity to intervene. Thank you  
11 again to the Committee for considering these two  
12 pieces of legislation.

14 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council  
15 Member Ung. Council Member Menin couldn't join us  
16 today, but she did provide a statement. Thank you,  
17 Chair Louis, for holding today's hearing on  
18 Resolution 889 which will reaffirm New York City's  
19 commitment to defending reproductive rights and  
20 access. I would also like to thank my colleagues for  
21 cosponsoring this effort to preserve reproductive  
22 freedoms of New Yorkers. given the repeal of Roe V.  
23 Wade by the Supreme Court and the intensifying  
24 political climate in our nation, it is now more  
25 important than ever that we dedicate ourselves to

1 safeguarding these essential rights. Reproductive  
2 rights are health care rights, and I look forward to  
3 this legislation progressing through the Council so  
4 that we can continue to protect our basic freedoms  
5 and uphold our shared values as New Yorkers. I'm  
6 going to give her a second, but we'll hear next from  
7 Majority Whip Council Member Brooks-Powers. Just  
8 give her one second.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,  
11 Chair Louis, and thank you to all the survivors and  
12 advocates and members of the public who have joined  
13 us today. We are here because the promise of justice  
14 for survivors of gender-motivated violence is in  
15 jeopardy, and because the City Council has a duty to  
16 protect that promise. Earlier this year, a court  
17 ruling created a dangerous loophole in the Gender-  
18 Motivated Violence Act, threatening to dismiss  
19 hundreds of cases brought by survivors. Already, 450  
20 cases against juvenile detention facilities have been  
21 dismissed. Hundreds more are now at risk. These are  
22 not abstract cases. They include New Yorkers who  
23 have endured sexual assault and abuse at the hands of  
24 city-run facilities, the Epstein estate and more.  
25 Without this bill, their pursuit of justice could



1 end. Not because their claims lack merit, but  
2 because of a technical gap in the law. Intro 1297  
3 closes that loophole. It reaffirms that survivors  
4 have the right to hold both individuals and  
5 institutions accountable for gender-based violence.  
6 The bill also creates a new one-year look-back window  
7 from March 2026 to March 2027, giving survivors  
8 another chance to come forward. This legislation is  
9 about more than law. It's about fairness, healing,  
10 and accountability. We know that for many survivors  
11 the promises of speaking out takes time the City  
12 should never turn its back on those who do. I want to  
13 thank the survivors once again who have shared their  
14 story, the advocates who have worked tirelessly to  
15 bring us here, and my 41 colleagues who have already  
16 joined as co-sponsors. Together, we have built  
17 strong momentum, but we must move quickly to ensure  
18 no survivor loses their right to be heard. I urge my  
19 colleagues and the administration to move Intro 1297  
20 forward without delay. Justice delayed is justice  
21 denied, and survivor cannot wait any longer. Thank  
22 you.  
23

24 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council  
25 Member Brooks-Powers. I would like to remind

2 everyone who wishes to testify in person today that  
3 you must fill out a witness slip which you can find  
4 on the desk of the Sergeant at Arms near the entrance  
5 of the room. Please fill out this slip even if you  
6 have already registered in advance that you will be  
7 testifying in-person today. If you wish to testify on  
8 any of legislation, please indicate on the witness  
9 slip whether you are here to testify in favor of or  
10 in opposition to the legislation. I also want to  
11 point out that we will not be voting on any  
12 legislation today. To allow as many people as  
13 possible to testify, testimony will be limited to 1.5  
14 minutes per person. That is 1.5 minutes. Okay.  
15 whether you are testifying in-person or on Zoom. I  
16 am also going to ask my colleagues to limit their  
17 questions and comments to five minutes. Please note  
18 that witnesses who are here in-person will testify  
19 before those who are signed into the Zoom webinar. I  
20 will now turn it over to Women and Gender Equity  
21 Committee Counsel to administer the oath.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hi, good morning. In  
23 accordance with the rules of the Council, I'll  
24 administer the affirmation to the witnesses. I'll  
25 call on you each individually for a response. Please

1 raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the  
2 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth  
3 before these committees and to respond honestly to  
4 Council Member questions?  
5

6 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yes.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Yes.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Please  
9 state your name prior to your testimony for the  
10 record and if anyone needs an accessible version of  
11 the presentation, please email  
12 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov).

13 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Good afternoon,  
14 Chair Louis and members of the Committee on Women and  
15 Gender Equity. I am Saloni Sethi, Commissioner of the  
16 Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based  
17 Violence, or End GBV. I'm joined by Edward Hill,  
18 Deputy Commissioner for Research, Evaluation and  
19 Training. NGBV operates the City's five Family  
20 Justice Centers and directly manages a contract  
21 portfolio of prevention and intervention programming.  
22 Our office builds capacity for agency staff and  
23 community members to identify and respond to domestic  
24 and gender-based violence, or DVGBV, through outreach  
25 and training. We also develop policies and best

1 practices to strengthen the City's approach to these  
2 issues. We collaborate with city agencies, over 100  
3 nonprofit providers, community stakeholders, and  
4 people with lived experience to reduce barriers and  
5 ensure access to inclusive culturally-responsive  
6 services for all survivors. Thank you for the  
7 opportunity to speak with you today regarding  
8 domestic and gender-based violence data in New York  
9 City. NGBV's Research and Evaluation Team provides  
10 data management and analytical support for our  
11 programs and initiatives, evaluates key efforts and  
12 conducts research in collaboration with interagency  
13 partners. This includes annual reporting on domestic  
14 violence initiatives, indicators, and factors that  
15 compile data across some of our key programs. The  
16 team also produces data and research reports and  
17 manages the work of the New York City Domestic  
18 Violence Fatality Review Committee. Established under  
19 Local Law 61 of 2005, the Committee which consists of  
20 representatives from 10 city agencies, two District  
21 Attorney's Offices, two community-based domestic  
22 violence programs, and two survivor representatives  
23 reviews and analyzes domestic violence related  
24 homicide including intimate partner and family  
25

1 violence homicides each year to better understand the  
2 circumstances surrounding these deaths, and assess  
3 how victims and survivors accessed or faced barriers  
4 to accessing available services and prevention  
5 supports. We also oversee the fatality advisory  
6 committee, established under Executive Order 36 which  
7 will conduct individual reviews of gender-based and  
8 domestic violence fatalities. This research-based  
9 committee includes representatives from 14 city  
10 agencies and will conduct two in-depth reviews of  
11 domestic and gender-based homicides annually. This  
12 committee's work complements the broader efforts of  
13 the Fatality Review Committee by providing deeper,  
14 case-specific insights to help identify barriers and  
15 service gaps. The FAC will complete its first case  
16 reviews next year. In addition to the annual  
17 analysis of cases involving fatalities, NGBV  
18 periodically conducts broader analysis of NYPD data  
19 to examine the intersections of intimate partner  
20 violence, gender, race, and other contributing  
21 factors. These analyses help identify disparities,  
22 highlight emerging trends and inform more equitable  
23 prevention and intervention strategies. Together,  
24 these efforts ensure that our policies and programs  
25

1 are guided by the full spectrum of survivor  
2 experiences reflected in city data. We want to  
3 emphasize that in collecting and analyzing program  
4 data, NGBV prioritizes survivor safety,  
5 confidentiality, and anonymity. When it comes to  
6 program data, this means ensuring that we only report  
7 data in aggregate form. Our goal is to ensure that  
8 all data collection practices are trauma-informed and  
9 do not create additional risks or discomfort for  
10 survivors. We also strive to minimize the reporting  
11 burden on both our providers and survivors  
12 themselves. We collect only the information  
13 necessary to conduct meaningful evaluations, assess  
14 program effectiveness and identify opportunities for  
15 improvement. Since much of our data relies on self-  
16 reporting, survivors can choose whether to share  
17 sensitive information based on personal experience  
18 and safety concerns which naturally limits the  
19 completeness of available data. We support Intro  
20 1188, the informational resource for newly-married  
21 individuals. Intro 1297 purports to authorize claims  
22 against entities brought under the Gender-Motivated  
23 Violence Act that predates 2022, including claims  
24 predating the enactment of the GMVA in 2000. The  
25

1 City, of course, supports the goal of holding  
2 perpetrators of gender-based violence to account and  
3 supporting victims of such violence. However, there  
4 are additional considerations including the potential  
5 for substantial cost considerations that the  
6 administration would like to discuss with the Council  
7 in a separate context. In relation to Intro 1216, we  
8 support the intent of the bill to raise awareness and  
9 connect survivors with critical resources. However,  
10 we note that outreach to cosmetologists is already  
11 being conducted under Local Law 39 of 2019. As part  
12 of that mandate our office has distributed printed  
13 domestic violence toolkits, posters, and palm cards  
14 to salons citywide to help connect survivors with  
15 local resources and support services. The same  
16 resources are also available online at no cost. We  
17 also recognize that there may be challenges related  
18 to the implementation of this bill. While we  
19 understand its intent, we do not support Intro 459.  
20 Currently, anyone who calls 311 and mentions domestic  
21 violence is transferred to the City's Hope hotline.  
22 Adding a direct transfer or menu prompt from 311 to  
23 the hotline would significantly increase call volume  
24 to the hotline and could unintentionally overwhelm  
25

1  
2 the service with misdirected calls. Given that a  
3 majority of domestic violence shelter referrals are  
4 made through the hotline, such disruptions could  
5 directly impact access to safety and support for  
6 survivors. We support the intent of Intro 1416,  
7 increasing access to data around gender-based  
8 violence. However, we also have concerns related to  
9 feasibility and privacy. We intend to connect with  
10 the Council post-hearing to discuss further. We look  
11 forward to continued collaboration with the Council,  
12 our sister city agencies and community-based partners  
13 to strengthen data coordination and advance evidence-  
14 based and survivor-centered approaches across our  
15 collective work. Thank you for the opportunity to  
16 testify today. I welcome any questions you may have.

17 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, and thank  
18 you for being here today. Quick question, and then  
19 I'll hand it over to my colleague. What key  
20 indicators does NGBV track when it comes to  
21 monitoring domestic and gender-based violence across  
22 New York City? For instance, what resources of  
23 information does NGBV rely on to monitor those  
24 indicators?



2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: So, one of the  
3 key things that we look-- one of the key things that  
4 we look at, annually we get a data set from NYPD of  
5 domestic violence incidents across New York City  
6 which provides the location by community district,  
7 the zip code, and some demographic information about  
8 the survivor and the perpetrator in those offenses,  
9 and we use that to map that information out across  
10 community districts to see what neighborhoods might  
11 be experiencing higher rates or volume of domestic  
12 violence incidents. In that data set, we also get  
13 domestic violence felony assaults and do the same  
14 type of analysis, and we also get domestic violence  
15 felony rape information. In addition to that, of  
16 course, we monitor data from our programs to see  
17 where their clients are coming from, particularly the  
18 Family Justice Center information. And so those are  
19 kind of the key indicators that we look at.

20 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Does NGBV collect and  
21 analyze data of sources from other agencies besides  
22 NYPD?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: No, not  
24 directly. We get information from our contracted  
25

1  
2 service providers across a series of programs that we  
3 manage, but not other data from other agencies.

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: And how does NGBV  
5 rely on that data about gender-based violence to  
6 inform the City of the work that these providers are  
7 doing?

8 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, on the  
9 programmatic level, I think, you know, the programs--  
10 we have about 37 contracts that our office oversees.  
11 And so for those programs, we're constantly meeting  
12 with our providers and looking at data on a regular  
13 basis to say, you know, there's an uptick in this.  
14 there's maybe-- need more training here, right?  
15 Looking at things like-- we look at things like what--  
16 - how many requests for language access we get on the  
17 hotline, for instance, right? That helps us, informs  
18 what-- where we might want to add language capacity.  
19 So we usually do that on the programmatic level I  
20 think mostly.

21 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: How does NGBV use  
22 state or U.S. level data as proxy to analyze or  
23 represent what is happening in New York City. For  
24 instance, what is the limitations of using statistics  
25 that are not specific to New York City?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Yeah. We do  
3 look at federal data collected through the CDC about  
4 gender-based violence, and we do look at New York  
5 state data that they collect. I think over my  
6 career, I find that that data does not necessarily  
7 reflect the population of New York City. And so  
8 while we use NYPD data as kind of a basis to look at  
9 the number of incidents, it is the largest data set  
10 we have on people who are experiencing domestic and  
11 gender-based violence. Although as was mentioned by  
12 Council, that information is limited to those who do  
13 reach out to the NYPD.

14 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay. How do concerns  
15 about being undocumented affect whether survivors  
16 access to service? For instance, how can the City  
17 try to incorporate information about undocumented and  
18 their needs without putting them at risk-- that are  
19 experiencing gender-based violence.

20 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I mean, one of the  
21 key services that we continue to offer around our  
22 Family Justice Centers is immigration legal services,  
23 right? And I think that's really important to  
24 continue getting the message out that for survivors  
25 of gender-based violence there are unique immigration

1 remedies, and I think that's one thing we could  
2 always talk about generally. You know,  
3 unfortunately, we have sort of seen that, like,  
4 undocumented folks are less likely to come forward  
5 and have concerns around engaging with systems  
6 broadly, right? I think for us this is not data that  
7 we collect, right? We don't ask about immigration  
8 status across any of our programs, because we really  
9 don't want to be a barrier to access.  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright. And are  
12 there any barriers to implementing 1188?

13 COMMISSIONER SETHI: This is the  
14 information, right?

15 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes. Intro 1188.

16 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I mean, I think we  
17 would want to where-- in terms of barriers, I think  
18 we would have to develop the materials and share it  
19 with the county clerk, too, to distribute it. I  
20 think the one thing that we would sort of think about  
21 is this, you know-- is this time when someone's going  
22 to receive this information well, or is there another  
23 time when it might be better received.

24 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright. And Intro  
25 1416 would require an evaluation of existing data on

1  
2 gender-based violence. How would NGBV approach this  
3 particular topic, and what barriers do you see in  
4 doing this work?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: I mean, to do  
6 that type of work, I think we would have to reach out  
7 to our sister agencies. Actually, let me take a  
8 step back. We'd have to take a look at our own data  
9 that we're collecting, get an understanding of what  
10 we're doing. I think by doing that, lay out some best  
11 practices about how to approach our sister agencies  
12 about how they're collecting data, and of course,  
13 collaborate them-- collaborate with them in doing  
14 that. And also, I think, set an understanding about  
15 the definitions of the data that we're collecting,  
16 and make sure everybody has the same definitions of  
17 domestic and gender-based violence.

18 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah, and I think  
19 the challenges are there mostly by the administrative  
20 burden, you know, on funds across the board on doing  
21 something-- it's a big project, because survivors are  
22 in all of our systems, as you know.

23 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Right. Alright, I am  
24 going to hand it over to my colleagues. We're going  
25 to start with Council Member Ung.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: thank you, Chair. I  
3 just have a quick question about your testimony  
4 regarding Intro 459. It says like adding a direct  
5 transfer menu prompt from 311 to the hotline will  
6 significantly increase the call volume to the  
7 hotline. Why-- I guess I'm trying to picture why  
8 would that be the case? Is it saying people who  
9 accidentally just hit that if they're not in a  
10 domestic violence situation?

11 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, I mean,  
12 currently the hotline does transfer if they're-- if  
13 they're-- I'm sorry, if the 311 does transfer the  
14 hotline if somebody says domestic violence, right?  
15 And I think we got-- we pulled some numbers and I  
16 think there's a few thousand calls annually that go  
17 from 311 to the hotline right now. I think the  
18 concern is that, like, if people are self-identifying  
19 or it's a menu option that it could unintentionally  
20 have a lot of misdirected calls. And kind of looking  
21 at the numbers which I have-- you know, it's like the  
22 volume of calls to 311 versus the hotline's current  
23 capacity, we're looking at it and even if like, you  
24 know, 0.5 percent of the calls that go to 311 are  
25 transferred to the hotline, that doubles the volume f

1 hotline calls that the hotline currently gets.  
2  
3 That's a very low percentage, yeah.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: But if people would  
5 need the assistance, then I mean, yes, we should work  
6 more harder to support the hotline, of course. I  
7 guess I'm just a little confused about why would it  
8 inadvertently having that direct transfer like  
9 inadvertently increase, you know, the call volume to  
10 the hotline, unless you think people would  
11 accidentally just hit that, you know, direct  
12 transfer.

13 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah, I mean, I  
14 think we're thinking about error here, right, and  
15 sort of an unintentional consequence, not the  
16 intentional consequence. I mean, there are obviously  
17 some percentage of folks who will be calling and  
18 they'll be calling the hotline for the services the  
19 hotline offers, and there's always going to be-- it  
20 happens our Family Justice Centers, right? We always  
21 say, when you have something is open and walking, a  
22 lot of the work that even happens our Family Justice  
23 Centers is making sure are you in the right place.  
24 And I think it's-- you know, the information is  
25

1 always challenging that way. So, I think that's the  
2 concern.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: No, I appreciate it.  
5 I just think more people might know about 311 more  
6 than they do know--

7 COMMISSIONER SETHI: [interposing] They  
8 do, exactly.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: about the hotline.  
10 So, that's why I think having that direct transfer on  
11 311 would be helpful.

12 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We've been joined by  
15 Council Member Riley. Council Member Brooks-Powers?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,  
17 Chair, and thank you, Commissioner. Good to see you  
18 again, as well as you, Deputy Commissioner. Couple  
19 of questions pertaining to Intro 1297. So, I have to  
20 say I was a bit disheartened to see that the admin  
21 hasn't really fully come out in support of Intro 1297  
22 which I feel is a really important piece of  
23 legislation. I wanted to understand, the  
24 administration is actively seeking to dismiss  
25 survivor cases under the Gender-Motivated Violence



1 Act. Can you tell this committee exactly how many  
2 survivors the City is prepare to abandon? How many  
3 people will lose their right to be heard if these  
4 dismissals move forward?  
5

6 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, unfortunately, I  
7 don't have that information in front of me, but--  
8 yeah, we don't have those numbers in front of us.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: I'm sorry,  
10 I can't hear you.

11 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I'm sorry, we don't  
12 have that information, those numbers in front of us  
13 in terms of how my cases are trying to be dismissed.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Would you  
15 be able to work to get us that number?

16 COMMISSIONER SETHI: We can follow up.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Is the  
18 administration's position that city agencies and  
19 contractors should be shielded from accountability,  
20 even when survivors allege that violence occurred  
21 under their supervision?

22 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, I think some of  
23 the concerns are really around the potential cost  
24 associated with navigating these claims.  
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: So, when  
3 you talk about cost, I'm just curious, what message  
4 does that sent to the survivors across New York City?

5 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Again, I think we  
6 fully support the intent of this legislation. We  
7 fully support the intent of like having survivors get  
8 access to justice through being able to file claims.  
9 I think we'd love to sort of follow up with Council  
10 in a different context, because I think there's some  
11 other similar acts that have passed around the Child  
12 Victim's Act and the Adult Survivor's Act, and we  
13 want to talk through some of the experiences, the  
14 kind of-- what we've learned from those other pieces  
15 of legislation.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: The  
17 Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based  
18 Violence exists to support survivors. How does that  
19 mission square with the administration's litigation  
20 posture which has the effect of silencing survivors  
21 and denying.

22 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Well, I think that  
23 this is the-- you know, the challenging nature of  
24 this type of legislation is that it's not just us who  
25 are impacted. It'd be easy if it was just our

1 office, but it's multiple city agencies and multiple  
2 departments, and so we would love to follow up in a  
3 different context.  
4

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Okay. I  
6 would have loved to have had the conversation prior  
7 to the hearing so that we could have a meaningful  
8 conversation about the bill. As someone who formerly  
9 worked for this agency and has been an advocate for  
10 survivors for quite some time now, it is disheartened  
11 to talk about costs when people's lives have been  
12 changed forever because of an act of sexual violence  
13 against them. And I think that the city, the  
14 administration owes it to the survivors to support  
15 this legislation so that they can be able to continue  
16 on that healing journey and that they can have full  
17 accountability. And so it's my hope that we're able  
18 to move forward with Intro 1297 to amend the GMVA so  
19 that those who are right now tied up in litigation do  
20 not lose their moment. Thank you, Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council  
22 Member. The federal government has reduced many  
23 agencies and initiatives that track data across the  
24 United States. Has NGBV-- how has NGBV work been  
25

1 impacted by cuts to federal research and initiatives?  
2 Please share why.

3  
4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Yeah. We have  
5 not experienced any reduction of information that we  
6 need from the federal government at this time.  
7 They're still producing reports and surveys on the  
8 most recent CDC gender-based violence survey that  
9 they did, and as recently as last month we're still  
10 producing reports based on that survey.

11 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay. In 2024, home  
12 flex funding 180-day report, NGBV reports only four  
13 racial and ethnic categories, Hispanic, Latinx,  
14 Black, African-American, White, and  
15 multiracial/multiethnic, omitting groups that are  
16 typically included in city data sets such as Asian,  
17 Native American, Pacific Islander. Can you explain  
18 why these categories were excluded or collapsed and  
19 whether NGBV plans to expand race and ethnicity  
20 reporting in future home reports?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: The actual  
22 data collection tool that we use for that program  
23 actually has 10 race and ethnicity categories. In  
24 the report we chose to reflect only those that were  
25 actually representative of the clients who have used

1  
2 the program at that point. However, understanding  
3 your question, in the future we'll make it clearer in  
4 the report all the categories that we collect.

5 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Why weren't they all  
6 captured?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: They were--  
8 they weren't captured-- we don't-- I don't-- I don't  
9 want to get this confused. The only categories that  
10 were represented in the report were when clients  
11 actually designated one of those categories. If a  
12 category wasn't designated by a client, we chose not  
13 to represent that in the report. So, we didn't have  
14 a line that said zero, but I understand your concern  
15 of it not reflecting, you know, all the categories  
16 that are normally presented in reports. In the  
17 future, we will include all categories even if  
18 they're zero.

19 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: So, is that data now  
20 lost if someone identifies as Asian, Pacific  
21 Islander? Where does that information go?

22 COMMISSIONER SETHI: No--

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: [interposing]  
24 Just-- I'm sorry for being confusing. Our data  
25

1  
2 collection tool that our contracted agencies use does  
3 include all 10 race and ethnicity categories.

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I heard that part.  
5 Yeah, but then you said-- so I mean, the provider,  
6 you'll add all of them, so.

7 COMMISSIONER SETHI: The provider for  
8 this time period reported zero in all those other  
9 categories, right? And so I think we do keep all of  
10 the data, the historical data-- and this is a shorter  
11 time period. This was like the program launch, and I  
12 think as mentioned it's only four out of five  
13 providers. One of our-- our provider in Queens  
14 actually hadn't launched the program yet at this  
15 time. So, we really anticipate the FY24 will reflect  
16 hopefully people from, you know, all categories, and  
17 if it's zero, we'll put zero just so it's very clear  
18 that we are asking. Our drop-down menu has 10  
19 categories, not four.

20 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay. Where does  
21 NGBV currently advertise information regarding how to  
22 identify signs of gender-based violence and  
23 information about gender-based violence services  
24 available in New York City? This is regarding Intro  
25 1216.

1  
2           COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, I mean, we  
3 currently have in our online NYC Hope resource  
4 directory, and then our cosmetology toolkit is on our  
5 website as well when it comes to the cosmetology  
6 outreach, and then we work with salons, you know, who  
7 are interested in salons in nail establishments that  
8 are interested. We will go conduct outreach across  
9 all five boroughs based on our capacity to do that  
10 outreach based on their interest.

11           CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: So, can you share  
12 with us-- I know the Council Member couldn't be here  
13 with us today, but can you share with us what's the  
14 difference between Local Law 39 compared to  
15 Introduction 1216? Because I know you all shared in  
16 your testimony that you can't fully support it. So,  
17 tell us what the differences are.

18           COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, you know, I  
19 think for Local Law 39, we're already required to  
20 conduct outreach and share materials to all-- to  
21 cosmetology establishments as part of our ongoing  
22 outreach efforts and it's something we've been doing  
23 since 2019 with some slow down during the pandemic.  
24 In terms of this new piece of legislation, I think  
25 one of the things in terms of implementing it is how

1 we're going to get salons to sort of do this across  
2 the board, right, which is a little bit different  
3 than how it's been working now, which is people is  
4 kind of opting in and doing it on that basis. And  
5 then, if we require this, how do we actually, you  
6 know, implement and enforce that requirement in some  
7 ways, and what does that look like? Because I think  
8 that's where some of the challenges and differences  
9 come in.

11 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: And what are the  
12 outcomes from Local Law 39?

13 COMMISSIONER SETHI: We have our report  
14 that we publish annually in terms of like how many  
15 times we've conducted outreach. I think, you know, in  
16 some ways I will say, we know that our outreach has  
17 sort of slowed down as our office has evolved and  
18 grown and the staff that are conducting the outreach  
19 now have multiple responsibilities including managing  
20 programs. But yeah, we have that. We can always  
21 share those reports with you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yeah.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Those reports  
24 actually submitted to Council on November 1<sup>st</sup> of  
25 every year.



CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: So, there's one coming up.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Yeah, there's one coming up.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright. We look forward to it. The cost estimate of Introduction 1416 that was submitted by the Mayor's Office of OMB, Management and Budget, states that DSS would require \$1.75 million in annual PS resources to hire 15 social workers and one research scientist to assist in data collection, management, and reporting. What work would each of the 15 social workers perform?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: We can follow up with DSS and get you that information.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: And how many social workers do you currently have conducting screenings for gender-based violence?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, in our office or at DSS?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Both.

COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, we can follow up. We'll follow up. In our office, you know, we again, across our programs have many--

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] How many in your office?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: In our-- we don't-- we don't provide services directly, right? We contract with our community-based organizations, and a lot of them have had social workers throughout conducting screenings for service, but we'll--

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Do you know how many from the service providers?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: We can follow up. We can follow up and look across our programs.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: How many vacancies does DSS have for social workers?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: We'll follow up with DSS.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: The cost estimate submitted by OMB for Intro 1216 states that NGBV would require a staff member to coordinate the work with cosmetology establishments. I know you can't stand this question, but we going to do it. Do you have an estimate of how many cosmetology establishments this legislation would impact?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: We can-- we'll follow up on that.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: It's a lot of follow-up.

COMMISSIONER SETHI: There's a lot in New York City. There's a lot of establishments in New York City.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright. How many vacancies does NGBV currently have?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: Vacancies, I will get you the exact number, but I know we're-- you know, it's been about the same. I want to say it's about a 25 percent vacancy rate.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Could this work be conducted by the staff members that NGBV currently employs?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: The cosmetology outreach?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER SETHI: If we shift them away from other priorities, but I think it's challenging.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Sorry, last question. The Mayor and NYPD Commissioner announced today a new Domestic Violence Unit which would have 450 domestic

1  
2 violence investigators. Was NGBV involved in  
3 developing this unit or any of its policies?

4 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, we were involved  
5 in the focus groups that led to these, the  
6 development of these recommendations and have worked  
7 with NYPD as they've developed these and we'll  
8 continue working with them as they implement some of  
9 these changes.

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, thank you.  
11 This panel is now excused. Thank you for making time  
12 to be here today.

13 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I know you want to  
15 run out of here. Thank you for being here today. We  
16 appreciate you being here. I now open the hearing  
17 for public testimony. I remind members of the public  
18 that this is a government proceeding and that decorum  
19 shall be observed at all times. As such, members of  
20 the public shall remain silent at all times. The  
21 witness table is reserved for people who wish to  
22 testify. No video recording or photography is allowed  
23 from the witness table. Further, members of the  
24 public may not present audio or video recordings as  
25 testimony, but may submit transcripts of such

1 recordings to the Sergeant at Arms for inclusion in  
2 the hearing record. If you wish to speak at today's  
3 hearing, please fill out the appearance slip with the  
4 Sergeant at Arms and wait to be recognized. When  
5 recognized, you will have 1.5 minutes to speak on  
6 today's oversight topic and/or legislation. If you  
7 have a written statement or additional written  
8 testimony you wish to submit for the record, please  
9 provide a copy of that testimony to the Sergeant at  
10 Arms. You may also email written testimony to  
11 testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours of this  
12 hearing. Audio and video recordings will not be  
13 accepted. I will call the first panel. Jeehae  
14 Fischer, Kavita Melva [sp?], Margarita Guzman. I'll  
15 do it one more time. Jeehae Fischer, Kavita Mehra,  
16 Margarita Guzman. You may begin.

18 JEEHAE FISCHER: Good afternoon, Chair  
19 Louis and Council Members who are here today. My name  
20 Jeehae Fischer. I'm the Executive Director of the  
21 Korean American Family Service Center. For over 35  
22 years KAFSC has walked alongside survivors, many of  
23 them immigrant women and children helping to rebuild  
24 their lives after abuse. Every day, KAFSC meets  
25 clients who come to us as a last resort after months

1 or even years of suffering in silence. In 2024, our  
2 hotline responded to 4,893 calls and our advocates  
3 supported nearly 3,000 survivors and family members,  
4 their family members. Yet, these numbers don't tell  
5 the full story. So many survivors now are  
6 [inaudible] remain unseen and uncounted. In today's  
7 political climate, the rhetoric around immigration  
8 and gender justice has become increasingly polarized.  
9 Many immigrant survivors feel even more isolated and  
10 fearful of seeking help. This means the role of  
11 trusted culturally-specific community organizations  
12 like KAFSC are even more critical. When survivors  
13 come to KAFSC they find staff who speak their  
14 language, understand their culture, and most  
15 importantly listen without judgment. I would like to  
16 express our strong support for Intro 20-- 1216 by  
17 Council Member Linda Lee which would require the City  
18 to provide gender-based violence resource posters in  
19 hair and nail salons. For many women, salons are a  
20 safe--

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] If you  
23 could please wrap it up.

24 JEEHAE FISCHER: and trusted spaces. We  
25 also strongly support Intro 1416 by Council Member

1  
2 Louis which will help the City better understand  
3 where survivors are seeking help and where resources  
4 are most needed. Thank you for this opportunity.

5 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may  
6 begin.

7 KAVITA MEHRA: Good afternoon, Chair  
8 Louis and Council Members. My name is Kavita Mehra,  
9 and I am Executive Director of Sakhi for South Asian  
10 Survivors. Thank you for the opportunity to testify  
11 today and for centering the needs of survivors of  
12 gender-based violence in New York City. Sakhi has  
13 been working with survivors in the South Asian and  
14 Indo-Caribbean diaspora since 1989. We believe  
15 transformational change can happen when advocacy and  
16 systems reform community mobilization and direct  
17 support with survivors work together. Through our  
18 programs, Sakhi believes holistic continuum of care--  
19 believes in a holistic continuum of care, crisis  
20 intervention, counseling, legal and housing  
21 assistance, financial support and economic  
22 empowerment to over 600 survivors each year. Our  
23 multi-lingual hotline receives over 1,800 calls  
24 annually. We're also a founding member of The  
25 Collective, a collection of culturally-specific

1 gender-based violence organizations working with New  
2 Yorkers who have experienced violence. City data on  
3 domestic violence is drawn almost entirely from  
4 police reports, over 110,000 last year, and it does  
5 not account for many of the survivors we work with.  
6 South Asian and Indo-Caribbean survivors of violence  
7 face overlapping barriers, immigration status,  
8 language access, stigma, and economic dependence.  
9 That's why Sakhi strongly supports 1416, introduced  
10 by Council Member Farah Louis, to strengthen city  
11 data collection. We also strongly support Intro 1216  
12 introduced by Council Member Linda Lee which would  
13 have multilingual resource posters in hair and beauty  
14 salons, a trusted familiar space for survivors.  
15 Thank you.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: If you could wrap--  
18 thank you. You may begin.

19 MARGARITA GUZMAN: Thank you, Chair Louis  
20 and Council Members. My name is Margarita Guzman.  
21 I'm the Executive Director at the Violence  
22 Intervention Program, New York City's only culturally  
23 specific organization led by and for Latina survivors  
24 of domestic and sexual violence. VIP is also a  
25 member of The Collective, a group of culturally-



1  
2 specific organizations organizing together on behalf  
3 of immigrants and survivors of color in NYC. At VIP  
4 we use data and data transparency is critical. How  
5 many survivors reported DV to their child's  
6 pediatrician or to their OBGYN? How effective is HRA  
7 being with their screening methods for families in  
8 shelter or people applying for benefits. These are  
9 examples of important blind spots in our awareness of  
10 how city agencies are interacting with survivors. It  
11 seems like the only data point that's being used  
12 effectively is police reports, and that negatively  
13 impacts immigrants, LGBTQIA survivors, youth, and  
14 anybody who doesn't want to go to the police.  
15 Survivors deserve an opportunity to be counted and  
16 counted in the formation of policy in New York City.  
17 I stopped the button. Back on. We support the data  
18 collection bill as well as 1216 by Council Member  
19 Lee. And I will just lift up the name of Carmen Adie  
20 Santiago [sp?], an immigrant from the Dominican  
21 Republic and a monolingual Spanish speaker who is  
22 also a mother of two boys, age 11 and 17 years old,  
23 when her husband walked into the salon where she  
24 worked in Jackson Heights and brutally stabbed her to  
25 death. I don't know if the salon poster bill would

1  
2 have saved her life, but it would have given her a  
3 chance to access resources, as it should give a  
4 chance to all survivors who might access that  
5 information in places where they're comfortable like  
6 hair and nail salons. Thank you for your championing  
7 of these bills.

8 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you all. You  
9 all may be excused. Thank you for being with us  
10 today. We appreciate your advocacy. The next panel,  
11 Rachel Brainstein [sic] and Doctor Carla Smith.  
12 Sorry, Rachel Braunstein and Doctor Carla Smith.  
13 Alright, you may begin.

14 DR. CARLA SMITH: Good afternoon, Chair  
15 Louis, members of the Committee on Women and Gender  
16 Equity, Council Members, and fellow advocates. My  
17 name is Doctor Carla Smith, and I have the privilege  
18 of serving as the Chief Executive Officer of the  
19 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community  
20 Center known to most New Yorkers as simply, "The  
21 Center." For over four decades The Center has served  
22 as a trusted home for LGBTQ+ New Yorkers.  
23 increasingly we have also served as a lifeline for  
24 LGBTQ+ survivors of intimate partner and gender-based  
25 violence, people who often experience additional

1 barriers to safety and support. Through our  
2 services, we clearly see how data translates-- data  
3 gaps translate into service gaps. When the LGBTQ+  
4 people are not represented in data, resources and  
5 systems are built as if we do not exist. Despite the  
6 progress that the Mayor's Office has made and its  
7 partners, the systems that collect and report data  
8 too often fail to capture our experiences, especially  
9 transgender and gender non-conforming identified  
10 individuals, many of whom are Black and Brown New  
11 Yorkers. While the City Council has a long and proud  
12 history of supporting survivors of domestic and  
13 gender-based violence through its annual budget,  
14 impact legislation and oversight of relevant city  
15 agencies, the data that has undermined important  
16 decisions have historically over-relied on police  
17 precinct data to the detriment of LGBTQ+ and other  
18 marginalized survivors. The Center recommends that  
19 the Council consider the following changes to current  
20 law and policy: mandate consistent collection of  
21 sexual orientation and gender identity data across  
22 all city agencies and contracted providers; include  
23 LGBTQ+ experts and survivors in the design and  
24 governance of city data systems to ensure inclusivity  
25

1  
2 and accountability, and re-evaluate how data is used  
3 to allocate funding, ensuring that all City Council  
4 funded initiatives are grounded not only in reporting  
5 incidents, but also community-validated indicators of  
6 need. This conversation is taking place, as you  
7 know, in a highly consequential political moment, one  
8 in which the City of New York's leadership carries  
9 national weight. In this climate New York City's  
10 example matters more than ever. New York can, again,  
11 lead the nation not just as a city of inclusion in  
12 name, but as a model of what equitable evidence and  
13 foreign policy looks like in practice. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much.  
15 You may begin.

16 RACHEL BRAUNSTEIN: Thank you, Chair  
17 Louis and the committee for the opportunity to be  
18 here. My name is Rachel Braunstein. I'm the  
19 Director of Policy at Her Justice, a nonprofit legal  
20 services organization that advocates with and for  
21 women living in poverty. With our pro bono first  
22 model, Her Justice serves thousands of clients each  
23 year. In addition, we engage in policy reform,  
24 advocacy, and research to address systemic barriers  
25 facing our clients. Her Justice is grateful for

1 funding from initiatives like Dove. We applaud the  
2 Council for considering how data is used to measure  
3 the extent of community need and allocate resources  
4 for survivors in the city. It is our understanding  
5 that data on the number of domestic incident reports  
6 made to the NYPD historically played a significant  
7 role in the Council's funding decisions. We're  
8 grateful for the opportunity to raise three points.  
9 First, law enforcement data tells part of the story.  
10 While reports of abuse to law enforcement are an  
11 important measure of need, research shows that a  
12 significant number of survivors do not report abuse.  
13 Second, in times of increased enforcement, immigrants  
14 and undocumented immigrants may be reluctant to rely  
15 on law enforcement. From our own research, we know  
16 that especially given an increase enforcement and  
17 deportation this year and unpredictable threats of  
18 policy change, fear abounds. Her Justice has  
19 analyzed our own client data and found that in areas  
20 where we serve a substantial number of undocumented  
21 immigrant survivors, there are actually lower rates  
22 of DV reporting to the NYPD. Third, challenges exist  
23 across data sources, even beyond limitations to fully  
24

1 account for the needs of immigrant communities. NYPD  
2 data has misaligned geographic levels.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: If you could wrap it  
5 up, please.

6 RACHEL BRAUNSTEIN: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright. You all are  
8 dismissed. Thank you for making time to be here  
9 today. Our next panel: Jason Moore, Khalid Melvin,  
10 Fauziya Muhummud, Victoria Mckenzie [sp?]. So, that's  
11 Jason Moore, Khalid Melvin, Fauziya Muhummud, and  
12 Victoria Mckenzie. Anybody-- you may begin. You may  
13 begin. You can turn on-- oh, sorry. We've been  
14 joined by Council Member Vernikov. My apologies.

15 FAUZIYA MUHUMMUD: Good afternoon. My  
16 name is Fauziya Muhummud. I'm here today because I  
17 was abused, not once but twice in two different  
18 juvenile detention facilities. I was just a child.  
19 Instead of being protected, I was handed over to  
20 people who saw that I had no one to stand for me.  
21 The places that were supposed to help me became  
22 places of fear and pain. When something like this  
23 happens once, it's devastating, but when it happens  
24 again in another facility, it shows that something  
25 bigger is very wrong. It means there was no

1  
2 accountability, no oversight, and no one making sure  
3 children were truly safe. What happened to me didn't  
4 just stay in my past. It has affected every part of  
5 my life, my relationships, my ability to trust, my  
6 sense of safety in this world. The kind of trauma  
7 never completely goes away. Intro 1297 matters. This  
8 bill restores what the City Council intended to give  
9 survivors the right to pursue justice from the  
10 institution that allowed the abuse to happen. For  
11 me, this about making sure that no other child goes  
12 through what I did, and that survivors can finally  
13 have the opportunity to get the justice they deserve.  
14 Please pass Intro 1297. It's time for justice, real  
15 justice for all of us. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You may begin.

17 KHALID MELVIN: Good morning. My name  
18 Khalid Melvin. I was 14 years old when I went to  
19 Spofford Juvenile Detention. Can you hear me? I'm  
20 sorry. When I was there I was abused by staff  
21 members, people who were supposed to protect us and  
22 guide us. Instead, they took advantage of us. You  
23 know, juvenile detention centers are a hunting ground  
24 for predators that disguise themselves of civil  
25 servants. The boys that were detained along with

1  
2 myself were victimized by adults knowing they had the  
3 law on their side. So, I'm here to ask that let the  
4 law be on our side. I understand that data is needed  
5 to help analyze and find a solution, but the trauma  
6 given didn't need a vote or data collection. Give  
7 our herd a voice. Hear what we went through and see  
8 the negative outcome for a lot of us. But because of  
9 the recent court ruling, survivors like me might lose  
10 that chance. That's why Intro 1297 is so important.  
11 This bill gives survivors a real path to justice. It  
12 ensures that those who enable the abuse, not just the  
13 individuals, but everyone-- anyone could be held  
14 accountable in this situation, all of us. We all  
15 have something that we had happen to us that we were  
16 either afraid or just too upset to talk about. So  
17 help us talk about it, everyone. You understand?  
18 Thank you.

19 JASON MOORE: Good morning. My name is  
20 Jason Moore. I'm 63 years old, but I still carry the  
21 pain of what happened to me as a child. I was abused  
22 when I was in a juvenile detention center and also at  
23 the hands of the Catholic Archdiocese. A place that  
24 I thought would keep me safe, instead it became a  
25 place where I lost my childhood. The people who hurt



1 me had complete control over me, and I had no way to  
2 escape. The trauma that has stayed with me my entire  
3 life-- there were times where I didn't to live  
4 anymore. I tried to take my own life more than once,  
5 and I couldn't see a way out of the pain. No child  
6 should ever have felt this hopelessness, especially  
7 one who supposed to been protected. When the Gender-  
8 Motivated Violence Protection Act revealed revival  
9 window open, it gave me something I hadn't had  
10 before, hope, hope that I could finally be heard,  
11 hope that I could get some justice, not just from the  
12 people who hurt me, but from the system that allowed  
13 it to happen. Now that the hope is slipping away  
14 again, because of a court decision that limits the  
15 survivor's who should be held accountable. That's  
16 why this bill Intro 1297 matter. It gives survivors  
17 like me a fair chance to seek justice to have our  
18 voices counted. I'm not looking for revenge or  
19 money. I just want acknowledgement to know that what  
20 happened to me was wrong, and that it will never  
21 happen again to another child. Please pass this  
22 Intro 1297. It's not just about changing a law, it's  
23 about restoring hope and dignity for all of us.  
24 Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I want to thank you  
3 all for your strength and for your advocacy today. It  
4 doesn't go unnoticed. So, thank you for being here  
5 and for testifying. We're going to hear now from  
6 Council Member Riley.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you, Chair  
8 Louis. I have no question. I just have to share my  
9 gratitude for all three of you for coming here today  
10 and everybody else that came here to share their  
11 stories, hearing from people who actually experienced  
12 these experiences. As the brother was talking, a lot  
13 of times this is not a easy task for anyone to  
14 discuss the trauma that they dealt with. I think it's  
15 extremely brave that you guys came here today, and as  
16 Council Members, there's 41 members on this bill out  
17 of 51, and we want to be supportive of this bill.  
18 So, if the administration is listening, please listen  
19 to these testimonies from these people that actually  
20 experienced this. So, thank you for coming here  
21 today. And we're going to continue to advocate and  
22 fight for you.

23 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, you all are  
24 dismissed. Thank you for being here today.

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank y'all for coming.

2 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: The next panel,  
3 Carine de Deus [sp?], Eva Santos Veloz, Kathryn Robb,  
4 and Logan Youngberg. Three-- we're missing one.  
5 Carine, Eva, Kathryn, and Logan. While we wait on  
6 the next person, you all can begin.

7 EVA SANTOS VELOZ: Good morning. My name  
8 is Eva Santos Veloz, and I am one more than a  
9 thousand woman who survived sexual abuse by ex-doctor  
10 Robert Hadden. I was assaulted [inaudible] at 18  
11 years old by a New York City Presbyterian OBGYN, and  
12 for years that truth was covered up and silenced by  
13 one of the largest institutions in the country,  
14 Columbia University. The fact is that they're still  
15 covering it. For many years, I lived in fear. I am  
16 undocumented and the fear silenced me. The only  
17 thing that gave me the strength to finally come  
18 forward was the passing of the Adult Survivor's Act  
19 which gave me and many of my sister survivors a  
20 glimpse of hope and justice. What happened to us was  
21 not just an act of violence. It was an abuse of  
22 power, and that power worked overtime to protect  
23 itself instead of protecting us. No amount of money  
24 can ever undo what was done or repay the years of  
25 silence and pain that follow, because the truth is,

1  
2 it never really varied [sic]. No matter how much  
3 people try to silence you, the trauma doesn't  
4 disappear. But this bill represents the only hope  
5 for accountability, just like the Adult Survivor's  
6 Act did for me and so many of my other sisters. I  
7 stand here not just for myself, but for the hundreds  
8 of women whose stories may remind, who were ignored,  
9 dismissed, or pressured because of status to stay  
10 quiet. This is not a one gender or one person issue.  
11 This is not about money. That's why Intro 1297 is so  
12 critical. This bill will give survivors like me and  
13 so many others the chance to hold not just the  
14 abusers that are doing time already accountable, but  
15 also the institutions that enable them and are still  
16 enabling this abuse. Thank you so much.

17 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You may begin.

18 KATHRYN ROBB: My name is Kathryn Robb.  
19 I'm the National Director of the Children's Justice  
20 Campaign at Enough Abuse, and I testify on this  
21 legislation all over the country. Right now, we know  
22 statistically that one in four girls and one in 13  
23 boys will be sexually assaulted before their 18<sup>th</sup>  
24 birthday, and one in six women in the United States  
25 alone will experience an attempted or a rape. If

1 this is not an epidemic, I don't know what is. Right  
2 now, several states, 33 states have passed revival  
3 legislation, and we have many more on the books this  
4 year. We have 22 states that have completely  
5 eliminated the statute of limitations. So, this is  
6 not some extreme position. This is a national trend,  
7 and New York is doing the right thing. I worked on  
8 the Child Victims Act. I also worked on the editing  
9 for the Adult Survivor's Act as well, and I'm happy  
10 to be here to support this. we will hear the sky is  
11 falling constantly, and we hear things like the  
12 courts will be flooded. Well, in New York City, we  
13 have over 8 million people and only 11,000 cases  
14 were filed. The courts were not flooded. The courts  
15 handled it just fine. We also hear, how about due  
16 process? Well, I went to law school. I understand  
17 and I appreciate due process. These are not your  
18 typical slip and fall or car crash type of cases.  
19 These are the rape, sodomy, and sexual assault of  
20 children and women. I would just like to, if I may,  
21 finish with one more thing. We hear a lot about the  
22 cost of this. Revival legislation like this shifts  
23 the cost away from the victims and the tax payers of  
24 New York to the people who caused it. So, we hear  
25

1 about the Epstein estate a lot, right? The Epstein  
2 estate, Prince Andrew, and other powerful deep-pocket  
3 institutions should bear the burden of this, not New  
4 York State taxpayers, and not-- certainly not the  
5 brave victims that are in this room and the brave  
6 victims who have come before all of the people in  
7 this room, and the brave victims in the future. I  
8 thank you for introducing this legislation. I'm happy  
9 to answer any questions about what the country is  
10 doing. Thank you for your time.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may  
13 begin.

14 CARINE SILVA: Good afternoon. My name  
15 is Carine Silva [sp?]. When I was a child, I was  
16 sexually abused by Jeffrey Epstein. I could not come  
17 forward before. I wasn't ready. Awareness and  
18 courage takes time. Now I am, but Epstein estate can  
19 argue that I cannot pursue justice because the  
20 statute of limitations. I struggle every day  
21 without-- I was abused, but I cannot afford proper  
22 health mental treatment. Please help me get justice  
23 and pass 1295. If you do not pass 1295-- 97, you  
24 will protect Jeffrey Esptein. You have a choice  
25 helping me, a child sex abuse victim or protect

1 Epstein. Please help instead of protecting Jeffrey  
2 Epstein. The world still see who you side with and  
3 will tell predators in New York City they [inaudible]  
4 sexual abuse, vulnerable children like I was or not.  
5 Thank you.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you.

8 LOGAN YOUNGBERG: Hello, my name is Logan  
9 Youngberg. I am 23 years old. I was a patient of Dr.  
10 Jerry Spetuk [sp?], and at the time I knew that he  
11 absolutely had exploited me, but I believed because  
12 of his actions and the way he did it, I didn't think  
13 that anyone would believe me, and I didn't think that  
14 anyone would take what happened seriously, or that  
15 there would be any kind of way to hold him legally  
16 accountable. I would never have known that he was a  
17 serial sexual predator, even though I felt it into my  
18 core, had it not been I discovered by chance. I know  
19 that there are certainly hundreds of people, much  
20 more, who were victims and are not going to have the  
21 courage or the awareness to come forward because  
22 there is no institutional support that goes back  
23 decades, and I really hope this bill gets passed,  
24 because those people, they absolutely need justice.  
25 And it's not about money. It is purely about

1  
2 acknowledging that these people are monsters, and  
3 they absolutely need to be accountable, and we need  
4 to know the length of what they did. And to know the  
5 history of how long this goes back needs to be aware,  
6 and people need to know that if it happened 20 or 30  
7 years ago, that it can be brought today. That's all  
8 I have to say. Thank you so much.

9 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you all for  
10 being here, for testifying, for your strength, and  
11 we're going to do our due diligence to ensure that we  
12 fight to get this bill passed. Thank you. You all  
13 are excused. Our next panel: Emily Miles, Elizabeth  
14 Ebright, Dr. Donna Hylton, and Chris Alexander.  
15 That's Emily Miles, Elizabeth Ebright, Dr. Donna  
16 Hylton, and Chris Alexander. You may begin.

17 EMILY MILES: Good afternoon. My name is  
18 Emily Miles. I'm the Executive Director of the New  
19 York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault, and  
20 organization dedicated to ending sexual violence  
21 through education, advocacy, and systems change. I'm  
22 here in strong support of Intros 1297, 1216, and  
23 1416. Intro 1297 would reopen the one-year window,  
24 allowing survivors of gender-motivated violence to  
25 bring civil claims against both perpetrators and



1 institutions that enabled their abuse. For decades,  
2 survivors, especially those harmed in institutional  
3 settings have been silenced by trauma and then  
4 blocked by statutes of limitation. Just weeks ago, a  
5 Bronx judge dismissed hundreds of lawsuits from  
6 people abused in juvenile detention facilities, cases  
7 thrown out because of deadlines, not because the harm  
8 wasn't real. Those dismissals send a clear message.  
9 Unless we act, survivors will continue to be  
10 retraumatized by a system that shuts them out. I  
11 encourage the City Council to act as swiftly as  
12 possible to ensure that the doors of justice and  
13 accountability remain open for these survivors, and  
14 send a clear message that New York City will no  
15 longer protect institutions that look the other way.  
16 The time is of the essence for the City Council to  
17 act as soon as possible. Additionally, we are in  
18 support of 1416. As in the New York City Alliance,  
19 we are constantly asked what the prevalence of sexual  
20 violence in New York City and we actually can't  
21 answer that question, because nobody measures it.  
22 And just one more note, when we really on NYPD  
23 statistics to measure sexual violence as we currently  
24 do by NYPD's own numbers, they estimate that only  
25

1 five percent of survivors actually report to them.  
2  
3 When we talk about who's not reporting, we're talking  
4 about immigrant survivors, survivors of color, LGBTQ+  
5 members. We desperately need data bills to be able  
6 to tell these survivor's stories and ensure that  
7 services are going to where they're most needed. So,  
8 thank you.

9 CHAPLAIN DR. DONNA HYLTON: Good  
10 afternoon. My name is Chaplain Doctor Donna Hylton.  
11 But before I was Chaplain Doctor Donna Hylton, I was  
12 inmate 86G0206, and before that, I can't even  
13 remember my ID number for Rikers Island. What I do  
14 remember very clear as an adolescent, in a system  
15 that said that because I allegedly did something  
16 wrong, I was there for correction and also  
17 protection. I was sodomized and raped. Out of the 13  
18 months that I spent on Rikers Island, 10 of those  
19 months I was sodomized and raped and abused by a  
20 Captain. And then I went on further into state  
21 system where I was abused again by a Sergeant. And  
22 so this continues to be a trend within systems that  
23 are saying that they're here to protect us. Listen  
24 to these stories right now. It-- I can't even sit  
25 with myself right now. I'm just disgusted and hurt. I

1  
2 continue to be hurt over and over and over and over  
3 and over again because we continue to be at tables  
4 like this over and over and over again asking and  
5 pleading and demanding that justice be served. And  
6 it's not fair to someone to go into a system and to  
7 continue to be harmed and abused and raped and  
8 sodomized, or anywhere-- going to a doctor, going to  
9 a-- wherever they go. It's not right and it's not  
10 fair, and for us to have to sit here repeatedly over  
11 and over and over again-- and I know it's not your  
12 fault, but it is the fault of someone. Someone has  
13 to take responsibility. Like how I had to take  
14 responsibility, we have to take responsibility-- it's  
15 about time, damn it, that people are accountable and  
16 take responsibility and are held-- held at a standard  
17 that they took an oath to stand for. If you're  
18 speaking for, then speak for me. Speak for us. We're  
19 tired of having our children being abused, raped,  
20 sodomized, our women, our men, people in general.  
21 This has gone on far too long, and it must end. So,  
22 yes, please pass Intro 1297. It's about time. We  
23 can't have this continuing ot happen. Who are we?

24 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may  
25 begin.

2 ELIZABETH EBRIGHT: Thank you. I want to  
3 start first by thanking all the survivors who have  
4 testified today in favor of Intro 1297. Their  
5 testimony has been extremely moving. My name is  
6 Elizabeth Ebright. I am the Director of Research and  
7 Evaluation at Safe Horizon, and I want to start by  
8 saying that we enthusiastically support Intro 1297.  
9 Trauma takes time. We know that it can take  
10 survivors of sexual abuse years and sometimes decades  
11 to process the trauma and to disclose what happened  
12 to them. Our laws must align with realities of  
13 trauma. We urge the City Council to pass this  
14 legislation. Survivors cannot wait one more day.  
15 And secondly, we wanted to weigh in on Intro 1416.  
16 You know, as the Director of Research and Evaluation  
17 for Safe Horizon, I know that data is important. Data  
18 helps us identify gaps. It helps us better  
19 understand where and how we connect survivors to  
20 supports and invest our resources, and data informs  
21 policy and practice. We also know, however, that  
22 data is deeply context-dependent. Numbers so often  
23 hide the true human story behind the numbers. we  
24 support efforts to survey and analyze what data is  
25 currently collected by city agencies to better inform

1 where we're directing our dollars. Safe Horizon  
2 administers the Dove initiative on behalf of the City  
3 Council, and we're proud of the role and the work of  
4 Dove. We agree that our government should look  
5 beyond police data to ensure that all districts are  
6 resourced. Our written testimony goes into the  
7 questions and considerations we want to highlight  
8 about data collection. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You all are excused.  
11 Thank you so much. Alright, for our final in-person  
12 panel: Jerome Block, Jordan Merson, and Anthony De  
13 Petro [sp?]. Alright, you may begin.

14 JEROME BLOCK: My name's Jerome. My name  
15 is Jerome Block from the law firm of Levy Konigsberg.  
16 Thank you so much for having us. The first thing I  
17 want to say proudly is I'm the attorney for Ms.  
18 Muhummud, Mr. Melvin, and Mr. Moore who testified  
19 here today. Those are three of approximately 460 men  
20 and women who recently had their case dismissed by  
21 that Bronx trial court judge. These are men and  
22 women who were sexually abused when they were  
23 children in New York City juvenile detention centers  
24 by adults, by the very adult staff members that were  
25 supposed to keep them safe, and their cases were not

1 dismissed because they weren't credible or because  
2 they lacked merit. They were dismissed solely  
3 because the incidents of sexual violence perpetrated  
4 on them occurred before 2022. So, how did this  
5 happen? How did this happen with the City Council  
6 in 2022 enacted a two-year revival window, and when  
7 the law as currently written today gives survivors  
8 the right to bring a lawsuit against, "any party that  
9 enables a crime of violence motivated by gender."  
10 This happened because of the SS Rockefeller decision.  
11 That decision, at least for now, without passage of  
12 Intro 1297 has nullified the two-year revival window  
13 that this City Council fought hard to pass. It has  
14 negated the work of this legislative body. That  
15 ruling was based on what the court described as a  
16 technical flaw in the law. Thankfully, thankfully,  
17 Intro 1297 is co-sponsored by a super majority of 40  
18 City Council members. It directly addresses the  
19 issue pointed by the SS versus Rockefeller case. It  
20 expressly states that these cases that these cases  
21 can be brought against institutions even if they  
22 occurred before 2022, even if they occurred before  
23 the year 2000. And I thank this committee so much  
24 for this hearing today, and I urge each of you to  
25

1  
2 vote yes on Intro 1297 in this committee and to push  
3 for a full vote as soon as possible. The next Stated  
4 Meeting is October 29<sup>th</sup>. The votes are there. The  
5 votes are there. The support for survivors are  
6 there. October 29<sup>th</sup>, we're asking for a vote to pass  
7 Intro 1297. Enact this into law. Thank you so much.

8 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may  
9 begin.

10 ANTHONY T. DIPIETRO: Thank you  
11 [inaudible]

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Turn on your  
13 microphone.

14 ANTHONY T. DIPIETRO: Hi. I'm Anthony T.  
15 DiPietro, and I'm a New York Patient Safety and  
16 Medical Malpractice Trial Attorney. I'm grateful to  
17 share the backstory about why I'm here today to  
18 support these bills. I have now represented over 800  
19 women and girls who were sexually exploited and  
20 abused under the guise of medical care by the now  
21 convicted, serial sexual predator, OBGYN Robert  
22 Hadden at Columbia University. I am currently  
23 representing over 450 men and boys who were similarly  
24 sexually exploited and abused under the guise of  
25 medical care by another convicted serial sexual

1 predator urologist named Darius Paduch at the Weill  
2 Cornell Medical Center. My work in this space has  
3 offered me the unique opportunity to see how our  
4 civil justice system is truly the last remaining  
5 safety net that our community has. Today's  
6 corporations and institutions like hospitals and  
7 universities have repeatedly proven themselves either  
8 incapable or just completely unwilling to police  
9 themselves. The one thing that every single case  
10 that I've handled has had in common is that the  
11 institution always knows the abuse is happening, but  
12 does nothing to protect their patients. Make no  
13 mistake, providing access to the courts with  
14 legislation like we're talking about today-- may I  
15 finish-- doesn't merely help compensate victims for  
16 what they've endured. Most importantly, it sends an  
17 important message to these corporations and reminds  
18 them that the community is watching and that they  
19 will be held accountable when they violate their oath  
20 and betray the community's trust. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You may begin.

23 JORDAN MERSEN: Thank you. My name is  
24 Jordan Mersen and I'm just going to two thing with my  
25 time. I will be much shorter than the 90-second



1  
2 allotment. I want to first thank this committee and  
3 the entire group of 41 sponsors of 1297. I also want  
4 to thank all the survivors and everyone in this room.  
5 I'm pleased to represent this young woman who spoke  
6 out for the first time ever concerning the abuse that  
7 she suffered at the hands of Jeffrey Epstein. Thank  
8 you for coming forward. It makes a difference. And  
9 I just want to address, like, the boogey-man in the  
10 room. Like, you heard the city talk about cost, and I  
11 thought it was a moment of pure cowardice where she  
12 wouldn't explain what specifically costs she was  
13 worried about. That is like the most hollow argument  
14 I've heard, and I'm-- like these two fine gentlemen  
15 next to me, I've represented hundreds if not  
16 thousands of sexual abuse victims. These cases were  
17 supposed to exist. There was a small technicality in  
18 the old law. There are no additional costs. These  
19 cases were supposed to exist, and even if they  
20 weren't, you have someone here who can't afford  
21 mental health treatment. Would we rather Jeffrey  
22 Epstein pay for that or would we rather the City of  
23 New York through Medicaid pay for that? the cost of  
24 this should be borne by the institutions that did it,  
25 and if that happens to be New York City, then New

1  
2 York City should pay for it, because it was intended  
3 to pay for it under the original law. I couldn't help  
4 myself, I went the 90 seconds. Too important of an  
5 issue to let even a second go by. So, please pass  
6 1297 on October 29<sup>th</sup>. If you don't, more cases are  
7 going to be dismissed. Every time a case is  
8 dismissed, a sexual abuse survivor is told they can't  
9 get justice. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I have a  
11 quick question for this panel. If this law were to  
12 pass and your clients could move forward with cases,  
13 how many cases would you bring? Any of you can  
14 answer or all of you can answer.

15 JEROME BLOCK: Are you asking how many  
16 cases would be brought in the additional one-year  
17 look-back window?

18 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes.

19 JEROME BLOCK: I think the number of  
20 cases that we brought in an additional one-year is  
21 not fully known. I think that the fact that when  
22 these windows open, more survivors come forward every  
23 time. Speaks to the fact that it's so difficult to  
24 come forward, and that many people do not become  
25 aware of their rights, you know, during the limited

1  
2 time of these windows. So, I don't know if I have a  
3 direct answer in terms of how many cases, but I just  
4 would say that each case is important in its own  
5 right.

6 JORDAN MERSEN: And also, I think this  
7 goes to like the flooding the court system. That  
8 just hasn't happened. Like, the Child Victims Act,  
9 Mr. Robb testified, the courts are doing fine. The  
10 Adult Survivor's Act, the courts are doing fine. Mr.  
11 DiPietro represents hundreds or over 1,000 survivors.  
12 They're getting resolved. These cases are getting  
13 resolved. So, to say that the overwhelming cost on  
14 the court system or any other system, it's just not  
15 true. There have been 30 of these survival windows  
16 across the United States. The sky hasn't fallen.  
17 It's like-- it's a common thing you hear in response  
18 to just protecting survivors.

19 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: If-- any of you could  
20 answer this question. I wanted to know how many cases  
21 you all have that are against institutions and how  
22 many are against government agencies?

23 JEROME BLOCK: So, my firm represents  
24 approximately 600 men and women that were sexually  
25 abused as children in New York City juvenile

1 detention centers. Those cases are against the City  
2 of New York, ACS, and the Department of Corrections.  
3 And I just want to say that the city Law Department  
4 is very experienced in resolving cases like this.  
5 they are currently doing so with the sex abuse cases  
6 that occurred in New York City schools, and they have  
7 a settlement program for DOE cases. They have an  
8 ongoing settlement program in process with cases from  
9 Rikers, the Rose M. Singer Center, and these men and  
10 women that were sexually abused in juvenile detention  
11 centers should not be entitled to lesser treatment.  
12

13 JORDAN MERSEN: I have exactly zero cases  
14 against any government agency. But if we're going to  
15 talk about cost, why don't we talk about not just the  
16 human cost of these people and what they're  
17 suffering, but the City's going to be paying for it  
18 anyway. You're having children growing into adults  
19 that are underperforming. They're not thriving.  
20 They've become dependent on Medicare and Medicaid  
21 anyway.

22 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Right.

23 ANTHONY T. DIPIETRO: The government is  
24 going to pay either way. Why not do it directly and  
25 try to make them whole.

1  
2 JORDAN MERSEN: And I would just say I  
3 have very few. I'm somewhere between the two.

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Of city agencies?

5 JORDAN MERSEN: Of cases versus city  
6 agencies. But what I will tell you, and I think this  
7 goes to the import of getting a vote on this  
8 immediately, is the City is very aggressively in  
9 those cases trying to dismiss these cases. We have  
10 tried. One of the lawyers in my office has made  
11 repeat phone calls to the City. This is going on. Do  
12 not dismiss these peoples' cases. Do not dismiss  
13 victim's cases. When you dismiss a victim's case, we  
14 have to call them and tell them that they are not  
15 goin to get justice, and what we hear on the other  
16 side of the phone, I hope no one ever has to hear  
17 those types of things. It is just disheartening that  
18 these people finally come forward and have a chance  
19 at justice, and it's taken away over a techniallky.  
20 We said to the City, do not rush to dismiss these  
21 cases. There is a new law that would fix it, and  
22 they have pressed forward time and time again. They  
23 want to wipe these cases and these victims off the  
24 map.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: So, my final question to you all, because my colleagues will be able to hear your testimony afterwards. Why is existing law - why is the existing law insufficient to help your clients?

JEROME BLOCK: So, if I could address that?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yeah.

JEROME BLOCK: The SS versus Rockefeller case says that if the incident of sexual violence occurred before January of 22, then you cannot bring a civil lawsuit over that incident against any institution or party that enabled sexual violence. And that is so insufficient because 2022 doesn't go back very far.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: right.

JEROME BLOCK: And it takes time to process trauma and be able to come forward. So nearly all of these cases occurred before 2022 because it takes a long time. And I would add that that was the whole point of the two-year revival window was-- went from 2023 to 2025, March 2023 to March of 2025. The whole point in enacting the revival window was to allow people to come forward

1  
2 against enabling institutions, but because of a  
3 tactical flaw in the 2022 amendments to this law,  
4 that two-year revival window has been wiped out as  
5 applied to the enabling institutions, the enabling  
6 parties, the ones most responsible. So for all those  
7 reasons, the existing law is insufficient and I'm  
8 really heartened by the huge amount of support and  
9 understanding by the City Council to fulfill their  
10 promise of protecting the rights of sex abuse  
11 survivors.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thanks. Any of you  
13 want to answer? No? Okay. Alright. This panel is  
14 excused. Thank you so much for being here.

15 JEROME BLOCK: Thank you so much.

16 JORDAN MERSEN: Thank you again, all of  
17 you.

18 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, our next  
19 panel is John Baldwin, Edita Birnkrant, Paisley Ana  
20 Bailey, Andrew Sta. Ana. Okay. You may begin.

21 EDITA BIRNKRANT: Hi, my name's Edita  
22 Birnkrant, and I actually run an organization that  
23 protects animals and the environment, and I learned  
24 about this issue for Intro 1297 fairly recently, and  
25 I felt compelled to show up to testify. I'm actually

1  
2 a survivor myself. I've never spoken about it  
3 publicly because I didn't have the courage, but  
4 hearing all the people here today really-- I'm just  
5 blown away, and as an activist for social justice and  
6 all issues that I feel are connected, I wasn't  
7 infuriated to learn that it seems that this bill is  
8 being blocked or not pushed forward, and I'm just  
9 calling on the entire City Council to push this  
10 forward. You know, the things we've heard today, we  
11 have to do everything we can to seek justice for  
12 victims and the cost of not doing that is so much  
13 higher than any monetary number. I don't think  
14 there's a person alive who doesn't have a close  
15 family member or a friend who is a victim of abuse,  
16 and this impacts many more people beyond just the  
17 victims, families, systems. So, I just very strongly  
18 push the Council, pass this. Don't waste a moment.  
19 It's a shameful that we even have to be here pushing  
20 for this with 41 co-sponsors. So, please, Council do  
21 the right thing, pass 1297. Thanks.

22 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you.

23 PAISLEY ANA BAILEY: My name is Paisley  
24 Ana Bailey. I'm a local advocate and I want to start  
25 by saying how deeply moving it is to hear the stories



1 of survivors today. I also want to thank all the  
2 people who are standing up for the victims and also  
3 the co-sponsors of this bill. It's heartbreaking and  
4 unacceptable that so many have been denied justice  
5 for so long. I'm here today as a New Yorker who  
6 believes in fairness, accountability and compassion.  
7 I'm not here because I'm a victim, but I'm here  
8 because I believe survivors of gender-motivated  
9 violence deserve a fair chance at justice. Too many  
10 people have suffered violence, carried these  
11 experiences for a lifetime while the systems meant to  
12 protect them fall short. Intro 1297 helps correct  
13 that. It reopens a door that should have never been  
14 closed. Supporting this bill is about moving forward  
15 as a city that says we hear you, we believe you, and  
16 your voice still matters. I stand with the survivors  
17 who are brave enough to come forward, and I urge the  
18 Council to do the same. It's a no-brainer. Let's get  
19 Intro 1297 passed. It's about time.

21 ANDREW STA. ANA: Good afternoon, Cahir  
22 Louis and members of the Committee on Women and  
23 Gender Equity, and thank you for holding this  
24 important hearing. I'm here to testify in support of  
25 Intro 1216. My name is Andrew Sta. Ana, and I'm the

1 Deputy Director of Research and Policy at the Asian  
2 American Federation, representing over 70 nonprofits  
3 serving 1.5 million Asian New Yorkers. We strongly  
4 support Intro 1216. Gender-based violence, domestic  
5 violence, stalking, and sexual assault is pervasive  
6 in every community, including Asian American  
7 communities. Research shows that up to 55 percent of  
8 Asian women in the United States have experienced  
9 physical or sexual violence, and 18 percent have  
10 experienced intimate partner violence. Here, in New  
11 York City, our member organizations, including Sakhi  
12 for South Asian Survivors, Womankind, Garden of Hope,  
13 and the Korean American Family Services Center  
14 provide culturally and linguistically-competent  
15 support to survivors every day. Salons are trusted  
16 familiar spaces where survivors can feel seen and  
17 heard. Stylists are in a unique way first  
18 responders, confidants who can quietly connect  
19 someone to help. Signage that shines light on  
20 gender-based violence, elevates the community,  
21 elevates this issue, and de-stigmatizes it, that's  
22 why this issue is so important. And to make it truly  
23 effective, language access must be central. Nearly  
24 half of Asian New Yorkers are limited English  
25

1  
2 proficient, and among Asian seniors, that number  
3 exceeds 70 percent. We urge the Council to include  
4 additional language alongside Chinese, Korean,  
5 Bengali, and Spanish. This is not just about a  
6 communication. It's about safety, dignity and  
7 equity. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

8 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You may begin.

9 JOHN BALDWIN: Hi, my name is John  
10 Baldwin, and I appreciate both you to be here to  
11 listen to this. I'm a victim of Doctor Paduch, and  
12 my point is that these institutions, the very home of  
13 these criminals make no effort to notify victims when  
14 a serious event occurs. Instead, they focus on  
15 burying the evidence and moving staff around, fully  
16 aware that a possible crime has been committed  
17 against individuals and their children, and I had two  
18 children under him also. The hospital knew all this,  
19 yet they chose to bury it rather than inform their  
20 patients. A simple phone call or off-the-record--  
21 just take it off the record and call the people and  
22 say this is what's going on. No, they go and they  
23 try to bury all the stuff. Or even a message through  
24 the patient portal would have been enough. I had two  
25 boys, right, I don't know what's going through their

1 minds. I don't know when it even happened. And they  
2 can't notify me? They have all the contact  
3 information, but no, they choose instead to batten  
4 down the hatches. If it hadn't been for that simple  
5 dinner with a friend that brought it up, that Paduch  
6 is actually involved in this thing. She was actually  
7 attached to the trial-- we would have never known. I  
8 get recall notices for cars, right, because of safety  
9 concerns, and these people, they can't call me? They  
10 can't send me something? It's terrible. So, thank  
11 you for your empathy. I can feel it.

13 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you all for  
14 being here today. You're excused. Audacia Ray and  
15 Chirstopher Leon Johnson. Sorry, and Yasmeen Hamza.  
16 You may begin. You have to turn on your microphone.

17 AUDACIA RAY: Hi, my name is Audacia Ray.  
18 I take they/them pronouns, and I'm the Executive  
19 Director of the New York City Antiviolence Project.  
20 We provide services and support for LGBTQ survivors  
21 of violence, and I'm submitting longer written  
22 testimony, but I have a couple things that I wanted  
23 to highlight today in my verbal testimony around how  
24 gender and sexual identity are talked about in the  
25 bills and in the committee's report that was released

1  
2 alongside this oversight hearing. So, the committee  
3 does flag that there are issues around reporting  
4 forms that only have binary genders. I myself am  
5 non-binary and also a survivor. So, my data would  
6 not be captured appropriately in those spaces, and so  
7 that's-- it's a fairly simple-- I know the computer  
8 systems, everybody talks about that being a problem  
9 with adjusting the fields, but it is an easy fix, and  
10 it also needs to be partnered with training around  
11 cultural competency so that folks who are collecting  
12 that data and interfacing with survivors are not  
13 being dismissive or not even asking questions about  
14 folk's name, identity, gender, stuff like that. And  
15 the other thing that I wanted to identify that was  
16 kind of a larger issue in the oversight report is  
17 that it's consistently identifying women as survivors  
18 and making that just equitable. Women are survivors.  
19 And so I just wanted to encourage looking at the  
20 diversity of language, because people of all genders  
21 are both survivors and people who do harm, and that's  
22 a really important thing to look at when providing  
23 services. I have a-- I will wrap up. I have a tool  
24 that's an assessment to help service providers to  
25 analyze how they're doing with providing--

1 encouraging space for LGBTQ survivors, and I'll share  
2 some copies of that, and that's a way to help people  
3 really look at what needs to be moved forward to make  
4 sure that survivor spaces are welcoming to everybody.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may  
7 begin.

8 YASMEEN HAMZA: Good afternoon, Chair  
9 Louis and Council Members. I'm Yasmeen Hamza, COO of  
10 Womankind, an API culturally-specific gender-based  
11 violence organization in New York City. We offer  
12 emergency shelters, counseling, legal assistance, and  
13 more, and are proud members of The Collective, a  
14 coalition of culturally-specific gender-based  
15 violence organizations. In 2024, we answered over  
16 4,000 calls on our multilingual help line and served  
17 over 2,600 clients, but we know that our data only  
18 reflects a fraction of survivors in New York City.  
19 Many survivors, especially immigrants, communities of  
20 color, and marginalized groups avoid law enforcement  
21 altogether, and that's due to fear of police,  
22 immigration enforcement, and just not being  
23 understood. This leads to major gaps in the city's  
24 data which relies heavily on police reports.  
25 Survivors often come to trusted community

1 organizations first, not police, because of cultural  
2 similarity and language access. Our multilingual  
3 staff are able to help bridge the gaps and guide  
4 survivors to medical care, legal protections and  
5 housing, but even then survivors hesitate to disclose  
6 their experience, and the data that's collected is  
7 often siloed. To meet survivor's needs, the city  
8 really must collect and publish data from places  
9 survivors regularly engage with such as hospitals,  
10 shelters, HRA, ACS. Without inclusive data planning  
11 and funding for services, we'll fall short and not  
12 meet the needs of survivors. We recommend that when  
13 that data is collected, it's published and the data--  
14 annually and it ensure transparency and the equity of  
15 service delivery. Sorry, and I'm done. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Is there  
18 anyone else in the room that signed up to testify,  
19 but your name was not called? Alright, we're going  
20 to now move to Zoom testimony. First person is  
21 Jessica Schidlow.

22 JESSICA SCHIDLOW: Good afternoon,  
23 Chairwoman Louis and members of the Committee. My  
24 name is Jessica Schidlow, and I serve as the Legal  
25 Director for Child USA which is an interdisciplinary

1 nonprofit dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse  
2 and securing meaningful access to justice for  
3 survivors. Thank you for the opportunity to testify  
4 in strong support of Intro 1297 which is the precise  
5 and necessary correction to restore this council's  
6 original intent for the Gender-Motivated Violence  
7 Protection Act. As a result of the court decisions  
8 narrowing the 2022 lookback window, survivors who  
9 filed exactly when and how this Council invited are  
10 being turned away at the courthouse doors on a  
11 technical reading rather than being heard on the  
12 merits, and over 700+ cases are presently at risk of  
13 being dismissed absent passage of 1297. Across the  
14 country revival windows have uncovered long-hidden  
15 patterns of abuse, improved institutional practices,  
16 and delivered accountability where criminal  
17 prosecution was unavailable. Yet, access to justice  
18 remains uneven. Survivors still encounter these  
19 outdated limitation periods, ambiguity about who can  
20 be sued, and procedural defenses that eclipse the  
21 merits, barriers that fall hardest on those who were  
22 children when the harm occurred. 1297 restores equal  
23 treatment under the GMVBPA [sic] by giving survivors-



2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you  
3 so much. Your time has expired.

4 JESSICA SCHIDLOW: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Next is  
6 Dr. Candace L. DeBlasio.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

8 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Dr. Candace L.  
9 DeBlasio?

10 DR. CANDACE L. DEBLASIO: I'm sorry. I  
11 was having technical problems.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright. Your time  
13 has started.

14 DR. CANDACE L. DEBLASIO: Okay, good  
15 afternoon. My name is Dr. Candace DeBlasio, and I  
16 come forth to you today because my husband has fallen  
17 prey-- had fallen prey to Dr. Reginald Archibald when  
18 he was a young teenager. His mom has been devastated  
19 with this news, and we just found out about these  
20 concerning facts only two years ago. My husband did  
21 not even realize as a young teenager that what Dr.  
22 Archibald was doing to him, having him do, having him  
23 perform was not normal. While looking for  
24 information about my husband's bone disease, we tried  
25 to locate former doctors. I googled Dr. Archibald's

1 name and realized that what had intended to help him  
2 provide medical care in absence of a parent being  
3 present was in fact sexual molestation and abuse. I  
4 was not aware that there was a time restriction. I  
5 just ask that you search your hearts and think about  
6 what if this was my son or daughter involved in a  
7 gender-motivated act of violence by someone you  
8 entrusted your child with, especially a renowned  
9 doctor and institution such as Rockefeller Institute.  
10 I implore you to please press [inaudible] this  
11 lookback act of 1297 so that these poor victims that  
12 we heard today can have their stories heard and to  
13 allocate justice for these survivors of the heinous  
14 abuse and emotionally and physically have scarred  
15 them forever. I thank you in advance for your time  
16 and consideration today. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. John  
19 Lopez?

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

21 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: John Lopez? John  
22 Lopez? Next, we have Ron Lukas.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

24 RON LUKAS: Yes. Hello. Thank you for  
25 your time here today. My name's Ron Lukas. Telling

1 my wife and my two sons what happened to me as a  
2 young boy was incredibly difficult. I had lived my  
3 whole life feeling angry and ashamed, and now I have  
4 this law that says sorry, it never happened. It was  
5 devastating. When it happened to me, I was 12. No  
6 one ever went against the Catholic church. It was  
7 never discussed again. The incident was never  
8 acknowledged by anyone from the church or CYO  
9 organization. My parents who were immigrants never  
10 spoke about-- never spoke about it, not to me or  
11 anybody else, as if it never happened. Not allowing  
12 any victim an opportunity towards justice and  
13 resolution should not have a timeline. I wish this  
14 never happened to me. I know my life would have been  
15 different. And now this law says the same thing to me  
16 again, like it never happened all over again. I  
17 really think that throughout the years, I-- we as  
18 victims need to get some resolution, some types of  
19 therapy or whatever, but it was devastating to me,  
20 and I wish it never happened. I wish it never  
21 happened to me. Thank you for your time.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: thank you for joining  
24 us. Now we're going to hear from Thomas J. DeBlasio.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

2 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thomas J. DeBlasio?

3 THOMAS J. DEBLASIO: Can you guys hear  
4 me? Can you hear me?

5 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: It this Thomas?

6 THOMAS J. DEBLASIO: Yes, it is.

7 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, you may  
8 begin.

9 THOMAS J. DEBLASIO: Good afternoon. My  
10 name is Thomas James DeBlasio. I'm coming here to you  
11 today, letting you know that I am a victim of Dr.  
12 Reginald Archibald. These acts occurred when I was a  
13 teenager. I did not come forward before this. I only  
14 found out about this situation a year and a half ago.  
15 Unfortunately, I didn't know there was a time  
16 restriction. I've been directly emotionally and  
17 physically and sexually affected by this abuse, and  
18 I'm hoping by coming to you today, you will approve  
19 the new law and give me the opportunity to have  
20 justice for myself and other survivors who were  
21 innocent children taken advantage of and not  
22 protected. Please pass this law so these victimized  
23 teenagers who were abused prior to the year 2000 can  
24 receive justice. I was deeply affected by the acts of  
25 gender-motivated violence. I urge you to pass this

1 law today. Thank you for your consideration and my  
2 request.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. John  
5 Lopez? John Lopez?

6 JOHN LOPEZ: Hello?

7 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, you may  
8 begin.

9 JOHN LOPEZ: Hello? Can you hear me?

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes, we can hear you.  
11 You may begin, John.

12 JOHN LOPEZ: Oh, good. Thank you so  
13 much. Okay, as an individual who has been a victim  
14 in the past, I am grateful for the opportunity to be  
15 heard today. Whether it was year ago, 10 years ago,  
16 or 40 years ago, as a child you don't forget these  
17 things that were traumatizing. I've lived with this  
18 pain for over 40 years, keeping it inside and now  
19 having to relive this as I speak today is deeply  
20 saddening. For all these years I've kept this trauma  
21 hidden from my closest friends and family, those who  
22 are dear to me, because it's been too difficult to  
23 share. Today, I'm just asking for a change. It's  
24 time to make things right and pass this law for all  
25 those who have been affected in the past. I just want

1  
2 to thank everyone for their time and for allowing me  
3 to speak and be heard today. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We see a  
5 Zoom user, no name. Zoom user? You're identified as  
6 a Zoom user with no name. Alright. We're going to  
7 hear from Alex Stein. Alex Stein? Is there anyone  
8 else on Zoom that would like to testify? One last  
9 call for either Zoom user or Alex Stein. Alright. I  
10 just want to thank everyone for coming out today,  
11 those of you that testified or just came to support  
12 or hear more about these bills today. I really want  
13 to thank also the attorneys that are representing  
14 your clients today, and the plethora of attorneys  
15 that you have-- clients that you have across the  
16 country. As a survivor myself, I truly understand a  
17 lot of the testimonies that I heard here today. It  
18 doesn't matter if you go to therapy. It doesn't  
19 matter-- you know, all the steps thwaht you could  
20 take, the trauma never goes away. Healing is a  
21 journey. It's a marathon. So, I want to thank all  
22 the survivors for being here today, for your strength  
23 and your courage. I hope you all continue in the  
24 fight with us to ensure that this bill gets passed,  
25 1297. If you're here for other bills, I hope you

1 stand in the gap with us as well. It is going to be  
2 truly a fight. So, I'm asking y'all to stick with it  
3 and stand with us as we stand with you. With that  
4 said, if anyone wants to submit additional testimony,  
5 you can submit that at [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov).  
6 Thank you all for being here today, and this hearing  
7 is now adjourned.  
8

9 [gavel]

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER EQUITY



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 October 24, 2025