

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS  
CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND  
INVESTIGATIONS

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March 14, 2025  
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HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Gale A. Brewer, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chris Banks  
Rita C. Joseph  
Shekar Krishnan  
Lincoln Restler

A P P E A R A N C E S

Joceylyn Strauber, Commissioner of New York City  
Department of Investigations

Christopher Leon Johnson, self

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Testing one, two.

Today's date is March 14, 2025. Today's Committee is on Oversight and Investigation, being recorded in the Committee Room by Keith Polite.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and welcome to the New York City Council Committee on Oversight and Investigation.

Please place your phone on vibrate or silent mode.

At any time during this testimony, please do not approach the dais.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Chair, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Good morning. [GAVEL]  
Thank you very much. Welcome to the Fiscal 2026 Preliminary Budget Hearing for the Committee on Oversight and Investigations. I am Gale Brewer. I am the Chair of the Committee, and today we will review the Department of Investigation's Fiscal 2026 needs of the Department of Investigation and, frankly, the needs of the public.

The Department of Investigation promotes and maintains integrity and efficiency in government operations across our city. DOI's Fiscal 2026

Preliminary Budget totals 55 million, including 24.6 million for personal services to support 293 positions, I think it should be more, and 30.4 million for other-than-personal services. I thank Commissioner Strauber and her team at DOI for their steadfast work over the past year.

The Department of Investigation has successfully coordinated with federal partners, performed important investigations, and issued policy and procedural recommendations to City agencies, all with a very restrictive budget, and I'm sure we'll hear more about that. I look forward to continuing our conversations regarding oversight hearings. We have a lot of work ahead. Holding elected officials and agencies accountable should be a top priority for everyone.

Today, we are interested in learning about the Commissioner's plans for the Department in the coming year, including DOI's role with the City as an oversight department, its federal funding resources, a general topic in today's world, as well as how we can work together to improve and baseline the Department's staffing needs. The plan does include an additional 10 investigative and support

positions, according to the Mayor. However, the Committee is concerned that after years of reductions, the Department is not adequately funded. We would like to discuss the concerns we have regarding its current budget. We would like to discuss budgetary decisions made by the Administration and highlight the important role oversight agencies play in City government.

I thank our Committee Staff and the Oversight and Investigations Division for their hard work, Owen Kotowski, Jack Storey, Nicole Catá, Alex Yablon, Erica Cohen, Zachary Mayer, he has another name but I just go with the short one, Kevin Frick, Katie Sinise, and my staff, Sam Goldstein.

I'm looking forward to hearing from the Commissioner, and I thank her and her staff. I don't think we have any Colleagues here yet, but now I'm going to call on our Counsel to swear in the Commissioner.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair Brewer. We will now hear testimony from the Administration. We'll hear from DOI Commissioner Jocelyn Strauber.

2           Before we begin, I will administer the  
3 affirmation.

4           Please raise your right hand. Do you  
5 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and  
6 nothing but the truth before this Committee and to  
7 respond honestly to Council Member questions?

8           COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: I do.

9           COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may  
10 begin when ready.

11           COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Thank you. Good  
12 morning. My name is Jocelyn Strauber, and I have the  
13 honor of serving as the Commissioner of the  
14 Department of Investigation. Thank you, Chair Brewer  
15 and other Members of the Committee on Oversight and  
16 Investigations who may be joining us later, for the  
17 opportunity to speak with you today about DOI's  
18 Fiscal 2026 Preliminary Budget.

19           My testimony will discuss highlights of  
20 the agency's work over the past year, our preliminary  
21 budget and staffing, and the agency's new needs  
22 requests that have been submitted to the Office of  
23 Management and Budget. But first, I would like to  
24 share some important background on how DOI conducts  
25 investigations and the key principles that guide our

work. DOI is the City's Inspector General, a law enforcement agency that conducts independent investigations uncovering corruption, fraud, and waste. Our investigations develop in several different ways, from complaints that come into DOI, intelligence developed by the Inspectors General and their teams, media reports, and through joint investigations with our law enforcement partners. When we see potential for criminal charges, we generally collaborate with prosecutors and sometimes other law enforcement agencies from the early stages of an investigation, working side-by-side to ensure that we develop admissible evidence and otherwise build the strongest case possible. For non-criminal matters, we make referrals of our findings to the Conflicts of Interest Board or to the relevant agencies for disciplinary action where appropriate.

DOI's investigations hold City officials and employees accountable, lead to recommendations for reform of City policies and procedures, and protect taxpayer dollars from waste and fraud. Our investigative expertise, deep knowledge of City government, and critically, our commitment to conduct investigations independently and confidentially

instill confidence in complainants, witnesses, prosecutorial and law enforcement partners, and the public that our findings are based solely on our rigorous and objective fact-finding. DOI's freedom from outside interference from City Hall, the City Council, or any other political body in the conduct of our investigations is foundational to our existence as a truly independent Inspector General.

As you know, DOI does not report to this Council, to City Hall, City agencies, or any outside entity about complaints we receive and investigations we open, nor do we provide updates on ongoing matters. We share our factual conclusions only when they are final, whether in the form of the announcement of criminal charges or the issuance of a public report. For public reports, we share final versions with the agencies and City Hall shortly before issuance to obtain their feedback and ensure that recommendations are feasible. Whether we incorporate their feedback is a matter within our sole discretion. I want to underscore that during my tenure, no City Hall official has asked DOI for updates on the status of our investigations and, had they asked, we would have declined to provide them.



As you know, the importance of ethical oversight of City government has been front and center, particularly over the past few weeks. We agree that safeguarding DOI's independence and protecting the agency from retaliation is a worthy goal. It will come as no surprise that we have given some thought over the past few years about the best ways to do this, and I would like to share some of those thoughts with you today.

There are three core proposals, each of which would require a change in the law. First, establishing a tenure of five or six years for the DOI Commissioner so that the Commissioner's term would span administrations, limiting the risk that a DOI Commissioner would be subject to improper influence by any mayoral administration.

Second, expanding and strengthening the controls around removal of the DOI Commissioner. Under current law, the Mayor may remove the Commissioner after making a statement of reasons for the termination to be provided to the Department of Citywide Administrative Services and to the Commissioner, who has an opportunity to respond. To reduce the risk of removal for an improper purpose,

the law should be amended to add a requirement that removal be for cause only and with approval of the City Council, which can hold a public hearing to further explore the Mayor's statement of reasons and the Commissioner's response. That process would provide a check on the Mayor's removal power and allow for a public exploration of the basis for the proposed removal. This process also is consistent with the appointment process for the Commissioner, who must be confirmed by the City Council.

Third, providing DOI budget independence, which would reduce the risk of City Hall control of or retaliation against DOI through control of the agency's budget and staffing. To be clear, while DOI has not been the target of retaliation during my tenure, at the same time, our budgetary needs do not seem to be a key priority for this Administration. As you are well aware, the City's budgetary challenges have significantly impacted DOI's ability to hire and to retain employees. Budget cuts that have applied equally to all City agencies have been particularly difficult for DOI due to our small size, and the constant shifts in the City's approach to hiring have made long-term planning with respect to staffing

difficult, if not impossible. The OMB approval process for hiring, as well as capital funding, also is extremely time-consuming. Budgetary independence for oversight agencies is a feature of many City institutions, such as the City Campaign Finance Board, which sets its own budget, the Independent Budget Office, whose funding is a set percentage of the budget of OMB, and the Civilian Complaint Review Board, whose staffing is based on a percentage of the budgeted headcount of the New York City Police Department, which it oversees. Funding DOI at an appropriate percentage of the City budget and giving DOI full control over its hiring, for example, would safeguard DOI's independence and reinforce the City's commitment to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. The Inspector General for the City of Chicago's budget is set in this way. I believe these protections would further strengthen DOI's independence and that now is the time to consider them.

Let me turn to our work in 2024, which was an extremely productive year for DOI. The work that we have done, ranging from large-scale criminal cases that have yielded numerous convictions, to complex criminal investigations of senior City

officials, to public reports and recommendations about a range of issues, from the City's oversight of non-profit contracts to combating contraband smuggling into Rikers, is a credit to our skilled and dedicated team of DOI investigators, auditors, and data analysts, and the support of our entire operational staff and our executive team. Together, they make DOI's accomplishments possible. Again and again, over the last three years, we have asked them to take on more work and more responsibility, often for no additional compensation, and every time they have stepped up and served the City admirably under very challenging conditions. I am very grateful to them. To give you a sense of our accomplishments over the past year, I will share the statistics on certain major indicators and highlight particular investigations and prosecutions. I encourage you to review our 2024 Calendar Year-End Report, which has been distributed with my testimony and provides a full picture of the results of DOI's hard work.

A unique feature of DOI is that when we find misconduct, whether or not our findings result in criminal charges, we consider whether changes to City policies and procedures might close corruption

2 vulnerabilities, limiting the risk of future  
3 misconduct and, if so, we make recommendations for  
4 policy and procedural reform. These recommendations,  
5 while not mandatory, are public, providing  
6 transparency about areas where City practices, in our  
7 view, can improve. This past year, we have focused on  
8 older pending recommendations, engaging with the  
9 agencies to advance them to accepted and implemented  
10 status. In 2024, DOI made 370 arrests, a nearly 59  
11 percent increase from 2022, when I began my tenure at  
12 DOI. Since 2022, the complaints we received rose  
13 considerably, to approximately 14,800 in 2024, as did  
14 the number of cases we referred for prosecution, to  
15 approximately 498 in 2024. These figures are  
16 extraordinary, given the number of resource-driven,  
17 complex investigations underway at DOI and the  
18 approximately 10 percent decrease in our overall  
19 staffing since the beginning of 2022. Last year, DOI  
20 and our law enforcement partners announced notable  
21 complex investigations, leading to significant  
22 criminal prosecutions, targeting official pay-to-play  
23 schemes and other misconduct, including the arrest of  
24 two former high-ranking Fire Department officials on  
25 bribery and related charges for soliciting and

accepting tens of thousands of dollars in payments in exchange for providing preferential treatment to certain individuals and companies with matters pending before the Bureau of Fire Prevention. Both defendants have pled guilty and no longer work for New York City. The indictment of Mayor Adams on bribery and campaign finance charges for allegedly obtaining illegal campaign contributions and luxury travel through the City government positions he has held for nearly a decade. As you know, the federal district judge assigned to the case is currently considering the Department of Justice's motion to dismiss the charges on grounds unrelated to the strength of the case or the conduct of the investigation. The arrest of a former City Hall official on witness tampering and destruction of evidence charges in connection with the investigation of alleged illegal campaign contributions to the Mayor. That case remains pending. The indictment of the Mayor's former Chief Advisor for monetizing her government position and influence to benefit herself and her family. The arrest of 70 current and former employees of the New York City Housing Authority for accepting cash payments from vendors in exchange for

2 awarding NYCHA contracts, driving up the cost of  
3 services, and depriving NYCHA residents of valuable  
4 resources. To date, 64 of the 70 defendants have been  
5 convicted. Cases against six defendants remain  
6 pending. DOI made 14 recommendations to NYCHA as a  
7 result of this investigation, all of which have been  
8 implemented. The indictment of a company and six of  
9 its executives and employees for operating a sham  
10 safety training school that issued safety  
11 certificates and cards to approximately 20,000  
12 students. Nineteen individuals also were charged with  
13 acting as brokers by connecting individuals seeking  
14 safety certification to the school. Fourteen of the  
15 defendants have pled guilty, and an additional  
16 defendant was convicted after trial. In light of the  
17 findings in this investigation, DOI issued a number  
18 of recommendations to the City Department of  
19 Buildings to improve its oversight of the  
20 construction site safety training requirements  
21 mandated by local law.

22 DOI's investigations over the last year  
23 also focused on theft of City funds, as well as  
24 misconduct impacting some of the city's most  
25 vulnerable residents, resulting in, for example, the

guilty plea of a former fiscal officer who stole nearly 2.3 million from the City-funded non-profit where she worked and spent the funds on home remodeling, landscaping, and luxury goods. A 42-month prison sentence for a Florida woman who defrauded at least 120 low-income city residents out of nearly 50,000 in benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The indictment of a landlord and corporate entities he controlled for maintaining uninhabitable conditions in his rent-regulated properties to induce tenants to vacate so that he could sell the properties for profit and for filing false documents with City agencies to conceal ownership of those buildings and evade responsibility for treatment of his tenants. DOI issued four recommendations to the City Department of Housing, Preservation and Development to strengthen the City's response to landlords who persistently neglect their properties.

Another key aspect of our mission is to provide public transparency with respect to the operations, practices, and conduct of City government. We do this in part through our public reports. In 2024, DOI published 15 reports that



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2 explored important issues, including the misuse of  
3 City-issued parking placards, compliance and  
4 governance risks at 51 City-funded non-profits that  
5 operate City homeless shelters, safety, disciplinary,  
6 and staffing challenges at ACS's juvenile detention  
7 facilities, and a review of the NYPD's Community  
8 Response Team that found insufficient public  
9 information about the unit and an absence of written  
10 policies and procedures governing its operations.  
11 These reports shed light on issues of significance to  
12 City government by detailing our factual findings and  
13 our recommendations for critical policy and  
14 procedural change.

15 Turning now to our Fiscal Year 2025 and  
16 2026 budget. Our Fiscal Year 2026 Preliminary Budget  
17 is 54.9 million, 30.3 million for personal services,  
18 and 24.6 million for other-than-personal services. At  
19 the start of Fiscal Year 2026, as it has in previous  
20 years, DOI anticipates receiving an additional 1.6  
21 million in intracity funds from other agencies that  
22 support a portion of our staffing. The total Fiscal  
23 2026 budget will support an anticipated 450  
24 employees, 310 funded through DOI's budget and  
25 memoranda of understanding arrangements with other

City agencies and public authorities, including NYCHA and NYC Health and Hospitals, and 140 who are on-loan employees directly funded by other agencies.

We recognize the enormous budget challenges that the City, and therefore all City agencies, continue to grapple with. I want to highlight today those aspects of the budget process that have been most difficult for DOI and that can impede our ability to fully fulfill our mission. The City's two-for-one hiring process significantly reduces our ability to hire qualified staff to fill critical vacancies. In light of past headcount cuts, all of our open positions, in our view, are critical, and two-for-one hiring materially delays and sometimes prevents the hiring of candidates that we have spent time and resources recruiting. For example, DOI made offers to three candidates to fill investigative analyst positions between September and October of 2023. We did not receive OMB approval for these positions until July 2024, November 2024, and January 2025, respectively. Understandably, given that almost 18 months had passed since the initial offer, one of the three candidates opted not to join DOI. Not only do we have to begin recruitment for

that position anew, these delays in hiring require current staff to absorb the additional workload, leading to burnout and ultimately greater attrition. DOI has lost staff at all levels to private, state, and federal entities due to the disproportionately low salaries we offer and the lack of growth opportunities permitted by the City's current hiring and promotion practices, which put us at further risk of losing critical staff. For example, DOI's Deputy Agency Chief Contracting Officer, or DACCO, left the agency in September of 2023, and despite several rounds of recruitment and offers to candidates, we have been unable to fill the position because the current OMB hiring policies require us to offer a salary that is materially lower than DACCO salaries offered by similarly-sized City agencies. DOI's current OTPS budget primarily pays the rent for our office space and the expenses of our monitorships, which, as you know, are paid to outside monitoring firms, not to DOI staff. DOI's baseline OTPS funding was cut by approximately 4 million due to PEGs in Fiscal Year 2024. DOI's OTS budget does not cover standard law enforcement agency expenses, such as cars, technology, and training. We have used

forfeiture funding to cover those expenses, and while that is a permissible use of forfeiture funds, the funds are limited and the City should be prepared to fund our operating expenses in the future.

DOI rarely seeks capital funding from OMB, but delays in that funding also have required us to use forfeiture funds for critical agency needs. For example, we decided in 2023 to obtain a new case management system to replace an aging system that lacked key functionalities, including readily accessible records and case files, streamlined export capability for production of discovery, and the ability to easily generate statistical information. We submitted a request to OMB in 2023 for capital funding for this basic operational law enforcement need, a request that met all the capital funding requirements. However, after well over a year of back and forth with OMB, when DOI still did not have a clear path or timeline to approval, the urgency of our need required us to abandon the capital request and leverage forfeiture funding to procure Caseware, our new electronic management system, which will cost approximately 2.8 million that will be paid over the next five years. I am pleased to say that Caseware

launched just last month, and DOI staff are learning to navigate the new system, one that vastly improves our ability to maintain and access information.

I want to return for the moment to the topic of forfeiture funds and the role that they play in supporting our operations. Both federal and state law provide for forfeiture by defendants of the profits of criminal activity to the government and for sharing of those funds with the investigative agencies that worked on the case. Forfeiture funds must be used to support legitimate law enforcement activities. The majority of our forfeiture funds come from federal prosecutions. There are very strict DOJ guidelines on how forfeiture funds can be used and for what purposes, and the guidelines require that forfeiture funds supplement, not supplant, DOI's budget. This means that the City cannot reduce DOI's budget due to the availability of forfeiture funds. We have used forfeiture funds to support our basic operational needs, as I have just explained, but those funds are limited. The majority of our forfeiture funds came from the 2011 CityTime case, in which the defendants were ordered to forfeit very significant funds, a portion of which were shared

with DOI. DOI has continued to receive forfeiture funds from the CityTime case as recently as 2023 through the identification and sale of properties subject to forfeiture, but DOI will not be able to fund our basic law enforcement needs with forfeiture indefinitely because we cannot expect to receive forfeiture in that amount again. Our use of forfeiture funds between Fiscal Years 2022 and 2025 to fund our operational needs has saved the City 16.2 million, but in the future, the City must be prepared to fund those needs when our forfeiture funding runs out. From 2014 through 2024, DOI spent an average of 2.5 million forfeiture funds per year. However, in Fiscal Year '25 alone, that amount increased to 10.2 million, taking into account the use of forfeiture funds to support our operational needs in light of the City's budget cuts.

Let me turn now to our new needs. We submitted a new needs request for the Fiscal Year 2026 January plan that included an exemption from the two-for-one hiring restriction since our agency is relatively small and staff-driven, as I've explained. Curtailing our ability to hire directly limits our productivity. Critical positions, such as e-discovery

management, have remained open for far too long because, while we have funding available to fill those roles, the two-for-one policy prevents us from hiring for them. The restriction also has contributed to our current 17 percent vacancy rate. And while OMB has agreed that DOI may make requests for exemptions from the two-for-one policy for critical vacancies, we must do so on a case-by-case basis with no guarantee of approval. While we have had some limited success, the process remains cumbersome and time-consuming.

DOI also requested 1.7 million to fund 23 headcounts that would support investigative staff, which included investigators with specialized skills such as data analytics, digital forensics, and investigative auditing, and operational staff in information technology, finance, and procurement. DOI received 10 of these lines and 745,000 in baselined funding to staff both investigative and operational units. Four of the approved investigative lines will go toward hiring confidential investigators, and we plan to separately hire for additional confidential investigators using existing vacancies to create a group of sufficient size to run our investigative

officer training academy this year. We are thankful for this headcount in a budget-constrained environment, but must continue to ask for the remaining 13 positions, which are required to fully meet our needs. It is worth noting that over the past three years, these 10 positions are the first additional headcount that we have received, putting aside the 18 un-baselined headcounts granted to us in the FY23 adopted plan that we could not fill because they provided funding for only one Fiscal Year. We have made additional requests for the Fiscal Year 2026 executive plan, including 75,000 to achieve salary parity for five supervisory investigative staff who were not included in the recent agency-wide salary adjustment effort that was approved by OMB, one that has improved our retention and hiring, 308,000 for modest salary increases to support the successful tiered title and salary structure, that we created in Fiscal Year 2023 to attract and keep investigators by providing a path to promotion at DOI, and 830,000 for the 13 headcount DOI did not receive in its last request, which includes specialized investigative staff. These requests are



essential operational needs for DOI to continue effectively carrying out its mission.

In conclusion, the New York City Department of Investigation is unique among municipal oversight agencies. The investigations we have conducted this year make clear that we serve a critical City need. As an independent factfinder, DOI supports good government and provides public accountability, transparency, and confidence that corruption, fraud, and waste allegations involving New York City will be independently and rigorously investigated. I thank you for your consistent support for our mission, and I am happy to take any questions you may have.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much. I've been joined by Council Member Joseph, who ran a phenomenal hearing yesterday on Education, Council Member Krishnan, who will do so on Parks, and Council Member Banks, who did the same thing on Public Housing so, if you have questions, immediately let me know, because I know some of us have B and T, and we're missing it so, if you want to go ahead, do you want to go ahead with questions? No, no, go ahead, because I'm going to be here, so I'm happy because I

know the feeling of not being at the Budget. Go ahead, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you, Chair Brewer. Thank you, Commissioner, for your testimony today and your perspective here on the budget and DOI's work, too.

I just have a few questions. Unfortunately, I've got to return to budget meetings we have, too. But a couple of them were, I saw the core proposals here that you had put in your testimony to further strengthen the independence of DOI from the executive branch, which will allow it to do its, in my opinion, responsibilities more effectively as well. One of the things that I saw was when it came to the budget itself and budgetary independence, and I was just trying to get a better sense, and I saw in here about perhaps it being a percentage of the City budget, and I was just curious to hear a bit more about what, in your view, would that budgetary independence look like? What other cities, I saw Chicago in here, too, but what other cities with their OIG-type offices, how have they structured budgetary independence and what does that look like?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So, I think there are a number of different ways that it could be done, and we outlined some of the models here. One would be a percentage of the City's budget, and frankly, I haven't studied all of the different models and I don't have a percentage to ask for today. I think this is a good time to start exploring these issues, but I think that is one way to do it. Some of the other models, the agency makes a proposal to the Council that then votes on that as part of its budget. In certain circumstances, there can be a back and forth and questions and recommendations made by other bodies who support the budget. I think the key point is there are clearly advantages to having an independent agency that is truly independent, and I think budgetary independence is a part of that given that our size and our staffing are so critical to the amount of work and the scope of the work that we're able to do, and also to our own financial planning. So, the current environment where there have been cuts and then freezes and then unfreezes for limited periods of time make it very hard to sort of look at our structure as a whole and think about how we want to do things going into the future, and rather leave

us in a position where we have to try to address our greatest need and our greatest urgency in that moment, and I think some measure of control over our own budget within appropriate and fair parameters would give us the ability to do that kind of planning, and a percentage of the City's budget obviously would ensure that we're not necessarily immune from the City's budget challenges, and we wouldn't expect to be, but that we would have a measure of separation from them.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: That's very helpful. And another question I had on that note is with the recommendations you provided, I mean, in my opinion, having enforcement investigative powers walled off independent from the executive branch is very important. Frankly, we're seeing at the federal level right now what is happening in the erosion of public integrity because of the ways in which the Department of Justice and the White House are structured now and what's going on there. So to me, I think this is a very timely issue. I'm just curious of how other cities and their offices, inspector general type offices or DOI type offices, do they follow the same model, too, of independence in terms

of the appointment of the Commissioner, how it overlaps with other Mayors as well? Is that independence generally seen in other cities? And if so, would you be able to provide the Committee with more examples of more independent models along these lines?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: We would be happy to provide examples. I have to say, I can't sit here today and tell you exactly how other models work. Certainly, a for-cause requirement is embedded in a number of inspector general hiring and firing protections, including, as you note, at the federal level. Obviously, the law has to be followed for the law to be effective. But certainly, we could find some additional models and examples and come back to you with those. We'd be very happy to do that.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: That would be very helpful. Thank you. My final question is just on your testimony about forfeiture. Are you telling me that a lot of the DOI budget is funded from forfeiture proceeds from a case going back to 2011?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: We were very lucky in, I believe, 2023 or 2024 to unexpectedly receive an infusion of forfeiture funds that I think came

from a more recent identification of properties subject to forfeiture, yes, from a case that is decades old at this point.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Sorry. You said it before, but I missed it. When do those forfeiture-funded parts of the agency, when does that expire, those forfeiture funds?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: There's no expiration, but there's a limited amount of money. We have been essentially running our operational needs on forfeiture for the past year or so, if not going back a little bit further. Eventually, that money is going to run out, which will depend on what our technology needs are. Obviously, we've had some technology upgrades. We've had this new case management system. The 10.5 million in spending recently may be a little high, but eventually we're going to be out of money.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Right. I understand. I don't mean expired. What I meant more is it sounds like a lot of it comes from a very old case. When will those funds run out? Do you have some sort of sense of when that would be?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Well, if we continue to spend at this rate, I think we'd have, like at a 10 million per year rate, I think we'd have no more than two or so years left.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: That's shocking.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: I'm getting nods from the people who know.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Right. Well, that's shocking. I would just say my point is I appreciate your testimony about recommendations to make DOI more independent. I think it's very unacceptable and shocking, and we're seeing with this Administration, to not only have no sort of checks and bounds and independence from DOI, but on top of that, to provide such little funding for DOI that they're relying on forfeiture proceeds from a case that's more than a decade old to fund core operations, and to state that for the record. Thank you so much, Chair. Thank you for the time.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: First of all, I want to tell my Colleagues that I spoke at the recent, I call it the Speaker's Charter, and now we have the Mayor's Charter coming up. I indicated, without knowing what you were going to say, some of the

suggestions to the Charter Revision Commission. I think I was the only elected official to testify, but there are more hearings coming up. So, what I'm saying to you is testify the same. Take this list when you testify at the Mayor's Charter and the Speaker's Charter, and please include this on your Charter Revision Commission testimony, as I have done, and I hope you'll do the same. Excellent testimony.

So, I just don't understand about your budget, because, I don't know, it was some, like, huge, larger number in the past, so can you just reiterate what it is now? Because I have, there's a number for what you have of staff, and then there's a number for the additional from intra-agency, right? And then there's sort of the need that you have for the future, because I know you want to do some more proactive investigations. I think you've said that in the past. So, both staff-wise and budget-wise, can you just give us some indication as to what you have now and what you would like in the future?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Sure. So just to sort of set this in context, our budgeted headcount, which is currently 310. That's for Fiscal Year 2025.



And just for context, it's been steadily going down since Fiscal Year '20, when it was 408. Now, that budgeted headcount does not include what we refer to as on-loan employees. Those are employees whose salaries are paid by their home agencies, but who work at DOI, support our investigations, report up, you know, through our chain. For those figures, I want to give you current active headcount. So our DOI-only active headcount is 257. It was 368 in Fiscal Year '20. And our on-loan headcount, which provides significant support for our operations, is 137. It was 180 in Fiscal Year '20. So that gives us a total active headcount of 394 for Fiscal '25. And our ask has been in addition to, you know, other funding issues, but headcount specifically, our ask has been for 23 additional personnel. We received 10 of those. We continue to ask for the other 13.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And of the 10, have you been able to hire? Are you still dealing with the two-for-one and the salary issues, etc.?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So for those, we are not dealing with the two-for-one. So those are all posted, and we are actively recruiting for them. But we have not filled those positions yet.

2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. All right.  
3 That's helpful. In terms of budget, so I think,  
4 obviously, the budget would mirror what the  
5 challenges are in terms of staffing.

6 COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Yes. And I also  
7 want to be clear that one of our asks is for  
8 additional funding for vacant positions that are not  
9 fully funded, and I can get you that number, but I  
10 just want to be clear that we have positions that,  
11 where we have the headcount but, because the salaries  
12 are so low, we have sometimes had to borrow from  
13 certain vacant positions in order to provide  
14 competitive salaries for positions we're hiring for,  
15 and so that means there is additional funding that we  
16 need to be able to hire our vacant positions in  
17 addition to these additional 10 headcounts.

18 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you. And, of  
19 course, just for the record, for the last two years,  
20 as Chair of this Committee, I've advocated for  
21 funding for your Department, and the Office of  
22 Management and Budget has refused. I just want to  
23 make clear.

24 COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: And we appreciate  
25 that support very much.

2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Very, very  
3 frustrating. Hope this changes this year.

4 So, in terms of the 10 that you have,  
5 needing 13 more, but how will those positions help  
6 your investigations when they're fully funded and  
7 fully in place?

8 COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So for those 10,  
9 we've picked the areas of greatest need. So, for  
10 example, we manage through search warrants and  
11 seizures of electronic devices in criminal cases. We  
12 have an enormous amount of material to go through  
13 that has to be processed. We have had one e-discovery  
14 manager managing sort of the vast bulk of this. So  
15 that's a position that we've posted for. We also do  
16 other forensic analysis of electronic devices, and so  
17 we're seeking two headcount for that. Auditing,  
18 obviously, is critical to the financial fraud  
19 investigations that we do. We're seeking to hire an  
20 additional auditor, four additional investigators, as  
21 I mentioned. Obviously, we could use many more. But  
22 that's how we allocated a portion of the 10 new  
23 headcount. And then we also need more technology  
24 support, and so we allocated two headcount to that  
25 position. So that is how we will use those 10. That's

what we've posted for so it's fair to say right now those are our areas of greatest need.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And I know you also have the Protest Settlement Unit. If you could talk a little bit about what the unit is doing. I believe those folks have been filled, those positions. Ironically, there's a protest every day. So, I will be interested to see what recommendations come out of it, but can you just talk a little bit about that unit?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Yeah. So, the unit is now fully staffed with five people, all of whom not only have been hired but are working as of this week at DOI. Their role is actually unique in the work that we do. That unit was created to manage oversight of the NYPD's compliance with a particular settlement of litigation arising out of the George Floyd protests. And as part of the settlement of that litigation, the Department agreed to implement policy and procedural changes to how they police protests. And the plaintiffs were interested in having a body that could monitor the NYPD's compliance. Now, as you're aware, and I know we've talked about this before, outside monitors can be very expensive for

the City. The City saw using DOI as the monitor as a way to save some money. We're very comfortable with playing that role. But to do so, we needed additional headcount, because given all of our other responsibilities and obligations, it was not something we could take on without designated additional staff. And so we asked for and received five additional staff and have created essentially a small unit with an inspector general, two attorneys who will serve as special counsels, and two investigators to do that work. And once the Department finalizes policies and training, which they're in the process of doing, that work will actually begin and it will involve, every six months for a three-year period, a selection by a collaborative committee of two protests that the unit will be responsible for reviewing and looking at the Department's response to the protests and evaluating whether the response complies with the new policies and procedures.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Just out of curiosity, have there been investigations that you haven't been able to, you've mentioned several now, but that you've not been able to conduct because of a

low staffing? In other words, again, back to this proactive situation.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Look. There are no complaints that we've received that we thought were significant and warranted investigation where we sort of put them aside because we couldn't do them. At the same time, there is proactive work that we would be interested in pursuing that we've not had an opportunity to pursue given our other obligations and responsibilities and the staffing that we have. You know, it is also the case that you don't know what you don't know. I think there are steps that we would be taking, resources we might be devoting to doing things like proactive audits involving large capital projects that aren't subject to a monitor. We're not in a position right now to do that because we don't have the staff.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. I'm sorry, to go back to those that are looking at the protests. Something about two every six months. Every six months there's a report, but how do you determine that the monitors look at X, Y, and Z? Is it every protest? Is it whether it's a complaint? Is it complaint-based, etc.?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: It's not every protest, and it's not complaint-based. The settlement provides for a collaborative committee that has representation from the plaintiffs in the litigation, from the NYPD. It's a committee that DOI chairs, and the committee selects two protests to be reviewed every six months. Now, DOI obviously can always do any protest review that we choose to do, but for purposes of this particular settlement, the settlement describes how the protests will be selected.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: You're going to have plenty to select from.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: It appears that we will.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Yes. So what is the current salary range for attorneys and investigators? You talked about this a little bit, but because they're so noncompetitive with other City agencies, we just want to hear that again. That seems to me such a fixable, we never can compete with the outside, but it seems to me we should be able to be on parity with those in our own government.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Yes. So the confidential investigator titles, and there are three levels of confidential investigators. That's the tiered system we put in place. If you take the sort of highest end of the range for each of those positions, which I would describe as including two years of service and the COLA adjustment, which obviously not everyone gets, the lowest tier Confidential Investigator One is 63,900. I'm rounding slightly, Tier Two is 76,700, and Tier Three is 89,500. And then we have, you know, another investigator title called special investigator that is, you know, another related title, which is around 76,700. So those titles are not competitive with other City agencies, and we have a specific request to increase each of those tiers so that that promotional path continues to be attractive and, you know, we can motivate very hardworking investigators to stay in their positions. So those are the CI salaries.

Our attorney salaries are competitive with other City agencies. There are challenges really, you know, the federal government, to some extent the state government, and the private sector.



CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Something to make us aware of so that we can advocate in the budget process, and I appreciate that.

And then just in terms of overtime, is that something that investigators and attorneys are able to access? I didn't know if that's relevant to you.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: You know, I think certain titles are overtime eligible, certain titles are not. So certain investigator titles are overtime eligible. As investigators promote into more senior supervisory positions like assistant inspector general, they are not overtime eligible. For the most part, I don't think this is sort of a determinant issue for us in terms of our staffing. People are motivated to be promoted despite the fact that in certain titles they're not eligible for overtime. Other people who are in overtime eligible titles have a cap, but we can seek waivers where necessary. I would say we do seek waivers regularly, but not for significant numbers of employees.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay, thank you.

So, we've been joined by Council Member Restler.

Council Member, she has excellent testimony. I hope you read it. It is the kind of testimony that you would like. And I have said to all of our Colleagues that when we testify before the one Charter for the Speaker, one Charter for the Mayor, as I have done already for the Charter for the Speaker, we should include her suggestions because that's where they have to lie in order to make some of the changes. We all have B and Ts, so if you want to go ahead with questions, you'll let me know because I let certainly others do the same so you'll let me know if you want to go ahead.

Commissioner Banks, I mean, Council Member Banks, if you have questions, go ahead.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Not a commissioner, but thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair, and to the Commissioner, thank you for your earlier statement and testimony.

Particularly when it comes to NYCHA, when I first took office, a major scandal regarding NYCHA employees that involved bribery and extortion, which brought significant attention to the issues of corruption and misconduct within the City agencies and authorities. I wanted to know, given the ongoing

need to address fraud and other criminal practices within various City agencies, how does the Department of Investigation prioritize its budget to effectively investigate cases of fraud, bribery, corruption, and particularly in agencies like NYCHA?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So, we actually have a squad that is solely devoted to NYCHA. It's a large squad, it's a very strong squad. They are the squad that was responsible for the large-scale bribery case that we announced last February. So that is a squad that I would describe as on-loan, where the employees are funded through NYCHA. They are actually paid higher salaries. As it happens, that's just through an agreement with NYCHA, with whom we have a strong relationship. They are committed to strengthening and funding that group of investigators, and so that is why we've been able to focus on and develop those kinds of cases.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Is there a particular unit, is there a special unit that deals just with public housing, with NYCHA?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So we have a squad in the agency. We manage our squads by numbers.

They're squad 7. They're the squad that oversees NYCHA.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: You said the headcount is seven.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: No, no, no. Sorry. The number of the squad, the way we label it is 7. Let me see if I have the exact headcount by squad. I do. Why am I missing Squad 7? Let me see. Give us a minute. I think we're going to be able to get it for you. 35.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: 35.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: That is a particularly large and well-staffed squad.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay. Excellent. What resources and strategies are in place to ensure that DOI can adequately respond to these types of high-priority investigations and prevent similar issues from happening in the future?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: I think we rely on our investigators to vet the complaints that we received and to have an awareness of what the concerns are at their particular agencies. That's certainly true with NYCHA. We have a very experienced inspector general and team supporting that entire

operation. So, we receive complaints, and we know what we're looking for. Like I said, we have strong relationships with NYCHA, so it's not only anonymous complaints from which we learn things. It's from concerns shared at times by leadership. That squad has strong relationships with prosecutor's offices, and so they have the relationships they could use to build a case like the case that we announced back in February. So those are some of the features that make for a squad that can do challenging, difficult, important investigative work and do it successfully. And then we make recommendations for policy and procedural reform, and we sort of stay on and follow up on those recommendations. So, as it happens, we had made recommendations to NYCHA years before the big bribery takedown last February. Some of those recommendations, unfortunately, NYCHA had chosen not to implement. They were operationally challenging, or they were expensive. Once we were able to bring a criminal case of that size, that can be a very motivating set of circumstances for an agency, and they did implement all of those changes. So, it's sort of a combination of understanding how the agency works, knowing how to vet complaints properly, having

the staff to devote to them, having the prosecutorial relationships. You know, that squad is a good model for all of those things.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you. Pointly towards the budget, given the complexity and the scope of investigating misconduct or fraud within large City agencies, what portion of DOI's budget is allocated to support in-depth investigations?

COMMISSIONER STRAUER: Well, the majority of our budget is really our staffing, and our staffing is all... you know, obviously we have an operational side that any, you know, that of course we need to support the running of the agency, but all of the personnel in the agency are really devoted to our investigations, right? We have a General Counsel Squad that advises the agency on legal issues, both related and unrelated to the actual investigations, but really our entire headcount, other than our operations staff, that obviously are critical to running the agency, are devoted to our investigations. That's why headcount cuts are so difficult for us, because we don't have programs of the sorts that other agencies have that we can cut.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay. And in terms of budget priorities, are there specific budget items dedicated to expanding DOI's capabilities in areas such as investigative technology, specialized staff, and interagency collaboration to better tackle some of the challenges we're facing?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Yeah. I mean, I would say that the critical asks are for additional headcount, right, which would be the 13 additional personnel that we've requested for. We have some other really headcount-related asks, so we have certain staff who, for various reasons, didn't benefit from the salary increases that other staff members have had. They're paid less than their peers, so we want funding to increase that. I mentioned we have certain vacant headcount that we don't have full funding for so we'd like funding for that. So really, all of our asks, at least on the personnel side, are focused on increasing our staffing, because that's what powers the work that we do, our investigative work.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Council Member  
3 Restler, he's always complaining, but he's not  
4 complaining today. Council Member Restler.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I like that Chair  
6 Brewer knows what I'm going to say before I say it.  
7 She's right. I'm not complaining today.

8 I firstly just want to concur with the  
9 Chair's assessment that I think your testimony is  
10 very impressive, which is only fitting for your  
11 tenure at DOI, which has been equally, even more  
12 impressive. I think the highlights that you point out  
13 in your testimony of the rigorous and impressive  
14 oversight and investigations that have been  
15 undertaken during your tenure are, I think,  
16 confidence-inspiring for New Yorkers. And at a time  
17 when we have seen more corruption in City government,  
18 certainly since the end of the Koch Administration,  
19 perhaps even longer, I firmly believe that a strong,  
20 well-resourced DOI is the single best check that we  
21 can provide on this Mayor and this Administration.  
22 The indictment of the Mayor himself, the indictment  
23 of the Chief Advisor, the arrests at NYCHA, the  
24 arrests of other FDNY officials, you have  
25 demonstrated just impressive clarity of purpose and



courage, because I think it's an awkward dynamic when you're appointed by someone and then responsible for investigating them, and you've just followed the law and made sure that everyone follows the rules, no matter how powerful they may be. And when we see what's happening in Washington right now at the DOJ, it's a reminder that there are good investigative leaders, prosecutorial leaders, who are committed to uncovering injustice and holding bad actors accountable. So really, from the bottom of my heart, I want to say thank you for your service to the City.

And with that, I'd like to ask a few questions. Actually, I'll make one more comment, and then I'll start asking questions. I strongly concur with your recommendation that the removal of the DOI Commissioner should involve a vote of the City Council. I worked in the de Blasio Administration when Commissioner Peters was let go, and writing a letter to the DCAS Commissioner is not an impediment of any kind in letting a DOI Commissioner go, and it is critically important that, at minimum, for the next ten months, that you are sitting in exactly this seat, providing tough oversight of this administration, and I very, very, very much hope that

Governor Hochul and our counterparts in Albany get this message that your removal should be contingent upon a vote of the City Council.

So, with that, I do have a few... I'll let you say something if you...

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Just thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: It's well-deserved. So, I am, as I know you are from your testimony and from our previous conversations, deeply concerned about the reductions in your headcount. Based on our analysis, going back to April 2020, the beginning of the pandemic, we've lost fully 100 headcount, over 25 percent of the DOI headcount in that five-year period. That is, you know, incredibly challenging, considering the impressive increase in arrests, investigations, cases that have been referred to DOI during this period. And we're, I guess, to no one's surprise, in the Adams Administration, experiencing record numbers of arrests, cases being investigated and investigations by DOI. I'm particularly concerned about how OMB impedes your ability to do your job. Can you elaborate, as is indicated in your testimony, the two-for-one hiring restrictions remain in place, so

only when two people leave, one person's able to replace them? And you give some examples here about when you identify candidates, how slow it is for OMB to approve new hires when you identify candidates.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Yeah, those are really the same issues, right? So two-for-one means we have to lose two people in order to hire one person, and so it can take a very long time for us to receive the allotment that we need to hire, you know, staff when other staff have left. There is also a review process when we're seeking exceptions to the two-for-one, which we are allowed to ask. I mean, I suppose anyone is allowed to ask, but that can also take time for that exception to move through the process. There's a fairly extensive back-and-forth so that has been a challenge to us in filling positions.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: You know, the CFB is allowed to submit a budget to the City Council that's essentially adopted, and the same should be true for DOI. You should be able to be resourced to meet your needs, and it should be funded. The idea that the Mayor's Office, which is the recipient of some of your investigations, is starving you of resources and not allowing you to fill your headcount

is totally counterproductive to you being able to do your job, and I think the incentives are deeply misaligned so I strongly support your calls for greater budget independence, and I think that Chair Brewer is right that this is where we need the Charter Revision Commissions to listen. You know, if we all want to take steps to try and ensure that the cronyism and corruption that we've seen in this administration do not continue in the future, a more independent and well-resourced DOI is an effective way to do so.

I also wanted to ask you about, in your testimony, you mentioned 140 individuals who are on loan from other agencies through MOUs. I believe you said it was 140 lines. Are those lines all filled, and do I have that right, and can you give us some insight of, are there agencies that are not loaning you as many employees as they are supposed to?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So, our current active on-loan headcount is 137, so around 140, as you said. And look, part of the issue is, this is through memoranda of understanding, right, so there are agreements that either party can cancel with, you know, some period of notice. And it certainly is the

case that for some of the MOUs that we have, we're not receiving headcount, you know, that is fully compliant with the agreement. On the other hand, we understand that all agencies have been subject to these budget reductions, and so all agencies are facing these challenges and, obviously, these are not enforceable agreements in the sense that they can be terminated by either party within a six-month period so I think, you know, this is an overall budget issue. It's certainly not the case that there's any, you know, one agency that's saying, we don't want to be helpful to you. I think the message that we're getting is, like, yes, we'd like to, we can barely fill our own staffing needs.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Right.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So that's the situation with the MOUs. So that, you know, in Fiscal Year '20, we had 180 through these agreements, 180 headcount. We now have 137.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And understanding that other agencies are facing challenges around headcount as well, can you help identify for us which agencies have seen the greatest reduction during that five-year period?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: You know, I'd have to know more about their budgets in order to do it. And frankly, I'd have to go back and look at each MOU. But for the most part, we're either getting fewer positions than agreed to, or there's such low funding available for each position that they wouldn't really fund a current full salary.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. I think it would be helpful for us to understand if there are agencies that should be stepping up, because in our oversight capacity, if we should be pushing NYCHA or DOB or whoever the case may be to being better partners to DOI and lending more staff as they had previously in their MOU agreements, then we should be doing so because you all having your own headcount is one way for you to have capacity, but this is another critical way, and we can put pressure on those agency heads as well if there are folks that aren't stepping up in the ways that they should.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: This is actually a good moment for me to correct something just quickly on NYCHA, which is not an example of an agency that is not stepping up. We have budgeted headcount through our agreement with NYCHA for 53 positions,

and we've got 49 active positions so they are staffing that squad quite fully.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I just wanted to ask one more question about e-mail access. My understanding is that DOI has direct access to most agency servers to be able to review e-mail correspondence from City agencies. Could you let us know which City agencies DOI does not have direct access to?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: We have direct access to all agencies whose e-mail accounts are hosted by OTI. So that excludes, for example, City Hall. Their e-mails are not hosted there. There are some other agencies as well. I'd have to get you... there are not very many, but there are some other agencies that are not OTI-hosted who we also don't have direct access to. For those, we have to go to those agencies with the request...

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Is that a cumbersome process?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: You know, I mean, it's a different process. I would say that when we make these asks, we are getting the cooperation that

we need. In an ideal world, would we have direct access without having to make the ask? Yes, we would.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And I guess two more questions, if that's okay, Chair Brewer. I really appreciate it. Could you explain to us how the KPMG... do I have my acronym right? KPMG?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: KPMG.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: KPMG. I'm sorry. KPMG contract to oversee the asylum seekers has been working. Do you think that, considering how OMB has starved DOI of resources, the 25 percent staffing reduction we've seen over the last year, which doesn't include the 25 percent additional reduction in loaned headcount, is that a model that we should be looking to replicate so as to help expand DOI capacity, bringing in partners like KPMG or law firms or other entities to provide kind of monitor-like oversight of areas of City government that need additional review at this time?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: It is certainly a model that I think works well. So typically, as you know, there are two types of monitorships. One type involves City vendors who have their own integrity issues where the City needs to contract with that



vendor for some purpose and therefore the vendor funds the monitorship and DOI oversees it. The KPMG model that you're describing, like the monitorship of the borough-based jails, are basically designed to assist us in monitoring large capital projects. That's how monitorships have been used. And the investment of funds that the City is willing to make makes sense because the project is so large that a risk of fraud and abuse is therefore much more significant.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Absolutely.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: And that was the basis for our proposal to use KPMG. And the City had...

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Is that strictly a fiscal oversight? Or are you in kind of waste, fraud, and abuse? Is that the real focus of...

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Well, the focus is really to make sure that the City is getting the benefit of what it's bargained for, right? So if the City has signed up vendors to provide meals and to provide residences for asylum seekers or to provide translation services, we want to make sure that they're getting those services, that they're not getting cheated, that people aren't charging more

than they should be, for example, for, you know, work that they're not doing. In the construction context, it's more complicated. You're also making sure that the materials being provided, in fact, line up with the specifications, which is not something that you would necessarily know just by reviewing invoices. So principally, that has been the purpose of those types of monitorships. But certainly, the model of hiring an outside firm with expertise to kind of force, multiply, DOI's staffing could be directed, I think, to, you know, almost any type of project, right? I mean, those firms have investigative expertise. We could, you know, staff a group that includes outside personnel. We could, you know, direct them to do really whatever kind of investigation we wanted. They could be acting as our agents.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And considering how challenging OMB has made the hiring process, that may also be a faster way to bring on capacity and provide oversight.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: It can be. It tends to be more expensive, right? Because you're getting private sector, and you're not giving those opportunities to employees who might work for the

City. That's kind of the downside. But certainly, you can hire and staff up more quickly. Obviously, you can use those sorts of things for short-term projects that we really would have difficulty hiring for, because you can't hire someone for a case that, you know, might be over in a year.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Yeah. And then, last question, open-ended. Are there any additional tools or resources or areas of authority that we can help provide to DOI or the State Legislature could help provide to DOI that could provide tougher oversight of the Adams Administration and City Hall for the remainder of this term to try and inspire confidence in New Yorkers that this Administration is kind of operating with a modicum of integrity?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: You know, I think the longer-term proposals that we've laid out sort of overall are the best way, you know, to strengthen the agency. I would say, you know, and I think you can see from the work that we're doing, that we've actually, you know, been able to accomplish quite a lot, even with our limited staffing. I think the additional staffing that we're asking for, you know, although we wouldn't have it immediately, we're

already posting for the 10 positions we got, I think that is the combination of those long-term independence measures and giving us more people now to do the work that we do is the most efficient way, you know, that, you know, I can envision. Certainly, if there were particular areas where we needed prompt, immediate oversight, you know, funding for some sort of an outside, you know, firm that would assist with that would be another option.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Well, I just want to conclude with where I started. Your tenure has been exceptionally impressive, and we're fortunate to have you in this role, and I really appreciate everything you've been doing.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Just in terms of overtime, obviously, in your situation, I think people are always complaining about overtime, but people could use it because of the salary situation, but there's 107,000, I guess, allocated, but I believe, according to the materials we have, it's over 200. So how do you repurpose

funding for that? How does that compute? In other words, you've got 107 that's supposed to be allocated for overtime, according to our notes.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So, I can tell you what our overtime earned Fiscal Year '25 to date is. It's 250,000 and change. And that number actually has gone, if you look at our overtime spend in Fiscal Year 2024, total, it was 426,000, up from 370,000 in Fiscal Year '23, so we're projecting for this year a total spend of around 400,000, roughly similar to what we were last Fiscal Year.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: All right. Thank you. Just in terms of Squad 5, which sort of was brought up by Mr. Restler, which is the one that's responsible for elected officials in terms of investigations. So, do the squad's investigations from your experience increase when an administration changes over? Do you look at retroactively at some of the previous administration's actions? And then again, do you have the capacity to perform for this particular squad in your current staffing levels? You could argue that you don't have enough staffing for any levels, but particularly in this one.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Right. So, the current active headcount in that squad is 18, which is sizable. NYCHA, which we spoke about, is kind of an outlier in terms of size, which is great, but that's not really consistent with most of our squads. So, they have 18. They have one vacancy. We have over the last few years done everything we can to give them the headcount that they need. They also have in-house auditors who are very talented, who do the complex fraud cases. They have attorneys. They have wonderfully experienced staff in various kind of categories. It is also the case that for large scale investigations of the kind that they've been working on, we will occasionally, and we certainly had to do this over the past year, bring in staff to support them from other parts of the agency, and not just from our dedicated digital forensics unit or e-discovery folks, but people from other investigative squads who otherwise would be focused on their agencies. That model has worked for us in terms of facilitating their ability to do the work that they do. Would we have more people in that squad if we could? We might, like all across our squads, but I think and I hope they would agree that they have

gotten what they have needed to do their work, albeit in the overburdened way that I feel like all of our staff is working.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I tried to say that when I was introducing the topic, so that's very helpful.

In terms of asset forfeiture, I was around during CityTime. I have to give now Attorney General and then Council Member with me credit. She never stopped talking about it to the point we wanted to shut her up, but she was right. I understand that hopefully there will not be another CityTime or something of that ilk because it was quite challenging. My question is, we heard earlier a couple of years in terms of the length of that particular asset forfeiture. My question is, are you concerned about the Trump Administration announcing freezes on this is federal funding? If so, how would that impact? I don't know that they will. I don't even know what they know about it, but I was wondering if you could comment.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Sure. It's funding that has now for quite some time been in the City's accounts. It's in our accounts here so it's not like

a recent transfer of funds. We don't have any reason to think from the conversations we've had that funding that came in a couple of years ago now or so is going to be clawed back.

In terms of future federal forfeiture, we certainly hope the program will continue, but exactly how it will be organized or the types of cases that might generate those sorts of returns, even if we don't get anywhere close to the CityTime case, it's hard to say.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Is there any average without CityTime included that you move into your asset forfeiture budget? It depends on the cases.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: We also have about 5 million, again, built up over time from State forfeiture, and then there's another Treasury Department category that we have that I think is roughly... the Treasury is 1 million. We have far smaller amounts than our current DOJ forfeiture that really comes from the CityTime case. I would say a few million a year would be...

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Would be average.



COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Oh, okay. Thank you. The current forfeiture balance outside of CityTime is 100,000, so you can see it's much lower.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Absolutely. Okay. Just back to the KPMG, which Council Member Restler was asking about. Is KPMG both working on the contracts to do with the migrants as well as the borough-based jails? Is it different companies?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: No. K2 is the monitor for the borough-based jails. I know there's some similarity in the name, but that's a separate entity. KPMG is just working on the asylum seeker expenditures.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Got it. So, I assume these contracts last as long as the asylum seekers are here and in terms of the borough-based jails when they get built, right? Is that how it works?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: There are different answers for each one. The contract with K2 for the borough-based jails, which we entered into in October of 2023, has a term of five years, and we'll see if that gets us through the construction or not, but that's the idea.

The KPMG term, I know it's been extended. Let me just see if I can get you a more precise answer on that. So currently that goes until June of 2026.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Got it. Okay. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Obviously to the extent that that there are fewer funds being spent in that way going forward, we'd be able to adjust that.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Oh, absolutely. And it's good that they're doing it. And then you get regular reports, obviously.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: We get regular reports. We have regular meetings. They escalate to us, you know, red flags that they identify when they're looking at invoices, when they're doing site visits. We are regularly in contact with them, and that is a good model of our sharing out with other City agencies problems that KPMG finds.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And then when it's over, is there a public report? Because I know you say correctly that an investigator, this isn't really an investigation. It's like an ongoing observance.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: It's an ongoing  
monitorship.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So how does the  
monitorship get concluded with public information?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Our plan is to  
produce a public report at the conclusion of the  
monitorship that explains the work that KPMG did and  
the findings and recommendations that we have for  
sort of future kind of crisis situations where the  
City has to pull together, you know, a significant  
number of vendors to serve a need in short order,  
which is certainly how the asylum seeker funding  
process started.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. It's something  
to think about for the future because in our cases,  
of course, we have tons of hearings on these  
contracts, and it's more mundane like the food is  
rotten and it gets thrown out, and that may not be a  
budget issue in the interim, you know, like, okay,  
the food is being delivered, it's just not being  
eaten because nobody wants to eat it so that's a  
different kind of oversight perhaps because it's not,  
maybe you're getting your money's worth, but it's not  
well-spent shall we say.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Those are issues that KPMG flagged in connection with their site visits too and particularly food that was spoiled, things like that.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. On the NYPD OIG, I know we've had a hearing on this, so what's the current budget and headcount of that particular office and, again, attrition and recruitment, do they differ for this office compared to the rest of the Department?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Okay, so the current active headcount is nine. We had significant attrition in the 2023 to 2024 period of 46.15 percent. You know, that's a significant amount. And I think we've talked about the ways in which we have worked to support the unit so that even with the lower number of staff, they are able to produce reports. They've already produced, you know, they're working on several reports right now that we hope to produce this year. We had the social media report already issued. We had the post act report. So they are continuing to work at a productive rate, but staffing is definitely a challenge.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And how are we addressing the staffing issue there? That's just based on needing the extra 13 or is there something else for this particular office?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Well, I mean, I think we are thinking about as we post for, you know, new positions, we have to make decisions about where they're going to be allocated. We also have the option, you know, of going back to OMB and seeking exceptions from the two-for-one hiring for certain, you know, positions, and so we're thinking about all of those things in terms of ways to build up their staffing.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. In terms of the loan, I know you heard earlier, Council Member Restler, but how many investigators in terms of loan are from NYPD, and I guess what they don't do is oversee NYPD, but what do they do?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Oh, so now you're talking about our Detective Squad, right? We have a Detective Squad at DOI that is currently, we have a lieutenant and a sergeant and I believe 10 detectives for a total of 12 people. Just checking that I had that right. And they support all of our

investigations. You know, first of all, they're great sort of guides and mentors to younger investigators who don't have experience with things like doing surveillance, and they help run down information for us. They help us with the execution of search warrants, which is not something that we can do on our own without other law enforcement officers. They help with arrests and other operations, and they are working with squads across the agency. We have a whole group of new folks who came in really at the beginning of this year, and that's been working very well. And they don't oversee the Police Department, as you say, but they do everything else.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Just in terms of background, because I think the public, when I say public, I mean City agencies and staff, they probably hear about Department of Investigation in terms of how they can get onboarded in terms of that's one way. So I wanted to hear again how you've been able to deal with the background and how long it takes now. I think you're down to 109 days, if I remember correctly. So again, that's a great number, but should it be less? It takes time. I think what you do now is you have an initial investigation. This person

looks okay. They haven't committed any immediate crimes, and they can go onboard and then do further investigation. But perhaps if they're high-level or sensitive position, then they have to wait until they get actually investigated. So, I just want to hear a little bit more about the background check currently and the backlog.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Sure. So, you know, one thing that our Background Unit has accomplished, which is quite significant, is we used to have this extensive backlog right in 2019. We had 6,500 backlogs investigations. We now have 164 remaining. So, it's barely a backlog anymore, and we expect that those remaining investigations will be completed by the end of the year.

Now, as you know, there are criteria for who should receive a background investigation, management, folks who have a salary of above 125,000, folks who have certain authority to enter into particular financial arrangements or to negotiate and approve contracts. But fundamentally, it is the hiring agency, or City Hall if they are the hiring agency, that sends us the request to do a background, and the completed background form that their

candidate has filled out, and whether or not to start a City employee before their background is fully completed is, therefore, to some extent obviously up to the hiring agency. So, there are plenty of examples including of senior-level government employees who are hired and in place while their background is still being completed. We also do regularly what's called pre-vetting, where we do, like you said, a sort of quick vet to make sure that there are no serious sort of obvious issues so that a promotion can be made or a person can be put in place while we complete the rest of the background.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. The other question I have about the public, as I call it, is we all take, I think most of us, we take a... I guess it's an online course about whether or not we are learning how to be honest brokers as City employees. And the question is, how many people take it? Is there any kind of an evaluation about whether it's effective? You know, I have always known that in today's world it has to be online. Years ago, because I've been working for the government for a very long time, we had to do it in person, and obviously that was much more impactful. I can't remember a damn thing about



whatever you asked when I've taken it recently, to be honest with you. Well, I try to be an honest person, so, you know, I don't tend to break the law, but some people do so I guess my question is, is it impactful, is it the way to go? I don't know.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Well, first, so I want to emphasize that we agree with you that in-person training on these issues that is specifically directed to particular agencies and tailored to their needs and interests is the best way to reach City employees. And over the past, for Fiscal Year '24, we conducted 273 of those in-person and, at times, virtual corruption prevention lectures. That was a 44 percent increase over 2023. That is not the kind of training you're talking about, which I'll get to in a minute, but I just wanted to emphasize that it is really a critical service that we provide to the City and also a way of making connections to City employees who then see, like, okay, there is a real person who understands my agency who I can call if I have a complaint or a concern so I agree with you that that kind of more bespoke training is very important.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: How do people get the in-person versus the virtual? Is it just a request?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: You know, it really depends on the agency relationship, the availability of staffing, and certainly the need. If there is ever a request, we are certainly going to do it. We're also doing proactive trainings, but again, that depends on the availability of staff to do them.

In terms of the online sort of standard training that more employees get, 36,150 City employees had viewed that corruption prevention module. That is down from the numbers in 2023. That is given, I think, every other year. It's not an annual requirement, and I don't have sort of precise data on who it's reaching and who it's not reaching. But there is a robust process in place to try to get City employees both kind of generally, more globally, sensitized to the important anti-corruption issues that they might face or corruption issues that they might face as well as a more bespoke kind of training.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: I mean, just because I've been around so long, in the old days, every time you got your paycheck, remember we used to have

checks? Young people don't even know that we did, but we did, and then there would be a little information about how to be an honest employee in almost every check. Now, of course, it's directly deposited, so you have no idea how to be an honest employee unless you go to one of these trainings. I'm just saying that little check had some positive aspects to it. No longer.

The other question is the Department has been operating a policy and procedure recommendation portal that helps inform the public on the recommendations. How often is the portal updated? When was the last update? I should know this, I should've looked at it, but I have not.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: The portal is updated every quarter. I don't know that I have, unless someone else has it, I don't have the specific last date that it was updated, but every quarter it's updated. We had some sort of a backlog last year with updating, which I think we are now up to date. Our number of policy and procedure recommendations went up significantly this year compared to last year. I had that number. I think it may have been in my testimony, but we went up by a significant magnitude,

and it's been reports and recommendations, as you know, has also been a focus for us over the last few years. We had, I think, 15 reports last year and over 200, maybe close to 300, recommendations.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Marshals. The fees and just more information about the marshals. I know they're appointed by the Mayor, so one of the questions is are they fully appointed? They obviously enforce orders from civil court cases. They carry out evictions, which is how we know them. They collect their judgments, and I think the City collected 1.2 million from fees last year, and they also have 207,000 from uncollected funds from marshals in '23. So the Fiscal '26 projected revenue is 2.3 million in fees. Now, of course, we wish, in some cases, they didn't have to collect all this, because these are people who have broken the law. So, what is driving the anticipated increase in revenue? We worry that it's evictions, to be honest with you. And what is the current guidance by DOI to marshals for commercial and residential evictions? And of course, what are the vacancies?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Okay. So, why don't we start with vacancies. There can be up to 83

marshals appointed by state law. There are currently 28 marshals appointed. The appointment process is sort of ongoing, but that is where we're currently at 28. So obviously, there are many more spaces to fill. You know, the number of evictions are increasing. In 2024, there were 16,850 evictions in New York City, still lower than pre-pandemic levels, but evictions, obviously during the pandemic, there was a moratorium, so evictions were way down. And so far in 2025, there have been approximately 2,500 evictions, which is expected to climb at an increased rate as civil courts are resolving their backlog in warrants pending issuance. So, you know, that's where we are in terms of anticipated evictions.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Revenue?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So in terms of revenue, you know, the marshals pay an assessment of 1,500 dollars and 4.5 percent of their gross income. The most recent numbers I have on that are 1.68 million and change for what the City has received from the marshals. That was in 2023. So it sounds like you have more updated numbers than I do.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: It's about the same, though. It's about the same.

2 COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Okay.

3 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: So I guess, you know,  
4 and I know we had a hearing on this, and we're still  
5 working with the State to discuss the future of the  
6 marshals. I assume the large number for, you know,  
7 '23 and '24 was because they were "catching up from  
8 pandemic" when there were no evictions and yet the  
9 courts were processing and all of that. So that was,  
10 you know, the more we can do to keep the number down  
11 if, in fact, you know, we're trying to keep people in  
12 their homes with one-shots and other aspects of  
13 paying the rent. I'm very good at one-shots, just  
14 FYI.

15 Following up on complaints, and this is  
16 just one of the few questions left, you get a lot of  
17 them. How do you determine the level of importance of  
18 each complaint, and how do you work through it to  
19 turn it into an investigation if that's appropriate?  
20 Because you get a lot.

21 COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Yes, yes, we do.

22 In Calendar Year '24, we got 14,816, to be precise, a  
23 little bit up from Calendar Year '23 where we had  
24 14,000 and something. Look, this is really where our  
25 investigators' and our squads' expertise come in. So,

complaints are routed to the squad that oversees the agency to which they pertain so we don't have someone who's an expert in corrections reviewing a NYCHA complaint.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: That's what I have to do all day long. Go ahead.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: So, it's really through their knowledge and expertise and sort of investigative sense that we decide what do we pursue, what do we not pursue, what's important, what's not. Obviously in situations where we have fewer resources, if a complaint seems on its face to be not of particular significance, we may kick the tires less than we would if we had more staffing, right? I mean, that just sort of stands to reason. Like I said, there's no complaint that I'm aware of that we've received that we thought was significant that we had to put to the side. But at the same time, there are things that we may not probe as deeply if on their face they seem to be not particularly significant.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: And then you get back to that person or that entity to say, what, how do

you handle a complaint that is kicked to the side, so to speak?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Well, you know, it depends. So, I mean, when I say things that we don't follow up on, let's say we get an anonymous complaint with very little detail. That might be an example of something that, like, we file away so that if we continue to get complaints that raise that same issue, even if they're vague and anonymous, we can then attend to that. Sometimes, you know, we have people who call and leave a message. We'll call them back. We'll take their information. Depending on whether we need to speak to them again or not, they may learn more about what we're doing, but it's not our process to kind of update them about the status of any investigation that might arise from their complaint.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. Arrests by local enforcement can occur as a result of an investigation. You mentioned that. The figure has increased in recent years, to your credit, from 288 in '22 to 344 in '24, and I think up even in '25. So, to the credit I think of what your investigations are showing, but what's the reason for the recent years,



and are there certain types of investigations that lead to more arrests?

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Sure. I mean, if you think about the NYCHA case, that was an unusually large case where we were able to obtain evidence of illegal conduct that was quite widespread in an organization, so when you have an investigation that can do that, you're going to have more arrests. You know, I think how much time an investigation takes, and even how significant it is, may not necessarily be reflected in how many arrests it generates. You can envision, for example, like an arrest of a senior official is a very significant one, but that's only one arrest, and so we really try to be more focused on doing impactful cases than sort of being stat driven. I think the arrests have increased, certainly because we've been quite busy, we've had a lot of complaints. You know, our folks have done efficient and excellent work. Prosecutors also, I think, were slower coming out of the pandemic than they are now. I think they are bringing more cases than they were a couple years ago so it's sort of a lot of factors that go into having an increased number in any one particular year.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. The issue of referring, obviously now you refer to state or feds, depending on the situation. Have you had the opportunity to refer to the feds? Is that going to change? Hopefully that agency, at least at the staff level, will continue to be professional.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: I certainly hope it doesn't change. We are continuing to make referrals and work with our federal prosecutorial partners with whom we have strong relationships. I certainly hope that the appetite and interest in the kind of work that we do will continue to be a priority for the federal government as well.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Okay. And then just finally, because we're all concerned about onboarding, just the training of investigators, when you hire, I don't know if it's a class or if they start at the same time. Given how hard it is to hire, maybe they start at different times. What kind of training is offered? How long does it take for the onboarding? Has the training changed over time? Because that's obviously, as we say, the meat and potatoes of the agency.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Yeah. We have an extensive, very well-developed investigative training program where our new investigators learn everything from how to do a surveillance, to how to write a memo, to how to manage testimony and cross-examination. It's a very comprehensive program. There is also, after that initial training program, a portion for those who are interested in being qualified as peace officers. That includes more physical training, obviously, handling of weapons, defensive tactics, that kind of thing. Our hope is to always offer that training to a group of investigators when they start because that's the most efficient way to do it, and I had mentioned that with the four new investigators that we posted for, from the new positions we received and some additional vacancies that we have, we're hoping to have a class of at least eight. What we've done in the interim, because there is a lot of interest in this program and not every investigator had the opportunity to take it, because in its current form, it hasn't been in existence for more than a few years, we offered it when we were, you know, subject to the true freezes and doing much less hiring, we offered it within the

agency to investigators who had some experience but felt that their skills could benefit from it. It's a very popular program. If it is new investigators who don't yet have a caseload, it's more intense over a shorter period of time. If it is investigators who are carrying an active caseload, we creatively sort of expanded it so that our team could do their casework while still getting trained so it's an excellent program. It's really, you know, a model, I think, for how to take folks who may have no law enforcement background and sort of get them ready to, you know, actually do all the work that we do, and it's a real credit to our training program who have worked to really refine and develop it over the last few years.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much, Commissioner, for your testimony, and we look forward to working with you during the budget process and beyond.

COMMISSIONER STRAUBER: Thank you, as always, for your support.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much.

Now we open the hearing for public testimony.

I remind members of the public that this is a government proceeding. Decorum shall be observed at all times. Members of the public shall remain silent at all times.

The witness table is reserved for people who wish to testify. No video recording or photography is allowed. Members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony, but may submit transcripts as such to the Sergeant-at-Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

I assume that you have already filled out an appearance card with the Sergeant if you want to be recognized. When recognized, you will have two minutes to speak on today's hearing, which is the Budget of Oversight and Investigations and the Department of Investigation.

If you have a written statement or additional testimony you wish to submit for the record, please provide a copy to the Sergeant-at-Arms. You may also email it to [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov) within 72 hours of the close of this hearing. Audio and video recordings will not be accepted at that time.

For in-person panelists, please step up to the table once your name has been called. I'm calling Christopher Leon Johnson.

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Hello, my name is Christopher Leon Johnson and I'm calling on the DOI to start investigating Brad Lander. I want to know, like, why does Brad Lander campaign for Mayor on government time, and I want to know why does Brad Lander use a social media account to advocate for his run for Mayor while he's polling at 6 percent on government time? The DOI has never, ever put an investigation out for Brad Lander. I want to know why does this Committee never, ever ask the DOI like, what's up with Brad Lander campaigning for Mayor for the past three and a half years on government time and using a social media account on government time? Now, one thing I want to bring up is that yesterday Comptroller Brad Lander was campaigning on government time using a non-profit, which is illegal against the New York State law and the federal government, where a non-profit, the Worker Justice Project, cannot campaign for a political candidate while on non-profit time.

And at the same time, the Speaker of the City Council, Adrienne Adams, the Speaker of the City Council needs to be looked into by the DOI, because there's a big thing that's going on with her, that she's intimidating Council Members, she's threatening Council Members, she's intimidating non-profits, she's intimidating leaders in the political spectrum to support her for Mayor, and this is budget time. Why she's running for Mayor and campaigning for Mayor, doing budget talks, where everybody knows that she has discretion of what gets funded and what doesn't get funded via Schedule C funding and discretionary funding so there's a big, big feeling that she is weaponizing the budget with Justin Brannan and Keith Powers to make everybody in the political spectrum endorse her for Mayor, and if they don't, they won't get government funding.

And I'm calling on, if the Worker Justice Project and Street Vendor Project doesn't get the funding they deserve, I will file a (TIMER CHIME) complaint with the Department of Investigation and she will be arrested. Thank you. And free Mahmoud Khalil. Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: There's no other in-  
3 person and nobody on Zoom. This hearing is concluded.  
4 Thank you. [GAVEL]

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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 April 9, 2025