

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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February 27, 2026

Start: 1:20 p.m.

Recess: 3:14 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - 8TH FLOOR - HEARING
ROOM 2

B E F O R E: Amanda Farías, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shirley Aldebol

Jennifer Gutiérrez

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Tiffany Cabán

A P P E A R A N C E S

Saloni Sethi, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

Edward Hill, Deputy Commissioner for Research, Evaluation, and Training at the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

Nathifa Forde, Founding Executive Director of NYC Her Future

Priya Nair, Executive Director for the New York City Commission on Gender Equity

Adio Motayne, Data Manager at the Violence Intervention Program

Melissa Norden, Executive Director of Bottomless Closet

Liz Roberts, CEO of Safe Horizon

EunJi Byun, Korean American Family Service Center

Eman Gad, Manager of Policy and Advocacy at Girls for Gender Equity

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.

5 If you would like to testify, you must
6 fill out a witness slip with one of the
7 Sergeant-at-Arms in the back of the room, even if you
8 signed up online to testify.

9 At this time, please silence all
10 electronic devices, and no one may approach the dais
11 at any time.

12 Chair, we are ready to begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: [GAVEL] Good
14 afternoon, everyone. Today is Friday, February 27,
15 2026. I'm Council Member Amanda Fariás, Chair of the
16 Committee on Women and Gender Equity. Welcome to our
17 hearing on the State of Gender Equity in New York
18 City. Thank you to everyone who has signed up to
19 testify. We look forward to hearing from you, and
20 thank you to those who are flexible with us on
21 rescheduling this hearing post-blizzard.

Today's hearing will examine issues
related to gender equity and the landscape of City
resources available to address these issues. More
specifically, the Committee is interested in

2 understanding how the City ensures health, safety,
3 and economic security of all people across the gender
4 spectrum. The Committee will also consider the
5 following legislation: Intro. 296, sponsored by
6 Council Member Louis, in relation to increasing
7 access to data around gender-based violence; Reso.
8 69, sponsored by Council Member Cabán, unequivocally
9 opposing President Trump's executive order
10 restricting protections for transgender students and
11 calling on the New York State Department of Education
12 to ensure that all schools in New York City continue
13 to uphold policies that protect the rights and
14 dignity of transgender and gender non-conforming
15 students regardless of federal directives; and Reso.
16 322, also sponsored by Council Member Cabán, calling
17 on the New York State Legislature to pass and the
18 Governor to sign S.1532/A.4576 to require school
19 districts to establish policies and procedures
20 regarding the treatment of transgender or gender
21 non-conforming students.

18 New York City has been seen as a national
19 leader in gender equity. The New York City Human
20 Rights Law prohibits discrimination based on gender
21 equity. Furthermore, entities like the Commission on

Human Rights and the Mayor's Office to End Gender-Based Violence and the Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice all administer programs with the purpose of advancing gender equity. Despite these initiatives, and in these times we're currently living through, which feels as if we are regressing, true gender equity remains out of reach. Safety remains a critical concern for women, people of color, and LGBTQ individuals, with data indicating high rates of domestic and gender-based violence. In 2024 alone, the NYPD responded to approximately 250,000 domestic violence incident reports. The rate of sexual assault continues to be an issue for many, with the NYPD recording approximately 14,000 complaints annually. Furthermore, gender-based health disparities persist across New York City for transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary TGNCNB people. TGNCNB individuals face higher rates of discrimination in health settings. With NYU Langone Health deciding to close its prominent transgender youth health program, many are worried about finding doctors willing to continue their care. Maternal mortality rates continue to be a significant issue in New York City, and with data showing that

1 pregnancy-associated deaths are rising. Moreover,
2 reproductive health clinics in the city have been
3 forced to pare back their operations due to federal
4 funding cuts. One longstanding clinic in Brooklyn has
5 closed two locations in the last year. Additionally,
6 women continue to face longstanding social barriers
7 to economic and career advancement. A recent study
8 showed that women workers earned 88 cents for every
9 dollar earned by a man and 67 cents for every dollar
10 earned by a White man in New York City. While that
11 gap is better than how women fared nationally, the
12 gender gap in New York City has remained unchanged
13 since 2007. There continues to be occupational
14 segregation and the undervaluing of women-dominated
15 sectors that results in low pay. Women also continue
16 to shoulder more responsibilities at home than men
17 with childcare, housework, and elder care often
18 falling disproportionately on women's shoulders.
19 Achieving true economic and social parity in New York
20 remains a work in progress. So, today we'll hear more
21 from the Administration, advocates, service
providers, and other interested stakeholders. And
we'll ask, what can the City do to advance gender

2 equity? What resources are needed to address issues
3 related to gender equity?

4 Thank you to the Members of the Women and
5 Gender Equity Committee who have joined us today,
6 including Council Members Aldebol and Gutiérrez and
7 Cabán virtually. I would also like to thank Committee
8 Staff Julia Goldsmith-Pinkham, Katie Salina, Allie
9 Stofer, and Taylor Francisco, as well as my own
work on today's hearing.

10 Before we swear in the Administration, I
11 will read remarks from Council Member Louis, the lead
12 sponsor of Intro. 296.

13 I want to thank Chair Amanda Fariás for
14 her leadership of the Committee on Women and Gender
15 Equity and for her continued commitment to advancing
16 policies that confront gender-based violence with
17 seriousness, care, and accountability. I am a proud
18 sponsor of Intro. 296 to strengthen our ability to
19 respond to and prevent gender-based violence by
20 increasing access to meaningful coordinated data.
21 Gender-based violence is a public health crisis, yet
our current data landscape remains fragmented and
incomplete. Critical interactions within healthcare

1 settings, shelters, and child welfare systems are too
2 often siloed, leaving gaps that prevent the City from
3 seeing the full scope of experiences, pathways taken
4 by survivors through our systems. This bill requires
5 the Mayor's Office to End Gender-Based Violence to
6 conduct a comprehensive review of existing
7 gender-based violence data and issue clear
8 recommendations to improve collection,
9 standardization, and public access. It also
10 establishes reporting on screenings conducted in
11 shelters and intake facilities, expands coordination
12 across agencies including DOHMH, DSS, and ACS, and
13 creates an interactive dashboard so policymakers,
14 advocates, and service providers can better identify
15 trends, service gaps, and opportunities for
16 prevention. This bill is about ensuring survivors are
17 not lost in the system, that agencies are
18 accountable, and that our policies are informed by
19 the realities people are facing across the city. I
20 look forward to working with the Administration on
21 its implementation and to serving all communities
affected by gender-based violence.

And I thank Council Member Louis for
presenting us a statement to read.

2 I'll now call on Council Member Cabán
3 virtually for her statement on her resolutions.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Thank you. Can you
5 hear me, Chair?

6 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yes. We can hear you.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Awesome. Apologize
8 in advance for bouncing around. Mercury is in
9 retrograde, and I'm in a tow truck because of that.

10 So, good morning. Thank you to Chair
11 Fariás, the Members of the Committee, and to everyone
12 who has joined us for this important hearing. We're
13 hearing two Resolutions of mine that really strike at
14 the heart of our responsibility to protect every
15 child in our city and our public schools. The first,
16 Reso. 69, expresses the Council's opposition to the
17 executive order issued by Donald Trump called Ending
18 Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling, which seeks
19 to roll back essential protections for transgender
20 students. That executive order included threats to
21 withhold federal funding from schools that recognize
students' gender identities and chosen names and
pronouns, or allow them to use facilities consistent
with those identities. It also directed federal
authorities to take action against educators who

1 support the rights of transgender students and would
2 force schools to violate students' privacy. Trump's
3 order stands in direct conflict with the New York
4 City Human Rights Law as well as the New York State
5 Constitution, both of which explicitly protect
6 individuals from discrimination based on gender
7 identity and expression. And research consistently
8 shows that hostile school climates and stigmatizing
9 policies contribute to increased levels of
10 depression, substance use, and suicide risk for
transgender and non-binary youth.

11 The second Resolution before us focuses
12 on reinforcing existing State law for the protection
13 of transgender and non-binary students. It calls on
14 the State to pass legislation which would require
15 every school district to establish clear policies and
16 procedures for the treatment of transgender and
17 gender non-conforming students. This legislation
18 would build upon protections already established in
the Dignity for All Students Act, strengthening
students' rights and privacy.

19 And so, taken together, these two
20 Resolutions reflect our shared commitment to ensuring
21 that transgender and gender non-conforming students

2 are not treated as political pawns, but as young
3 people deserving of the full protection of our laws.

4 I'm looking forward to hearing testimony
5 on them today and urge my Colleagues to support.

6 Thank you so much.

7 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Thank you, Council
8 Member Cabán.

9 I would like to remind everyone who
10 wishes to testify today in person that you must fill
11 out a witness slip, which you can find at the desk at
12 the Sergeant-at-Arms near the entrance of this room.
13 Please fill out the slip even if you have already
14 signed on and registered in advance that you'll be
15 testifying today in person.

16 If you wish to testify on any of the
17 legislation, please indicate on the witness slip
18 whether you are here to testify in favor of or in
19 opposition to the legislation.

20 I also want to point out that we will not
21 be voting on any legislation today.

To allow as many people as possible to
testify, testimony will be limited to two minutes per
person, whether you are testifying in person or on

2 Zoom. I'm also going to ask my Colleagues to limit
3 their questions and comments to five minutes.

4 Please note that witnesses who are here
5 in person will testify before those who are signed on
6 on the Zoom webinar.

7 I'll now turn it over to the Women and
8 Gender Equity Committee Policy Analyst to administer
9 the oath as the Administration joins us on the dais.
10 Thank you.

11 POLICY ANALYST SALINA: Good afternoon.
12 Now, in accordance with the rules of the Council, I
13 will administer the affirmation to the witnesses from
14 the Mayoral Administration. I will call on each of
15 you individually for a response. Please raise your
16 right hands.

17 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
18 whole truth, and nothing but the truth before these
19 Committees, and to respond honestly to Council
20 Members' questions?

21 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Hi. I do.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: I do.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FORDE: I do.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: I do as well.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Whoever would like to
3 begin first on providing testimony.

4 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, good afternoon,
5 Chair Fariás and Members of the Committee on Women
6 and Gender Equity. I am Saloni Sethi, Commissioner of
7 the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based
8 Violence, or ENDGBV. I'm joined by Edward Hill,
9 Deputy Commissioner for Research, Evaluation, and
10 Training. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with
11 you today regarding the state of gender equity in New
12 York City.

13 ENDGBV supports survivors of domestic and
14 gender-based violence by developing and delivering
15 accessible and inclusive services to survivors, their
16 families, and their communities through collaboration
17 with government agencies, community partners,
18 survivors, and philanthropy. We strive to ensure that
19 the City's services and resources reduce barriers,
20 address gaps in service, and create new pathways to
21 safety through program development, legislative and
policy advocacy, research, and capacity building for
service providers, City agency staff, and community
members to identify and respond to domestic and
gender-based violence or DVGBV. ENDGBV directly

oversees a portfolio of prevention and intervention programming that includes services for survivors of DVGBV and victims of other crime, and we operate the City's five borough-based Family Justice Centers.

Our office was established in the City Charter in 2001, and its responsibilities, originally focused on intimate partner violence and elder abuse, were expanded by Executive Order 36 in 2018 to include other forms of gender-based violence, such as sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. In 2024, the office expanded further by taking on a portfolio of programs from the Office of Crime Victims' Supports, including the Crime Victims Assistance Program, CVAP, the City's 24-hour HOPE Hotline, family and criminal court-based programs, and community programs for victims of all crime. The City's HOPE Hotline provides crisis intervention and support to all crime victims with specialized support for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, including placement in emergency shelter. Our Family Court program provides information and support to all respondents in Family Court, as well as dedicated services for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, including a supervised visitation program

1 that operates in two boroughs. The Criminal Court
2 program helps survivors of gendered violence engaged
3 in criminal legal proceedings connect to resources
4 and includes services tailored to meet the needs of
5 criminalized survivors, who may be drawn into the
6 criminal legal system in ways that are directly
7 connected to their experiences of abuse. Our
8 borough-based community programs provide
9 trauma-informed counseling, advocacy, and support to
10 DVGBV survivors and crime victims in community-based
11 settings.

12 ENDGBV's expansion to include programs
13 for victims of all crime, in addition to programs
14 specifically tailored for survivors of DVGBV, not
15 only recognizes the connections between gendered
16 violence and other forms of violence, like gun
17 violence, but also ensures that our services reflect
18 the lived realities of the individuals we serve, many
19 of whom are dealing with the intersecting layers of
20 trauma from multiple experiences of violence. ENDGBV
21 also oversees a range of preventive programs,
including the Relationship Abuse Prevention Program,
or RAPP, Home Plus, and our abusive partner
intervention programs. RAPP places trained counselors

1 and community educators in middle schools and high
2 schools throughout the city to educate students,
3 staff, and caregivers about teen dating violence and
4 promote healthy relationship skills. RAPP also
5 provides direct support to young people who may be
6 experiencing abuse in their own relationships or
7 witnessing violence at home, furthering the program's
8 goal of fostering safe, informed school communities.
9 HomePlus focuses on preventing homelessness that is
10 purely due to safety concerns by providing survivors
11 with security devices, free lock changes and repair
12 services for doors and windows, and flexible funding
13 to help survivors remain safely and stably housed.
14 Our two programs for people who cause harm, Respect
15 and Responsibility for Adults and Respect First for
16 Young People, focus on trauma-informed accountability
17 to help change abusive behavior and prevent future
18 abuse.

19 In addition to successfully managing
20 ENDGBV's expansion, ENDGBV was also able to increase
21 funding to culturally specific providers by 300
percent in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, through
competitive procurement processes, including
reprocurement for our core service contracts at the

1 Family Justice Centers. This has significantly
2 expanded our capacity to provide culturally
3 responsive, linguistically appropriate, and
4 survivor-centered services through partnership with
5 community-based organizations. In July 2024, ENDGBV
6 launched the flexible funding component of HomePlus
7 under Local Law 112 of 2022, adding a new option for
8 survivors to remain in their homes safely and avoid
9 shelter entry. Flexible funding provides low-barrier
10 financial assistance to survivors with incomes under
11 300 percent of the federal poverty level without
12 requiring documentation such as orders of protection
13 or police reports, and without regard to credit
14 history, criminal history, or immigration status.
15 Flexible funding can be used to support housing
16 stability and safety by covering a range of essential
17 needs, including rent arrears, utility costs, moving
18 costs, food, phone bills, and other critical
19 expenses. In Fiscal Year '25, the program supported
20 426 survivors, dispersing more than 875,000 dollars
21 in assistance, with an average grant of approximately
2,050 dollars. The program helps survivors remain
safely housed or transition into stable housing while
connecting them to case management and ongoing

1 support. Its flexible design promotes survivor
2 self-determination and fills critical gaps for
3 individuals who may not qualify for other housing
4 resources. Survivors consistently report that these
5 services play a vital role in preventing
6 homelessness, strengthening their emotional
7 well-being, and helping them navigate housing-related
8 barriers. The program underscores how important
9 addressing survivors' economic needs, reducing
10 financial stress, and advancing long-term housing
11 stability are to mitigating the impacts of abuse and
12 promoting survivor-centered healing.

13 In January 2025, ENDGBV launched Respect
14 First, a citywide prevention and intervention program
15 focused on fostering healthy relationships among
16 young people ages 13 to 21. Respect First serves
17 youth who have caused harm or engaged in abusive
18 behavior in either dating or family relationships
19 using a trauma-informed model centered on
20 accountability, healing, and behavior change. The
21 program includes a 16-week group intervention,
individualized case management, and connection to
supportive services to address the root causes of
harmful behavior. Young people also receive a stipend

1 for attending group sessions. Respect First initially
2 launched in the Bronx and Brooklyn, expanding to
3 Staten Island in fall of 2025. ENDGBV anticipates the
4 program will begin operating citywide this year,
5 increasing access to early intervention and
6 prevention services for young people across the city.
7 In 2025, the City's five Family Justice Centers
8 served 15,362 clients and facilitated more than
9 61,000 client visits, connecting survivors to
10 critical services including safety planning, case
11 management, counseling, legal assistance, and
12 economic support. In Fiscal Year 2025, the HOPE
13 Hotline received 93,942 calls, and CVAP responded to
14 46,435 victims of crime. In 2025, ENDGBV conducted 91
15 trainings reaching more than 5,600 City staff,
16 non-profit providers, and community members to
17 improve identification of and response to domestic
18 and gender-based violence, and we conducted 180
19 outreach events citywide, raising awareness,
20 connecting communities to resources, and
21 strengthening the City's overall response to
violence.

As we look ahead into 2026 and beyond,
ENDGBV remains committed to further expanding

1 supports for survivors of domestic and gender-based
2 violence through innovative programming for people
3 who have experienced harm, an increased focus on
4 prevention, and continued coordination across
5 systems. We expect to launch a family violence
6 services demonstration project in the summer of 2026.
7 This is a first-of-its-kind program to address abuse
8 that occurs between members of a family or household
9 who are not involved in a romantic relationship,
10 including individuals related by marriage, foster
11 care, adoption, or any other type of familial
12 relationship. Within New York City, family violence
13 is a widespread issue that makes up a significant
14 portion of total domestic violence crime, yet there
15 are gaps in services for individuals and families
16 experiencing this type of abuse. Through this
17 initiative, ENDGBV will partner with community-based
18 providers in high-needs communities across all five
19 boroughs to deliver tailored trauma-informed services
20 including case management, mental health counseling,
21 mediation, and legal support. This project will not
only provide critical resources to families impacted
by violence, it will also include a concurrent
evaluation to help build the City's understanding of

1 family violence, test new community-based
2 intervention models, and inform future program
3 expansion.

4 In addition, ENDGBV is focused on
5 strengthening and expanding prevention efforts to
6 address gendered violence citywide. This includes
7 increasing the number of schools participating in
8 RAPP, expanding public awareness and community
9 education, and investing in programs that address
10 harmful behaviors and support individuals in making
11 positive changes. Together, these efforts help
12 prevent violence before it occurs and promote safer,
13 healthier communities for all New Yorkers.

14 And of course, the work to end gendered
15 violence cannot be done by ENDGBV alone. Survivors
16 and victims of crime engage with multiple systems,
17 including child welfare, criminal legal, housing, and
18 healthcare. ENDGBV is committed to working with City
19 agency partners, electeds, and community-based
20 organizations to strengthen how survivors are
21 identified and supported across these systems, to
improve coordination, reduce barriers to access, and
ensure survivors receive timely, trauma-informed, and

2 survivor-centered support across all points of
3 contact.

4 Key collaborative efforts in 2026 include
5 our Strangulation Roundtable, which aims to
6 strengthen the response to strangulation across our
7 healthcare, law enforcement, and social services
8 systems, and our work to implement Local Law 160 of
9 2025, focused on enhancing systemic response to
traumatic brain injury in partnership with healthcare
experts and community-based providers.

10 ENDGBV appreciates the opportunity to
11 provide its position on the legislation under
12 consideration today. We support the intent of Intro.
13 296, increasing access to data around gender-based
14 violence. However, we also have concerns related to
15 feasibility, privacy, and capacity. The Department of
16 Social Services would also like to note that nearly
17 all of their screenings for gender violence are
18 pursuant to New York State directives, and that those
19 screenings are balancing between obtaining
20 information and not chilling a DV survivor from
21 pursuing services. We intend to connect with Council
post-hearing to discuss further.

2 We look forward to continued
3 collaboration with the Council, our sister City
4 agencies, and community-based partners to strengthen
5 services, close gaps, and ensure that all survivors
6 have access to the support they need. Thank you for
7 the opportunity to testify today. I welcome any
8 questions you have.

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FORDE: Good afternoon,
10 Chair Fariás, Council Member Aldebol, and Council
11 Member Gutiérrez, and Council Member Cabán, and to
12 all of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity and
13 community advocates and members of the public. My
14 name is Nathifa Forde, and I'm the Founding Executive
15 Director of NYC Her Future, the City's first office
16 dedicated to advancing the well-being, leadership,
17 and long-term economic mobility of young women and
18 girls with a specific focus on girls of color and all
19 those who identify as such. Thank you for the
20 opportunity to join you today to discuss the
21 accomplishments of this newly created office under
the Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice that
launched in 2024.

NYC Her Future's mission is clear and
urgent. It's to ensure every girl, young woman, and

1 all those who identify as such in New York City
2 possesses the intellectual capital, essential skills,
3 and supportive social network required to realize
4 their full potential and long-term well-being. NYC
5 Her Future is dedicated to cultivating leaders and
6 social innovators by expanding access to ensure
7 academic success and meaningful mentorship by
8 establishing robust pathways to sustainable
9 socioeconomic mobility. NYC Her Future employs a
10 culturally responsive, data-informed programmatic
11 framework designed to dismantle systemic barriers
12 that negatively affect the social determinants of
13 health, including access to education, economic
14 stability, and career opportunities. The work is
15 rooted in a commitment to community empowerment and
16 equity by validating the diverse cultural assets and
17 lived experiences of every young woman, girl, and all
18 those who identify as such in the city.

19 NYC Her Future acknowledged a truth that
20 we can no longer ignore. The disparities facing girls
21 and young women and all those who identify as such,
especially of color, are real, measurable, and often
dismissed in policy conversations. Nearly 25 percent
of adolescent girls who have had a relationship have

1 experienced physical or sexual partner violence.
2 Women's literacy rates are lagging behind men by 7
3 percent, and the gap is even widened for women of
4 color with Black and Hispanic women falling 17
5 percent below the national average. Although girls
6 continue to outperform boys academically, 4 in 5
7 report low satisfaction and higher stress in school
8 environments, with Black girls often reporting the
9 lowest levels of satisfaction across multiple
10 measures of school climate. These disparities persist
11 into adulthood. Hispanic women earn only 37 percent,
12 and Black women earn only 42 percent for every dollar
13 earned by a White man, a gap that can amount to
14 nearly 2 million in lost earnings over a lifetime for
15 Hispanic women alone. The data is clear, young women
16 experience higher rates of gender-based violence,
17 disproportionate economic insecurities, and
18 persistent gaps in mental health access and workforce
19 development opportunities. NYC Her Future was built
20 on the belief that equity must be operationalized.
21 Equity in action means redesigning systems so that
every young person has what they need and not just
what's left over. At its launch in 2024, NYC Her
Future was created with the intention to work in

tandem with other gender-focused entities, such as our sibling office, the New York City Young Men's Initiative, within the Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice to form a collective committed to our youth at large. Together, these offices are ensuring that thoughtful, targeted, and nuanced programming is not only created but accessible, culturally responsive, and rooted in the lived experiences of all young people. NYC Her Future is rooted in data, driven by equity, and committed to dismantling the structural barriers shaping the lives of girls, young women, and all those who identify as such across our city. NYC Her Future is an innovation and investment hub within the City. The office serves as both a thought partner and a funding catalyst to City agencies across New York. Together, we design, pilot, and evaluate initiatives that serve as a proof of concept for sustaining baseline investments and scalable models to advance gender equity citywide. NYC Her Future recognizes that advancing gender equity is collective work. We stand on the shoulders of longstanding advocates, organizations, community leaders who have led and fought for generations, including our City partners here with us today, the

Commission on Gender Equity and the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence. The work is interconnected and it should not operate in silo. NYC Her Future is housed within the Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice, which encompasses four offices: the New York City Young Men's Initiative, as I mentioned before, the Commission on Gender Equity, NYC Her Future, and the Unity Project, working collectively to advance racial, gender, and economic justice under the Chief Equity Officer and Commissioner Afua Atta-Mensah's leadership, MOERJ ensures gender equity is understood and deeply interconnected with race, class, immigration status, disability, and age, and it is not siloed. Since launching in 2024, NYC Her Future has received a programmatic budget of nearly 2.5 million in Fiscal Year '25 and '26. NYC Her Future has strategically invested in a portfolio of programs that serve all young people, prioritizing young women and girls of color and all those who identify as such. These programs are not theoretical. They are producing measurable results. During our inaugural year, we planted seeds. Since then, the office grew and has shown what is possible when purpose meets

1 partnership. NYC Her Future's investment in 7
2 programs has reached over 28,000 young people across
3 New York City. Our funds are a coordinated portfolio
4 of programs designed to dismantle systemic barriers
5 that negatively affect the social determinants of
6 life, using evidence and community-informed insight
7 to design programs that address existing disparities
8 and reduce the likelihood of those disparities
9 continuing in the future. Whether the office is
10 developing intervention-based programs or
11 preventative initiatives, the goal is always to
12 respond to real needs with strategy that creates
13 long-term impact. As of Fiscal Year 2025, NYC Her
14 Future's investment in the citywide nursing residency
15 program in partnership with the Mayor's Office of
16 Talent and Workforce Development continues to
17 strengthen the pipeline for newly licensed nurses
18 from underrepresented communities. Through hand-on
19 clinical trainings, mentorship, and evidence-based
20 practices, the program serves 1,440 participants and
21 achieved a 94 percent retention rate. These
initiatives not only stabilized the nursing
workforce, but built a more diverse, community-rooted

healthcare system that expands equitable access to maternal health and allied health professions.

Through Health Career Connect, a partnership with the City University of New York, the office further reduced financial barriers to high-needs healthcare career students by providing vouchers, academic guidance, and access to 18 credentialing tracks. The program served 356 students, achieving a 91 percent completion rate.

Beyond healthcare, NYC Her Future is deeply invested in youth workforce pathways in partnership with the Administration of Children's Services. Future Force has provided 57 young people involved in the child welfare system with individualized career coaching, vocational training, and full financial support for certification and materials, in addition to a 3,360 completion stipend. This initiative directly addresses low post-secondary enrollment, limited professional network, and high unemployment among foster youth.

NYC Her Future also recognized that leadership pipelines must include civic and justice pathways. The Law Project, a program in partnership with the Department of Youth and Community

1 Development, expands early exposure to legal careers
2 through 22 legal literacy lessons, mentorship from
3 justice sector professionals, and a multi- a
4 multi-round mock trial. Serving 32 participants, this
5 initiative counts as the persistent
6 underrepresentation of women of color in law and
7 public leadership.

8 NYC Her Future's school-based initiatives
9 continue to reach young women at scale. My Sister's
10 Keeper is a citywide initiative in partnership with
11 New York City Public Schools serving over 25,000
12 girls that coordinated professional development
13 events, showcases across multiple programs, dedicated
14 to empowering girls and young women. This initiative
15 includes their Ambassador Program, a two-year
16 fellowship for high school students centered in
17 mentorship, social justice projects, financial
18 literacy, leadership development, and college
19 readiness, the GEMS chapter that fosters mentorship,
20 sisterhood, leadership, and identity exploration, and
21 ROSE, a mentorship empowerment program focused on
self-esteem, leadership, community service, and
violence Prevention. Together, these programs create

a comprehensive ecosystem of support that nurtures confidence, leadership, and lifelong success.

Also implemented in partnership with the New York City Public School is the Young Women Empowerment Program, which provides mentorship, social-emotional support, and college and career exploration for 16 school sites across 10 school districts. This program has served 320 middle and high school students, improving confidence, academic persistence, and post-secondary readiness.

Looking ahead, NYC Her Future will deepen its work to address persistent disparities by strengthening partnerships with City entities and collaborating with agencies to design innovative equity-centered programs that respond to the unique challenges faced by women and girls of color. This next phase is encouraging and intentional. We are working on the following items. Beginning in spring 2026, NYC Her Future will launch a suite of initiatives that reflects the office mission and vision. The Motherhood Initiative developed with the Department of Youth and Community Development and the Department of Correction will provide trauma-informed, family-centered mental health

1 supports for incarcerated mothers at Rikers,
2 promoting family reunification and long-term
3 stability. Design Her City, created with the
4 Department of City Planning, will expand youth access
5 to civic leadership and urban planning pathways,
6 ensuring meaningful participation in shaping the
7 built environment. Finally, the STEAM AI Fair, in
8 collaboration with New York City Public School, will
9 offer students an opportunity to develop STEAM
10 projects, with a focus on artificial intelligence and
11 emerging technologies for a competition. This program
12 supports young people across New York City becoming
13 creators, not just users of emerging technology.

14 In conclusion, as we are a newly
15 established office within a newly formed agency, NYC
16 Her Future has navigated predictable startup
17 challenges, including a modest budget allocation,
18 contractual limitations, and limited human capital.
19 Despite the challenges, NYC Her Future was able to
20 launch new programs, strategically partnering with
21 City agencies to develop and enhance existing
programs and organize campaigns. The office has
delivered high-impact, data-driven initiatives with
measurable results across education, workforce

1 development, public safety, maternal health, and
2 civic leadership. Our early outcomes demonstrate both
3 the urgency of the work and the capacity of the
4 office to execute with precision, accountability, and
5 equity at the center. The need is clear, our strategy
6 is strong, and the impact is already visible. Thank
7 you for the opportunity to speak about NYC Her
8 Future's work. We look forward to any questions the
9 Council may have.

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: Good afternoon,
10 Chair Fariás and Members of the Committee on Women
11 and Gender Equity. I am Priya Nair, the Executive
12 Director for the New York City Commission on Gender
13 Equity, or CGE. I'm honored to bring nearly a decade
14 of experience advancing inclusive, mission-driven
15 policy across New York State and city government. It
16 was great to hear the testimony from my colleagues
17 from ENDGBV and NYC Her Future, and I'm looking
18 forward to the opportunity to discuss the state of
19 gender equity in New York City and to update you on
20 CGE's accomplishments, current projects, and our
21 plans for the future.

So, the Commission on Gender Equity. We
were established in 2015 and codified in the Charter

1 in 2016, and CGE works to advance gender equity for
2 both the City's workforce and the communities we
3 serve. CGE serves an advisory role in City
4 government, uplifting key issues and making
5 recommendations to the Administration to reduce
6 inequities facing women, girls, transgender,
7 intersex, gender non-conforming, and non-binary New
8 Yorkers. Through policy and advocacy, data-driven
9 reports and publications, interagency collaboration
10 and public engagement, CGE works to strengthen gender
11 equity for New Yorkers across our three focus areas:
12 economic justice, health and reproductive justice,
13 and safety. CGE is also part of the New York City
14 Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice, or
15 MOERJ, along with three other innovative offices and
16 commissions. Launched in October 2023, MOERJ is the
17 City's centralized equity office, and we take an
18 intersectional approach to advancing change across
19 our city. Under the new leadership of Chief Equity
20 Officer and Commissioner, Afua Atta-Mensah, I look
21 forward to continuing our strong partnership to
ensure that gender equity is not advanced in
isolation, but is understood as interconnected to
race, class, ability, age, and other identities.

1 Since joining CGE in July, I have hit the
2 ground running and worked closely with our committed
3 team of 10 staff, many of who are here today to
4 strengthen CGE's impact. First, we reinvigorated our
5 Commission which you serve on, Chair, thank you and
6 which is a group of leading gender equity experts who
7 advise CGE on its work. By appointing seven new
8 members and bringing long-serving members to the
9 table for dynamic and in-person meetings, CGE is
10 really trying to energize its key stakeholders who
11 are trusted messengers in the field. As experienced
12 conveners, we also drove forward the work of our many
13 task forces and boards that we lead, including the
14 Sexual Health Education Task Force, the Marshall Plan
15 for Moms Task Force, and the Street Harassment
16 Prevention Advisory Board, which we co-chair with
17 ENDGBV. And I really think these task forces and
18 boards are crucial opportunities, right, to center
19 New Yorkers' lived experiences and to ensure that
20 communities can directly shape government
21 decision-making. CGE, you know, we're also considered
trusted policy experts, and we used our voice to
advocate for gender equity issues and stand up for
vulnerable New Yorkers. In December, we published the

2025 Guide for Women and TGNCNBI Workers Considering Non-Traditional Careers, which includes recommendations for City government and employers to better support women and transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and intersex workers in fields historically dominated by men. When the federal government continued its relentless campaign against trans communities, we came out with a public statement and supported the City's public comments condemning the harmful attacks on gender-affirming care.

At CGE, we also believe meaningful community engagement is vital to our efforts, and it continues to anchor our work. With costs rising and New Yorkers struggling, we hosted an impactful outdoor resource fair to meet New Yorkers' everyday needs. And we also launched the first session of our gender equity workshop series, which is designed to engage New Yorkers in an interactive way about gender equity issues, tools and actions. Finally, we remain committed to advancing gender equity not only externally for the city's residents but also internally for the City's workforce. We launched the City's first ever pay equity study with the

1 Department of Citywide Administrative Services to
2 examine gender and racial wage gaps and occupational
3 segregation across City job titles. Just last month,
4 CGE launched a mentorship pilot program, which aims
5 to develop emerging leaders and gender equity
6 champions within the City's workforce. And through
7 trainings, workshops, webinars, and an annual
8 conference, we continue to support City agencies in
9 embedding gender equity in their policies, programs,
and operations.

10 CGE is incredibly grateful to do this
11 work with the support of the new Administration and
12 Mayor Mamdani. In the first 57 days, the Mamdani
13 Administration has taken swift action on economic
14 justice, public infrastructure, childcare, and
15 housing, all issues that intersect directly with
16 gender equity. For the very first time, new providers
17 have been invited to join 2K programs, a step toward
18 universal childcare. New providers have also been
19 invited to join 3K for the first time in five years.
20 At a moment when women with young children are
21 exiting the workforce at a record pace, we know New
Yorkers are ready for change. And just in a two-week
period, more than 50,000 families applied for 3K and

pre-K, and applications are actually open through today.

To improve quality of life on our streets, the City issued a request for proposals, or RFP, to bring modular public restrooms to New York City. In and of itself, increased bathroom access helps people of all genders navigate our city more comfortably. And specifically, this RFP asks applicants to address a number of gender equity priorities: period product dispensers, corner mirrors for safety, and family-friendly features such as changing tables and space for strollers.

Finally, the Administration has prioritized housing and tenant protections from day one. Mayor Mamdani has revitalized the Office to Protect Tenants, held landlords accountable through vigorous enforcement, and will hold rental ripoff hearings in each borough to hear directly from New York City renters. Stable, safe, well-maintained housing allows us all, including LGBTQ elders, parents with small children, and caretakers in multigenerational homes, to not only remain, but thrive in the city.

1 In terms of the landscape of gender
2 equities, you know, despite all this progress,
3 stubborn gender inequities and unfairness persist,
4 depriving women, girls, and transgender New Yorkers
5 of the opportunity to live their lives to the
6 fullest. On pay equity, progress is so slow that the
7 time to reach parity is now measurable in
8 generations. If progress continues at the same pace
9 it has... okay, great. Thank you. Mercury is in
10 retrograde, as Council Member Cabán said. Yeah. If
11 progress continues at the same pace it has in recent
12 years, it will take until 2088 to reach pay equity
13 between all working women and men. For Latinas, it
14 will be over four generations or until 2160 to reach
15 parity with White men. For Black women, over five
16 generations or until 2183. And for American Indian,
17 Alaska Native women, it will be over 11 generations
18 or until 2393 to reach pay parity. Women workers,
19 especially women of color, are disproportionately
20 concentrated in lower-paying occupations, which tend
21 to offer fewer benefits, less flexibility, and
limited access to paid leave. Across the state,
working mothers also face a motherhood penalty with
their wages being 65 percent of that of fathers who

1 experience a fatherhood bonus. Pay gaps are actually
2 even worse for women with disabilities, who
3 nationally are paid just 56 cents for every dollar
4 paid to men who do not have a disability. For
5 transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and
6 intersex people, data remains limited. A report from
7 New York State indicates that employment
8 discrimination remains a common experience for these
9 workers, including termination. However, the lack of
10 comprehensive data obscures the full scope of
11 inequities that workers face. In terms of healthcare
12 and street safety, while New York offers significant
13 healthcare protections to patients and providers, we
14 reside in one of only four countries in the world to
15 have rolled back reproductive rights since 1994. We
16 know that the ongoing attacks on gender-affirming
17 healthcare follow the same harmful playbooks as
18 attacks on abortion access, making it an especially
19 alarming time for anyone, particularly young people,
20 who need this care. At the same time, for both
21 patients and providers, gender and racial
discrimination worsen experiences and outcomes in
healthcare settings. One of the clearest examples is
the city's ongoing maternal mortality crisis, where

1 discrimination is a contributing factor in half of
2 pregnancy-associated deaths. Meanwhile, as federal
3 actions exacerbate rising healthcare costs, even
4 insured New Yorkers increasingly delay or forego care
5 due to cost and fears around medical debt. While
6 healthcare affordability and access impacts people in
7 every community, LGBTQ+ people report being
8 significantly more worried about paying for medical
9 bills than non-LGBTQ people, and women, especially
10 Latinas and Black women, report higher levels of
11 concern than men.

12 Feeling safe on city streets and public
13 transportation also remains a challenge. The Street
14 Harassment Prevention Advisory Board survey which
15 more than 3,700 New Yorkers participated in, found
16 that 7 out of 10 respondents reported experiencing
17 street harassment in New York City. Concerningly,
18 more than half of respondents reported that it began
19 when they were a minor. And after a street harassment
20 incident, half of respondents changed their regular
21 route or commute and almost 30 percent considered
moving out of New York City entirely.

 Given the significant rollbacks of human
rights protections that disproportionately impact the

1 community CGE serves and the ongoing effort to cut
2 off federal dollars from a range of initiatives that
3 support equity, our work is as urgent as ever. And
4 even this high-level overview on just a few issues in
5 CGE's focus areas demonstrate how far we still have
6 to go.

7 In terms of the future of CGE, we will
8 continue building on our progress, learn from the
9 past, and promote a more gender-equitable city in
10 every borough for every single New Yorker. Some of
11 our goals this year is:

12 Number one. To appoint a Chair of the
13 Commission. This is one of my main priorities this
14 year as the Chair serves as an important liaison
15 between me and the Commission members.

16 Number two is to develop CGE's new
17 strategic plan. We believe that, you know, in order
18 to ensure that over its next decade, CGE is both
19 steadfast in our vision for New York City and also
20 adaptable to new circumstances, that we must have a
21 strategic plan to meet this moment. CGE has not had a
strategic plan since 2018. And in late 2025, we began
this process, tapping into our community, our
Commission members, and other City partners, and we

1
2 are looking forward over the course of the year to
3 continue to ensure that strategic plan reflects the
4 lived experience of our city and to work with City
5 Council as well as our three Council Members who
6 serve as Commission members in that work this year.

6 Number three. We're excited to celebrate
7 CGE's 10-year anniversary. One way we're doing that
8 is by co-hosting 10 bystander intervention trainings
9 to directly engage communities across New York City.
10 In addition to helping train New Yorkers to respond
11 to harassment, we will also expand our workshop
12 series where students learn about gender equity
13 topics in an interactive and engaging way. We will
14 also organize our third annual community resource
15 fair, building on the success of the one we held last
16 year in Corona, Queens.

15 Number four. We will publish the Marshall
16 Plan for Moms report. CGE serves as Chair of the
17 Marshall Plan for Moms task force. And after
18 publication, we will continue to convene the task
19 force to support its recommendations to improve the
20 lives of working mothers and caregivers.

20 Five. We will co-host a period drive with
21 New York City Her Future in May in celebration of

2 Period Action Day. We're really excited to host this
3 period product drive in Staten Island with a local
4 partner to advance menstrual equity and public health
across New York City.

5 Number six. We will publish the final
6 report of the Sexual Health Education Task Force. CGE
7 serves as chair of this task force along with our
8 three Co-Chairs, New York City Public Schools,
9 Department of Mental Health and Hygiene, and
10 Children's Aid. And along with our interdisciplinary
11 membership, we will continue to convene the group
this year and work towards publishing our final
report with recommendations.

12 Number seven. We'll continue the pay
13 equity study of the City government workforce. CGE
14 and DCAS are currently working with an MWBE vendor to
15 execute a pay equity analysis of select City
16 government job titles. This June, the job title
17 evaluation will enter the second year of its
18 four-year project to identify occupational
19 segregation and gender and race pay disparities
within the City government workforce.

20 Number eight. We'll continue to provide
strategic support and technical assistance to City

1 agencies to strengthen their own capacity for gender
2 equity. We'll convene the 3rd Annual Gender Equity
3 Interagency Partnership Conference in April, which is
4 an interagency gathering of City workers, and we'll
5 continue to offer ongoing trainings, tools, and
6 learning opportunities that support agencies in
7 integrating gender equity into their policies and
8 practices.

8 Lastly, we will support the pay equity
9 data collection and implementation study for private
10 employers. So, CGE really commends the Council on its
11 tireless work last year to enact these two important
12 pay equity bills. These laws were high priorities for
13 CGE and our Commission members because they will
14 strengthen pay transparency by requiring large
15 private sector employees to report pay data by
16 gender, race, and ethnicity. So, CGE looks forward to
17 assisting the Administration and the lead agency with
18 designing the data collection and then analyzing this
19 vital data to ultimately address longstanding
20 disparities in pay equity.

19 Thank you so much for this opportunity
20 and looking forward to speaking more.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank all of you for
3 your very thorough testimonies this morning. I'm
4 like, do I even need to ask questions? I know. We
5 have literal textbooks in front of us, but it is
6 greatly appreciated. And I do want to say, despite, I
7 think, some of the data in front of us, or maybe some
8 of the harder, more bleak moments that we all know
9 we're all facing, it is really an honor to do the
10 work with you folks. It's clear that a lot of our
11 efforts are going to ensure that there are, whether
12 that's monetary investments or policy investments
13 being made, it's coming through your Commission. So,
14 we really appreciate it.

15 I'm going to start off with some
16 questions for CGE, and I will just premise here too,
17 I'd like to, and I believe I have, like, budgetary
18 finance questions for every single one of you, as
19 I've seen, heard it nod to some of the staffing
20 capacities that we have and the limitations that some
21 of that brings. So, I just want to preface that.

18 For CGE, in terms of gender equity
19 issues, which ones are a priority for the Commission
20 under the new Administration? Have you had those
21 conversations?

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: We have a number
3 of priorities. You know, I just spoke at length about
4 them. I think for us, you know, number one is the
5 economic justice priorities, particularly considering
6 the new Administration's focus on affordability and
7 economic justice, which are key gender equity issues.
8 So, I would say the pay equity analysis study of the
9 City government workforce, supporting the lead agency
10 on the pay equity study of the private workforce, as
11 well as the publishing of the Marshall Plan for Moms
12 report, which is also an economic justice issue
13 considering mothers, you know, shoulder the
14 responsibility of caregiving.

15 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Great. And how does
16 CGE directly work with other agencies to promote the
17 gender equity initiatives at hand?

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: CGE works
19 closely with other agencies on a number of our, you
20 know, projects and policies and reports on every
21 single one really. You know, between the Sexual
Health Education Task Force, we work closely with New
York City Public Schools, Department of Health and
Mental Hygiene, on all of our task forces, right?
That's our strength, is that we're a convener, and we

2 convene and are members of many of these boards and
3 commissions that are really supposed to push forward
4 reports and recommendations that the Administration
5 can consider. So, I would consider our interagency
6 work one of our strongest pieces, as well as the work
7 we're doing internally with City agencies to help
8 them embed gender equity into their own workforce
9 operations.

10 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And are you working
11 with agencies both looking at it from bird's-eye view
12 and recommending what type of reports to do or
13 oversight to do versus maybe like on our side what
14 we're mandating the reporting mechanism on, on our
15 end to, to you folks? Like, how has that worked with
16 the agencies? Is there like open communication on
17 what we think we should be looking for or leaning
18 towards?

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: Can you repeat
20 the question? I'm trying to...

21 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: I'm just wondering,
in terms of the level of work you're doing in
collaboration, are there times where maybe data rises
in one area where you go to a different agency and
say, hey, this is something that we're looking at or

2 that came up for us that is in this agency, are you
3 guys looking at it or are you folks looking at ways
4 to address it versus what, like, on our end in the
5 Council, we know we will pass a reporting bill or
6 pass a task force and mandate you folks to do that.
7 I'm just wondering, what's that interagency
8 coordination if and when these types of moments come
9 up?

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: Yeah. I would
11 say it's both/and. You know, we are very focused on
12 the many mandates that we have from Council. And I
13 know since getting here in July, that has been one of
14 my focuses to ensure that we're meeting those
15 mandates and publishing the reports that we're
16 required to publish and convening the task forces
17 that were required to convene. But I do think, you
18 know, as needed, we also work with agencies on, you
19 know, gender equity issues and advising them as they
20 come up.

21 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Great. And then in
22 terms of the Marshall Plan for Moms Task Force
23 report, When will we have that publicly available? Do
24 we have a deadline?

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: Yes. So the
3 Marshall Plan for Moms report. You know, we convened
4 the task force in December and we had a really
5 productive meeting. During that meeting, the task
6 force members reviewed the draft recommendations and
7 gave us feedback on the draft recommendations, and
8 we've since integrated that feedback into the report.
9 We do have a draft of the report that's currently
10 going through internal review processes, and we are,
11 you know, on track to get that out in the coming
12 months, the first half of the year. I know that's a
13 big priority for me.

14 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Okay. I think I heard
15 spring. Great.

16 What are the primary indicators that the
17 agency uses to assess gender equity in New York City?
18 For each of those indicators that we have, what's the
19 most recent data available?

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: I would say you
21 know, it depends on the issue area right? We look at
22 data across our different focus areas: health safety,
23 and economic justice. So, it really depends on the
24 issue area. I can't answer that question because it's
25 quite broad, but we would work with the relevant

2 agency in that focus area to look at the data that's
3 available.

4 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And so from
5 that, I'm assuming you would say since the economic
6 justice focus, it's like the biggest trends and the
7 highest indicator of concern at the moment?

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: Sure.

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And then, how
10 many staff members does CGE currently employ and how
11 many vacancies does CGE have?

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: So, I manage a
13 team of 10 staff currently. You know, in terms of
14 vacancies, we are not hiring for, you know, any
15 posted positions at the moment, and we're, you know,
16 continuing to have conversations about hiring in the
17 future.

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Do you think there's
19 a need for an increase in the budget headcount for
20 CGE?

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: You know,
because the prelim budget is out and then there's
going to be prelim hearings, budget hearings in the
coming weeks, you know, we would look forward to
having those conversations at that time.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Commissioner, I'm
3 asking because we don't get a preliminary budget
4 hearing, and so if you believe there's a need for an
5 increase, this is the moment to say it. But we can
6 also talk offline, see what I can prioritize.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: That sounds
8 great. Thank you so much for the question, and I
9 definitely appreciate the attention.

10 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Amazing. And are
11 there any specific budget needs that you folks have
12 right now for FY27?

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAIR: Again, I would
14 say I would have to circle back. You know, I
15 definitely appreciate the question and, you know, as
16 prelim budget conversations continue, happy to, you
17 know, give more information.

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Great. Thank you so
19 much.

20 I'm going to move over to the Mayor's
21 Office to End Gender-Based Violence. What trainings
does ENDGBV offer to City agencies? How are those
trainings evaluated? And have there been any
adjustments made to them over the last couple of
years?

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: We do a series
3 of seven different trainings for City agencies
4 involving gender-based violence, intimate partner
5 violence, human trafficking, trauma-informed care,
6 to name a few. Right now, about half of those
7 trainings are conducted virtually and the other half
8 are conducted in person. Not for all our trainings,
9 but for a subset of them, we do pre- and post-surveys
10 to measure knowledge and then look at how that
11 knowledge has changed from the training that they
12 have received. I'm not sure if I answered all your
13 questions.

14 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And any adjustments?
15 Have you seen any trends that you've had to readapt
16 any of the trainings or the curriculum?

17 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I can jump in a
18 little bit because it's like everybody sees a
19 training team that does these trainings that we
20 offer. We also do a lot of training through our
21 Family Justice Centers and sort of one-off training.
So, you know, our Family Justice Center staff in
particular and our providers do all kinds of, you
know, trainings on public benefits, and so they're
seeing all those changes and kind of adapting that

1 content to what's happening federally and in the
2 world around us. And we've also recently done a lot
3 of training over the past few years with the migrant
4 shelters on identifying domestic and gender-based
5 violence, identifying things like human trafficking.
6 And like, as those, you know, sort of unique City
7 projects have come together, we're always involved in
8 trying to make sure that as we're creating these new
9 systems and these new places to house people in
10 particular, we're, you know, identifying survivors,
11 and those are often one-off that are not part of our
12 ongoing, but we're always adapting our content.

CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Okay. Great.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Sorry. The one
13 thing that we've also done is instead of having
14 agencies just schedule trainings with us, we a few
15 times a month just have open provider trainings. We
16 schedule training for a certain time, send out the
17 ability to register for them, and they have been very
18 successful. Our average training for an agency would
19 have about, say, 50 to 60 people in it, and those
20 trainings are averaging about 200 to 250.

CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: That's really great.

1 This kind of goes to the next question of
2 what type of outreach is ENDGBV currently doing
3 around issues pertaining to gender-based violence.
4 I'm assuming this is one piece of it in terms of
5 outreach.

6 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah. The training
7 and outreach. I think we also, you know, again, I
8 think in the past, it's a year and a half, you know,
9 we've rebranded, we've stepped up our social media
10 presence, we've created a new newsletter that's
11 weekly. And so all of that stuff I think is new and
12 evolving in outreach. And we're still incredibly
13 committed to working with communities across the city
14 and working with our community-based organizations
15 because I think, you know, when it comes to our
16 issue, it's like there's a general outreach, but
17 there's also outreach that has to be tailored to meet
18 the needs of the community that, that you're speaking
19 to, and like, you know, it's an issue that, you know,
20 touches everybody but, but impacts folks differently,
21 and so it's always something I think, you know, when
we say one of our priorities is public awareness, I
think it's all of it, right? It's from the very
beginning of understanding, getting folks to identify

2 that this is an issue, and then also really focusing
3 in on how do we reach more survivors, the most
4 isolated survivors.

5 CHAIRPERSON FARIAS: Are you usually
6 using, like, referral... other than, like, socials,
7 email marketing, things like that, is there an
8 allocation in your budget that's for, like, using the
9 LinkNYC system, using MTA, like our subway?

10 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah. We do have an
11 ongoing budget for public awareness and I think, you
12 know, I'll use an example of the Street Harassment
13 Prevention Advisory Board, right? So I think when
14 we're committed to something, and one of the things
15 we want to do as part of that work and part of the
16 survey, and, and the outcomes of the survey was do
17 more public awareness around street harassment. And
18 so we are often, because of our budget, our
19 programmatic budget, able to find surplus to fund
20 these one-off things. And so we are working on, you
21 know, getting that approved through sort of a
self-funded project. We do also have an ongoing
annual budget for public awareness.

CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And are there any key takeaways from the 2024 Street Harassment Survey and how it's impacted ENDGBV's work?

COMMISSIONER SETHI: I mean, I think, yeah. Priya highlighted some of the surveys, but I think thinking about the public awareness piece is definitely one of them, right? It's like that became really clear as when it comes to street harassment, it's so widespread and often, and really where we need to start is getting folks to identify it as an issue. And I think it goes to really thinking about, you know, again, for our office, how much of our work is really based in culture change, and that's really the goal, right, and so public awareness like that, we really have to start with folks to identify that this is a problem at all, and that's so much of the work. And then really work to shift people's, you know, kind of ideas of how we're willing to treat each other and what we're, you know, willing to sort of accept broadly. And so I think that the street harassment work has really helped inform that shift overall in some ways. And, Ed, feel free to jump in.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: The only thing, and Priya mentioned this, is how young people

1 reporting that it started and, and, and kind of
2 helping us direct that, you know, we have the RAPP
3 program and how we can kind of use the RAPP program
4 to also get that information out and get folks to
5 understand that issue more clearly.

6 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: I appreciate that.

7 In the 2024 Street Harassment Survey
8 report, it didn't have a disaggregate data set up by
9 gender identity. Is there any reason why we didn't do
that?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Yeah. I'm going
11 to apologize here that I can't answer that question,
12 but I will go back and look to see why we did not do
that.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Sure. Thank you.

14 The 2025 FJC client satisfaction survey
15 reflects language needs among clients. Were there any
16 languages requested at higher rates than in previous
17 years, and do we anticipate expanding language
capacity in FY26?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: So, the
19 satisfaction survey is kind of a subset of clients.
20 So we're seeing, you know, in excess of 15,000 to
21 16,000 clients a year, and we had roughly, I think if

2 I remember correctly, about 1,100 clients fill out
3 that survey. So, the FJCs have a robust ability to
4 provide translation services, and those services are
5 available to all clients either telephonically or
6 through staff who speak the language that's needed.

7 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah. And we can go
8 back and see if there's any trends in terms of
9 language access and language use. We don't have that
10 on hand. I will say anecdotally, it's like we're
11 generally able to accommodate everybody, even if it
12 takes a little while.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: I get that.

14 And according to your testimony in
15 October, the Fatality Advisory Committee established
16 under Executive Order 36 will conduct its first case
17 reviews this year. Do you know when the first report
18 will be available?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: So, the
20 Fatality Advisory Committee, it'll do its first
21 review later this year. I'm hoping for the
22 August-September timeline. That is a little fluid
23 because there are a lot of steps involved in getting
24 agencies to collect information for us and making the
25 family aware of the victim that we're doing this and

2 giving them an opportunity to weigh in on that. But
3 we're hoping for, let's say, the August to September
4 timeline. The FAC operates under the Department of
5 Health Institutional Review Board, so it's considered
6 a research entity, and to preserve the identity of
7 the both victim and perpetrator in the case that
8 we're reviewing, we're not allowed to identify them.
9 So, we can't publish a report each year. We have to
10 wait till we get a sufficient number of cases
11 reviewed that we can issue a report, and people
12 wouldn't be able to identify the victim whose cases
13 we reviewed.

14 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Is the discretion of
15 that percentage at your discretion, or is there a
16 threshold that you're trying to meet?

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: That's actually
18 at the discretion of the IRB and, having
19 conversations with them, we haven't settled on what
20 that number would be. Since we'll be doing one case
21 this year and then two cases a year going forward, it
might be three or four years before we can do a case.

CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Or report, I
should say.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: For those folks in
3 the room, I'm a new Chair so we're going back on some
4 things to check in, but that's great. That makes more
5 sense, and that gives us a better understanding of
6 when we should check in.

7 And then I'd like to ask some questions
8 on Intro. 296. In October, you testified that you had
9 concerns about feasibility and privacy about
10 Introduction 296, and at the time, for your
11 reference, it was Intro. 1416. Could you expand on
12 what barriers you see to implementing this bill?

13 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah. I mean, so we
14 can, you know, talk a little bit. I think in terms of
15 feasibility, we're thinking about our own internal
16 capacity in terms of staffing to do this and manage
17 this, as well as other City agencies. I think we're
18 also thinking about how data is currently collected
19 around City agencies and thinking about the various
20 State mandates. So, ACS and DSS may have different
21 State mandates and how they're reporting on this
22 issue. And so I think there's some work to be done
23 there and sort of how do we align this and do this in
24 a way that makes sense. I also think when we're
25 thinking about the healthcare system, the bill did

1 mention that the healthcare system, we think about
2 feasibility, especially with like the private
3 hospital sector and and HIPAA and how we get some of
4 that information. On the privacy side, it really is
5 around, you know, reporting data in aggregate, which
6 we do on our website, but really thinking through
7 what are the times when the numbers are so low that
8 we may not want to report because it could
9 potentially make a survivor unsafe or make them
10 identifiable, right, if we're talking about shelter
11 data. So, yeah, so I think broadly those, I think
12 it's all things that we could sort of talk through,
13 but just would love to have the conversation. And Ed,
14 feel free to jump in.

15 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yeah. I mean, I would
16 love to hear your feedback on that so I can work with
17 the prime sponsor on a bill that feels feasible to
18 both you folks on the other end, the Administration,
19 and for what the prime sponsor would like to see as a
20 result in the reporting. I do think it's
21 comprehensive data that we really need to look at,
but I totally hear some of the concerns you're
raising.

2 COMMISSIONER SETHI: And we would tend to
3 agree, right? I think it's one of those things where
4 it's great to have other data sets on this topic in
5 addition to the criminal justice data, which we
6 usually rely on.

7 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yeah.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: I could just
9 add one thing. I think from the privacy issue that
10 the Commissioner raised, I think is like probably the
11 primary concern that I would have as a data person.
12 And that all comes down to the kind of demographic
13 data that we want to include. The more demographic
14 data you include and geographic location heightens
15 the risk that someone might be able to actually
16 identify the actual person who's in the aggregate
17 data. I think that's, like, you know, probably the
18 biggest concern, but I do think that's something that
19 we can talk through and kind of hopefully resolve.

20 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Sure. Thank you for
21 that.

I'd like to go into some of the annual
reports. Big day. Buckle in. Okay. According to your
annual report on domestic violence initiatives,
indicators and factors, Family Justice Centers

1 assisted approximately the same number of individual
2 clients in 2024 and in 2025, but there were 3,500
3 more visits in 2025 than 2024. So how do you
4 interpret the increase in total visits relative to
5 stable client counts? And then looking back three to
6 five, are FJC visits trending upward or have they
7 plateaued post-pandemic?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: As far as the
9 number of clients served versus the number of visits,
10 I think that shows that clients are more engaged,
11 right? They're coming back more often for services,
12 having more multiple visits. And to be quite honest
13 with you, looking back over the last five years of
14 FJC data, during the early COVID period when we had
15 to transition quickly to virtual client visits, that
16 data I would say is not as reliable as current data
17 so I couldn't go back to you and say since, you know,
18 2020, client visits have been increasing. But client
19 visits have definitely been increasing from 2023,
20 2024, to 2025, and they seem to continue to be
21 increasing in the early part of this year.

CHAIRPERSON FARIAS: Do you folks have or
evaluate the data set to see how many of the visits
are related to the same client coming in more

2 consistently for direct services versus new
3 clientele? Like, are these new individual 3,500 more
4 people, or is this just more visits per year?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: We do look at
6 that. To give you a more specific answer, I think I'd
7 have to get back to you.

8 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: The number of
10 new clients has stayed relatively stable, so a lot of
11 that increase in visits are people who have already
12 been engaged coming back more.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. According to
14 the 2025 Annual Report on Domestic Violence
15 Initiatives Indicators and Factors, Family Justice
16 Centers only offers SNAP assistance at the Bronx and
17 Brooklyn locations. Why is SNAP not available
18 citywide at each center?

19 COMMISSIONER SETHI: We can follow up on
20 that a little bit more, but what I will say is, you
21 know, all of our FJCs do have food pantry and so, you
know, I have to look specifically at what that SNAP
is capturing because they all have HRA public
assistance folks on site, so they're all set up to do
this, but we'll follow up.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay, great. The 2024
3 ENDGBV Fact Sheet reports intimate partner homicides
4 declined from 43 in 2023 to 33 in 2024. What
5 prevention strategies do you believe contributed to
6 this decline, or if there's any other data consistent
7 or inconsistent with this trend?

8 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I mean, I could jump
9 in, but I think, you know, one of the things that
10 sort of strikes me over that period is that, like,
11 we've just been talking about it more, which is
12 great, right? Like, people have been saying, oh,
13 domestic violence, just being part of the
14 conversation in that way feels new and feels really
15 important as part of that because I think that is an
16 opportunity to reach folks that might be in these
17 situations and might not have sort of identified as
18 such or reached out for help.

19 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: That's great.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: I'm sorry. The
21 only thing I would add there is some of that is
coming out of COVID where we saw an increase in IPV
homicides, and now you're seeing people getting
reconnected, I believe, to services and getting

1
2 reconnected to community-based organizations, and
3 that is helping seeing that decline in IPV homicides.

4 CHAIRPERSON FARIAS: That's great. The
5 2024 Fact Sheet also shows that the HOPE hotline
6 calls declined from 87,985 in 2023 to 81,949 in 2024.
7 How do you interpret this decrease? Reduced violence
8 or reduced reporting? And were there any early
9 2025-2026 hotline trends in that time period?

10 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I'll start and, you
11 know, pass over to Ed, but I think in general I would
12 assume it's reduced reporting, not necessarily
13 reduced violence, right, because I know we haven't
14 seen the data that the violence has been reduced. And
15 so I think, again, for me in particular, as I think
16 about this is where, like, the public awareness piece
17 just feels so much more important to, like, all the
18 work that we do. And I think, you know, our office
19 has done such a good job of focusing on services, and
20 I really think it's time to shift more on, like, how
21 do we do more on prevention, public awareness,
22 outreach, and just make sure that people know. I
23 mean, you know, in New York City, I feel like that's
24 a forever job, making sure that folks know about the
25 resources resources available.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yeah.

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: And I'm going
4 to sound like a broken record. I apologize. Some of
5 the declines that you're seeing, if you would go back
6 into like the 2019-2020 time period, you'll see that
7 the numbers spiked significantly during COVID,
8 especially after the first three or four months, and
9 I think what you're seeing now is kind of return to
10 the mean, the number of calls going back down closer
11 to the what they were COVID, although I will say
12 they're still elevated from that time period.

11 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay.

12 And the 2024 Fact Sheet also notes
13 efforts to improve tracking of the number of virtual
14 visits to Family Justice Centers, as you mentioned.
15 Has virtual service tracking been fully standardized
16 in 2025?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: I wish I could
17 say yes. So, we have actually implemented what we
18 thought was going to be a fix to easily track virtual
19 visits. I mean, not to get technical here, but as it
20 turns out, we put that tracking piece where you make
21 the appointment, and so we track visits through a
different table in the database, and we're having

2 trouble linking that data. I've been working actually
3 with OTI to figure out how to actually do that
4 analysis so it's accurate.

5 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. What kind of
6 services are offered virtually?

7 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I mean, I think all
8 of our services are offered virtually. And so I
9 think, you know, I think if you're case management,
10 counseling, all of that. But then if you're working
11 with a lawyer, there are times you're going to have
12 to come in and do an in-person visit. But any legal
13 services that we could do, immigration, legal, family
14 law, virtually, we will. But there are times that you
15 might have to.

16 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Great.

17 And what percentage of FJC visits are
18 currently virtual?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: As I noted, I'm
20 having a little bit of difficulty linking the virtual
21 checkbox on the appointments. But from the analysis
that we are doing, preliminarily it looks almost 40
percent, but I will say I can get back to you once I
work through some of the technical issues with OTI.

2 That percentage might change. I don't think it's
3 going to change a lot.

4 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. I wrote kind of
5 40. Oh, okay.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Yeah, I'm
7 sorry. I mean, I'm just trying to...

8 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: That's fine.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: Yeah, yeah.

10 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: You're totally fine.
11 And does this vary by demographic or
12 geographic variables at all from what we're seeing?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: It doesn't vary
14 by geographic very much, maybe within a few
15 percentage points for each FJC. I have not looked at
16 it further than that because of the technical
17 difficulties that we're having.

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Sure. Okay. Almost
19 there with you folks.

20 Okay. The 2025 FRC annual report
21 indicates that DSS and HRA had contact with 22.7
percent of victims and 38.2 percent of perpetrators,
more than any other reported agency, including NYPD
and ACS. Does ENDGBV or DSS HRA track how many of the

1 victims who interacted with DSS were screened for
2 domestic or family violence during those encounters?

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: We do not get
4 that information from DSS through the FRC work. We
5 only get information about whether they had contact
6 with the perpetrator or the victim and not any
7 specifics about that contact.

8 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And do you know, of
9 the victims who had contact with DSS, how many were
10 accessing domestic violence-specific shelter or
11 services versus general public assistance or benefit
12 programs?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HILL: I believe that
14 breakdown is in the report, but I don't have it in
15 front of me. We can get back to you with that
16 information.

17 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Sure.

18 Long-term fatality data identifies a
19 disparity for Black men in family homicides with a
20 3.95 risk ratio, meaning they are represented among
21 family homicide victims at nearly four times the rate
22 expected based on their share of the general
23 population. This risk ratio now exceeds the 3.53 risk
24 ratio for Black women in intimate partner homicides.

2 How is the City responding to this trend in family
3 homicide patterns?

4 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I mean, I think this
5 has been a key part of why we've, you know, developed
6 this new program to address family violence
7 specifically, right, is that we've kind of recognized
8 looking at this data over time that, that the IPV
9 sort of homicides have been relatively stable, but
10 where we're seeing the need and the increase is
11 really on the family violence side, and we don't have
12 dedicated services the same way that we do for IPV.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay.

14 I will send follow-up questions to that,
15 but I definitely agree that we need more investment
16 in some of those programmings. The risk ratios are
17 too high on both ends for Black families.

18 And then my finance questions. What is
19 ENDGBV's current Fiscal 2026 budget? I know it's in
20 your testimony, you stated that.

21 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, yeah, our Fiscal
budget is about 65 million dollars for 2026, and that
does include some public-private partnerships.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And is that
3 also the anticipated FY 2027 budget for the
4 preliminary plan that was released last week?

5 COMMISSIONER SETHI: I think it's slightly
6 higher, but I'll follow up with you.

7 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And does ENDGBV
8 have any funding needs that were not addressed so far
9 in the FY27 preliminary budget?

10 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: We can follow up.

11 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And your
12 current budgeted headcount and how many vacancies?

13 COMMISSIONER SETHI: So, we have a
14 headcount of 80, and we have a staff of 59 right now,
15 so a vacancy rate of 26 percent.

16 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Sorry. Tell me the
17 percentage again.

18 COMMISSIONER SETHI: It's 26 percent.

19 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: 26 percent vacancy.

20 Thank you so much.

21 Okay. I'm going to move over to the
Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice. Can I
just ask what the primary indicators your agency uses
to assess gender equity in New York City and if
there's any recent data available or trends over the

2 past three to five years that you're focusing on?

3 Yes, no, maybe, no? Okay.

4 Let's see. Let's go just to NYC Her
5 Future. Wasn't sure if they gave you some of that,
6 but thank you.

7 I have some questions on the Doula Work
8 Program. Do you know how many participants are
9 partaking in that program currently?

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FORDE: Yes. So, it's
11 done at a CUNY, so it's done semester by semester.
12 So, each semester, it's been 50 in the last semester,
13 so a total of 100 and the numbers have been
14 increasing. And it's a mixture of community members
15 and nursing students who want a more holistic
16 approach and understanding of what it looks like to
17 be in practice and lifting up more culturally
18 relevant approaches to clinicians when they're inside
19 of the hospitals.

20 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Great.

21 And how do you track interest,
22 participations, and outcomes for each of the
23 projects?

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FORDE: So, we have
25 been working with our... we work with our program

1 partners and our agency partners to develop KPIs and
2 metrics in tandem with them and making sure that the
3 metrics are fair but also that they're pushing us to
4 get the work done in a way that is grounded in
5 equity. We have, I would say, newer programs.
6 Everything's new with us. So, let's start there. So,
7 we meet with our agency partners weekly, and then we
8 move to monthly meetings where we're just kind of
9 learning about the programs and going in tandem. So,
10 we're taking demographic data, everything from
11 non-identifiable data obviously on our end, but
12 demographic data is in understanding attendance and
13 retention. So, if you heard from my testimony, we can
14 tell, like, the rate of participation, but also how
15 many individuals are actually completing the program
16 the way it was designed to be completed. And that
17 requires just a series, depending on the start of the
18 program and depending on the agency, either it's
19 biweekly, monthly, and then it moves to quarterly
20 reporting out. So, we provide the performance
21 measurements.

CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay, great.

And how do you see or have you already
started planning some work with the other projects

2 within, like, Young Men's Initiative or the Unity
3 Project?

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FORDE: Yes. So, I
5 would say we work closely with the Young Men's
6 Initiative with some of our work. We had, what I
7 would consider, people enjoy our Rites of Passage
8 program, in which we honored all the young people in
9 New York City in public school to participate in
10 programs. We actually have an event coming up, a
11 college signing day. You hear my team back there
12 signing, signing, the college signing day, which is
13 in partnership with the New York City Young Men's
14 Initiative. And then I think the other pieces are the
15 conversations, as I mentioned in my testimony, to
16 just have a deeper understanding of where the work is
17 aligned and how we can support and be allies in those
18 spaces, understanding that there is a nuance when
19 we're supporting different parts of the larger
20 ecosystem. And then Priya mentioned just some work
21 we've been doing with them around the Period
Campaign. So whether it's campaigning, whether it's
programmatic work, we're deepening in this
Administration our commitment to working together.

CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Got it.

1 The only last question that comes to mind
2 for you, and I have this under the Young Men's
3 Initiative bucket in case they were present today,
4 but are we having any open dialogue or conversations,
5 whether that's YMI and NYC Her Future or even just
6 putting young people together in how do we fight,
7 like, toxic masculinity, this what I feel like is
8 anti-woman narrative that gets out there, or even
9 really, like, more specific things like revenge porn
10 and things like that, where I think, like, we're in
11 an age of lots of tech usage, we're in a space where
12 these are young people in front of us where we can
13 develop them a bit more. Like, are we having the
14 harder conversations between these two projects and
15 how we have accessibility to young people and
16 hopefully how we can also integrate, you know, their
17 minds a little bit deeper as they are aging?

 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FORDE: I'm smiling
16 because I love this question. Thank you, thank you,
17 thank you. Yes. I'll say yes, we've been having the
18 conversations. As we mentioned, our program with
19 Future Force with ACS, even though that's a Her
20 Future program, one of the things to note both for
21 YMI and NYC Her Future is our program support all.

1 Like, if you come in, you can join. While we don't
2 run program, our agency partners and the community
3 partners that we work with knows that you don't turn
4 anybody away. However, you do need to understand who
5 we're prioritizing here. So, I do want to say that.
6 The other piece is, yes, we're having the
7 conversations. The program ACS Future Force, the
8 piece that sometimes the KPIs and the metrics meet,
9 was really about our young people talking to each
10 other and having those conversations with each other
11 and leading with this understanding that they have
12 autonomy over who they're going to be and the things
13 that they enjoy but, most importantly, how are they
14 navigating social media and a lot of those pieces. We
15 partner with NYC Service for the YA50, which is a
16 cohort of young people that come in that are advising
17 our work. And a piece of it, these conversations keep
18 coming up. So, they're in the place of creating some...
19 and they really put this all under mental health, and
20 they've been having the conversations and really
21 pushing us to think about how do they facilitate a
mental health training for their peers but also to
have some of those harder conversations. There's
synergy across, and I think as we are looking forward

2 in this Administration is really deepening the work
3 and deepening those conversations, and those are
4 conversations we've had with the Young Men's
5 Initiative to really strengthen that. Again, we're
6 just a year old so it's there, but I really do
7 appreciate the question because I think sometimes we
8 forget that it is those conversations, the things
9 that they're listening to on social media that kind
10 of needs to be grounded in the work in a real way. So
11 yes, yes, yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Amazing. Yeah, I
13 mean, you know, I look at some of the data that's
14 presented in front of me and it's like, this data is
15 going to persist if we don't actually get into the
16 work with young people really early and try to help
17 shape a lot of what can change the culture, shifting
18 the culture so I appreciate the response.

19 COMMISSIONER SETHI: Yeah. I was going to
20 say, I think that's where we can deepen our
21 partnership to, right, with some of our healthy
22 relationship sort of work too. It's great.

23 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Amazing.

24 Well, I don't have any additional
25 questions.

2 Anyone has anything left to say, this is
3 your moment. If not, the dais is dismissed. Thank you
4 so much for joining me today.

5 Okay. Great. I'm now going to open the
6 hearing for public testimony. I remind members of the
7 public that this is a government proceeding and that
8 decorum shall be observed at all times.

9 Members of the public shall remain silent
10 unless called upon to testify. All testimony must be
11 relevant to today's hearing on the State of Gender
12 Equity in New York City. If remarks stray from the
13 subject matter, speakers will be reminded of the
14 topic and to refocus their comments.

15 The witness table is reserved for people
16 who wish to testify. No video recording or
17 photography is allowed from the witness table.
18 Further, members of the public may not present audio
19 or video recordings as testimony, but may submit
20 transcripts of such recordings to the
21 Sergeant-at-Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

 If you wish to speak at today's hearing,
please fill out an appearance slip with the
Sergeant-at-Arms and wait to be recognized. When
recognized, you will have two minutes to speak on

1 today's oversight topic and/or legislation. If you
2 have a written statement or additional written
3 testimony you wish to submit for the record, please
4 provide a copy of that testimony to the
5 Sergeant-at-Arms. You may also email written
6 testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72
7 hours of this hearing. Audio and video recordings
8 will not be accepted.

9 I'll now call the first panel. Adio
10 Motayne, I apologize. Adio Motayne. Thank you. Sorry.
11 There's a little thing here. Okay. Melissa Norden and
12 Liz Roberts.

13 Adio, you can begin when ready.

14 ADIO MOTAYNE: Good afternoon, Chair
15 Farías and Council Members, and thank you for
16 organizing today's hearing. My name is Adio Motayne.
17 I am the Data Manager at the Violence Intervention
18 Program, also known as VIP. VIP is New York City's
19 only nonprofit led by and for Latin survivors of
20 domestic and sexual violence. VIP is also a member of
21 The Collective, a group of culturally specific
organizations working with immigrants and survivors
of color in NYC. The Collective is proud to have
collaborated with Council Member Farah Louis on the

1 drafting of Intro. 0296, a bill focused on data
2 collection by City agencies, in particular DOHMH,
3 DSS, and ACS. As a data manager of an anti-violence
4 organization, this bill is personally important to me
5 because I see every day how data can be a tool for
6 safety, accountability, and equity, not just a
7 compliance requirement. In my role, I work to make
8 sure our systems capture what survivors actually
9 experience, and what services they actually receive,
10 so that programs can respond in real time and
11 leadership can make decisions based on evidence, not
12 assumptions. When data is missing or inconsistent,
13 survivors can become invisible in the very system
14 designed to support them, and resources follow that
15 invisibility. I also believe deeply that data must be
16 collected and used responsibly. In our work, we have
17 to be clear about why we collect sensitive
18 demographic information, limit access to it, and
19 protect confidentiality because survivors should
20 never have to trade their privacy for help. When data
21 practices are trauma-informed and culturally
responsive, they allow us to understand disparities
without putting people at additional risk. The same
is true for our City agencies, that they are not

1 screened and counted does not mean that survivors did
2 not go to City agencies for help. And if they're not
3 counted, how can cities possibly reduce the violence
4 experienced by survivors? It is necessary to hold
5 agencies accountable for data collection and
6 analysis, and without it, the City's strategies will
7 be riddled with blind spots and tragically
8 ineffective. (TIMER CHIME) Should I keep going? I
9 have one paragraph. Okay. This Council has the power
10 to do something to change that, to make sure that all
11 experiences of violence are counted and count in the
12 formation of policy and resource allocation. I
13 commend the Council members who have sponsored bills
14 to gather and disseminate data that will shine a
15 light on the trends and patterns for survivors who
16 seek assistance throughout the City programs. VIP
17 stands ready to assist in getting this bill across
18 the finish line. Thank you.

16 MELISSA NORDEN: Good afternoon, Chair
17 Farías. My name is Melissa Norden. I am the Executive
18 Director of Bottomless Closet, a New York City-based
19 non-profit that has supported nearly 50,000 women
20 entering and re-entering the workforce over the past
21 25 years. We provide professional attire, career

1 readiness training, and ongoing support to low-income
2 women across the city seeking economic independence.
3 We are facing another she-cession where U.S. women,
4 particularly with mothers, are leaving the workforce
5 at high rates due to unaffordable child care, lack of
6 workplace flexibility, increased caregiving burdens,
7 and persistent wage gaps, leading to significant
8 drops in female labor force participation, with over
9 half a million women exiting the U.S. workforce in
10 2025. The New York City unemployment rate is over 5.5
11 percent for the first time since the pandemic. It's
12 close to 10 percent for women of color who make up 90
13 percent of our client population. The National
14 Institute of Health reports that one in two survivors
15 of gender-based violence in the US report losing a
16 job due to abuse. Survivors lose a total of 8 million
17 days of paid work each year, which is equivalent to
18 roughly 32,000 full-time jobs. I am here representing
19 Bottomless Closet in strong support of legislation
20 requiring the Mayor's Office to End Gender-Based
21 Violence, to strengthen coordination, transparency,
and reporting around gender-based violence data
citywide. Gender-based violence is not a marginal
issue in New York City. It's pervasive and systemic.

1 According to the NYPD, there are more than 200,000
2 domestic incident reports filed annually in New York
3 City. Nationally, the CDC reports that one in four
4 women experience severe intimate partner violence in
5 a lifetime, and New York City mirrors these national
6 trends. In New York City shelters, a substantial
7 percentage of families with children entering the
8 system cite domestic violence as a primary cause of
9 homelessness. These numbers represent not just
10 incidents, but disruptions to housing stability,
11 physical health, (TIMER CHIME) employment, and
12 long-term economic mobility. At Bottomless Closet, we
13 see the economic impact of gender-based violence
14 every day. Survivors forced to leave jobs due to
15 safety concerns, missed work because of court dates,
16 medical appointments, or relocation, financial abuse
17 resulting in damaged credit and barriers to housing,
18 and workplace instability linked to trauma-related
19 health challenges. Yet, our system often operates in
20 silos. Law enforcement collects one set of data,
21 healthcare providers another set, social services,
child welfare, housing agencies, and workforce
programs collect the additional pieces. Without
coordinated integration, we lack a full picture of

2 how gender-based violence correlates with
3 unemployment and public benefits usage. This
4 legislation moves the City towards a comprehensive,
5 evidence-based response.

6 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: I'm going to stop you
7 there just because your time has expired, and we have
8 the testimony with the rest of the statement. Okay.
9 Thank you so much.

10 You can begin.

11 LIZ ROBERTS: Good afternoon, Chair
12 Farías, and to my colleagues from VIP and Bottomless
13 Closet. Thank you for the opportunity to provide
14 testimony on the state of gender equity in New York
15 City. My name is Liz Roberts, and I'm the CEO of Safe
16 Horizon. We're the nation's largest non-profit victim
17 assistance organization, and we reach 250,000
18 survivors of violence, abuse, and exploitation every
19 year.

20 I want to talk today, and I'll keep it
21 brief, about how gender-based violence, including
22 domestic domestic violence, sexual assault, child
23 sexual abuse, and human trafficking is preventing us
24 from achieving gender equity in New York City.

25 Numerous studies have shown the harmful impact of

1 gender-based violence, not just on survivors'
2 freedoms and opportunities, but very specifically on
3 their financial circumstances. And we know that these
4 forms of violence, of course, affect New Yorkers of
5 all genders, but the impact on girls, women,
6 transgender and non-binary people is disproportionate
7 and severe. So, to address these pressing issues, we
8 are urging the City Council to continue to invest in
9 a diverse array of services and programs for
10 survivors, as you have done for many years. We know
11 that City Council discretionary funding can make a
12 huge difference in quickly connecting survivors and
13 their families to services in their communities.
14 We're also calling on the City Council and the Mayor
15 to develop and invest in a comprehensive citywide
16 plan to prevent gender-based violence. While the City
17 has invested in significant ways in services for
18 survivors and for those who cause harm and, of
19 course, we know there are many unmet needs, we feel
20 that the investment in prevention of violence at its
21 root, or further upstream, if you will, is woefully
inadequate. And we need a bold strategy that goes
further upstream essentially to prevent gender-based
violence before it happens. (TIMER CHIME) That was so

1 fast. Just to end, while these facts, you know, we
2 know that all these forms of gender-based violence
3 damage the long-term health, mental health, and
4 economic opportunities of survivors. We know that
5 financial abuse is very often, I would say almost
6 always, a part of the picture, and that interference
7 with job advancement is very often a part of the
8 picture. We also know what works, timely,
9 trauma-informed interventions that meet the needs of
10 survivors in every community. And we're so grateful
11 for the Council's investment in the Dove Initiative,
12 The SAVE Initiative, the Initiative to Combat Sexual
13 Assault and for Persons Involved in the Sex Trade.
14 So, I want to urge the Council to maintain and
15 enhance funding for those initiatives, and with a
16 reminder that many of the non-profits in this space
17 have lost funding due to new federal policies or
18 threatened with lost funding. We receive threatening
19 letters from the feds all the time at this point.
20 It's really alarming, and so our reliance on the
21 Council and the City is greater than it has ever
been. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you all so much
3 for your testimony today. This panel is now
4 adjourned.

5 I'm going to move to virtual testimony.

6 I'm going to first call on Eunji Byun.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

8 EUNJI BYUN: Good morning, Chair Amanda
9 Fariás and Council Members. Thank you for the
10 opportunity to testify today and for your leadership
11 in addressing the urgent needs of survivors of
12 gender-based violence in New York City. For over 35
13 years, the Korean American Family Service Center,
14 KAFSC, has worked alongside survivors, many of them
15 immigrant women and children, as they rebuild their
16 lives after abuse. Our team provides counseling,
17 legal and housing assistance, financial support,
18 workforce development, and youth programming, and we
19 operate a 24-hour bilingual hotline. We are also a
20 proud member of The Collective, a coalition of
21 community-based organizations serving survivors of
color and immigrant survivors across New York City.
Every day, KAFSC meets clients who come to us as last
tool resource after months or even years of suffering
in silence. In 2025, our hotline responded to 4,923

1 calls, and our advocates supported nearly 3,000
2 survivors and family members. Yet these numbers do
3 not tell the full story. Many survivors in our
4 community remain unseen and uncounted. And many are
5 hesitant to seek help through police or other City
6 systems because of language barriers, fear related to
7 immigration status, or mistrust based on past
8 experiences. I want to share a brief story that
9 reflects what we see every day. Recently, a
10 Korean-speaking mother came to KAFSC after enduring
11 years of abuse. She had never called the police. She
12 was afraid that seeking help would expose her
13 immigration situation and put her children at risk.
14 She also did not know what resources existed in the
15 city, and she assumed that no one would be able to
16 understand her in her own language. When she finally
17 reached out to our hotline, she did not start by
18 naming the violence. She started by asking quietly,
19 is this confidential? Our advocate was able to
20 reassure her, to greet her in Korean, and explained
21 her options step by step. Over time, with counseling
and safety planning, she was able to access medical
care, secure legal support, and move towards safety
housing. Her story is not unique, but it is often

1 invisible in official systems because she never filed
2 a police report. That is why we strongly support
3 Intro. 296, sponsored by Council Member Louis,
4 previously Intro. 1416. This bill is an important
5 step towards closing the gap between what City data
6 captures and where survivors are actually seeking
7 help. Too often, the data that drives planning and
8 funding decisions relies heavily on police reports
9 which cannot understand immigrant survivors and
10 others who do not feel safe reporting to law
11 enforcement. Intro. 296 would help the City build a
12 more accurate picture by incorporating information
13 from the setting where survivors often turn first,
14 including hospitals, shelters, and community-based
15 providers. With a fuller view of need, The City can
16 better target outreach, allocate resources, and
17 strengthen service coordination across all agencies
18 and neighborhoods. On behalf of KAFSC and the
19 survivors of families we serve, thank you for your
20 leadership and commitment to making New York City
21 safer and more inclusive for all. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you so much for
your testimony, and feel free to email over that

2 testimony so we have it on file to
3 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

4 I'll now call the next virtual
5 participant, Eman Gad.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

7 EMAN GAD: Good afternoon. Thank you,
8 Chair Fariás and Members of the committee for this
9 opportunity. My name is Eman Gad, and I'm the Manager
10 of Policy and Advocacy at Girls for Gender Equity.
11 GGE works intergenerationally through a Black
12 feminist lens to center the leadership of Black girls
13 and gender-expansive young people of color in
14 reshaping culture and policy through advocacy,
15 youth-centered programming, and narrative shift to
16 achieve gender and racial justice. We are here
17 offering this testimony today on our experience as a
18 small Black queer and immigrant-led non-profit
19 organization doing critical racial, gender, and
20 sexuality justice and liberation work in the context
21 of today's hostile world. As I need not tell you, we
are in the face of democratic erosion nationally and
the normalization and validation of sexual violence
against girls and gender-expansive youth, as noted by
the lack of accountability of perpetrators in the

1 Epstein files. This, paired with the continual
2 presence of ICE in our communities, is impacting the
3 mental health and well-being of youth that attend our
4 programs, as well as youth across the city at large.
5 Our youth feel powerless, which our staff has been
6 responding to in real time by shifting program
7 curriculum, increasing one-on-ones, updating
8 in-office safety protocols, and developing a whole
9 new organizing arm and campaign to tend to current
10 real-world needs and re-empower our young people. To
11 further exacerbate these problems, attacks against
12 DEI and racial justice work have led foundations to
13 steer away from funding our work. Over the past year
14 alone, GGE has faced decreased funding from across
15 the sector, including funders spending down
16 portfolios and reducing investment away from gender
17 and racial justice organizations. In response to
18 these challenges, GGE had to previously implement
19 necessary structural changes, including reducing
20 staff by seven positions and scaling back certain
21 programs. This current fiscal year, we are projecting
a budget deficit of approximately 1 million dollars,
which underscores the urgency of securing multi-year
flexible funding and a stronger partnership with City

1 Council to stabilize operations and sustain impact,
2 not just for GGE, but for all small non-profit
3 organizations doing this critical work. This is why
4 we formally launched the Alliance on Gender Equity,
5 or AGE, at the end of last year and are requesting
6 300,000 in the form of a new City Council initiative
7 to sustain this work. AGE is a youth-led space for
8 political education, civic engagement, leadership
9 development, and community building for Black girls,
10 queer and gender-expansive youth of color across New
11 York City. The coalition is three-pronged, consisting
12 of one, our GGE youth participants, two, young BIPOC
13 queer and gender-expansive youth aged 16 to 24, and
14 three, adult co-conspirators and non-profit allies
15 who are facing similar issues that I addressed above.
16 So far, we have started convenings of these allied
17 non-profit organizations on a monthly basis to see
18 how we can support and uplift each other with our
19 unique and shared priorities as we face growing
20 attacks against our work and our communities. On the
21 youth side, we held a youth town hall in November
2025 centering young BIPOC girls, gender-expansive,
and LGBTQIA+ youth and cis male allies across all of
New York City's five boroughs. We heard from them in

6 priority areas, including two areas that are of direct interest to this community: reproductive justice and gender and sexuality justice. AGE then took their grievances and recommendations and turned them into a list of demands for New York City and State, which is now the School Girls Demand Campaign. We have formally launched this year. Due to time constraints, I will share the list of demands and list of City-specific requests on an appendix to this testimony. From these demands and more, you can see that GGE is doing the active work despite our financial constraints. With 300,000 in support from City Council through the AGE Initiative, we hope to continue equipping young Black girls, queer, and gender-expansive youth to fight for a New York City that is resilient against harmful national forces working against them. Our goal is to also use these funds to support our education, mobilization, and outreach efforts to other smaller gender justice and queer liberation organizations serving BIPOC, gender-expansive, and LGBTQIA+ youth who are facing the most financial strains but also have the most to lose right now. We hope you consider supporting us in these endeavors. Thank you so much.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you so much for
3 testifying today.

4 If there is anyone on Zoom or in person
5 who has not testified and would like to testify, this
6 is your opportunity to either use the raise hand
7 function or to speak up now in the hearing room.

8 Seeing none, this hearing is now
9 adjourned. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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15 Date April 15, 2026

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