

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

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OCTOBER 29, 2020
Start: 10:36 A.M.
Recess: 10:44 A.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING

B E F O R E: COSTA G. CONSTANTINIDES, CHAIRMAN

COUNCIL MEMBERS: STEPHEN T. LEVIN
CARLOS MENCHACA
ERIC A. ULRICH
KALMAN YEGER

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

2 SARGEANT AT ARMS: We are live.

3 CHAIRPERSON COSTA G. CONSTANTINIDES:

4 Alright, good morning, my name is Costa
5 Constantinides. I want to recognize the members of
6 the Committee that are here this morning. Council
7 Member Ulrich from Queens, Council Member Levin from
8 Brooklyn, Council Member Menchaca from Brooklyn and
9 Council Member from Brooklyn as well. And I am,
10 today, we will hold a hearing and vote on Intro 1947-
11 A, local law to amend a New York City Charter and the
12 administrative code of New York in relation to
13 regulated accommodations and on Intro 2072, a local
14 law to amend the administrative code of the City of
15 New York in relation to greenhouse gas emission
16 reduction methods and outreach and education. In
17 2019, New York State made significant changes in
18 their rent laws affecting tenants. The Housing
19 Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019 was
20 enacted and provides protections for tenants from
21 increases from major capital improvements or MCI
22 increases. Under the Housing Stability and Tenant
23 Protection Act of 2019 if fewer than 35% of the
24 apartments in your building are rent regulated, your
25 landlord cannot receive an increase for a major

2 capital improvement. In the past, landlords were
3 able to receive permanent reimbursement in rent for
4 MCIs or major capital improvements that provide
5 little benefit to the tenant. Additionally, in
6 regard to emission compliance and below 497,
7 buildings that contain even one rent-regulated
8 apartment may be eligible to install pre-approved
9 energy-efficiency measures in lieu of meeting the
10 specific energy emissions reductions. 1947 would
11 ensure that buildings must contain at least 35% rent
12 regulated units to take advantage of this alternative
13 compliance measure, greatly expand the university
14 buildings that must meet strict emission reduction
15 benchmarks. This local law will conform New York
16 States definition of a rent-regulated building to
17 State Law. So, we are bringing these buildings in
18 compliance and into the same category as the State
19 Law does. However, this local law places no
20 immediate burden on landlords, no immediate benefits
21 in lieu of tenants. Consistency with State Law is
22 the main benefit and rationale for the enactment of
23 this local law. Going forward, this local law will
24 help us conform with the New York Climate Leadership
25 and Community Protection Act. Intro 2072, amends the

2 building code regarding reports that must be filed by
3 an owner respecting compliance with an applicable
4 building emissions limit established by local law 97.
5 With noncompliant buildings expected to report excess
6 emissions. This local law also requires reporting by
7 the Office of Building Energy and Emissions
8 Performance regarding the methods used to meet
9 emissions limits and total number of buildings in
10 each occupancy category in compliance. Finally, this
11 local law requires outreach and education and
12 reporting on the details of such outreach and
13 education made to building owners, operators, tenants
14 and the public respecting information provided
15 including information on financing and in sentence,
16 according to the IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on
17 Climate Change, education promotes awareness, positive
18 practices and wide participation and aware of public
19 is essentially of decision-makers expect to mobilize
20 the necessary means to limit the effects of climate
21 change. Education is an in-separatable part of
22 response strategies that people feel directly engaged
23 and empower to act. The largest audience for the
24 climate change, education includes everyone.
25 Additionally, the IPCC notes that many actions on the

2 local level can tantalize much larger events
3 particularly encouraging more efficient use of
4 energy. An environmentally informed population is
5 essential to addressing and responding to climate
6 change. That is the goal of the Legislation. The
7 only way to a sustainable future especially today
8 when we see that we are on the Greek letters of
9 hurricanes. I think Hurricane Zeta just has
10 devastated you know Louisiana and the southern part
11 of our country and I am praying for those
12 neighborhoods and those communities today, but we
13 have to act because this has been. Climate change
14 has not taken a break during our pandemic. It has
15 only intensified and made the air that we breathe
16 more toxic and more difficult. Last month was the
17 hottest September on record, which only passed last
18 September as the hottest September on record. So, I
19 recommend an aye vote, a yes vote on both local laws.
20 They are both incremental steps as part of a broader
21 strategy to reduce carbon pollution from buildings
22 which is our biggest polluter in New York City. 70%
23 of our emissions come from buildings and to
24 transition to renewable energy use within a usual
25 timeframe, I want to thank the Committee Staff,

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2 Samara Swanston, our attorney, Nattia Johnson, and
3 Nikki Challa, our policy analyst, Jonathan Seltzer,
4 our financial analysis, all the Sargeant at Arms,
5 Jeff Baker, Megan Chan, Nicole Embe, Chiaz Anaster,
6 everyone who helped draft this legislation and move
7 it forward. And of course, my staff, Nicholas
8 Wuzowski, my legislative counsel and Terrance Cullen
9 my communications director. With that, I will hand
10 it over to the clerk, requesting an aye vote on both.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Good
12 morning, William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call
13 vote Committee on Environmental Protection,
14 Introductions 1947-A and 2072-A, items are coupled.
15 Chair Constantinides?

16 CHAIRPERSON COSTA CONSTANTINIDES: I vote
17 aye.

18 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank
19 you. Levin?

20 STEPHEN LEVIN: Aye.

21 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:
22 Menchaca?

23 CARLOS MENCHACA: I vote aye. And thank
24 you to the Chair and if I could be added to the, I'm

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2 on one of the bills, if I can be added to the other
3 one, thank you very much.

4 CHAIRPERSON COSTA CONSTANTINIDES: You
5 got it. Thank you.

6 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Yeger?

7 KALMAN YEGER: Aye.

8 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Ulrich?

9 ERIC ULRICH: Uhm, permission to explain
10 my vote.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:

12 Absolutely.

13 ERIC ULRICH: Thank you so much. You
14 know I had raised a number of concerns at the hearing
15 that we had on 1947 and I'm not quite sure that those
16 concerns have been satisfied so I am going to be
17 voting no now on 1947 and aye on all the others, but
18 I will talk to you offline after the call and see if
19 we can uhm, you know rectify or you know explain some
20 of those issues that I raised at the initial hearing
21 and maybe I can change my vote for the full stated,
22 but right now I am still a no on 47, 1947.

23 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Okay,
24 thank you.

25 ERIC ULRICH: Thank you.

2 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: The
3 vote on today's Committee on Environmental
4 Protection, Introduction 2072-A has been adopted by
5 the committee, five in the affirmative, zero in the
6 negative, no abstentions and Introduction 1947-A has
7 also been adopted by the Committee, four in the
8 affirmative, one in the negative and no abstentions.

9 CHAIRPERSON COSTA CONSTANTINIDES: Thank
10 you. With that I will gavel, or pretend to gavel
11 this Committee Hearing of the Environmental
12 Protection Committee closed.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date NOVEMBER 16, 2020