

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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Thursday, August 3, 2023

Start: 11:13 A. M.

Recess: 11:22 A. M.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: Hon. Pierina Sanchez, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
Shaun Abreu
Alexa Avilés
Charles Barron
Tiffany Cabán
David M. Carr
Eric Dinowitz
Oswald Feliz
Crystal Hudson

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS
A P P E A R A N C E S
[N/A]

2 SERGEANT LEWIS Mic Check, Mic Check, Mic Check.

3 This a test on today's Committee on Housing and
4 Buildings. Today's date is August 3, 2023. Location
5 is Committee Room. Recorded by Walter Lewis
6 [phonetic].

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to the
8 New York City Council Vote of the Committee on
9 Housing and Buildings.

10 At this time, can everyone please place all
11 electronic devices to vibrate or silent mode. Thank
12 you for your cooperation.

13 Chair, we are ready to begin.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ:

15 [GAVELING IN] [GAVEL SOUND]

16 Good morning, I am Council Member Pierina
17 Sanchez, Chair of the Committee on Housing and
18 Buildings.

19 We are here today to vote on two bills aimed at
20 providing assistance to homeowners and continuing our
21 vote from last month, three additional bills
22 targeting lead-based paint hazards in multiple
23 dwellings.

24 When we talk about housing, the focus can often
25 be on affordable rental housing developments in our

1 rental stock, which are extremely important
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3 recourses. But, home ownership is a critical tool
4 for building generational wealth. And we cannot
5 overlook the fact that certain groups from our City
6 have been historically blocked from this opportunity
7 -- our communities of color.

8 The homeownership rate in New York City hovers
9 around 31 percent, and is significantly lower in
10 communities of color. There continue to be too few
11 opportunities to help homeowners achieve the dream of
12 home ownership and, for those who are homeowners,
13 there are too few resources to help them improve and
14 keep their homes.

15 At this committee's Homeownership Hearing on May
16 3rd, 2023, the Administrative acknowledged how
17 expensive it is to finance affordable homes. And
18 advocates shared their experiences with roadblocks in
19 trying to develop more homeownership opportunities.

20 In an effort to protect homeownership rates,
21 especially in those communities that have homeowners,
22 we need to support them in maintaining in their homes
23 and building intergenerational equity.

24 To that end, we are voting on two bills:
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2 PROPOSED INT. NO. 384-A, sponsored by Council
3 Member Brooks-Power, would create the Office of the
4 Homeowner Advocate within the Department of Housing
5 Preservation and Development.

6 Proposed Int. No. 689-A, sponsored by Public
7 Advocate Jumaane Williams, would waive certain fees
8 for green building projects undertaken in one to
9 three family homes.

10 In addition, we are voting on bills that address
11 lead-based paint hazards in multiple dwellings. On
12 July 13, 2023, the Committee on Housing and Buildings
13 voted on Int. 193-A, that targets lead-based paint
14 hazards in common areas of dwellings.

15 The context here: for over six decades, New York
16 City has been a leader in lead exposure hazard
17 regulation. We banned the use lead-based paint in
18 1960, before the federal government and before any
19 other jurisdiction. And we passed stringent
20 regulations in 1982, again in 1999, 2004, and most
21 recently, between 2019 and 2021.

22 Each of these attempts have been met with steep
23 resistance. But, our City has been bullish in the
24 ascertain and the goal that lead poisoning in
25 children is entirely preventable. And, yet, despite

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2 this leadership, for decades our kids in the City
3 have remained poisoned. The agencies responsible for
4 enforcement of lead safe requirements lagged in their
5 duties of enforcement until only recent years.

6 In 2022, the Department of Health and Mental
7 Hygiene reported that 2,557 children had elevated
8 blood lead levels across our city in 2021. From this
9 sample, 81 percent of the children were Asian, Black,
10 or Latino; 88 percent of the children were from
11 moderate to high poverty neighborhoods; and 65
12 percent of the children poisoned reside in just a few
13 Bronx neighborhoods including my own.

14 These are unacceptable realities. As a new
15 mother, it fills me with anxiety to know that we have
16 so much work left to do to rid our homes and the
17 places where our children frequent from lead hazards.
18 And, so, I am so proud to join in supporting Deputy
19 Speaker Ayala's legislation today that will
20 strengthen our lead laws.

21 We continue to interrogate our polices and
22 practices and enforcement regimes in order to know
23 that our agencies are doing what they need to do to
24 make sure landlords and owners keep our children
25 safe.

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2 Today we will be voting on three bills in
3 relation to lead:

4 PROPOSED INT. NO. 5-A is in relation to the
5 records of lead-based paint investigation.

6 PROPOSED INT. NO. 6-A is in relation to the
7 remediation of lead-based paint in multiple dwelling
8 units.

9 PROPOSED INT. NO. 750-A: Is in relation to
10 proactive identification and inspection of multiple
11 dwellings where children are at risk of lead
12 poisoning.

13 I am joined today by Council Member Dinowitz,
14 Council Member Feliz, Council Member Avilés, Council
15 Member Barron - virtually, Council Member Cabán,
16 Council Member Abreu, Council Member Carr, and Public
17 Advocate Williams.

18 I will now turn it to Public Advocate Williams to
19 make some remarks on his legislation.

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you so much,
21 Madam Chair. As mentioned, my name is Jumaane
22 Williams, Public Advocate of the city of New York.
23 Thank you again, uh, Chair Sanchez and members of the
24 Committee on Housing and Buildings for holding this
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2 vote, and for allowing me the opportunity to provide
3 a statement.

4 In 2019, Local Law 97 was passed, which required
5 buildings over 25,000 square feet to meet new energy
6 efficiency standards and greenhouse gas emissions
7 limits by 2024. This bill creates an advisory board
8 and climate working group that supports the City on
9 meeting these aggressive sustainability goals.

10 In addition, these buildings are required to file
11 a report that includes the Annual Greenhouse Gas
12 Emissions to the Department of Buildings. The main
13 goal is reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from
14 buildings to 40 percent by 2030 and 80 percent by
15 2050.

16 To continue our efforts on addressing climate
17 change, I hope my colleagues can vote yes for my bill
18 Intro 0689. This bill will create a new definition
19 for green building projects that would include one to
20 three unit family homes and waive any building permit
21 fees for green projects in this building -- about 29
22 percent of available units right now of one to two
23 family homes in New York City. This legislation will
24 capture smaller buildings on Local Law 97 2019,
25 applies to buildings consisting of 25,000 square feet

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2 or more. We must ensure that any project filed can
3 show improvements to energy and water efficiency with
4 the a seamless as possible process for the permit
5 waivers to incentivize energy improvements. And, as
6 the Chair said, we have to make sure that our
7 homeowners are part of this conversation. And many of
8 them are not particularly rich, and we have to make
9 sure we are able to incentivize them to do it, uh,
10 while watching their pockets.

11 Now is the time to continue our support and fight
12 for the sustainability of New York City. Every New
13 Yorker deserves access to a safe and healthy home.
14 We must invest in clean energy and actions toward
15 environmental justice. It is a scary reality for us
16 and the future generations if we do not prioritize
17 climate change and address it head on.

18 I want to thank the Council and thank my staff
19 who worked on this, some of whom are here today,
20 Thank you very much.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Public
22 Advocate. And, on behalf of all the homeowners in my
23 district, thank you.

24 I also just want to take a moment to thank our
25 committee team, Taylor Zelony, who listened to a lot

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2 of different perspectives to get some of these bills
3 to the finish line, thank you for all your work -- as
4 well as Daniel Kroop, Brooke Frye, and countless
5 others. Our Chief of Staff, Samantha Cardenas;
6 Kadeem Robinson, and, yeah, it takes a village.

7 Uh, so with that, I will now ask the clerk to
8 call the roll call vote.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Good morning, William Martin,
10 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Housing
11 and Buildings. All items are coupled.

12 Chair Sanchez?

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Aye on all.

14 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Dinowitz?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Aye on all.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Feliz?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Aye on all. And I just
18 want to thank my colleagues for taking steps to make
19 sure that our families are protected from lead-paint,
20 thank you.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Abreu?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Avilés?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Aye on all.

25 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Cabán?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Aye.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Carr?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I just want to briefly
5 congratulate the Public Advocate on a great piece of
6 legislation. Thank you for introducing it, and I
7 will be voting no Intro's 5-A and 6-A, and aye on the
8 rest.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you.

10 With a vote of 7 in the affirmative, 0 in the
11 negative, and no abstentions, we have Introductions
12 384... [BACKGROUND NOISE] If the committee members
13 could stay for a moment, please?

14 Thank you, Council Members.

15 Council Member Barron?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes?

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Yes, greetings, sir, uh, vote on
18 Committee on Housing and Buildings?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye on all.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you, sir.

21 Vote now on Committee on Housing and Buildings,
22 we have Introductions 5 and 6 adopted by the
23 Committee with 7 in the affirmative, 1 in the
24 negative, and no abstentions.

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And proposed Introductions 384-A, 689-A, and 750-A are adopted by the Committee with 8 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and no abstentions.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Clerk, and with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[GAVELING OUT] [GAVEL SOUND]

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 August 8, 2023