

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

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October 10, 2024  
Start: 10:20 a.m.  
Recess: 10:49 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Farrah N. Louis, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Tiffany Cabán  
Jennifer Gutiérrez  
Kevin C. Riley  
Inna Vernikov

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Julie Menin

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. This is a  
3 microphone check for the Committee on Women and  
4 Gender Equity. Today's date is October 10th, 2024,  
5 located in the Chambers, recording done by Pedro  
6 Lugo.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and  
8 welcome to today's New York City Council vote for the  
9 Committee on Women and Gender Equality.

10 At this time, please silence all  
11 electronic devices.

12 No one may approach the dais at any time  
13 during today's vote.

14 Chair, you may begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [GAVEL] Good morning.  
16 My name is Farrah Louis. I'm the Chair of the  
17 Committee on Women and Gender Equity. Today, the  
18 Committee will vote on several pieces of legislation.

19 First, I am proud to sponsor both  
20 Proposed Intros 891-A, a Local Law to amend the  
21 Administrative Code of the City of New York in  
22 relation to information about the Maternal Mortality  
23 and Morbidity Review, and Proposed Intro. 892-A, a  
24 Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the  
25 City of New York in relation to written lactation

1 room accommodation policies. We will also be voting  
2 on Council Member Gutierrez's Proposed Intro. 912-B,  
3 a Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the  
4 City of New York in relation to requiring the  
5 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to develop  
6 and distribute parenting resource materials to  
7 parents and guardians of newborn children, and  
8 Council Member Gutierrez's Proposed Intro. 869-A, a  
9 Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the  
10 City of New York in relation to outreach and  
11 education regarding parental mental health resources.  
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13           Additionally, we'll be voting on two  
14 Resolutions today. Resolution number 133A-2024,  
15 sponsored by Council Member Menin, a Resolution  
16 calling on the New York State Legislature to pass and  
17 the Governor to sign legislation to increase Medicaid  
18 reimbursement to cover eight pre- and post-natal  
19 visits as well as delivery support by doulas. And  
20 finally, Resolution 293-2024, sponsored by Council  
21 Member Stevens, which is a Resolution calling upon  
22 the New York State Legislature to pass and the  
23 Governor to sign S.2898A and A.4017A, the Chisholm  
24 Chance Act, which would establish a plan to address  
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2 the severe maternal morbidity crisis in Brooklyn and  
3 the Bronx.

4 Now I invite Council Member Menin to  
5 provide remarks on her legislation.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Thank you so much,  
7 Chair Louis. Today I'm honored to speak about my  
8 resolution, Resolution 133, that calls on the New  
9 York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to  
10 sign legislation to increase Medicaid reimbursement  
11 to cover eight pre- and post-natal visits as well as  
12 delivery support by doulas. Doulas provide very  
13 important emotional, physical, and educational  
14 support to a mother who is expecting, is experiencing  
15 labor, or who has recently given birth, and should be  
16 more accessible to all New Yorkers. In fact,  
17 according to the New York City Department of Health  
18 and Mental Hygiene, only 5.5 percent of New Yorkers  
19 who gave birth last year relied on a doula. This is  
20 up from 4.7 percent in the previous year, according  
21 to this report from last August, but the rate is,  
22 quite frankly, far too low. As New Yorkers seek doula  
23 support, there remain fiscal challenges. An equitable  
24 Medicaid reimbursement rate would ensure greater  
25 access for doulas and increased post-natal visits.

2 There has been substantial progress made so far this  
3 year for doulas from the State. In January, the  
4 Governor announced a comprehensive plan to address  
5 maternal and infant mortality. This included  
6 expanding New York's paid family leave policy to  
7 include 40 hours of paid leave to attend prenatal  
8 care appointments. In June, the State's Department of  
9 Health announced that any eligible New Yorker can  
10 receive doula services at no cost for a period of up  
11 to 12 months after a pregnancy ends. As Co-Chair of  
12 the Women's Caucus and as a mother, I'm thrilled  
13 knowing this remains a priority for the State. More  
14 can be done to build on the work done so far, and  
15 passing this Resolution would send a clear message to  
16 the State from New York City that more investment in  
17 doula support is needed.

18 I want to thank the Chair for allowing me  
19 to speak and for my Colleagues for joining me on this  
20 Resolution, and I also want to thank the drafter,  
21 Cristy Dwyer, and from my team, Jonathan Szott,  
22 Brandon Jordan, and Mercedes Anderson. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council  
24 Member.

2 And, oh, I thought Council Member Stevens  
3 was here. She's not here.

4 I'm really grateful that we're going to  
5 pass today, finally, Intros 891-A and 891 to continue  
6 to address the maternal mortality and morbidity issue  
7 here in our city.

8 Finally, I'd like to thank my own Staff  
9 and Members of the Women and Gender Equity Committee  
10 Staff who worked to prepare for this hearing.

11 Clerk, we are ready to begin the vote,  
12 right?

13 Oh, and, sorry, just adding an addendum.  
14 We are not hearing Intro. 869-A today. It will not be  
15 voted on today, for the record. We're ready.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good  
17 morning, William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call  
18 vote, Committee on Women and Gender Equity. All items  
19 are coupled. Chair Louis.

20 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I vote aye on all.  
21 Congratulations to all bill sponsors.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Riley.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank  
25 you. Cabán.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Aye on all.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:

4 Gutiérrez.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Aye on all.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Vernikov.

7 With a vote of four in the affirmative, zero in the  
8 negative, and no abstentions, all items have been  
9 adopted by the Committee.

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: And we'll keep the  
11 vote open for a few Members. Thank you.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:

13 Continuation roll call, Committee on Women and Gender  
14 Equity. Council Member Vernikov.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Final  
17 vote is now five in the affirmative, zero in the  
18 negative, and no abstentions. Chair Louis.

19 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [GAVEL] Adjourning.

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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 October 13, 2024