



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS
TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS
COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR
SEPTEMBER 29, 2025**

Good morning Chairs Sanchez and De La Rosa, members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, and members of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor. I am Guillermo Patino, Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Legal Affairs, at the New York City Department of Buildings (“the Department”). I am joined today by my colleagues, Gus Sirakis, Deputy Commissioner for Development and Technical Affairs, Reynaldo Cabrera, Assistant Commissioner for Investigations and Compliance, Frank McCarton, Assistant Commissioner for Emergency Services, and Keith Wen, Assistant Commissioner, for Code and Zoning Interpretation. I am pleased to testify before the Committees regarding Intro 261 which would allow certain residential buildings to be constructed with only one exit stairway, Intro 1384 which would require the Department’s Site Safety Training program to include a component addressing mental health and wellness, suicide risk and prevention and alcohol and substance-misuse, and Intro 1376 which would require the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“Health Department”) to post guidance regarding best practices for protecting workers from extreme weather.

Intro 261

Intro 261 would amend Section 1006.3.2 of the New York City Building Code (“Building Code”) to expand the circumstances in which single exit stairways are permitted in R-2 occupancy buildings. The R-2 occupancy classification includes apartments and other residential buildings. The Department has significant concerns regarding the proposed amendments, as allowing more buildings to have single exit stairways poses significant safety risks.

Pursuant to Section 1006.3.1 of the Building Code, a minimum of two exits are required for egress in buildings where the occupant load does not exceed 500 people per floor. Section 1006.3.2

currently provides seven exceptions to that requirement by setting forth the scenarios in which a single stairway may be allowed. Item 7 of Section 1006.3.2 allows a single stairway where the building is six stories or less and the square footage per floor does not exceed 2,000 square feet. In general, the 2,000 square foot standard serves to limit the number of apartments located on a single floor of the building, which in turn limits the number of occupants per floor, allowing one stairway to be sufficient for egress.

Intro 261 would amend Item 7 to increase the floor area allowance from 2,000 square feet to 4,000 square feet per floor. An increase to 4,000 square feet per floor would essentially double the number of apartments allowed per floor and in turn potentially increase the occupant load by 100%. Additionally, Item 7 requires the building's occupancy to be classified as R-2 but does not limit its applicability to just apartment floors. As written, the section does not account for the potential presence of an accessory amenity or assembly space that may have up to 74 persons in the gathering spaces. This, when combined with the expansion of the square footage proposed in Intro 261, would increase the occupant load on the single stairway to a level that poses significant safety concerns for egress in emergency situations.

The Department has conferred with our colleagues at the Fire Department, who share our concerns regarding Intro 261. The Fire Department also expressed concerns about the dangers of responding to fires and other emergencies in single exit stairway buildings. Large single stairway buildings pose serious fire safety risks and challenges to first responders and firefighting operations. Increasing the occupant load of these buildings would only compound these challenges. In buildings with a single stairway, the same stairway must be used as both the evacuation stairway for occupants and the stairway for firefighters to run hoses, conduct searches, perform fire suppression procedures, and other operations. This can quickly become a hazard and could impede evacuation and firefighting operations.

Intro 1384

Now moving to Intro 1384. The Department is supportive of this legislation which would require that the Site Safety Training ("SST") curriculum include mental health and wellness, suicide risk and prevention, and alcohol and substance-misuse training. The site safety training curriculum

already addresses drug and alcohol awareness, and the Department has no objection to incorporating mental health and wellness, as well as suicide risk and prevention into the 40-hour course curriculum for site safety training.

Given that this bill is proposing to amend the definition of “site safety training card,” the Department would like to take this time to also address issues that have come to light as the SST program has been implemented. Site safety training cards, once issued, are valid for five years and can be renewed contingent upon successful completion of the required refresher training within the one-year preceding submission of a renewal application. The Department recently became aware of an issue where workers must retake the full course and reapply for the SST card rather than renewing due to language in the Building Code that does not allow for flexibility when SST cards are up for renewal. Take for example the scenario where a worker’s SST card expires today, September 29th, and the worker completed all required refresher credits prior to the expiration date but was unable to obtain the printed card before the end of today. If the worker goes to get their card tomorrow, September 30th, the provider is unable to print and issue the card because it is past the expiration. As a result, the worker then has to take a full course again to be issued an SST card. Delays in obtaining the physical card prior to the expiration, may be due to such things as the worker’s inability to get to the course provider’s location or problems with the machine used to print the card. The Department has received significant feedback from the industry regarding the challenges this presents and the impact it has on worksites. As such, we’d like to propose amendments to the bill to allow for a grace period following the card expiration to address situations such as this. The Building Code provides for a grace period for other certifications, such as suspended scaffold installers, adjusters, repairers, maintainers, users, or removers so the proposed change would be consistent with that.

One additional change we’d like to propose is expanding the qualification pathways to obtain an SST card. Currently, applicants can obtain an SST card, which is required for all workers at a major building site, through one of three qualification pathways - completing the OSHA 10-hour class and 30 to 45 additional SST credits as specified by the Department, completing the OSHA-30 hour class and 10 to 25 additional SST credits specified by the Department, or completing a 100-hour training program. Those seeking a Site Safety Manager (“SSM”) or Site Safety

Coordinator (“SSC”) certification must complete the DOB-approved 40-hour site safety course. The 40-hour site-safety course covers the topics addressed in the OSHA 30-hour course, but the 40-hour site safety course is not currently recognized as a pathway to qualify for an SST card. Therefore, under the current regulatory scheme, a worker seeking an SSM or SSC certification would likely have satisfied one of the three qualification pathways for obtaining the SST card as well as completing the 40-hour site safety course. We’ve received feedback from the industry regarding the cost and time to complete training that is duplicative. If the OSHA 30-hour course is acceptable, the Department believes the 40-hour site safety course should also be acceptable. As such, the Department would like to further amend the “site safety training card” definition to include the 40-hour site safety course as a qualification pathway and the potential to include additional comparable qualification pathways by rule as other training options may become available in the future.

Intro 1376

The Department has been asked to provide testimony regarding Intro 1376 on behalf of the Health Department. Intro 1376 would require the Health Department to post guidance regarding best practices for protecting workers from extreme weather conditions such as extreme heat. The Administration supports this legislation, as extreme weather events pose recognized occupational health risks and are found to be associated with higher accident rates, illness, injuries, and deaths. The New York State Department of Labor has produced employer guidance to protect workers from extreme precipitation, extreme heat, extreme cold, and wildfire smoke.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. We welcome any questions you may have.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
BRAD LANDER

TESTIMONY OF NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
Committee on Civil Service and Labor and Committee on Housing and Buildings
Oversight Hearing – Worker Safety and the Effects of Climate Change on Labor
September 29, 2025

Good morning, my name is Matan Diner, and I serve as the Policy and Research Analyst for Workers' Rights in the Office of New York City Comptroller Brad Lander, in the Comptroller's Bureau of Labor Law. Thank you to the Committee on Civil Service and Labor, the Committee on Housing and Buildings, and to Chairs Carmen De la Rosa and Pierina Sanchez for the opportunity to testify today.

We thank the City Council for holding this hearing on worker safety and the effects of climate change on labor and applaud Council Member De La Rosa for sponsoring Introduction 1376 to amend the administrative code of the City of New York to require the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to post best practices for protecting workers from extreme weather. With rising temperatures and worsening air quality, it's essential for New York City to have stronger regulations in place to protect workers from the deadly risks of extreme heat, poor air quality, and other effects of our changing climate.

Climate emergencies like poor air quality and extreme heat claim lives and pose a severe risk to outdoor workers who put their health and safety on the line to provide essential services to New Yorkers. That's why our office published a report last year titled ["Safeguarding Outdoor Workers in a Changing Climate,"](#) authored by myself, our former Chief Climate Officer Louise Yeung, our Workers' Rights Deputy Director Rebecca Lynch, analyzing the health impacts of extreme temperatures and unsafe air quality, quantifying the New York City outdoor worker population, and identifying national best practices for labor standards. The report concludes with policy recommendations that should be implemented by New York City and State to protect outdoor workers.

Our report found that 1.4 million workers, or a third of New York City's workforce, work outdoors for prolonged periods of time. These workers are disproportionately composed of immigrants and Latino or Black New Yorkers. These figures are conservative underestimates given many outdoor workers, such as street vendors, app-based delivery workers, and day laborers, are self-employed, independent contractors, or gig workers without traditional employment arrangements and not comprehensively captured by official data sources.

Extreme heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the country and in New York City. Each year in New York City, there are seven deaths directly caused by heat and 340 heat-exacerbated deaths. Outdoor workers face significant higher heat risks compared to the general public. One study found that construction workers were 13 times more likely to die from heat exposure than workers in other industries. Heat exposure can result in heat stress, heat stroke, heat rashes, heat cramps, and exhaustion,

causing accidents and injuries on the job. App-based delivery workers and street vendors, who do not have set workplaces, face unique challenges in extreme heat without access to bathrooms and or places to cool down. Delivery workers can be penalized for future work if they take rest breaks longer than 10-15 minutes. Workers who lack access to restrooms may intentionally limit how much water they drink, even in extreme heat, to avoid having to urinate during working hours. In addition to dehydration, many of these workers also develop urinary tract infections. In addition, lack of access to shade and cooling also causes sunburn and other skin conditions due to prolonged sun exposure.

Occupational risks from extreme heat will only become more dangerous as temperatures rise. By 2030, the number of days with heat index above 95°F may increase six-fold. Workers experience a 6-9% increase in injury rates on days where temperatures exceed 90°F, and 10-15% increase in injury rates when temperatures exceed 100°F.

Forecasts also indicate a potentially active wildfire season in future years, which may mean more air quality emergencies in New York City. New York City experienced its first air quality emergency in June 2023, triggered by smoke from Canadian wildfires, which pushed the air quality index to hazardous levels. Poor air quality from wildfire smoke can lead to serious health issues, including cardiovascular problems, respiratory illnesses, and eye irritations. The City's response was slow, leaving many outdoor workers without guidance or protective measures. The need for effective guidelines became evident again in June 2024 when high ozone levels caused by fossil fuel emissions prompted an air quality alert.

To address the growing threats of climate change thoroughly and sustainably, our office recommends that City and State officials enact both employer requirements and increased public health initiatives.

Recommendations for Employer Requirements

- **Pass the Temperature Extreme Mitigation Program (TEMP) Act:** Sponsored by New York State Senator Jessica Ramos and Assemblymember Harry Bronson, this legislation would mandate that employers provide essential protections against extreme heat, including water, shade, and rest breaks.
- **Expand Outdoor Heat Standards:** The City must extend heat protections to all outdoor workers in New York City, ensuring safe working conditions during heat waves for sectors not covered by the TEMP Act.
- **Set Labor Standards for Unsafe Air Quality:** The City must set new labor standards for unsafe air quality. This legislation will require employers to develop air quality illness prevention plans, ensuring access to safe air, personal protective equipment (PPE), and reduced strenuous activities during air quality emergencies.

Recommendations for Public Health Initiatives

- **Collect and Publicly Report Data:** The City should collect and report data on the occupational impacts of extreme weather to better understand and mitigate these risks.
- **Develop Emergency Protocols:** Protocols should be established to protect outdoor workers during extreme weather events, ensuring their health and safety.
- **Expand Public Bathroom Access:** Increased access to public bathrooms is essential, particularly in

areas with high concentrations of outdoor workers.

- **Reform the City Street Vending Code:** Allow merchandise vendors to use shade structures to protect themselves from extreme heat.
- **Establish a City PPE Distribution Program:** In the event of air quality emergencies, the City should distribute PPE to outdoor workers with non-standard employment arrangements.
- **Proactive Outreach and Education:** A citywide outreach program should be developed to educate outdoor workers on how to stay safe during extreme weather conditions.

Climate emergencies like poor air quality and extreme heat claim lives and pose a severe risk to outdoor workers who put their health and safety on the line to provide essential services to New Yorkers. Our office's report is a glimpse into that reality and its consequences. State and City officials should collaborate with workers, unions, and advocacy organizations to prioritize the protection of these workers by ensuring access to safe working conditions, necessary protective equipment, hydration, and proper breaks.

REBNY Testimony | September 29, 2025

The Real Estate Board of New York to The City Council Committees on Housing and Buildings and Civil Service and Labor on Intros 261, 1376, 1384, and 1404

The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) is the City's leading real estate trade association representing commercial, residential, and institutional property owners, builders, managers, investors, brokers, salespeople, and other organizations and individuals active in New York City real estate. REBNY appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on the above-referenced legislation

Int. 0261-2024: in relation to the means of egress requirements in certain new buildings

Sponsors: Council Members Joseph, Feliz, Louis, Banks and Bottcher

This bill would allow for certain new residential buildings to be built with only one staircase if they are six stories or under, constructed to fireproof standards, do not exceed 4,000 square feet per floor, and have a maximum of 20 feet from the door of a dwelling unit to the exit staircase. Today, these types of buildings require two staircases, but with such a small floor plate, that means less units and less efficient unit placement, driving up the cost of construction.

REBNY appreciates the Council's ongoing work to increase NYC's building stock whenever possible. This bill, which is in furtherance of the City's recently approved zone text amendment City of Yes for Housing Opportunity that seeks to encourage more multifamily buildings, could help with housing affordability and efficiency. Therefore, REBNY supports this proposed bill.

Int. 1376-2025: in relation to the department of health and mental hygiene posting worker guidance for best practices for protecting workers from extreme weather

Sponsors: Council Members De La Rosa, Cabán, Hanif, Brannan and Restler

This bill would require the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to post on their website best practices for protecting construction workers from weather-related risks, including extreme heat, extreme cold, and poor air quality days. The guidance would be posted in all designated citywide languages.

Given the fact that global climate change is causing an increase in all varieties of extreme weather, it is of particular importance to have measures in place to protect workers from such weather events. This bill is a commonsense way of doing so by promoting industry-proven best practices that can be implemented based on the particular characteristics of a given construction site. Therefore, REBNY supports this bill.

Int. 1384: in relation to requiring construction site safety trainings to include mental health and wellness, suicide risk and prevention, and alcohol and substance-misuse**Sponsors: Council Members Lee, Sanchez, Restler, Hanif and Brannan**

This bill would expand site safety training to also cover issues related to mental health and substance abuse disorders.

Under local law, workers at construction sites are required to complete site safety training and be knowledgeable about ways to protect themselves from potential physical harm. This bill recognizes that addressing issues of mental health and substance abuse is also part of staying safe on a construction site. In addition, substance abuse disorders and mental health issues are often undertreated and misunderstood, and the opportunity to better reach workers on these issues is critically important. Therefore REBNY supports this proposed legislation.

Int. 1404: to allow the occupancy of cellars in certain one- and two-family dwellings**Sponsors: Council Member Sanchez (by request of the Mayor)**

This bill creates an exception for ancillary or accessory dwelling units from the prohibition against cellar occupancies. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) encompass both basement and cellar apartments, which are distinguished in the zoning resolution, building code, and administrative code by the amount of height of the floor that is above and below grade. This intro is part of aligning the various regulatory frameworks with allowing ADUs.

As with Intro 261, we commend the Council for expanding housing opportunities for New Yorkers, as the current housing shortage is driving up living costs. This legislation supports changes produced through City of Yes for Housing Opportunity. As part of the modernization of the zoning resolution ADUs are now permitted in all low-density districts on lots with one- and two-family homes. Memorializing this change and aligning the regulatory frameworks is an important change. As such, REBNY supports this legislation.

CONTACT:**Dev Awasthi**

Vice President of Government Affairs
Real Estate Board of New York
dawasthi@rebny.com



NEW YORK CITY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

President
BRENDAN GRIFFITH
Secretary-Treasurer
JANELLA T. HINDS

Testimony of Support Resolution 1015-2025

Good morning, my name is Brendan Griffith, and I am the President of the New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO. The New York City Central Labor Council representing more than 300 affiliated unions and over one million working people across all five boroughs, supports Resolution 1015-2025, Condemning Alden Global Capital cuts and managerial hostility towards unionized Daily News staff and calling on the hedge fund to reach a contract deal with the newspaper's union. Given the assaults on free speech, democracy, and truth, now is a critical moment for newspapers to invest in their workers and staff.

The unionized journalists at the Daily News have been fighting for three years to secure fair workplace standards in the face of Alden's refusal to bargain in good faith. Alden Global Capital earned its reputation as the "Destroyer of Newspapers" by slashing staff and hollowing out newsrooms across the country, from Chicago to Oakland to Baltimore. New York has not been spared. Since acquiring the Daily News in 2021, Alden has sold off its printing plant and offices for \$90 million, gutted its newsroom, and left just 65 journalists to cover a city of 8.5 million people.

The Daily News and its journalists serve an essential function in our city. For more than a century, they have chronicled the hearings, elections, and everyday struggles that shape our communities. Their reporting has won Pulitzer Prizes and held power to account, while also ensuring that no story, big or small, goes untold. When these newsroom jobs are undermined, it's not only workers who suffer; it's the entire city that will lose.

The unionized staff at the *Daily News* are seeking standards that will safeguard the future of local journalism: fair wage floors and cost-of-living adjustments, equitable treatment for part-time employees, protections against subcontracting, and preservation of their benefits. These are basic, commonsense measures to ensure the stability of the newsroom and the ability of journalists to serve the public.

The New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, urges the Council to pass Resolution 1015. This resolution will send a clear message that New York City will not tolerate predatory corporate practices that strip workers of their dignity and communities of their voice. Labor is proud to stand in solidarity with the journalists of the Daily News, and we call on Alden Global Capital to reach a fair contract without delay.

MEMORANDUM WITH COMMENTS

Int. No. 1376-2025 – Posting Worker Guidance for Best Practices in Preventing and Responding to Suspected Substance Misuse at Construction Sites

The Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is a national construction industry trade association representing over 23,000 members nationwide. Grounded in the merit shop philosophy, ABC and its 68 chapters focus on developing skilled workers, ensuring ethical and safe project delivery, and promoting cost-effective construction practices that benefit communities. Our diverse membership spans all specialties, with a core focus on industrial and commercial construction.

Associated Builders and Contractors – Empire State Chapter (ABC), representing open shop contractors across New York, respectfully submits the following comments on Int. No. 1376-2025.

General Position

ABC supports the goal of increasing awareness around substance misuse and ensuring that construction workers have access to accurate health and safety information. Education and prevention are valuable tools in addressing this important issue.

Comments & Clarifications

1. Consistency with Existing Guidance

- We encourage the Council to ensure that any guidance materials posted at construction sites are developed in coordination with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and are consistent with existing state and federal guidance. Conflicting or duplicative information could cause confusion on jobsites.

2. Format and Posting Requirements

- Clear direction on the form, size, and placement of posted materials will help contractors comply effectively. Without uniform standards, compliance could vary widely from site to site.

3. Responsibility for Maintenance

- Contractors should not bear ongoing liability for monitoring the accuracy or updating of posted materials once distributed by the City. The issuing agency should be responsible for ensuring posters are current and updated as new information or best practices evolve.

Conclusion

ABC supports the intent of Int. No. 1376-2025, provided that implementation details are clear, consistent, and coordinated with appropriate public health authorities.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian Sampson, President
Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC)
Empire State Chapter
Email: sampson@abcnys.org
Phone: [REDACTED]

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MEMORANDUM WITH COMMENTS

Int. No. 1377-2025 – Protections for construction workers from extreme heat.

The Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is a national construction industry trade association representing over 23,000 members nationwide. Grounded in the merit shop philosophy, ABC and its 68 chapters focus on developing skilled workers, ensuring ethical and safe project delivery, and promoting cost-effective construction practices that benefit communities. Our diverse membership spans all specialties, with a core focus on industrial and commercial construction.

Overview

ABC recognizes the City Council's intent to protect construction workers from extreme heat and shares the goal of ensuring worker safety and health. At the same time, ABC has serious concerns regarding the practicality, clarity, and implementation of Intro 1377-2025 as written.

Key Concerns

1. Duplication of Existing Standards

- OSHA already provides comprehensive federal requirements and guidance on heat illness prevention, hydration, rest breaks, and emergency response.
- Contractors are additionally subject to New York State Department of Labor standards and site-specific safety protocols enforced through contracts, insurance, and internal safety programs.
- Requiring the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) to develop additional guidance risks conflicting obligations and inconsistent enforcement across agencies.

2. One-Size-Fits-All Rules Are Impractical

- Construction sites in New York City vary widely in scope and environment—from indoor renovations to high-rise superstructures, and from demolition to fit-out projects.
- Citywide mandates for extreme heat exposure do not account for these differences, whereas contractors already tailor safety protocols to project-specific conditions.

3. Safety is Already Prioritized

- Open-shop contractors invest significantly in training, personal protective equipment (PPE), hydration, shade access, and emergency planning.
- Imposing additional mandates implies a deficiency where none exists, unfairly stigmatizing responsible contractors and adding redundant administrative burdens.

4. Enforcement and Liability Issues

- DOHMH, which lacks construction-specific expertise, is tasked with issuing guidance. This creates potential conflicts with OSHA and DOB directives and exposes contractors to confusing and conflicting compliance requirements.

5. Economic and Operational Burden

- Construction schedules are already tightly managed under DOB regulations, environmental restrictions, noise ordinances, and community agreements.
- Additional mandates related to heat exposure could delay projects, increase costs for owners, and ultimately raise the cost of housing, schools, and infrastructure for taxpayers.

6. Clarification of Language

- The definition of "extreme heat stress threshold" is not only an actual temperature of 95 degrees, but also a "projected" temperature of 95 degrees. This means contractors would have to make the call based on projected heat conditions that may or may not eventually materialize.

Conclusion

ABC is committed to worker safety and supports measures that are practical, evidence-based, and coordinated with existing federal and state regulations. While the Council's focus on extreme heat is appreciated, Intro 1377-2025 as written is duplicative, vague, and operationally impractical. ABC urges further discussion and clarification to ensure any requirements are feasible, site-specific, and aligned with established safety standards.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian Sampson, President
Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC)
Empire State Chapter
Email: sampson@abcnys.org
Phone: [REDACTED]

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MEMORANDUM – SEEKING CLARIFICATION

Int. No. 1384-2025 – Construction Site Safety Trainings to Include Mental Health and Wellness, Suicide Risk and Prevention, and Alcohol and Substance-Misuse

The Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is a national construction industry trade association representing over 23,000 members nationwide. Grounded in the merit shop philosophy, ABC and its 68 chapters focus on developing skilled workers, ensuring ethical and safe project delivery, and promoting cost-effective construction practices that benefit communities. Our diverse membership spans all specialties, with a core focus on industrial and commercial construction.

Associated Builders and Contractors – Empire State Chapter (ABC), representing open shop contractors throughout New York, respectfully submits the following comments on Int. No. 1384-2025.

General Position

ABC is supportive of efforts to improve worker safety and wellness on construction sites, including measures that address mental health, suicide prevention, and substance misuse. We recognize that these are serious challenges within the industry and commend the Council for elevating these issues within the framework of Site Safety Training (SST). However, before fully supporting Int. No. 1384-2025, we respectfully seek clarification on several key points:

Questions and Comments

1. Retroactive Application

- The bill should clarify whether existing SST card holders will be required to take additional training hours retroactively.
- Our assumption is that this requirement would apply prospectively only to new applicants and not impose a retroactive burden on current card holders. Confirmation of this would be helpful.

2. Training Hours

- The text of the legislation appears to require *two SST credits* (i.e., two hours) on mental health, suicide prevention, and substance misuse, without increasing the overall number of required training hours.
- We respectfully request confirmation that this new requirement does not expand the total training hours beyond what is currently required for an SST card.

3. Renewal Requirements

- Clarification is also needed regarding renewals. Will this new training requirement apply when workers renew their SST cards, or only for new applicants? If so, will renewal requirements remain consistent in terms of overall hours?

Conclusion

ABC supports the intent of Int. No. 1384-2025 and the Council's recognition of mental health and wellness as integral to overall site safety. However, contractors and training providers need clarity regarding implementation, particularly around retroactivity, training hours, and renewal requirements.

With these clarifications, ABC would be prepared to support the legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "BS", followed by a horizontal line.

Brian Sampson, President
Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC)
Empire State Chapter
Email: sampson@abcnys.org
Phone: [REDACTED]

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**STATEMENT OF THE BTEA TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS AND COMMITTEE ON CIVIL
SERVICE AND LABOR
SEPTEMBER 29, 2025**

Good morning,

My name is Elizabeth Crowley, and I am the President and CEO for the BTEA. I would like to thank Chair Sanchez, Chair De La Rosa, and the members of the Committees on Housing and Buildings, as well as Civil Service and Labor, for holding this important hearing. On behalf of the entire board of the BTEA, we greatly appreciate the introduction of Intro 1384 and your commitment to prioritizing the health and well-being of our workforce.

The Building Trades Employers' Association (BTEA) is made up of more than 1,200 union construction managers, general contractors, and specialty trade subcontractors across New York City. Our contractors set the standard for safety, maintaining the safest job sites in the nation. At the same time, they have been directly affected by the mental health and substance use crisis that continues to impact our workforce. Too many lives have been cut short, and the BTEA is resolved to take action and be part of the solution.

Groundbreaking research at Syracuse University reviewed the CDC database covering 47,000 construction workers' suicide cases from 2003 to 2023, and based on police and hospital reports, 24% of suicides are confirmed to be from substance abuse. Additionally, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2023 nearly 15,900 construction workers nationwide died from opioid-related overdoses and more than 5,000 died by suicide. Despite these staggering numbers, substance abuse and suicide remains a silent epidemic. Families often hesitate to speak publicly about overdose-related deaths or suicides, but the lack of publicity does not diminish the magnitude of the problem.

The BTEA is determined to confront this crisis head-on by providing resources focused specifically on mental health and substance abuse awareness. We host



Building Trades Employers' Association
1325 Avenue of the Americas • 10th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10019
212.704.9745 • www.bteany.com
Elizabeth Crowley, President & CEO

presentations, distribute educational materials, and partner with leading nonprofits to expand support and break the stigma.

The BTEA strongly supports Intro 1384, as conversation and education are essential to addressing construction worker suicide and substance use. Because SST cards are required for the vast majority of construction workers, this legislation has the potential to create a profoundly positive impact across our industry. Too often, workers struggle to express feelings of depression or to ask for help, and incorporating this training into the SST framework will give them the tools and language to do so in a familiar environment.

Additionally, we support Intro 1376. Protecting worker safety requires addressing both physical and mental health, and this legislation will be an important resource for our members' Safety Directors. The only point we wish to raise for the Committee's consideration is that OSHA has, within the past two years, introduced several online information-sharing policies that may overlap with the provisions of this bill.

Thank you to the Council for prioritizing construction worker wellness.



THE ASSOCIATION OF

NEW YORK'S LEADING CONTRACTORS

Building Trades Employers' Association

1325 Avenue of the Americas • 10th Floor

New York, N.Y. 10019

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Thank you to the Council for prioritizing construction worker wellness.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

191 Joralemon Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Testimony of Joseph Rosenberg
Executive Director, Catholic Community Relations Council
New York City Council Committees on Housing and Buildings and Civil Service and Labor
Int. 261 – Egress Requirements in New Buildings
September 29, 2025

Good morning, Chair Sanchez, Chair De La Rosa, and members of the Housing and Buildings and Civil Service and Labor Committees. I am Joseph Rosenberg, Executive Director of the Catholic Community Relations Council, representing the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens on local legislative and policy matters. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Committee on Int. 261.

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York and Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens have been providing shelter, food, clothing, and other essential services to New York City residents for over a century. Each Charity has an affordable housing department that since 1970 has constructed, preserved, and managed thousands of affordable housing units throughout the 5 boroughs. They work closely with our governmental partners from both New York City and New York State to construct housing for older adults, families, the formerly homeless, veterans and those struggling with mental illness. We also have aggressive residential development pipelines to help assist the growing number of low income and homeless individuals in New York City.

One of our main priorities, and of all New Yorkers, is that housing must be safe. That is why we have concerns with Int. 261. It is absolutely paramount that with the rental vacancy rate so low and the number of people on housing waiting lists soaring, public, private and nonprofit sectors must produce a wide range of affordable units. We question however the wisdom of permitting only one means of egress from a housing unit even if it restricted to new buildings that are not high rise. It can place tenants in a dangerous situation in the event of an emergency.

The housing developments covered in Int. 261 are limited to new buildings not exceeding 6 stories and where there is no more than 20 feet of travel to the exit stairway from the exit door of the dwelling. In the case of fires or other emergencies, the margin of 20 feet from the entrance of an apartment to an exit stairway might be too great a distance to allow for the safe evacuation of existing tenants. We urge that there should be two means of egress for each apartment unit.

It is also worth noting that recently proposed Department of Buildings Rules require two means of egress for ancillary dwelling units. As a matter of safety for tenants, these same egress requirements should also be in place for the residential developments identified in Int. 261.

Accordingly, we do not support Int. 261.

Thank you.

Testimony in Support of Climate Protections for NYC Workers, Int 1376, and Int 1384

October 1, 2025

To the Committees on Civil Service and Labor and Housing and Buildings:

My name is Molly Senack, and I am the Education and Employment Community Organizer at the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY).

As New York City continues to see an increase in days that break records- record heat, record cold, record flooding, record smoke- it is critical to consider protections for employees whose jobs make them more vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change. A 2024 AFL-CIO Safety and Health Department report found that heat stress caused approximately 963 workers deaths and 33,000 workplace accidents between 1992 and 2020 nationally. However, because these numbers don't reflect correlation, they are most likely severe undercounts: according to a [2021 report](#), workplace accidents and injuries are 5-7% likelier to occur on days that are between 85 and 95 degrees than on days when the temperature is in the 60s, and 10-15% likelier on days over 100 degrees. This is because while heat is a danger in and of itself, it also can create more cognitive confusion and lead to workers making more potentially dangerous mistakes. The focus of this hearing and the legislation being considered have largely been on outdoor workers. However, whether workers experience physical impact that is the direct result of climate change or the indirect result of it, the effects are not felt exclusively by outdoor workers. In fact, it is far from it.

Based on an analysis of claims filed with the New York State Workers' Compensation Board between May and September from 2002-2022, the construction industry sees a 20% increased likelihood of workplace injury on days over 85 degrees. The other industries most likely to be impacted by extreme heat are warehousing, waste management, manufacturing, and food services. While the danger presented by working in these particular sectors may not seem as explicit as working outdoors, it is critical to remember that these industries are notorious for hazards exacerbated by extreme weather and poor air quality: poor air circulation, lack of reliable temperature control, and, in the case of many food service locations, the presence of additional heat sources. On days over 85 degrees, each of these industries see a 13-18% increased likelihood of workplace injury. To de-center these sectors from discussions on the impact of climate change is to delay protections for employees who are also acutely feeling the impact. These conditions are included in the [August 2025 report](#) published by the World Health Organization and the World Meteorological Organization. The report stresses that it is a matter of public safety to protect both outdoor and indoor workers.

It is also a matter of public safety that disproportionately impacts the disabled community: jobs in the aforementioned indoor sectors are more prevalent in disabled community than in nondisabled community: according to [a 2025 report](#) published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, approximately 32% of employed people with disabilities work in what are considered the highest risk sectors (including construction), compared to 29.7% of people without disabilities. It is also critical to acknowledge that the physical impact of climate change on employment is not limited to onsite dangers: poor air quality and extreme weather can also make commuting to and from work inherently dangerous, particularly for those who rely on accessible public transit. Extreme delays, overcrowding, and broken air conditioners can put employees' health at serious risk before even arriving at work, and can force employees into the difficult position of having to miss work (and possibly pay) when the process of getting there poses a significant health threat.

We appreciate the Council taking steps to protect workers from the effects of climate change. **We strongly support the implementation of climate safety standards, along with bill Int 1376**, which would require the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to post information on best practices for protecting outdoor workers from extreme weather. **We do, however, ask that the same consideration and protection be given to employees working in other climate-impacted industries, and that these recommendations include guidelines for employers allowing more remote work when transportation is risky.** We would also like to express our **support for bill Int 1384**, which, while not necessarily climate-related, would require construction site safety trainings to include mental health and wellness, suicide risk and prevention, and alcohol and substance-misuse, and is therefore a critical protection for the health and safety of New Yorkers.

We thank the Council for their time, and for their efforts to ensure that New York City employees, particularly those with disabilities, are protected from the impact of climate change.

Sincerely,

Molly Senack (She/Her)
Education and Employment Community Organizer
Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York
Email: msenack@cidny.org Phone: [REDACTED]



TESTIMONY TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL, SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 KATE LEITCH, SENIOR POLICY ANALYST

Good afternoon, Chair Sanchez and Members of the Committee. My name is Kate Leitch, and I am a Senior Policy Analyst at Citizens Housing and Planning Council, an 88-year-old policy research organization. I am pleased to submit testimony for CHPC in strong support of T2025-4120, which clarifies the Administrative Code with respect to cellar occupancy.

This bill makes an important and timely clarification. By explicitly aligning the Administrative Code with the regulatory framework established at the end of 2024 through *Zoning for Housing Opportunity*, Local Law 126, and Local Law 127, the Council ensures that recently enacted reforms will work as intended. The changes adopted by the Council created a new, more promising path to bring basement and cellar apartments into safe, legal use; T2025-4120 closes a lingering gap in the law that could otherwise undermine that progress. We applaud the Council for sustaining its commitment to implementing these changes.

With this step forward, it is urgent that the City follow through with the implementation of the new basement and cellar conversion program authorized by the State in early 2024, by:

Chairman
Richard Roberts
President
Mark Ginsberg
Vice President
Samantha Magistro
Treasurer
Matthew Petrula
Secretary
Joseph Lynch
Executive Director
Howard Slatkin
Executive Committee
Hercules Argyriou
Robert Ezrapour
Paul Freitag
Kirk Goodrich
Aileen Gribbin
Marvin Markus
Amelia Rideau
Matthew Rooney
Jessica Sherman
Richard C. Singer
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Board Members
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Thomas Brown
Thomas Campbell
Louise Carroll
Rafael Cestero
Emily Chen
Andrew Cohen
James Colgate
Bret Collazzi
Jill Crawford
James S. Davidson
Monica Dean
Beatriz De la Torre
Douglas D. Durst
Neil Falcone
Deborah Gans
Richard Gerwitz
James Gillespie
Sally Gilliland
Elliott M. Glass
Alexander Gorlin
Rick Gropper
Amie Gross
David E. Gross
Baaba Halm
Timothy Henkel
Larry Hirschfield
William N. Hubbard
Marcie Kesner
Aaron Koffman
Emily Kurtz
Deborah Clark Lamm
Phil Lavoie
Robert O. Lehrman
Nicholas Lettore
Jeremy Levkoff
Richard Lobel
Michael Lohr
Brian Loughlin
Kenneth Lowenstein
Philippe Martelly
Moshe McKie-Krisberg
Ron Moelis
Niall Murray
Perry Notias
Michael Nyamekye
Anthony Richardson
James Riso
Joseph B. Rose
Carol Rosenthal
David Rowe
Matthew Schatz
David Schwartz
Avery Seavey
Paul Selver
Nadir Settles
Wendi Shafra
Ethel Sheffer
Jane Silverman
Brian Smalley
Meenakshi Srinivasan
Mark E. Strauss
David Walsh
Adam Weinstein
Alan H. Wiener
Mark A. Willis
Emily Youssef
Emeritus
Peter Salins

- **Promulgating the necessary rules** that will govern the program’s design, financing, and tenant protections.
- **Establishing an implementation committee** to coordinate across City agencies, City Hall, and external stakeholders, ensuring challenges are identified early and addressed effectively throughout the rollout of the program.
- **Enlisting trusted community-based partners** to improve access to program information and technical assistance.
- **Setting clear benchmarks and timelines** so that the Council and the public can hold the City accountable for progress.

New Yorkers are living in these units today, outside of government oversight, and they will continue to do so unless we provide safe, legal pathways for conversion. Each day of delay risks lives, perpetuates housing instability, and narrows the window for low- and moderate-income homeowners to participate. We urge the Council to pass this bill and support the swift and transparent implementation of a legalization program.

We also offer comment today on Int. 261-2024, which would amend the Building Code to permit single exit stairs in buildings of six stories or fewer. We are encouraged to see that the Council is carefully reexamining egress standards that may add unnecessary cost or feasibility constraints. Too often, building codes are shaped by the assumption that if two of something is good, three must be better. Yet, this logic has contributed to the affordability crisis, making it harder for New Yorkers to access safe and affordable housing.

Local Law 126 of 2024, which on balance delivered important improvements to basement and cellar safety, included a new and often impractical requirement for an additional egress door for cellars. This will make many potential conversions physically

impossible, even when the unit is fully sprinklered and otherwise compliant with all other modern life-safety standards, including the very egress provisions now being considered for six-story buildings. This illustrates how a seemingly safety-oriented provision can actually undermine safety, by keeping cellar units in the shadows rather than enabling safety upgrades under the protection of the code.

Thank you for your time and for your leadership on this critical issue.



Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

As the Executive Director of the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention, I am writing to express strong support for Intro. 1384-2025. This is a vital piece of legislation that would require construction site safety training to include education on mental health and wellness, suicide risk and prevention, and alcohol and substance misuse.

Construction workers face some of the highest rates of suicide and substance use of any profession. The physical demands, job insecurity, and cultural stigma around seeking help contribute to a mental health crisis that too often goes unaddressed. By integrating these topics into the Site Safety Training (SST) curriculum, Intro. 1384 takes a proactive and compassionate step toward protecting the whole health of our workforce.

This bill recognizes that safety is not just about hard hats and harnesses—it's about ensuring workers have the tools to cope with stress, trauma, and addiction. Requiring at least two SST credits focused on mental health and substance misuse will help normalize these conversations, reduce stigma, and connect workers to life-saving resources.

I commend those supporting and advocating for this bill. It is an urgently needed measure that will save lives and strengthen our city's construction industry.

I urge the Committee to advance this legislation and the full Council to pass it without delay.

Thank you for your consideration

Sonya Bohmann

Executive Director- Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention



Testimony of CWA District One re: Res. No. 1015-2025
Committee on Civil Service and Labor
Monday September 29, 2025

My name is Logan Needle. I'm the Deputy Political Director of Communications Workers of America, District 1. Thank you to Chair de la Rosa and the Labor Committee for the opportunity to testify today.

We represent 145,000 workers in 200 CWA local unions in New York, New Jersey, New England, and eastern Canada. CWA members work in telecommunications, health care, higher education, manufacturing, broadcast and cable television, commercial printing and newspapers, state, local, and county government.

Alden Global Capital, a predatory hedge fund known as the "Destroyer of Newspapers" is lining their pockets at the expense of high-quality, thorough, local journalism – both nationally and here in New York. In 2021, Alden acquired New York's hometown newspaper, and since then, the Daily News' newsroom has been decimated, a blueprint they have followed in local newsrooms across the country.

The Daily News staff has been fighting for a fair contract for *three years*, fighting for straightforward terms that will allow them to continue doing their jobs with dignity:

- Fair wage floors and guaranteed annual cost-of-living raises amidst skyrocketing inflation in one of the nation's most expensive cities
- Job protections and fair benefits for part-time workers
- Job-security provisions that protect their work from being subcontracted permanently
- Maintaining standard benefits like time off, sick time, parental leave and 401(k) match

We are seeing a concerning trend regarding the treatment of journalists - local newsrooms are under attack, profit is prioritized over coverage, and reporters and outlets have even been barred from covering press conferences. At the same time, and not unrelatedly, we're seeing a rise in authoritarianism and attempts to roll back our democracy. Now is the time to *increase* our investment in local journalism, ensuring institutions are held accountable and that independent sources are delivering the news. We cannot allow a hedge fund who is not invested in the future of our city to compromise the quality of the Daily News' 106 year old newsroom.

Councilmember Carmen de la Rosa's resolution sends a clear and strong message to Alden Global Capital: the cuts they've made to the Daily News, their hostility towards unionized journalists, and their refusal to reach a fair contract deal are unacceptable. We urge you to stand with New York's hometown paper and pass this resolution. Thank you for your time.



**Testimony of Alia Soomro, Deputy Director for New York City Policy
New York League of Conservation Voters
City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings Jointly with the
Committee on Civil Service and Labor
Oversight Hearing on Worker Safety and the Effects of Climate Change on Labor
September 29, 2025**

My name is Alia Soomro and I am the Deputy Director for New York City Policy at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV is a statewide environmental advocacy organization representing over 30,000 members in New York City. Thank you, Chairs Sanchez and De La Rosa and members of the Committees on Housing and Labor for the opportunity to comment.

As the climate crisis continues to wreak havoc on our residents and environment, NYLCV believes that New York City must take leadership ensuring that workers have protections in place to protect against climate change and its impacts on the human body, whether it's during extreme rainfall and flooding events, extreme heat days, and air quality emergencies due to wildfire smoke.

Extreme heat is the deadliest form of extreme weather [according to the World Health Organization](#). Heat waves are also getting longer, hotter, and more humid. Prolonged heat exposure can harm the body, such as kidney damage, and can exacerbate underlying illnesses such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, and mental health. Additionally, poor air quality—whether due to wildfire smoke or high ozone—can [result](#) in eye irritations, sore throats, asthma, pulmonary and respiratory illnesses, bronchitis and pneumonia, adverse birth outcomes, and cardiovascular issues.

When it comes to New York City's workforce, according to the NYC Comptroller's report [Safeguarding Outdoor Workers in a Changing Climate](#), roughly 1.4 million workers, or a third of New York City's workforce, work outdoors for prolonged periods of time. Of the total NYC outdoor workforce, 12.4% (roughly 173,700 workers) are constantly exposed to the outdoors. According to the report, these figures are conservative underestimates given many outdoor workers, such as street vendors, app-based delivery workers, and day laborers, are self-employed, independent contractors, or gig workers without traditional employment arrangements and not captured by official data sources. New York City's outdoor workforce tends to have higher proportions of non-citizen immigrants, Hispanic/Latino or Black, and male workers, and jobs with higher outdoor exposure tend to be paid lower wages. Since many workers lack traditional employment arrangements, many are often unprotected from existing labor laws that govern employee-employer relationships. Lastly, the climate crisis colliding with

the city's affordability crisis highlights the need for worker protections, access to water and shade, and education during climate emergencies since outdoor and/or low-income workers have to [risk their health \(and sometimes lives\)](#) in order not to miss a small paycheck.

[According to the New York Times](#), only [seven states](#) in the United States (California, Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, Oregon and Washington) have heat-protection standards for workers. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration is in the process of finalizing heat standards. And a handful of states, including Texas and Florida, prohibit local governments from passing laws that would mandate rest and water breaks.

Given the Trump Administration's hostility to any environmental, public health, and worker safety policies, gutting funding for the EPA and NOAA, and the fact that [some states have taken steps to prohibit outdoor labor standards](#), **NYLCV urges New York City and New York State to take leadership to develop labor standards, mitigation measures, and public education campaigns in light of climate and public health emergencies such as extreme heat events and air quality emergencies.**

NYLCV supports Intro 1376, sponsored by Council Member De La Rosa, requiring the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) to post on the department's website information on best practices for protecting workers from extreme weather, such as extreme heat, extreme cold, and low air quality. Such guidance would be posted in English and each of the designated citywide languages. We recommend adding that the legislation takes into account best practices for protecting outdoor workers during extreme rainfall and flooding.

NYLCV also calls for more comprehensive solutions tailored to different weather-related emergencies and different types of workers, whether it's an extreme heat emergency, air quality emergency, flash flood event, or extreme cold event. This includes, but is not limited to, mandatory rest and water breaks and access to bathrooms, drinking water, shade and cooling, and face masks, as well as heat illness prevention and emergency response plans in the event a worker shows signs of illness. We are also aligned with the [NYC Comptroller's report recommendations on public health initiatives](#), such as developing emergency guidance for employers to protect the health and safety of outdoor labor during extreme weather and developing a proactive outreach program to educate outdoor workers on how to stay safe during extreme weather. Lastly, we encourage the City and State to work together on more incentive programs to help businesses protect outdoor workers. One example is [Governor Hochul's launch of the New York State Insurance Fund \(NYSIF\)'s new Extreme Heat Equipment Credit](#). The credit helps qualifying small businesses protect their workers through the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE) and supplies designed to minimize the effects of heat exposure.

On the flip side, in addition to worker protections from extreme weather due to climate change, the climate crisis presents an opportunity for a just transition and increasing well-paying green jobs in the public and private sector. Green job opportunities range from electrifying our transportation sector, including electrifying school buses, sustainable building retrofits,

particularly for Local Law 97 needs, park maintenance and staffing, offshore wind, and more. Further, given the decades of environmental racism and historic disinvestment against low-income and communities of color, in addition to the day-to-day impacts of climate change such as extreme heat, disadvantaged communities (DACs) must receive specific attention and prioritization when it comes to investing in green jobs and workforce training programs.

NYLCV looks forward to working with the City Council and other stakeholders to ensure our workers are protected on the job from the impacts of climate change and that we are moving towards a just transition.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



October 2, 2025

New York City Council
New York City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing in support of Intro. 1384, Intro. 1385, and Intro. 1376 to improve physical and mental health and safety on construction sites.

I have the privilege of serving as President of Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW). Since its founding in 1978, NEW has prepared, trained, and placed thousands of women in careers in the trades and helped them achieve economic independence and a secure future for themselves and their families. Our graduates are changing the face of the building and construction industry in New York City.

However, our industry is facing a mental health, substance abuse, and suicide crisis. Groundbreaking research at Syracuse University reviewed the CDC database covering 47,000 construction workers' suicide cases from 2003 to 2023, and based on police and hospital reports, 24% of suicides are confirmed to be from substance abuse.

This crisis has jeopardized workers' health and safety and driven both men and women out of the construction industry. Intro. 1384, Intro. 1385, and Intro. 1376 are key to protecting workers' safety, physical, and mental health, retaining our hardworking tradespeople, and building the pipeline for the industry's workforce. We thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to prioritizing the health and wellbeing of our workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leah Rambo', written in a cursive style.

Leah Rambo
President



September 29, 2025

New York City Council
Committee on Housing and Buildings

Re: The Proposed Existing Building Code, Int 1321-2025

Dear Councilmembers:

I am writing in support of the proposed Existing Building Code (EBC). As described below, I believe that this is a critical piece of regulation for the built environment in New York City.

I am a professional engineer in private practice with 38 years of experience, all of it based in New York, and nearly all of it concerned with the investigation, and design of repairs, alterations, and additions to existing buildings. I have served on the structural committee for the current and previous Building Code revision cycles; I served on the structural committee for the proposed EBC.

New York City has over a million buildings, and the vast majority of them do not meet all of the provisions of the current Building Code. That does not automatically mean that they are unsafe; rather, they were built to different standards, some of which are acceptable by current standards and some of which are not. In the interests of economy (allowing people to keep their existing investment in buildings), ecology (keeping the existing investment in energy, materials, and carbon represented by the buildings), and ordinary social interaction (the existing built environment is part of what makes the city what it is), it is beneficial to save buildings that can be safely reused.

Unfortunately, all ordinary building codes are based on applying modern standards, and therefore do not always work well with existing structures. To use a simple example from structural engineering, the forms of floors used in steel-framed buildings before 1955 are, for the most part, not represented in current codes. As I write, I am sitting in my office in a 1932 steel-framed office building with “cinder-concrete, draped-mesh” floors, which are safe but appear nowhere in current codes or textbooks. The proposed EBC addresses this issue and many others that have caused confusion among designers, contractors, and buildings owners as long as I have been working. It also regularizes various paths to upgrading existing buildings to make them safer.

The New York City Building Code has been revised numerous times to improve practice for the construction of new buildings. In that spirit, the proposed EBC will improve practice for the far-more-numerous projects that involve alteration and repair of existing buildings.

Donald Friedman, PE



Good morning, esteemed Members of the Council.

My name is Susan DeCarava and I am the President of The NewsGuild of New York, CWA Local 31003. Our local represents nearly 6000 media professionals across the tri-state area, including the hard-working journalists of the Daily News Union.

With every turn in New York City's history, the Daily News' journalists have been there to tell the story.

Beginning as the nation's first tabloid, the Daily News has been the newspaper for everyday New Yorkers, winning seven Pulitzer Prizes for stories that covered horrific police brutality, the after-effects on workers exposed to Sept. 11 environmental toxins, and widespread abuse of eviction rules affecting immigrants.

But in 2021, Alden Global Capital slithered onto the scene, a predatory hedge fund with a notorious reputation. Former Washington Post media columnist Margaret Sullivan described Alden best: "One of the most ruthless of the corporate strip-miners seemingly intent on destroying local journalism." Alden acquired the Daily News, adding it to its portfolio, which now makes it the owner of the second largest newspaper chain in the country.

Alden Global Capital, led by managing director Heath Freeman, has a playbook it follows at every newspaper it acquires: Strip out all the assets and liquidate, slash staff and freeze salaries. Wash, rinse, repeat.

Alden stopped paying rent at the historic art-deco Daily News building, forcing the staff to move their work into their own homes. It sold off the New Jersey printing plant, pocketing \$90 million as it moved print operations to a much more distant location. It slashed staff, cut salaries and froze funding.

The Daily News' editorial staff has shrunk to 65 employees tasked with covering a city of 8.5 million people. Many of those who remain after the acquisition have either had their salaries cut or frozen.

None of the asset sales have resulted in any investment in the newsroom. Those profits go directly into Alden's pockets and that continues today.

In 2021, the journalists at the Daily News unionized with our Union, the NewsGuild of New York. They understood that a union was the best possible way to protect their work from the ravages of their bosses, greed-focused Alden Global Capital.

And as Alden continues to try to devour more newspapers, including most recently its failed attempt to buy The Dallas Morning News, its reps refuse to agree to a contract with the Daily News Union with anything close to living wages.

How bad? Alden's reps want our union to accept a starting salary of \$55K, which is nearly \$6,000 less than the bare minimum for a single person with no kids to make ends meet in New York City.

Alden is ruthless and shameless in its actions. It's why the "Too Tough to Die" resolution is so important.

This resolution necessarily and urgently calls out Alden for its hostile and predatory actions against every day New Yorkers who count on the Daily News to stay informed. We are all here today to put the hedge fund on notice that New York City stands united against greed harming one of its newspapers and recognizing that a fair contract ensures that the work of unionized journalists can continue.

At no point in our history has the Daily News' work been more important. Defending the Daily News ensures that a vitally important source of information continues to not only cover the story of New York but also preserves our democracy in New York.

We call on the City Council to support this Resolution fully, and continue to support the hard-working staff of the Daily News.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS
SEPTEMBER 29, 2025

Good morning Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings. I am Patrick A. Wehle, Executive Director of the Association of Wall Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York ("WC&C"). WC&C represents nearly two hundred union signatory interior contractors responsible for much of the carpentry work across New York City. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony in support of introductory Number 1384 that will address the tragic rate of suicide that is crippling the construction industry.

It is common knowledge that construction work is inherently dangerous. The men and women who build our City regularly face risks that many of us do not, including falls from height, electrocutions, struck-by incidents, caught-in-or-between events, the list goes on. While these threats to their safety are real and require constant vigilance, there exists a crisis of greater significance that is not receiving nearly enough attention. Construction workers are dying of suicide at rate far higher than any other occupation.

Across America, construction workers are nearly six times more likely to die from suicide than from injuries resulting from all workplace hazards combined, including falls – 6,428 construction worker suicides in 2022 alone. In 2021, 22% of all male worker suicides occurred in construction. In New York City, 269 construction workers dies of a drug overdose in 2020, more than twice any other occupation.

There are numerous factors that contribute to construction workers facing greater mental health challenges than the population as a whole. Males and veterans are heavily represented in the construction industry, and both have higher rates of suicide than the general population. It is common for many construction workers to travel wherever the work is, resulting in them being away from their families for long stretches of time. Additionally, there can be periods of job insecurity where furloughs are common and paid sick leave is a luxury. Finally, is the stress associated with inherently dangerous work. When injuries on the job occur, workers may be prescribed opioids which can lead to addiction. What this all amounts to is a perfect storm of deeply troubling characteristics that lands squarely on the broad shoulders of our colleagues in construction, and that cries out for government intervention.

Thanks to the commendable work of the City Council, Department of Buildings, and the broader construction industry, much progress has been made in reducing injuries and fatalities on building construction sites. In particular, Local Law 196 of 2017 established a nationally pioneering safety training program and through assiduous implementation, there are now more than four hundred thousand construction workers with a minimum of forty hours of safety training specific to their trade.

When Local Law 197 was enacted there was a lack of awareness of the mental wellness challenges facing the construction industry. Now with our knowledge of the enormous scale and scope of the problem, not having mental wellness training included in the safety training construction workers receive represents an enormous missed opportunity. Introductory Number 1384 will for the first time incorporate mental wellness training within the safety training curriculum and will go a long way in addressing the mental health needs of construction workers.

I suggest the bill be amended to require the refresher safety training required every five years to also include a mental wellness component.

I thank you very much for taking on this issue of critical importance, and hope that the City Council will approve this legislation expeditiously. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**

RE: SUPPORT of Int. 1384-2025

Construction Site Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Safety Trainings

October 3, 2025

Candace Bravo

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention; Executive Director – New York City Chapter

Phone: [REDACTED]; Email: cbravo@afsp.org

Chairperson Pierina Ana Sanchez and Members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings:

My name is Candace Bravo, and I am the Executive Director of the New York City Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony in support of Intro 1384 which would require construction site safety trainings to include mental health and wellness, suicide risk and prevention, and alcohol and substance misuse.

The [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](https://www.afsp.org/) (AFSP) is dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide, including those who have experienced a loss. AFSP creates a culture that cares about mental health by engaging in the following core strategies: funding scientific research; educating the public about mental health and suicide prevention; advocating for public policies in mental health and suicide prevention; and supporting survivors of suicide loss and those affected by suicide.

Suicide is a leading, preventable public health problem in [New York](https://www.afsp.org/new-york). In 2023, we lost 1,717 New York residents to suicide, making it the 4th leading cause of death for ages 35-44, the 5th leading cause of death for ages 45-54, and the 9th leading cause of death for ages 55-64.¹

America's hardworking construction professionals are vital to our nation's future. Tragically, about five times as many construction workers lose their lives to suicide compared to the general population – one of the highest suicide rates among all professions in the U.S.² Every day in the U.S., approximately 18 construction workers lose their lives—two to three from job-related accidents,³ and the remaining 15 to 16 due to suicide.⁴

While the physical safety of its workforce has never been higher than it is today, construction workers experience the second highest rate of suicide and the highest rate of overdose deaths among all U.S. industries.² Findings revealed that while 15.4% of construction workers reported experiencing anxiety or depression, a majority (84.3%) had not sought professional help within the last year.² Key factors driving these risks include high job stress, job insecurity, long hours, and a workplace culture that often stigmatizes vulnerability.⁵

Embedding mental health considerations into existing safety protocols is a critical step toward comprehensive worker support with resources and programs specifically tailored to the workforce's unique challenges. This legislation would help to empower construction

workers to recognize and respond to mental health concerns among colleagues and can foster a supportive community and facilitate early intervention. Prioritizing mental health has the potential to enhance overall safety and productivity on job sites. We need to foster a culture where it is a sign of strength to seek help and where construction workers are supported in mental health just as they are in other aspects of health.

Committee members, the AFSP New York City Chapter is grateful for your consideration of Intro 1384 and for working with your colleagues and other agencies to address the suicide rate among our construction worker community. The construction industry faces significant challenges related to mental health and suicide prevention. However, there is substantial potential for positive change through strategic action, collaboration, and commitment. By implementing Intro 1384, New York City can drive impactful, lasting improvements for workers and the entire construction industry. Please feel free to contact me at (646) 284-5790 or cbravo@afsp.org with any questions or if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,



Candace Bravo
Executive Director of New York City Chapter
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). Retrieved on October 3, 2025, from <https://wisqars.cdc.gov/>

² Trueblood, DrPH, A. B., Rodman, MPH, C., Brooks, MPH, R. D., Harris, MS, W., Bunting, MPH, J., Roelofs, ScD, C., & Rinehart, ScD, R. (2024). *Mental Health Trends in the Construction Industry: A Look at Anxiety, Depression, Psychological Distress, Suicides, and Overdoses [Review of Mental Health Trends in the Construction Industry: A Look at Anxiety, Depression, Psychological Distress, Suicides, and Overdoses]*. *The Center for Construction Research and Training Data Bulletin*.

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023). *Construction deaths due to falls, slips, and trips increased 5.9 percent in 2021*. The Economics Daily. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2023/construction-deaths-due-to-falls-slips-and-trips-increased-5-9-percent-in-2021.htm>

⁴ The Center for Construction Research and Training. (2023). *Leading Causes of All Deaths Among Current, Retired, and Former Construction Workers: Daily Bulletin*. <https://www.cpwr.com/wp-content/uploads/DataBulletin-January2023.pdf>

⁵ Gullestrup, J., Lequertier, B., & Martin, G. (2011). MATES in Construction: Impact of a Multimodal, Community-Based Program for Suicide Prevention in the Construction Industry. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8(11), 4180-4191. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph8114180>

**Committee on Public Safety, the Committee on Public Housing and the
Committee on Oversight and Investigations on September 30, 2025:**

Invasion of Privacy should not be collateral damage for the lack of funding. Oversight for quality of life; this is a necessity. We deserve to have our 964 regs and 1st amendment rights upheld. This should be at the helm of this policy that is in question. We should mirror California law and protect NYCHA residents. Where was the true public engagement of talking to residents instead of sticking a flyer on a wall. Public safety starts in the home ie repairs and work tickets. Transparency and accountability should be instilled with oversight monitor. Community should not be treated as criminals in their own home. This is structural racism playing out. Do not fail your constituents as November approaches!! We the people can usurp OUR POWER then!!

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brendan Griffith

Address: _____

I represent: NYC Central Labor Council

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ray Casarea

Address: Assistant Commissioner, Investigations and Compliance

I represent: Department of Buildings

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gus Siliakis

Address: Deputy Commissioner, Development and Technical Affairs

I represent: Department of Buildings

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Keith Wen

Address: Assistant Commissioner, Code and Zoning in Department of Buildings

I represent: Department of Buildings

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Guillermo Patino

Address: Deputy Commissioner, Policy and Legal Affairs

I represent: Department of Buildings

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 261 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Keith L. Wen, R.A.

Address: 280 Broadway, NY, NY 10007

I represent: DOB

Address: 280 Broadway, NY, NY 10007

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Samuel Eluto

Address: 1325 Ave of Americas

I represent: BTEA Building Trade Employees

Address: 1325 Ave of Americas Assoc

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Clifton Smith

Address: [REDACTED] Bronx Ny 10471

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1180 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alice Nascimento

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: NYCC

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1180 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KEN SCHLES

Address: _____

I represent: FOOD + WATER WATCH

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1180 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PETE SIKORA

Address: 275 Degraw St #4

I represent: New York Communities for Change

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1015

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Sheridan

Address: 4055 Freemansbury Ave. Easton PA

I represent: New York Daily News Union

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1015 Res. No. 2025

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Cogan Neale

Address: [REDACTED] Brooklyn, NY 11231

I represent: CWA District 1

Address: 80 Pine St.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1015

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Evan Simha. [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: Daily News Office

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1404 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Stephen Erdman

Address: 100 Gold Street

I represent: HPD

Address: 100 Gold Street

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 7/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chief Tom Currao

Address: _____

I represent: FDNY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1384 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Reynaldo Cabrera

Address: _____

I represent: Department of Buildings

Address: 280 B'way

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/27/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Leon Johnson

Address: _____

I represent: Self

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1384/16 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth Crowley

Address: 1325 Ave of Americas

I represent: BTEA Building Trades Employees Assoc

Address: 1325 Ave of Americas

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1015-2025

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Susan DeCarava

Address: 1500 Broadway, suite 900, NYC 10036

I represent: The News Guild of New York

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1376 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 9/29/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matan Diner

Address: _____

I represent: NYC comptroller

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Josh Kellermann

Address: 370 31st St NYC

I represent: Climate Jobs NY

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Sept 27, 2005

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lobitha Leland

Address: [Redacted] NY NY 10020

I represent: _____

Address: Housing Vouchers directly to Recipients

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms