

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH,  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY,  
ALCOHOLISM, SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
AND DISABILITY SERVICES

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July 24, 2014  
Start: 11:06 a.m.  
Recess: 11:12 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: Andrew Cohen  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Elizabeth S. Crowley  
Ruben Willis  
Corey D. Johnson  
Paul A. Vallone

A P P E A R A N C E S

COUNCIL MEMBER: Helen Rosenthal



2 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: Good morning, I'm  
3 council member Andrew Cohen, chair of the council's  
4 committee of mental health, developmental  
5 disabilities, alcoholism, substance abuse and  
6 disability services. We are here today to vote on a  
7 pre-considered introduction which would amend the  
8 administrative code of the city of New York in  
9 relations to increasing the maximum qualifying income  
10 level for exemption from brimp increase granted to  
11 certain persons with disabilities. In 2005 New York  
12 State established the disability rent increase  
13 exemption DRIE Program. The DRIE program helps  
14 shield low income people with disabilities from  
15 rising housing cost by freezing their rents at an  
16 affordable level. In return landlords receive  
17 property tax abatements equal to the amount of the  
18 rent forgiven. Currently, individuals that receive  
19 state or federal disabilities assistance are eligible  
20 for DRIE if they live in rent regulated housings and  
21 have a maximum annual income of \$20,412 for  
22 individuals or \$29,484 for 2 or more person  
23 households. In the pre-considered introduction we  
24 are gathered here today to vote on would increase the  
25 income threshold for all household to \$50,000. We

2 previously held a hearing on this legislation on July  
3 22<sup>nd</sup> at that hearing we heard from disabilities  
4 rights advocates, housing advocates, legal rights  
5 organizations and real estate advocates as well as  
6 the administration. These district groups  
7 unanimously testified in favor of the bill. I am  
8 pleased to have the opportunity to vote yes on this  
9 bill and I encourage my colleagues to do the same. At  
10 this moment I would like to acknowledge that we have  
11 been joined by my colleagues from the mental health  
12 committee. Council members Crowley, Ruben Wills,  
13 Corey Johnson, Paul Vallone and we've also been  
14 joined by council member Rosenthal. I would also  
15 just like to take one second to acknowledge the  
16 passing of Robert Benjamin who is the father of  
17 Michael Benjamin the analyst to this committee.  
18 Yeah, I believe council member Rosenthal has  
19 something she'd like to say.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I do, I just  
21 I wanna thank the chair and this committee for  
22 speedily moving this bill along. Last night I had a  
23 housing clinic for seniors who are newly eligible for  
24 rent reductions due to the new lifting of the cap for  
25 for their income levels. And the room was packed.

1  
2 And the single largest question I got is when do the  
3 city do this for our disabled residence? The  
4 disabled are assembly a group of vulnerable citizens  
5 and New York City has many aspects to its affordable  
6 housing plan. This is one more tool now that we will  
7 have in our tool box to help secure the homes of  
8 those who are the most vulnerable. So I want to  
9 thank Melissa Mark-Vevrito for helping our speaker  
10 for helping to move this along and at the state level  
11 to assembly member Brian Cavanaugh and state senate  
12 member Diana Sivino (sp) for getting this passed by  
13 the state. I think the governor signed the bill  
14 into law last night. And in advance I want to thank  
15 this committee and my and the council for passing the  
16 bill swiftly. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: Anybody else? Yes,  
18 I'm gonna call.

19 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I just want to commend  
20 council Heaven Roosevelt. She didn't hear me  
21 (laughter). Council member Helen Rosenthal on this  
22 bill. This is a bill that will affect people in my  
23 district and beyond in perpetuity. The work that is  
24 going into this bill has been incredible and to the  
25 chair who has spearheaded this bill and a fashion

2 that we have become to see as the norm from you. I  
3 also commend you on that so to you and council member  
4 Rosenthal (laughter). I just wanted to give my  
5 comment.

6 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I vote I. Go first,  
7 I'm sorry.

8 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: OK. Alright at this  
9 time I'd ask the clerk to call the vote.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK KEVIN PENN: Kevin Penn,  
11 committee clerk roll calling the committee on mental  
12 health, developmental disabilities, substance abuse,  
13 alcoholism and disability services. Speaking to the  
14 intro, council member Cohen.

15 CHAIRPERSON COHEN: I.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK KEVIN PENN: Crowley.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CRAWLEY: I vote I.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK KEVIN PENN: Wills.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: I vote I.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK KEVIN PENN: Johnson.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: I'm proudly vote  
22 I and I thank council member Rosenthal.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK KEVIN PENN: Vallone.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I.  
25

2 COMMITTEE CLERK KEVIN PENN: By a vote of  
3 5 on the affirmative, 0 in the negative, no  
4 extensions the addendum has been adapted, members  
5 please sign the committee report.

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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 July 30, 2014