

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS

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June 9, 2015  
Start: 11:05 a.m.  
Recess: 11:10 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E:  
RAFAEL L. ESPINAL, JR.  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
JULISSA FERRERAS-COPELAND  
KAREN KOSLOWITZ  
RORY I. LANCMAN  
VINCENT J. GENTILE

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

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Good morning. My name is Rafael Espinal. I'm the chair of the Consumer Affairs Committee. Today the Committee will be conducting a vote on two pieces of legislation, Intro 726 and 729 which will support and hopefully promote and continue vibrant small business community in the city of New York. Small businesses make up to over 90 percent of all business and provide the majority of private sector employment in the city. These bills seek to proactively educate small businesses regarding rules and regulations with which, which with, which they must comply an also provides a mechanism for analyzing fines issued to businesses so that unnecessary fines may be reduced. Intro 726 would expand and codify a successful past program of the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs called business education days. It would require DCA to hold these events in two separate locations in each of the five boroughs in the city of New York in English and the six languages most commonly spoken in this city on an annual basis. Information provided at these events would include the laws and

1 rules enforced by DCA including the licensing laws,  
2 consumer protection laws, and truth in pricing  
3 laws. To ensure that businesses understand that  
4 these events are a resource to help them succeed.  
5 The bill requires that the Department of Small  
6 Business Services supports DCA, indoor organization  
7 and operation of the events. Finally to track the  
8 implementation of the bill it would require DCA to  
9 issue an annual report specifying the number of  
10 events held the locations where they were held, the  
11 number of participants and the information provided  
12 to small business operators. The first of these  
13 events pursuant to this legislation will be held on  
14 or before June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 which is also my  
15 birthday, just for the record. Intro 729 introduced  
16 by my colleague Vinny Gentile. You know I'll pass  
17 the mic over to you if you want to explain the bill  
18 a little further.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Thank you  
21 Chairman Espinal. And, and thank you for having  
22 this on your committee agenda today. You know  
23 sometimes in, in government we're overzealous and  
24 we tend to do things that have a negative affect  
25 particularly on small, small businesses. And in

1  
2 this regard the negative effect often comes in the  
3 form of violations and summonses issued by the  
4 Department of Consumer Affairs that are ultimately  
5 dismissed by the same agency. But it causes small  
6 business owners to take the day off to go down and  
7 fight it to get that ultimately gets dismissed. And  
8 that is an immense waste of time for, for business  
9 owners and really city workers. So what this bill  
10 would do at 729 would mandate a study to discover  
11 and reduce the violations is issued to business  
12 owners that are frequently dismissed by the DCA.  
13 And by documenting and categorizing and cataloging  
14 those summonses and violations that, that are most  
15 frequently dismissed by DCA they would have the  
16 mandate then to reduce those types of violations  
17 that are issued and thereby lessen what is almost  
18 amounts to harassment of small business owners. So  
19 this is a bill that would move in that direction so  
20 Mr. Chairman again I thank you for your support and  
21 the support of this committee on 729.

22 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Thank you Vinny I  
23 appreciate it. I also want to thank Lobony Ramono  
24 [phonetic] Martinez. I'm also Alia Ali for all the  
25 work they've done putting this package of bills

1  
2 together and also the speaker Melissa Mark Viverito  
3 for her advocacy behind these bills. This is a very  
4 friendly package to our small businesses here in  
5 New York City. We hope we can continue promoting  
6 that and without further ado would the clerk please  
7 call the roll? But before I do that I wanted to  
8 acknowledge my colleagues. I have Julissa Ferreras  
9 from Queens and Karen Koslowitz from Queens.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: William Martin  
11 Committee Clerk. Roll call vote Committee on  
12 Consumer Affairs. Introduction 726A and 729A which  
13 are coupled. Chair Espinal.

14 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: I vote aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Gentile.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Happily vote  
17 aye on all.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Ferreras-  
19 Copeland.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FERRERAS-COPELAND: I  
21 vote aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Koslowitz.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I vote aye  
24 and I'd like my name added to these bills.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: By a vote of four in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstentions both items have been adopted.

CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Okay so we're, we're, we're going to adjourn this committee hearing.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date          June 12, 2015