

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON GENERAL WELFARE

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November 22, 2021  
Start: 2:09 P.M.  
Recess: 2:15 P.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING VIRTUAL ROOM 4

B E F O R E: Steven T. Levin, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Steven Levin  
Vanessa Gibson  
Rafael Salamanca  
Darma Diaz  
Barry Grodenchik

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

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3 SGT. BIONDO: Recording to the PC begin

4 SGT. HOPE: Order as well, started

5 SGT. PEREZ: Back up is rolling.

6 SGT BIONDO: Thank you. Good afternoon

7 and welcome today's remote New York City Council vote  
8 on the Committee on General Welfare. At this time,  
9 would all panelist please turn on their video for  
10 verification purposes, and to minimize disruptions,  
11 please place all electronic devices to vibrate or  
12 silent mode. Thank you for cooperation. Chair  
13 Levin, we are ready to begin.

14 CHAIR STEVEN LEVIN: Thank you very much,  
15 Sergeant. I'm going to gavel in here. Good  
16 afternoon everybody. I'm Council Member Steve Levin,  
17 Chair of the Council's Committee on General Welfare.  
18 I want to thank everyone for attending today's  
19 important vote. The three pieces of legislation that  
20 I'll be sponsoring that we are voting on today will  
21 make strides in improving outcome for young people in  
22 New York City who are experiencing housing insecurity  
23 and homelessness. These Bills will expand  
24 eligibility and access to rental assistance programs  
25 through CITYFEPS and insure that youth have the same

2 opportunities to securing housing when exiting  
3 shelter or other temporary settings. Proposed Intro  
4 150 would require the creation of a task force  
5 regarding the transportation of students in temporary  
6 housing. The task force would issue a report  
7 assessing barriers to arranging transportation for  
8 students in temporary housing and recommendations for  
9 addressing those barriers. The task force would also  
10 report on any recommendations that are implemented 12  
11 and 24 months after its submission of the initial  
12 report. Proposed Intro 148 would allow youth who  
13 have spent time in foster care to eligible for  
14 CITYFEPS rental assistance voucher. Any 90 days of  
15 the previous two years spent in foster care would  
16 count as time spent in shelter for purposes of  
17 determining eligibility for the vouchers. Proposed  
18 Intro 2405 would allow youth who have spent time in  
19 runaway and homeless youth services funded by  
20 Department of Youth and Community Development,  
21 otherwise known as DYCD to also be eligible for  
22 CITYFEPS rental assistance vouchers. We have a  
23 responsibility to the young people of the city to  
24 insure that whether they are exiting out of a youth  
25 shelter or the foster care system, that they are

2 eligible to find opportunity and to thrive. Often,  
3 these young people don't have support through  
4 traditional means or the guidance of the agency in  
5 which they are exiting to secure housing or permanent  
6 living arrangements. As we have heard from advocates  
7 and young people themselves, adult shelters are  
8 inadequate at best for this population and often  
9 dangerous and chaotic. Many young people  
10 experiencing homelessness identify as a member of the  
11 LBGTQIA plus community and those in foster care or  
12 temporary settings are more vulnerable to violence  
13 and the very real safety risk of shelter and unstable  
14 housing. Further, homeless youth have been long  
15 waiting on vouchers through the CITYFEPS program  
16 since the mayor pledged access to this program for  
17 youth in early 2017. I'm deeply grateful to the  
18 advocates and young people who have informed this  
19 legislation. It's long overdue that we rectify this  
20 problem for young people in the system. I'd like to  
21 thank the staff of the General Welfare Committee;  
22 Aminta Kilawan, Senior Counsel; Chrystal Pawn, Senior  
23 Policy Analysis; Natalie Amari, Policy Analysis;  
24 Julia Harris, Finance Analysis; and Dan Croup,  
25 Finance Analysis. I'd also like to thank my Chief of

2 Staff, Jonathan Boucher and my Legislative Directors,  
3 Elizbeth Adams and Nicole Hunt, and one special  
4 acknowledgement, I want to acknowledge our late  
5 colleague Lou Fidler, who is the Chair of the Youth  
6 Services Committee in this council for a number of  
7 years and I think of Lou when proposing this  
8 legislation, 2405 in particular. He was so dedicated  
9 to the young people in the RHY system and I just  
10 imagine, you know, his righteous indignation at the  
11 fact that any of those young people are exiting that  
12 system and having to go into an adult shelter system  
13 in order to access a rental assistance voucher, so  
14 you know, this one is for Lou. With that, I'll turn  
15 it over to the Clerk of the Committee.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
17 you. Good afternoon. William Martin, Committee  
18 Clerk, roll call vote, Committee on General Welfare,  
19 Proposed Introductions 148A, 150A, and 2405A. All  
20 items are coupled. Chair Levin.

21 CHAIR LEVIN: Thank you. I vote I on  
22 all.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thanks,  
24 I'm losing it there. Gibson.

1 COMMITTEE ON GENERAL WELFARE

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VANESSA GIBSON:

3 Congratulations Chair Levin. I vote I on all.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
5 you. Grodenchik.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRY GRODENCHIK: It was  
7 nice to hear the late, great Lou Fidler mentioned.  
8 What man he was, and with that, I proudly vote I.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
10 you. Salamanca.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RAFAEL SALAMANCA: I on  
12 all. Congratulations.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
14 you. Darma Diaz.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DARMA DIAZ: I vote I, but  
16 I'd like to thank the Chair for keeping Lou's name  
17 alive. This is definitely a biggie for us that  
18 (inaudible) and had the pleasure of bumping elbows  
19 with Lou. Again thank you. Thank you for what  
20 you're about to do for New York City children.  
21 Thanks. I vote I.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
23 you. By a vote of five in the affirmative, zero in  
24 the negative, and no abstentions, all items have been

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2 adopted by the Committee. We haven't heard from  
3 anyone else, Mr. Chair.

4 CHAIR STEVEN LEVIN: Thank you, Clerk,  
5 and thank you to our Sergeants as well, and to Ms.  
6 Castro as well, and with that, so, we'll adjourn now,  
7 is that right, Mr. Martin?

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Yes,  
9 sir.

10 CHAIR STEVEN LEVIN: Okay, and at 2:15  
11 p.m. this hearing is adjourned. Thank you all.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 22, 2021