

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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May 20, 2013  
Start: 3:10 p.m.  
Recess: 3:23 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
JAMES VACCA  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Gale A. Brewer  
Council Member Margaret S. Chin  
Council Member David G. Greenfield  
Council Member Peter A. Koo  
Council Member Jessica S. Lappin  
Council Member Darlene Mealy  
Council Member Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Council Member Deborah L. Rose  
Council Member Eric A. Ulrich  
Council Member James G. Van Bramer

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay, can I  
3 have your attention, please. Good afternoon. I'm  
4 James Vacca, and I'm Chairman of the Committee on  
5 Transportation. And today we're here to vote on  
6 Intro 591, a bill that will make it easier for  
7 customers of intercity busses to be informed of  
8 passenger safety ratings. I want to thank Council  
9 Member Chin for introducing this bill, along with  
10 myself. And before I begin, let me introduce the  
11 Members that have joined us today: Council Member  
12 James Van Bra--Jimmy Van Bramer, Jessica Lappin,  
13 Eric Ulrich, Margaret Chin, Gale Brewer, Peter  
14 Koo, myself, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez,  
15 Council Member Debbie Rose. This bill would  
16 require the New York City Department of  
17 Transportation to post a link to and information  
18 about passenger carrier safety. It is common  
19 sense legislation with the intent of making every  
20 intercity bus passenger more knowledgeable about  
21 the safety rating of the bus company they plan to  
22 patronize. New Yorkers want to know what they are  
23 getting into when they get onto a bus. No riders  
24 of any private bus company should have to feel  
25 like they are putting their lives on the line

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2 every time they want to use these busses to travel  
3 outside of our city. This Committee wants all of  
4 these passengers to have some, as much information  
5 available to them as possible before they step  
6 foot on such a bus. This bill is one step further  
7 beyond action the Council has taken in the past to  
8 increase the safety of passengers who use  
9 intercity busses. In 2011, following a string of  
10 horrific incidents involving intercity busses, the  
11 Council adopted State Legislative Resolution No. 1  
12 requesting the New York State Legislature to give  
13 the City the authority to monitor and regulate the  
14 intercity bus industry. In addition, the Council  
15 passed Resolution 892, which called on the federal  
16 government to pass the Motor Coach Enhanced Safety  
17 Act of 2011, and Resolution No. 1000 which called  
18 on the State Legislature to pass legislation  
19 requirement bus drivers to undergo background  
20 checks. To-date, the Motor Coach Enhanced Safety  
21 Act of 2011 has been enacted and Governor Cuomo  
22 signed into law Chapter 410, giving the City the  
23 power to monitor and regulate the intercity bus  
24 industry. This law took effect in November and  
25 authorized the City to establish rules for a

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2 permit system for intercity busses that pick and  
3 drop off passengers within New York City, and to  
4 designate specific pickup and drop off locations  
5 for these busses. Council Member Chin and I,  
6 along with Speaker Quinn, have urged the  
7 Department of Transportation to promulgate these  
8 important rules relating to the creation of this  
9 permit system. The proposed rules have been  
10 released for comment and will have a hearing next  
11 month. We look forward to their enactment. With  
12 that, do any of my colleagues wish to be heard  
13 before we vote? Council Member Chin.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you,  
15 Chair Vacca. First, I wanted to thank you for  
16 sponsoring this bill with me, and also the  
17 Committee Counsel, Lyle Frank, for helping us  
18 develop this legislation. In 2011, a bus  
19 traveling back to Chinatown from a casino was  
20 involved in a terrible, deadly crash, which killed  
21 a large number of my constituents. Since this  
22 accident, and other incidents, we have worked to  
23 support greater regulation of the intercity  
24 busses. For a consumer, there are numerous bus  
25 company now offering discount rates to travel to

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2 Boston, D.C., Philadelphia, and other city. Some  
3 have questionable safety records and we believe  
4 this essential information that all consumers  
5 should be able to check before deciding which bus  
6 company to use. This bill would ensure that bus  
7 riders can check the safety records of companies  
8 through the City government's Department of  
9 Transportation's website, so they can know before  
10 they ride. Much of this information is available  
11 on the federal Motor Coach Safety Administration  
12 website, but we found that few customer know about  
13 this site and that it's not easy to navigate or  
14 find this information. This bill will make all of  
15 this information more easy to access, thereby  
16 taking the mystery out of the bus safety issue and  
17 empower consumer to make safer choices for  
18 themselves. I urge all my colleagues to support  
19 this bill and I look forward to seeing this  
20 legislation become law. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you,  
22 Council Member Chin. And I'd like to thank you  
23 for keeping our focus on this issue throughout.  
24 Without further to do, I will now call the roll, I  
25 ask the Clerk to call the roll, and I recommend a

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yes vote on Intro 591.

CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call vote, Committee on Transportation. Council Member Vacca.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Votes yes. And I'd now like to welcome Council Member Greenfield who has joined us.

CLERK: Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [off mic] I vote aye.

CLERK: Lappin.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: [off mic] Aye.

CLERK: Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] Aye.

CLERK: Koo.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [off mic] Aye.

CLERK: Rose.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [off mic] Aye, and I want to thank - - for--I want to thank Council Member Chin for this common sense, appropriate and very necessary legislation.

CLERK: Van Bramer.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

CLERK: Greenfield.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I vote aye, and congratulate Council Member Chin, and I ask that my name be added as a co-sponsor.

CLERK: Ulrich.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Mr. Chairman, I vote aye. I want to congratulate the sponsor of the bill, it's a good bill, and I ask that my name be added as a co-sponsor.

CLERK: By a vote of nine in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstentions, item is adopted. Members, please sign the Committee report, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you. I will leave the roll open until 20 after 3:00 for members who may not have arrived at this point. Without--now do I adjourn, or [background comment] adjourn? Without further comment, the meeting is recessed until 20 after 3:00. [gavel] [pause, background noise] Then I'm adjourning. [background noise] I will now call on Council Member Mealy. How do you vote on the Intro, Council Member Mealy?

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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Just for  
you--no, I vote aye on all.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: The final vote  
is?

CLERK: Final vote in Committee on  
Transportation is now ten in the affirmative, zero  
in the negative, and no abstentions.

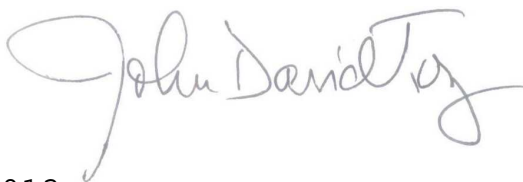
CHAIRPERSON VACCA: This meeting is  
now adjourned.



C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the printed word "Signature".

Date June 6, 2013